

MY ORPHANAGE

AND

GOUNOD IN ENGLAND.

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*PART I.—FRIENDSHIP.*

*PART II.—BUSINESS.*

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NARRATIVE BY

GEORGINA WELDON,

On her method of Teaching Singing, General Training, and Education of
Children, Published for her

PERSONAL JUSTIFICATION

At the Request of her Friends.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY N. N.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL

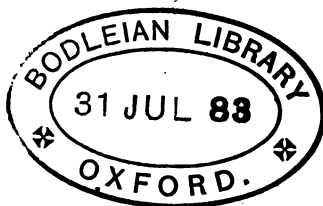


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Qui ! voilà le miracle, inégal à tout autre,
C'est qu'une bergerette, avec sa foi d'apôtre,
Ait eu meilleur secours de ce peuple aux abois
Qu'avec tous leurs trésors les favoris des rois.

Mais quoi ! . . . cette candeur, à bon droit méprisée
Chez les sages de cour est matière de risée ! . . .
Prodiguez votre sang, votre âme, votre cœur,
D'un peuple agonisant refaites un vainqueur
C'est par la calomnie, et l'injure, et la haine
Que s'acquitte envers vous l'ingratitude humaine,
Et le premier effort du serpent irrité
C'est de mordre la main qui l'a ressuscité !

Jeanne D'Arc (p. 122), J. P. BARBIER.

Literal Translation.

Yes ! 'tis this the miracle unequalled by all other ; a shepherdess with her apostle's faith has done more towards saving her beaten countrymen than all the treasures of the king's favourites . . . How now ! 'Tis this which is held up to derision by the wise statesmen of the Court ! *Pour forth your blood, your heart, your soul.* Give Victory to a people in its death-throes. 'Tis by calumny and abuse and hatred that human ingratitude acquits itself towards you, and the first effort the warmed adder makes, is to sting the hand which has saved it !

PREFACE

TO

MY ORPHANAGE AND GOUNOD IN ENGLAND.

THE readers of these two volumes, *FRIENDSHIP* and *BUSINESS*, must bear in mind that they are written without any attempt at effect or sensationalism, or even grammar. They are printed simply as an explanation of the volume of "*LETTRES ET DOCUMENTS ORIGINAUX*," which were published in 1875-76.

The volume *BUSINESS* was printed at the same time.

FRIENDSHIP was re-written in 1878, and published in 1882.

All the books, pamphlets, and articles I have written and published, explain each other. Many things which may not appear quite clear, become so when the whole of the works have been read through carefully.

When I first wrote them, I was in an agony of mind at the thought of doing Mr. Gounod grave injury by defending myself from the shocking calumnies he himself, from the first day he knew us up to the present one, has not scrupled to encourage the circulation of, and to circulate against me.

I did not know then that it was so exceedingly advantageous in the musical profession to be considered to have no reputation, or that foreign gaol-birds and adventurers would meet with the sympathy and protection of our English Judges.

I acknowledge from first to last that I have laboured under most serious delusions upon a great many points. Few people who read this history but will say—"How foolish Mr. and Mrs. Weldon were! How indiscreet! How imprudent! How could they trust a Frenchman? The idea of slaving like that for three years without a stamped contract!"

Everybody is so much cleverer than I am!!! So few people are swindled—are they not? So few people are caught by religious cant—are they not?

I wrote these books through blinding tears, with despair in my heart—for my justification; I clung to the belief in the good they would do me, as a drowning creature clutches at a straw; I earnestly prayed

my example might be a warning to other simpleminded enthusiasts. I now laugh at the books the whole way through; it all appears to me so thoroughly ridiculous. Those who have read them say they would rather read them than the CAUDLE LECTURES!!! I, therefore, publish them, still hoping others of my stamp may learn a lesson from them, that the sale of them may benefit my orphan children, that they may make people laugh, and that in a few years it will be acknowledged that I did work and always have worked for the public good, with complete abnegation of self, however SILLY I may be considered.

I know now that it was utterly silly of me caring to protect either my own or my husband's honour; that it was folly labouring for any one's interests but my very own. I know now that no one wishes a beautiful or talented woman to do anything with her beauty than to make the most of it for her own personal advantage, and, with her talent, than to show it off for her own personal and selfish ends, and for the amusement of "*Society*." No matter what her character may be, if she amuses Society, Her Majesty the Queen opens the doors of her palaces to her, and makes her regal presents.

If a woman does as I have done, she will be hunted down till the doors of a prison close over her, as they have done in my case; till the coarse dress of the low prostitute of the London gutters encumbers her delicate limbs, and that she has been made to associate with pickpockets and murderesses on terms of equality.

This, IN FACT, has been my experience of my reward and my encouragement for the work of *Education* I have so successfully carried on, but which, owing to intrigue upon intrigue (which shall be further described in future publications), I have been successfully prevented from carrying out.

Mr. Gounod, who had allied himself to me for the avowed purpose of helping me carrying out this work, after suffering years of insult and persecution on my account, joined my enemies, and I am not ashamed to say, that after twelve years' hard struggles—my husband also having joined their ranks—I am forced to avow myself beaten, and obliged to give in.

These volumes, appearing just before Mr. Gounod is to receive the crowning portion of the payment for his behaviour towards me, which he knew (from experience) he could rely on, namely, £4000 from Mr. Littleton (who in 1871 would barely have paid him £600 for the same work), it may be interesting to the public to read:—

- I. The answer of Mr. Gounod to a letter he received from Balmoral, dated 31st October, 1873.
- II. Mr. Gounod's answer, dated 24th November, 1873, to another letter received from Balmoral.
- III. A letter (same date) written by me to the same person at Balmoral.
- IV. A letter of Mr. Gounod, dated 19th July, 1872, to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.
- V. A letter of Mr. Gounod (date uncertain) to Mr. Richard Peyton, Secretary of the Birmingham Festival Committee.
- VI. And another, dated 31st October, 1873, from Mr. Gounod to Mr. Peyton.

No. I. proves that all I have said in my pamphlet, *The Quarrel of the Royal Albert Hall Co.* (published in 1873) was very true, and that Her Majesty's gracious patronage was not so easy to obtain when Mr. Gounod was working for a noble and beautiful object, as it is now, when he is well known to have conducted himself in the way described in the volumes which follow.

No. II. proves that, although my pamphlet could profit no one but Mr. Gounod, he allowed me and encouraged me to publish a work which, from the moment he deserted me, could only entail upon me certain ruin.

No. III. proves my credulity, my enthusiasm, my folly, and makes me compare myself in my "*importance*" and insignificance to that of a flea hopping about on an elephant's back, serene in the belief of the powerful impression it is making not only on that particular elephant, but on the whole herd of monsters!

No. IV. proves that, as early as July, 1872, Mr. Gounod tried to make an impression on the Royal Family, but that, until my articles in the *Cosmopolitan* had appeared, and the pamphlet had been advertised, no sign of politeness or consideration was shown him.

No. V. proves that the Birmingham Festival Committee would not have engaged me at the Festival if they could have helped it. And—

No. VI. proves that, as they could not have got out of engaging me to sing the part in *THE REDEMPTION* Mr. Gounod had destined for me, they found other excuses for refusing the work which is to be performed at the Festival (Birmingham) in August, 1882.

And after this, who will come and talk before me of *BRITISH LOVE OF FAIR PLAY?*

I.

Letter of M. CH. GOUNOD to Balmoral.

[TRANSLATION.]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 31st October, 1873.

DEAR —

I have composed and written myself the poem of a great Sacred Trilogy, entitled *The Redemption*, which is divided into three great parts, and which I have compiled from episodes and texts from Holy Writ :—

1. *Calvary.*
2. *The Resurrection and the Ascension.*
3. *Pentecost.*

The music of this composition is the most important work of my life. I offer to dedicate it to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. I ask Her Majesty's gracious patronage, and confidently await her Majesty's commands for the first execution of *The Redemption* in the Royal Albert Hall.

I will now give my reasons for wishing this. I had hoped to found in this Hall, which is the most beautiful and magnificent one in Europe, and which is dedicated to the memory of a venerated and revered Prince, a great Institution devoted to Sacred Music. I have been shamefully expelled, iniquitously turned out of the position of "*Founder-Director*," to which I had been appointed. I feel and I know that I am inspired truly to say, that I was worthy of fulfilling this mission through my faithful and religious love for my divine art. I have the profoundest contempt for the ill-natured plot of which I have been the object; but nothing will make me forget the great artistic future of the Royal Albert Hall which has been my dream. I wish to re-enter there with a work worthy of the place and of the name it bears, and *this must be by the Queen's own hand*. . . .

This, therefore, is my plan for the production of this great work :—

The 24th May, 1876, anniversary of Her Majesty's birthday, under the Patronage of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria,

First Performance of

THE REDEMPTION,

GRAND SACRED TRILOGY,

Composed and Dedicated to Her Majesty by the Author,

CH. GOUNOD.

Before therefore fulfilling the formalities you recommend me through the intermediary of Sir Thomas Biddulph, I beg of you to tell me exactly what to do by an altogether private communication, and to let me know, unofficially, if the Queen consents to second and assure the favourable reception of my work and of my plan by her simply

expressing her consent and wish to hear, in Albert Hall, the first performance of this work, of which Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to accept the dedication, and to which she would graciously accord the favour of Her Royal Patronage.

Yours, ever respectfully,

CH. GOUNOD.

P.S.—Kind remembrances from my angelic friend,* who has much suffered.

II.

Letter of M. CH. GOUNOD to Balmoral.

[TRANSLATION.]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, 24th November, 1873.

DEAR—

Once more I thank you for the indefatigable solicitude you evince towards myself, my position, and my interests. I will answer you with all the frankness due to Truth, to you, and to myself. I have absolutely nothing whatever to do with the articles in the *Cosmopolitan* concerning the *Royal Albert Hall Quarrel*, etc. I have neither advised, suggested, inspired, or insinuated them in any way. They exclusively emanate from my friend, Mrs. Weldon, who takes upon herself the entire responsibility of them. I should have scrupulously relieved her from the weight thereof had it been my business or my duty to do so. She herself will write to you on the subject. I leave her therefore to treat that side of the question with you, and I limit myself to writing about what personally concerns myself.

You know that the subject of dedicating one of my works to Her Majesty was recently agitated quite independently of any suggestion on my part, and was made known to me by your kind letter of the 30th October, 1873. You also know with how much reserve as well as sincerity of expression and objections I responded to it. I will never deviate either to-day or ever from the line of conduct my name and my position, as an artist, prescribes to me.

I know to what and to how many idle remarks and mistaken expressions of opinion one finds oneself exposed when one happens to be situated as I and my dear friends the Weldons are; but I repeat, *on my honour*, I have nothing to do with the articles in the *Cosmopolitan*. Had I inspired them, I should have considered it cowardly to allow another person to sign that to which I had given birth. However, far be it from me to deny or to desert the author of the said articles. I have too much veneration for the nobleness of character and devotion of heart which has dictated and signed them—a heart incapable of compounding with either injustice or intrigue, and in which it

* His angelic friend is me.—G. W.

would be impossible to crush the indignation it feels against *evil*, or the zeal which fills it for what is right and just.

As to the favours which come from the Throne—for their honour, as well as for ours, it is expedient that they should be given and accepted unconditionally. They become worthless, and make those who would pay for them through fear of forfeiting them worthless, and I for one have never paid for anything in that coin.

I take leave of you in impressing upon you these two grand texts :

“If the Lord is with us, who shall be against us.”—PSALMS.
and—

“The word of the Lord knows no prison.”—ST. PAUL.

Always yours,

To ———.

CH. GOUNOD.

III.

Letter of MRS. WELDON to Balmoral.

[TRANSLATION.]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 24th November, 1873.

DEAR ———.

It would be an immense disappointment to me—in fact, it would quite break my heart—if the publication of my pamphlet about the Royal Albert Hall would deprive our dearly beloved friend of the Queen's gracious patronage. The pamphlet, with a preface, will appear in about a fortnight or three weeks. There is plenty of time, therefore, for me to withdraw it from publication, and I beg you to believe and to tell the Queen I have no wish whatever to make any scandal. It is not for the purpose of doing anyone any injury I have written it. I have written it for the sole purpose of exposing the intrigues connected with musical *trade*, and to prove that a distinguished artist like Mr. Gounod can be *ruined* through it, and how hard it is for ME, A LADY, born in a brilliant position, with a good and excellent husband like mine who spends all his time and his fortune in doing good, to find it impossible to succeed because English musical *Commerce* opposes us. I only wish for one single thing (never in my life should I ask for anything for myself or for my husband). We—*for ourselves*—we want nothing. My husband has about £2000 a-year. He is a Member of the Queen's Household. We do not care for Society; we have a very nice house, and, no doubt, we could live a life of perfect peace and selfishness. But this is not God's will! It is HE who has inspired me to work for the good of my fellow-creatures. I never thought of seeking a vocation; I lived, for eight years, very quietly in the country with my husband. It never struck me to try to find something to do. I had no hobby. This turbulent existence is most distasteful to me, and Her Majesty could put an end to it in one day.

I send you a little pamphlet explaining my plan of Education, and a letter on the *National Training School of Music at South Kensington*, which would enable you and Her Majesty to understand what I am aiming at. In my pamphlet on the Royal Albert Hall I render interesting all that which I can only explain to you but very curtly in a letter. We have passed through very hard times indeed; things are at last going better, and people are beginning to recognise the fact that Mr. Gounod can hold his own against the different powers who have attempted to crush him. My eternal gratitude is his, for *without him* I could never have succeeded in what I am doing. . . . In my eyes he is the instrument which it has pleased God to send me to help me found a School of *High Morality*, and render Musical Art what it ought to be—an *honourable trade*. And succeed I shall, believe me, with God's help, Mr. Gounod's, and Mr. Weldon's, who has been quite converted to my method by the visible success of it, and the capacity I have for teaching children. I shall, therefore, succeed without anyone else's help, but there is no doubt the aid and approval of Her Majesty would hasten the accomplishment of my vows quicker than ten years of struggle would, during which I should be forced to throw much discredit on many public Institutions. If I could honourably avoid this I should indeed be happy; for the time I otherwise should be so joyfully devoting to teaching is often swallowed up by the cowardly attacks I am obliged to ward off as well as I am able. Now, although I should be deeply grieved to disoblige Her Majesty or any of the Royal Family, I shall be constrained to publish this pamphlet, which will attract much notice, much interest towards my system of education, and which I intend to publish separately and sell for the benefit of my Academy after they have appeared in numbers in the *Cosmopolitan*; and though I am by birth and inclination a loyal Royalist—my father was an old-fashioned *Tory* Member of Parliament—I could not consent to give up publishing that which would ultimately benefit my Academy. I have no other arms but the Truth, and the disinterestedness of my whole life—public and private. To be able to attain my object for my school satisfactorily I want £20,000, and without publicity I shall never get that sum together. I cannot now afford to keep more than eleven children—I cannot establish a school with that small number. I work incessantly: my health suffers from my hard work. I feel very anxious besides, for, without my energy, everything would drop through.

Now, I will tell you the way everything may be put straight. The Duke of Edinburgh has allowed himself to be caught by the chaff of Mr. Arthur Sullivan, a little gentleman, teeming with bad manners and impudence, and who *owes me* a personal grudge, because many years ago I would not suffer his familiarities. Arthur Sullivan is partner in the firm of *Cramer*, where H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh's Valse is published, and by which he has perhaps already made £2000. Ah! Her Majesty does not know what goes on. I

could tell you about all kinds of things for two hours. Everybody knows all about these sort of things! Is it not disgraceful? Everybody, therefore, has been set against Gounod because he admired my way of singing—our way of living. The English musical tradespeople object to see their prey—thanks to us—slip out of their grasp. No insult or worry has been spared Gounod, even to the refusal by H. M. Commissioners to *let* the Royal Albert Hall to him for his concert, after it having been stipulated that they would *lend* it to him. The Queen must see that there is but one way of repairing the mischief, and that is by getting him reinstated in his position at the Albert Hall, from which he has been so ignominiously expelled.

If this could be managed, with how much pleasure would I withdraw my pamphlet from circulation! You can easily understand that if Gounod were a *commercial* power I should attain my object without casting opprobrium on anyone else, and I could get a fair hearing for my pupils. If Her Majesty would deign to allow me to publish that my school was "*Under the Patronage of Her Gracious Majesty the Queen,*" I could soon get up a subscription, and should collect the £20,000 in a very little while.

I have a pupil, a poor Dane, who cannot get a hearing at the Monday Popular Concerts, or any other concert in London, because he is *my* pupil. He has not a farthing. He has been deserted most cruelly by Strakosch, after he had got me to undertake to teach him, because he sang very much out of tune, and so badly. I have kept him more than a year. We have spent on him over £250. I am come to the end of my money. He sang, with great success, at Gounod's concerts, at the Crystal Palace. He is superior to many other vocalists; people like him; but *because he is my pupil*, he is tabooed all over London. My pupils have been stolen from me to prevent their continuing to work with me. Well, I cannot describe to you all the difficulties of our situation. But if we had Her Majesty the Queen and Royal Family on our side, all obstacles would be smoothed down; and as the *only* object of my life is my Academy, and *not at all* to harm or annoy anyone in the world (I assure you that being obliged only to *think* of our enemies is a sad loss of time), for my part I ask for nothing better than to cease all polemic for ever!

So I hope you thoroughly understand that it entirely depends on Her Majesty as to whether or no I publish my pamphlet. Gounod has nothing whatever to say to it. It is in English. He has not even read it. He did not even know of the advertisement in the *Fine Art Annual* before your letter came this morning.* It is we who look after all his affairs, for he understands nothing about them or about advertisement. Observe that in my letter of the 21st August, 1873, I say nothing against the Royal Albert Hall. I simply say I want to found a NATIONAL ACADEMY on sound moral principles.

That is all I dream of. I am yours sincerely,

GEORGINA WELDON.

* See page 9, *Musical Reform*.

IV.

Letter of MR. GOUNOD to H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.

[TRANSLATION.]

To His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, 19th July, 1872.

MONSEIGNEUR,—I am informed Your Royal Highness has been very much astonished at not yet having seen the Royal Patronage Your Royal Highness has been graciously pleased to honour my Concert of the 15th July with, duly advertised.

The fact is, I was not informed of Your Royal Highness' answer till Friday the 12th, at 8 P.M. It was therefore impossible for me to announce Your Royal Highness' Patronage on Saturday the 13th. The next day was Sunday, the 14th July, therefore Monday morning only remained to me, that is to say, the day of the Concert.

This very much to be deplored and inexplicable incident gives me the hope that Your Royal Highness will graciously make this disappointment up to me by according me Your Patronage, and in obtaining for me that of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales for the *Festival Concert*, organised on my behalf by the Crystal Palace Directors, on Saturday the 27th inst.

This circumstance gives the Choral Society, which I conducted at the Royal Albert Hall, the opportunity which had been refused it by H.M. Commissioners, to present me with a public testimonial of the sentiments of regard with which I am proud of having inspired them.

The Gracious Patronage of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales would add to the success of a *fête* which the presence of Their Royal Highnesses would crown.

The *Thanksgiving Te Deum* which will be sung at this Festival Concert, was begun on the very day the first hopes were given of Your Royal Highness' recovery.

I have the honour to be, Monseigneur, with the most profound respect, your Royal Highness' most humble and most obedient servant,

CH. GOUNOD.

V.

* *Letter of MR. GOUNOD (date uncertain) to MR. RICHARD PEYTON, Secretary, Birmingham Festival Committee.*

DEAR MR. PEYTON,—I have to thank you for your letter of the 9th inst., from which it appears to me that you still, in some measure,

* The copy of this letter (in Mr. De La Pole's handwriting, corrected by Gounod,) has not recorded the date thereof.—G.W.

Readers of the *Birmingham Daily Post* will find, on referring to the current numbers of that newspaper, that from the beginning of June till some time in September, 1873, a correspondence between Mr. Gounod and other persons, leading articles, etc., on this subject, were kept up. That Mr. Gounod proposed, for 1873, several of his new Works for the Birmingham Festival, and that everything was refused.—G. W.

misconceive my views. I do not wish to interfere in the choice of vocalists to take part in the Festival generally, I simply require to be allowed to see the performance of my own work entrusted to what I believe to be the most competent hands. I think you will allow there is nothing unreasonable in this demand, considering how much I have at stake. I can only add that I do not see how such an arrangement as I propose could for a moment result in the permanent withdrawal from the Festival managers of the power of selecting and engaging their principal singers.

If we should be unable to come to an arrangement, I shall, like yourself, experience regret, but I cannot risk the success of any work whatever of mine now, simply on account of a want or refusal of elasticity of a Committee.

Yours faithfully,

CH. GOUNOD.

VI.

*Letter of M. CH. GOUNOD to MR. RICHARD PEYTON, Secretary,
Birmingham Festival.*

[TRANSLATION.]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 5th July, 1873.

MY DEAR MR. PEYTON,

I have not read without a kind of astonishment the objections contained in the letter you have done me the honour of sending me, dated 2nd July, in the name of the Birmingham Festival Committee. These objections ought, however, not to have astonished me; for they take their standpoint from a point of view which I have never failed to fight against during the whole of my artistic career.

I have the greatest respect for Institutions, but I have not the least for that kind of despotism which is called *Custom*, and which becomes *Routine*.

1. I am told, "*The custom is to choose texts from the Bible.*"

Where is the necessity of *all* the *words* being taken from the Bible? Those in the *Scenario* I have sent you are in great part taken from the Bible, and is only the *translation* of a poem in French verse written by myself. *The whole* is compiled from Holy Scripture, and from a few sentences of the Early Fathers of the Church.

2. Where is the necessity of the text being in *Prose* and not in *Verse*?

3. What is there to prove that the *Public* would pronounce itself unfavourably towards my Version?

4. Who can *say*, or who can *know*, that my Text is adapted more to *Recitatifs* than to *declaimed* or "*singable*" music? This is my secret. I do not indicate in the libretto where I put my airs, my duets, my concerted pieces, etc., but it would be a great error to

suppose that I am going to treat a work of this importance by writing it in *Recitatifs*! I have not by any means carelessly written my texts. The words "*Les Récitants*" do not in any way signify "*Musical recitation*."

I have passed my life in listening to thousands of arguments founded upon *Custom*: FAUST was nearly smothered by them. I resisted, I stuck to my convictions, and it is owing to these I have presented to the world works which perhaps have the merit of not being like everybody's and which to-day are accepted truths.

Allow me, therefore, dear Sir, in conclusion to say, that if my Text does not suit the members of your Committee, I should see myself obliged, with great regret, to decline the offer made to me of writing a work for the Birmingham Festival of 1876.

Yours faithfully,

CH. GOUNOD.

I add as No. VII. a letter Mr. Weldon wrote Mr. Gounod (20th June, 1874), which in a few words explains what has appeared so inexplicable—the only cause of rupture between Mr. Gounod and ourselves. This letter was written twelve days after Mr. Gounod had gone on a visit to some French friends in France after a sojourn of nearly three years and a half with Mr. Weldon and myself at Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, London.

VII.

Letter of MR. WELDON to MR. GOUNOD.

[COPY.]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE,
20th June, 1874.

MY DEAR OLD MAN,

If you were to see the unhappy state Georgina is now in about you and the management of your affairs I am sure you would never have seen Goddard, except to refer him straight back to her.

For has she not slaved for you for three years day and night, giving up *all, everything*, for you and your interests, because you are the greatest genius and the best Old Man in the world, but not in any way a man of business?

That you are not a man of business you know, for you are constantly yourself saying so, and you could show no greater proof of it than in this affair of Goddard, for you should not have listened even to his proposition to make a fresh agreement as to the payment of his debt, as I have a lien on the property, fortunately for you, so you are

protected, but at the same time you are giving rise to what may be a serious complication.

Georgina is quite unable to write, and was much disappointed at not getting a letter from you this morning. If you could now see poor Mimi's face so pale, swollen eyes, and sad dejected ways, you would indeed pity her and be less vacillating.

Since writing the above I have just heard from Goddard—which I hope is untrue, or you have been untrue to us, which I cannot believe—that you really have made a fresh agreement* with him!

If such is the case, you will have, I fear, a large law bill to pay Mr. Taylor, who has had the affair in hand for some weeks, and has been acting on the original agreement; on the strength of which agreement we have lent and spent upon you and your affairs all the money we have had to spare.

Send me, dear Old Man, your contradiction to Goddard's statement *by return of post*.

Our best love and best wishes.

Your most devoted friend,

HARRY WELDON.

P.S.—*Telegraph*; Georgina will then not be so long in suspense.

In concluding this PREFACE, I beg my readers to refer at once to the EPILOGUES printed at the end of the second volume. It will be gathered from these that I had passed the winter of 1874-75 away from home; that I had returned to Tavistock House, and that my husband, through sheer indolence, had taken no steps whatever in the matter. He encouraged me to continue teaching the children; gave me £1000 a-year and Tavistock House, and, to better further my plans, went to live almost in the next street to me with our old friend Mr. Frederick Warre, in 44 Great Ormond Street, which till, we had bought Tavistock House, had been like a second home to us.

Mr. Weldon gradually deserted me without any explanation or discussion. Some friends of his exhorted him to put me into a lunatic asylum, and an attempt to do so (which failed) was made. I was then got into prison, my house and money taken away. When I found myself obliged to take legal means to force him to return home, he made a defence which brought the matter into the Divorce Court, and the case was *misconducted* in such a way that I immediately had the following letter printed, and widely distributed it:—

* Mr. Gounqd denies having done so to this day, but he, nevertheless, HAD made one, completely ignoring us.—G. W.

VIII.

* *To the Editor of the* * * * *

WELDON v. WELDON.

SIR,—Will you allow me to protest again at the way the newspapers have reported my suit for the restitution of conjugal rights? I am aware that the reporters of the Court faithfully and accurately reported the case, and I am all the more indignant that the press in general have made proof of that “bad faith” which has characterised it in almost every case in which I have been concerned, and that for the obvious purpose of hushing up the criminal attempt to incarcerate me as a lunatic, made by half a dozen men in good positions.

Allow me therefore to report exactly what took place on Thursday, 13th July, 1882, while I was (at length), after vainly striving to get the case into Court for two years and two months, in the witness-box.

Mr. Bayford, counsel on my side, asked me the usual questions as to when I was married, whether I had read respondents’ reply, and then asked me, “Is it true you have committed adultery?”—a sort of general question as to whether that was my profession (so it struck me).

It had been arranged by Mr. Bayford and myself in *conference* on the preceding evening, that I was to have been distinctly asked by him, and my solicitor’s brief contained, the questions, categorically, as regards the three men with whom Mr. Weldon had accused me of criminal intercourse. Sir Henry Thompson (the eminent surgeon) *whom I had not set eyes on for fifteen years*; George Werrenrath, who was a pupil of mine from April, 1872 to 1876; and Cadwallader Waddy, a madman, with whom I am not even acquainted. Reference to these two latter-named persons will be found in my books and pamphlets on sale at the “Music and Art Association, 23 Oxford Street,” so I need say no more about them, further than to say, that apart from the odiousness and falseness of the charges, nothing more absurd could have been invented by the most diseased imagination.

Now as for Sir Henry Thompson, I had, in truth, been entangled into a rather imprudent intimacy with him, mainly through my husband’s desire to obtain £500 from him for a Quarry Company, in which his then and present solicitor is largely interested, and who encourages him in all his insane proceedings against his lawful and careful “partner.” I obtained the £500, which to this day is invested in that business. Something happened which led to a lengthened correspondence between Sir Henry Thompson and my husband. This I (after more than a year’s asking for) at length

* It is hardly necessary to say no newspaper published this letter, but the Liverpool papers, the Provincial Press printed the reporters’ notices in their integrity, giving full names of my “co-respondents,” etc.

obtained discovery of, and this, among many other expressions, proving how little I was to blame in the matter, contained this passage in one of my husband's letters :—

"I have the strongest confirmatory evidence in your handwriting of the way you deplore Mrs. Weldon's detestation of you."

Now, Sir, I was most anxious these names should be mentioned in Court, as proving, once for all, that Mr. Charles Gounod's name had not been brought into the affair, as people had insinuated for years that Mr. Weldon had left me on his account; but, Sir Henry Thompson being an "eminent man" like Sir Henry de Bathe (who tried to get me into a lunatic asylum, my case, as usual, has been "hushed up" by judge and counsel (my own); and altho' Dr. Tristram and Sergt. Ballantine were in Court watching the case (in case it came on) on the 12th for Sir Henry Thompson, they had disappeared on the 13th, and my counsel had arranged with the "lot" to act in complete defiance of my solicitor's instructions.

What redress have I?

Mr. Low, Sir Henry Thompson's solicitor was present and knew how anxious I was to get my case cleared up; he has only himself to thank if I now make as much publicity about Sir Henry Thompson (whose name otherwise would never have passed my lips or my pen, had not this most unfair advantage been taken of me) as I have about Sir Henry de Bathe.

What passed therefore was this—

Mr. Bayford—"Is it true you have committed adultery?" (I paused to hear if he asked with whom) and then said, "It is a most infamous lie and Mr. Weldon knows it, either as regards Sir Henry Thompson, Mr. Waddy (I could not recollect the third name, I was so enraged and confused). "What's the name of the third man?" I said; then suddenly recollecting, I said, "Werrenrath;" upon which the judge (who has allowed Mr. Weldon about thirty summonses for time, hoping, I suppose, he would manage to prove something against me) said angrily—

"But for what you have said, the names you have mentioned would not have been known."

"But I wish them to be known," retorted I, "because people have said—"

The Judge continued—

"I should not have allowed you to enter the witness-box had I known you would have mentioned names."

"I knew you would not," said I, triumphantly.

"Leave the box," said my Lord, furiously.

"It is a scandal and disgrace the way that judges, magistrates, and my own counsel try to hush up every case I bring into Court. I hate such ways, it is disgraceful," etc. (as I left the box). Of course I knew I could not injure my case, the Judge was obliged to pronounce a decree for restitution of conjugal rights and costs,

thus proving that every insinuation as to there being "something queer about Mrs. Weldon and her husband" has no truth in it, *so far as I am concerned.*" However, I do not suppose the public have heard the last of me ; all that depends very much upon Mr. Weldon's present and future conduct.

I have done my best, in the public interest, to expose several public abuses ; I hope I shall not be considered deserting my colours if I now retire into private life.

GEORGINA WELDON.

23 Oxford Street, London, 14th July, 1882.

INTRIGUE EVERYWHERE will surely be the two words sighed or muttered by those, who, having read my books, lay them down with, I hope, the impression that there is at least ONE sincere and truthful "*greenhorn*" in the world who has thrown away all the many chances she has held through life, thanks to her mistaken belief of faith in the WORLD, SOCIETY, and the DIVINE ART of MUSIC !

G. W.

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MY ORPHANAGE
AND
GOUNOD IN ENGLAND.

VOLUME I.
FIRST PART.—FRIENDSHIP.

MY CHILDREN,

That you may be able thoroughly to appreciate and understand the incredible story known as the "*Weldon-Gounod affair*" (or "*Gounod-Weldon*"), it becomes a necessity to explain to you first, very succinctly, who I am, and who I was, and as a natural consequence what my social position has been.

I must begin then by telling you, my dear children, who were my parents. My father was the second son of Morgan Thomas, of Llanon, owner of extensive ancestral domains, which he had inherited from his father, in the County of Carmarthen, South Wales. His eldest brother Rees inherited this property. My father, to whom not only his father but an uncle left a considerable fortune, married in 1835 the only daughter of John Dalrymple, of Gate House, in the County of Sussex, one of the sons of Sir John Dalrymple. My mother was her father's heiress. I was the second daughter of this union. Even at my birth I was the cause (then, as subsequently, innocently so) of deception and disappointment to my parents. My father, who was of a very determined disposition in all ways, and who ardently desired a son for reasons of succession, was more than deceived on learning that his first-born was a little girl. He, as well as my mother, had so thoroughly settled it in their own minds that the second child could not fail to be a boy, that their surprise was as great as their disappointment when it was found to be a settled and incontrovertible fact, that the little creature which had just been born was of the female sex. I have been then a cause of discontent ever since my birth; I have never known how to do things like "*other people*," and I have been blamed all through my life for matters in which I had no more voice than on the occasion just referred to.

I was, it appears, a healthy little girl, very good, very gentle; I cooed with joy in my cradle, my little hands and feet in perpetual

motion. I never cried ; but my joyous disposition even then was unwelcome ! for my mother has told me that, when I was six months old, my sister Cordelia, who was eighteen, died after a long illness in convulsions, brought on by a terrible attack of whooping cough. While my poor mother wept by the side of her dead child, and afterwards by the empty cradle, I was shouting for joy—a behaviour which, at such an inopportune moment, caused her more grief than any wails of mine could have done.

It is in this way that I have, it is said, been always "*wanting in fact.*" It was prophetic of all that was to happen in relation to me later on.

It would appear, also, that I was endowed with a very philosophical temperament, for at two years of age, when, "for some misdemeanour," I was deprived of strawberries, cakes, or sweets, I replied calmly and contentedly, "*To-morrow day*"—meaning, in nursery language, that if I could not have it to-day, I could wait for it till the morrow.

My mother, who became very delicate in health after the birth of the third child (the boy so long wished for), was ordered to Italy for her health. My father took us all therefore to Florence, where we arrived in 1840, two months after the birth of the fourth child, a little girl. We occupied the Villa Capponi for six years—a splendid residence, one of those beautiful and spacious palaces of the old Tuscan nobility. That villa has always led me to sympathise in my day-dreams with *Mignon*, who pensively nursed the remembrance of orange flowers and marble statues, the palaces of marble, the grand staircases, the spacious courtyards, the lovely gardens filled with myrtle, jessamine, geraniums, and varied perfumes, and also with muscatel vines, with sunburnt clusters of grapes, which we were forbidden to touch, but which, however, more than once found the way secretly to my little greedy mouth. This villa was "*fuor la Porta San Gallo.*" A long avenue of plane trees separated us from a little village, La Pietra, a mile from Florence.

I was born on the 24th May, 1837 (the anniversary of Queen Victoria's birthday, which fact inspired me as a child with a vague idea of superiority and relationship to the Royal Family) at Tooting Lodge, Clapham, near London, where my grandmother, Mrs. Thomas, resided. The bells unconsciously had rung in the birth of the future Georgina Weldon all over England. My father was *Welsh*, and my mother of Scotch descent ; I am not therefore, strictly speaking, an *English* woman. My family was prouder of its origin and position than if it had been of Royal blood. A certain Knight, Sir Gilbert Treherne had (I think I remember) married the daughter of Edward IV. I was therefore thoroughly persuaded that we should become entitled to the throne of England if anything should happen to the reigning family.

My father delighted to expatiate on his illustrious genealogy. He claimed to be descended in a direct line from the Plantagenets, of Howell Dha, a good old Welsh King : I was in consequence puffed up with conceit, proud as a little peacock, and I was fully convinced

for many years that my father (who was very handsome) and my mother (who was exceedingly beautiful) were the most handsome, the richest, the most important, and the most infallible personages in the land. We had a butler, footman, chef, scullions, I don't know how many nurses, horses and carriages; it is impossible to have been brought up with greater luxury than I have been. I was therefore proud and haughty. I remember it well. I was not, however, personally vain. Up to the age of fifteen I had never heard that I was good-looking, but that did not prevent me assuming an importance in my own eyes which nothing could equal! I had always been told that mere beauty was of secondary consideration, and that "*handsome is that handsome does.*" I even imagined that I was ugly; but since I had a contempt for mere beauty, I was perfectly satisfied. I was very fond of learning, and applied myself conscientiously to my studies, which won the affections of my governesses, whose favorite I was deemed, since my brother and sister were on the contrary very idle children. I remember that I used to reflect that it must be a sad disappointment to my parents, so handsome and so superior, to have a little girl of so insignificant an appearance, so commonplace, and that I must study assiduously to compensate them for my want of beauty.

I was shy, painfully shy and sensitive; this shyness has always been the bane of my life, and has, in truth, stood in the way of my doing anything—has made me keep in the background; I have avoided balls, society, and fine dress. This shyness I inherited from my mother, and it was nursed by my family pride. I also inherited it from my grandfather Dalrymple, who was very shy and nervous to an almost unreasonable degree, and to such a pitch that he could not eat if a servant stood behind a chair during meals, and was not at his ease if the servants remained in the room. I was therefore as sensitive as I was shy, and as shy as I was proud; and what rendered me still more awkward were the exhortations I was plagued with on all sides, "*to behave like a lady, not to be vulgar, and to remember what my family was,*" and all the usual commonplace arguments which, I verily believe, assassinate the moral faculties of most young people, rendering them awkward and ungraceful, and often unhappy and incapable all their lives. As for myself, I am conscious that I am not a tenth part of what I ought to have been. The proof is self-evident—although having talent for literature, as well as for poetry, musical composition, singing, painting, and drawing, and for other attainments—I had not till I was thirty-three years of age begun to have the least initiative. My modesty overcome, or almost so at this age, my unfortunate shyness or sensitiveness, however, remained, so that—notwithstanding all the fire, soul, passion, and art which I am able to throw into my singing—I would become, as of yore, paralysed before an audience, sometimes even if only of five or six persons. A single individual is sufficient to throw me into this state without knowing why. I could not possibly appear on a platform or stage, if I did not drink as much as would suffice to render me intoxicated for hours at any other time, I who have not the habit of drinking either wine or

spirits. I was thus incapable of pushing forward and earning the amount of money with which I had fancied I should have been able unaided to found an Academy for Music and Education in all its branches.

My father was a man of strict integrity, scrupulous to a fault in everything affecting his reputation and that of his wife, consequently, of all belonging to him, as well as his neighbours. Unfortunately, he had chosen Florence to come to, where, it appears, certain individuals of more or less shady reputations flourished. My father disliked society—he loved his home; my mother, on the contrary, liked society. My father did not like women to wear low-necked dresses; my mother, on the contrary, wished to be like “*other people*.” My father’s opinion was, that eleven o’clock at night was a respectable hour for leaving parties; this was the hour at which parties began. He obliged my mother to come home just at the time when she was beginning to amuse herself. My father would not call on this lady or that lady, or visit Madame A. because she had a lover, or Madame B., because she received Madame A.; or Madame C., because she received Madame A. and Madame B. He would not even set his foot at the English Embassy while Lord Holland was Ambassador, because gossip was afloat concerning Lady Holland. He seemed possessed with a passion for virtue, and he had been nicknamed at Florence “*The Policeman of Society*.” I had inherited to the full his mania to keep my reputation inviolate. I bristled with virtue, and the idea that any one could have allowed himself to utter a disparaging remark about me, would have broken my heart.

This, then, was my moral condition till the age of thirty-four, when I made the acquaintance of Charles François Gounod, and of his family.

It was shortly after this that I, believing him as unassailable as myself, and believing him to be inspired with the same holy ardour in the cause which I had undertaken, at which I had been working since the year 1867, and which, in fact, is the most important of all—that of a reformed education, in which music and singing were to have a large share—it was then that I cast my prejudices to the winds, and threw myself heart and soul into it; I “*burnt my bridges*” (*vide p. 15, No. 1*), and I sacrificed myself entirely to aid this man, who had already a name, which I had not—a name which would enable me to found a pure, regenerate School of Art, which, according to our dreams and convictions, would make mankind better and the world less unhappy.

The society frequented by my parents at Florence was the Parnassus of Virtue. Among the women honoured by the favourable opinion of my father was the Princess Mathilde, who was then residing with her husband, Prince Anatole de Demidoff, at San Donato. She was the godmother of one of my brothers. Shortly afterwards, she secretly left Florence, and went to Paris without informing her husband. My father never forgave her for an act which he considered cowardly, his theory being that a wife ought to live with her husband. Let Demidoff be ever such a brute or devil (he beat the Princess), but never

mind, better to remain to be killed than to be false to the vows made at the altar. When Napoleon III. became Emperor, the Princess Mathilde took steps to persuade my parents to go and establish themselves in Paris, but my father would not even listen to it, and the name of the Princess was never again mentioned amongst us! I believe that my father entertained a profound friendship for the Princess, and that when she acted without informing him, without consulting him, and in a manner which clashed with the rigid and Spartan ideas of my father, his ideal was shattered, and that this did him a harm from which he never recovered.

I had then, by degrees, found every one in turn tabooed by my father. When I was fifteen years old, I daresay they feared that the pestiferous air of this modern Sodom and Gomorrah would taint my principles of virtue. We then left Florence, and went to stay for about two years at my uncle's in Switzerland, at the Schloss Hard, near Ermatingen, in the Canton of Zurich, close to the Lake of Constantine. It was a paradise. My uncle delighted in the culture of flowers; his hot-houses, his green-houses, and his gardens were celebrated. This was my Uncle George, younger brother of my father. He married, in 1846, the Baroness Frédérique de Hildprandt, granddaughter of Count Nostitz, nearly connected with the Clam Gallas, the Würmbrandts, and many of the best families in Bohemia. My uncle was then a widower, and his only daughter has married Count Théobald Butler, the eldest son of Count Butler-Haimhausen, of Bavaria.

In 1864, my uncle committed the crime of marrying his second wife (the most charming, the most excellent woman in the world), the governess of his daughter. This *mésalliance* enraged my father. Every feeling of the family pride of the Thomas of Llanon were profoundly hurt. My uncle was excommunicated by my father, who died without having seen him again.

In 1847, we returned to England for two or three years. The winter of 1847-48 was spent at Gräfenberg, in Austrian Silesia, to try the cold-water cure, according to the treatment discovered by the famous Priessnitz. Ever since then we have always had recourse to hydropathy, as an infallible cure in all cases of inflammation, of fever, etc. In 1852 we returned to Florence.

The visit to my uncle at Schloss Hard being at an end, my mother—I cannot exactly understand why—persuaded my father to take us to Brussels. We resided there in a fine house on the Boulevards, No. 1 Rue du Luxembourg. We passed the winters in Brussels, and the summers in England, at Gatehouse, my mother's estate.

I had then what was called by common consent a fine voice. My mother did her best to overcome my shyness. I could not sing if I thought any one was passing in the passage. I had been very "*properly*," brought up; I had never read a novel of any kind; I spoke and wrote English; I knew German, French, and Italian; I played the piano; I drew—but with all that I was a real child: a tom-boy. I was devoted to my doll, and I skipped, *I played at horses*, I climbed. I remember that, in 1853, there was a youth who was said to be in

love with me ; my delight was to get him to *play at "horses"* with us, and to run away maliciously without stopping, in order to prevent his saying a single word to me alone ; it seems he could not contain himself with rage ! This is what I have learnt since, but at fifteen years of age I knew nothing of it ; I had heard very little about love. I had, however, come to the conviction (cleverly instilled by my mother), that a *proper young lady* never loves before she is married ; that then it is her duty to love her husband, and that the more she loves her husband the more she does her duty.

In our prayers, no allusions are made which, as in Catholic books, might generate ideas in the minds of young girls—at all events, it is an incontrovertible fact, that conversation on certain subjects are free in France ; and that in England, except with a doctor strictly on medical matters, no one thinks, nor even knows, that which in France is in the mouth even of unmarried women ! I think, then, that it must be impossible for a French person to conceive the extreme purity of the mind of a young English girl such as myself at seventeen years of age.

I was so innocent, so well-trained—I was and have ever remained so, ingenuous and so credulous. This is what happened to me. I went everywhere with my mother—to balls, soirées, etc. The Carnival was very delightful, but very short that year, I think. I shall always remember the 17th February, 1855. There was a fancy ball at the Baronne de Goëthals. I looked so pretty in a grisette costume of the time of Louis XV., on returning to the house at five o'clock in the morning, I cried to have to take off my clothes, I was so pretty—I felt I was so pretty, I was so happy to be pretty. He whom I loved (without knowing it) had told me that evening, "*You are so pretty this evening, I could live with you in a cottage all my life.*" And I was going to undress ! Had I not reason to be distressed ? *I should never be so pretty again.* I loved ; yes, it is true, I was no longer a *proper young lady*, but there are, I hasten to explain, extenuating circumstances.

HE was twenty-five years of age ; HE was a Catholic ; HE was not a catch for me, because HE was poor ; HE was almost an Englishman (his father had been his country's Ambassador in London for twenty-five years) ; and then HE had a sister older than I, whom I doated on.

And this young man, who, it was clear, I could never marry (it had never even come into my head) paid me assiduous court. He loved me to distraction ; he treated me in a manner by turns dictatorial, submissive, savage, tender, ferocious and caressing, brusque and gentle, at the same time. I did not know which way to turn ; I was so afraid of displeasing him. He was as jealous as a tiger. I was so afraid of displeasing my mother, who did not wish to see me snapped at and swallowed up by a penniless suitor ; and I was so afraid of being forbidden to speak to him altogether.

I danced the cotillon on the 17th February with one of my rich sweethearts, and Pedro (that was HIS name) had not taken another partner. He sat on the other side of me, so he was almost like my own

partner, and I was looking so pretty that he could not help being in a good humour all the evening, in spite of the swarm of admirers around me. With the loss of my becoming toilette, I lost the realisation of that happy night. He had made no scene or row. Mamma knew that I had a rich one for a partner, and that he was also very much in love. She was satisfied ; I was calm and happy all the evening. I must tell you that Pedro was a great pianist, he was a born artist, he criticised my singing without mercy, he laughed at my defects. The truth is, that although my father and mother had wonderful voices, they did not trouble themselves about elementary rules ; my father especially, who knew nothing about music, found that "*time was made for him and not he for time.*" My mother had fallen unconsciously into the same habit, and there are pieces which up to the present time I find difficult to sing as they are written, because when I was young I was in the habit of hearing them incorrectly rendered.

I was eighteen years old on the 24th May, 1855. A few days after this we left Brussels and went to spend a month at Boulogne. I thought I should have died with grief, but had no suspicion of the reason why.

After this separation, once aroused from the mechanical and mournful stupor into which I had been plunged, and to which I had succumbed during several weeks, I took to practising the piano desperately. I played sometimes a single bar for three-quarters of an hour without stopping. I remembered with love and sorrow all that he had remarked on and criticised. This is the secret of my becoming a great musician. I played the piano to perfection, I sang charmingly, and it is impossible for any one to have had greater success than I have had.

A fortnight after our departure from Brussels, on returning from church, we found Pedro in our drawing-room. To make a long story short, he asked, when, at last, we could get a word together alone ; if he had deceived himself in allowing (from some expressions I had made use of in a letter to his sister) the thought to enter his mind, that perhaps I loved him Mamma having told me that a *proper young lady* only loved her husband, his question seemed very improper to me. I answered, "If I loved you, what would be the use?" "Forgive me," said he, "if you did love me, we could be married in that little church," and he pointed to the Church of Boulogne. We were seated on the chalky cliff, we were looking at the sea—that is, he was looking at me ; I at him, although my eyes were fixed on the sea. I made no reply, he bent towards me, his lips almost touched my cheek. I drew back gently—he did not kiss me. He departed the same afternoon, and . . . I have never seen him since.

This is the secret why and how I became a great musician—he did not know that I loved him, and the following year he married a lady—a noble and rich heiress. I had worked in vain for him, but the benefits and the torments which my talents have caused me became part and parcel of my life. I regret nothing.

I was secretly and instinctively religious and mystical. Brought up

in a Catholic country, my parents, my nurses, and my governesses, ultra-Protestants, I used to cast longing glances at Calvaries and crucifixes. In our walks we visited sometimes the chapels and the churches; we explored the beautiful galleries of paintings. I used to think the monks so simple and devoted, I never passed the door of a monastery without seeing the monks serving out to the poor the "*minestra*," and how good this "*minestra*" smelt.

The Passion scenes, the pictures, fired my imagination; the sufferings of Jesus Christ pierced my soul and tortured my brain; I used to shudder. I would have carried, I would have stolen all that I saw, no matter what, to carry it to the foot of the altar, to give it to the poor. I have been well whipped several times for my depredations made with this object. I argued to myself that Jesus must be consoled for his sufferings in knowing that I thought so much of Him! I loved to hide myself in a confessional; and make a little prayer. In my eyes Jesus was a beautiful young man, thin and sad, whom all men tried to imitate. I had a vague idea that it was for this reason men were superior to women. I am convinced all those whom I have loved, I have loved through this feeling. It is one which is absolutely false and dangerous from one point of view, as it causes you to suffer much; from another, being of so ideal a nature, it preserves you from contact with those horrid men, and protects you in spite of yourself from their natural libertine ways.

I have never had a particle of vanity or jealousy; I have always been told that I did not know how to love. I do not know if any one has loved more than I have, but I do not think it is possible to have suffered more than I have from the consequences of this absurd sentiment, which is contrary to all common sense, and which men dignify by the title of Love. As a proof of what I tell you of my want of jealousy, coquetry, and tact, I will give you an example which (on becoming more experienced) I know is really very peculiar. Pedro, whom I loved so much, was one of the *lions* of society at Brussels, and he had the reputation of being on the best terms with one of the *lionesses* most in vogue there.

At the time he made my acquaintance, he was in the habit of going to her daily five o'clock teas. I never had the wish to cause him to miss his *rendezvous*; on the contrary, I used to be careful to remind him of the hour, fearing to disappoint the Countess of —, who was not, however, one of my own friends.

I have never had the wish to take possession of anything or anybody. It is on this account, no doubt, I have been considered cold and indifferent. I like to share whatever I love, thinking to please the person who shares with me what I love so much.

The great misfortune, when one loves, is to believe the object of one's adoration perfect, endowed with all the virtues: and as for me, thanks to my naïve, credulous, and good-natured turn of mind, I used to believe that, as we are all brought up on principles advocated by the Gospel, and that everybody went to church, all those who fell in love with me must be leading model lives.

I have had, however, in matters of religion, a moment—a very

long moment—of doubt and indecision. I no longer had any deep conviction about anything. At the age of twenty-one a great grief befell me: I turned again eagerly to my Bible, which, however, I knew by heart. Through the influence of my uncle—an excellent man, who believed absolutely only in chaos before existence, and chaos after death—I had come to ask myself how, if Christ was to be believed in, such a book as the Bible, containing so many contradictory versions, was allowed to circulate. I was much troubled on the subject. "*The Life of Jesus*" (large edition) did not satisfy me, and disgusted me with Renan. I could not help, however, reading many books of the same kind. There was an abundance of such at my uncle's. I listened dispassionately to the conversations of unbelievers and of freethinkers; I found nothing practical to reply to their attacks on religion. What prevented me from becoming completely unbelieving was the thought which pursued me—that it might, perhaps, be true, and how much the sufferings of Jesus would be increased if I no longer believed in HIM! However, it is written, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye have eternal life." I had done so, I had searched, and I had found nothing. I sought for the Truth as I could not believe; I wished, at least, to understand *something*. I said to myself, disconsolately, "God must know that it is not my fault, and, if there is no God, it matters little!"

This not being my autobiography, I pass over several years, and come to 1860. On the 21st April of that year, I was married to William Henry Weldon, a young officer of the 18th Regiment of Hussars. He was six weeks older than I. He was twenty-three, and I twenty-two years old. I had made his acquaintance in 1858. Since that date he had spent and squandered the little income which he had inherited from his father, who died when he was a year old. It was for love of me, he told me, that he had plunged into debauchery and dissipation, and that nothing was left him but to go and get killed in India.

This speech touched my heart, and to save him from death I promised to marry him, but as I had no desire to "*die of starvation*," as my parents had prophesied, I consented to marry him on condition that he should not oppose my utilising my talents as a vocalist, and becoming a *prima donna*.

Immediately after my marriage, I became *enceinte*, and I was bathed in the ecstatic thought of becoming a mother. My husband's mother helped us. I was not *dying of starvation*. I no longer thought of the stage; we lived quietly. I knew how to accommodate myself with scarcely anything, and during nearly fifteen years Mr. Weldon and I were the best friends in the world. We resided at Beaumaris, in the Isle of Anglesea, North Wales. We came up regularly for a month, once a year, to London, during the season. We paid visits in the country to a host of friends; in Switzerland, to my uncle, and in Italy; and although I was obliged to be excessively economical, and, to keep my husband (*who was a spendthrift to the backbone*) in check, I had nothing to complain of. I am fond of all that is domesticated—mending clothes, making my own wardrobe,

cooking, washing up, tidying. All these household occupations delighted me. I never went out to pay a visit when once we were settled in our own little cottage. The ladies of the neighbourhood called on me; I received them with my large kitchen apron on. I had the reputation of being an original, thanks to my indispensable apron.

In 1864, the grandmother of my husband died, and he came into property which amounted—

In September, 1866, to January, 1867, to	£551	17	4½	about	13,000	frs.
" " " 1867, "	1795	4	2½	"	46,000	"
" " " 1868, "	2469	15	10½	"	61,000	"
" " " 1869, "	2056	6	3½	"	51,000	"
" " " 1870, "	2430	2	8	"	61,000	"

I will state later on my reasons for being so precise as to the income of my husband. As for me, I never saw my father again after my marriage, and I had no dowry; my sisters had £7,000 each. This was a great injustice, as the only objection my father had to my husband was, that he had not £10,000 a-year, and that for this same reason my parents had caused me already to refuse several brilliant offers. As it so happens, my husband is much better off than either of my brothers-in-law, and as the insufficiency of my husband's income was the only obstacle to our marriage, on the same grounds that I was disinherited, my sisters ought to have been so also. Matters are as they are, because my father was at last acknowledged to be out of his mind, and he had made his will before it was a recognised fact; otherwise, he would have been as furious about my sisters' marriages as he was about mine. It was his pride that made him insane; he certainly carried his desire to see his daughters married to rich men to the pitch of insanity. I also think he wished to keep them at home, but as we never dared open our lips in his presence, scarcely to breathe without his snubbing us unmercifully, as my mother dreaded him, and as he allowed us no amusement whatever, not even that of teaching the choir at the Parish Church—at twenty-three years of age nearly—worn out and wearied by men constantly making me offers which I was obliged to refuse, I left the paternal roof, where otherwise I should have been so happy, without much regret.

I had no taste for, or need of marriage. I neither cared for dress or jewels, or luxury. I made no jealousy scenes to my husband. I did not care to go out. I can understand that it is not entertaining for certain men to have such a quiet, gentle wife as I was. I longed to be a mother, but my child was not born alive. I should have made an excellent sister of charity. In a convent I should have been the happiest of women, without a desire, without an aspiration. I was endowed with the most placid temperament in the world.

I was very popular, as all amateurs invariably are, whether good or bad, who, with the view of being admired (I was forced to the piano in spite of my wretched shyness), entertain society for a whole evening.

I was brought up in the Italian school. I knew all the operas of Bellini, of Donizetti, of Rossini, of Verdi, of Cherubini, by heart—

those of Mozart and Meyerbeer. I had an excellent memory ; and was well up in Handel, English music, etc. I had acted but very little, because it was not at all to my taste. I had, however, played with a college professor, Carl Seiz, of Constance, "*Sletzi Fensterl*," by Lachner, in Bavarian dialect. At Ashridge, at Lady Marian Alford's (the Marquis of Northampton's sister), I had played the principal part in a charming little comedy, written by Augustus Stafford, entitled "*The Queen of Hearts*." H.R.H. the Princess Mary of Cambridge played one of the parts on this occasion. Mr. Stafford was very much pleased with me, as he told me I was *not like other people*—that I was simple, unaffected, and without pretensions—that I gave myself no airs, and that I was satisfied with all he wished me to do. I was always in the best society ; and, after my experience of all classes of society, and of those out of society, in which my lot has been cast, I must confess that that is the most pleasant—as although without doubt as false and as vicious as any other, there is no parade of coarseness and vice ; it has a politeness and tact which the others laugh at.

I have never seen in the best society anything to shock one—no embarrassing allusions are indulged in. In this class of society there is more politeness, a greater appearance of modesty, less boastfulness and assumption of pride, than in the inferior classes. Although I am a Republican, and even a Communist, I declare that is my opinion, the outcome of my experience of all kinds.

I was presented before my marriage at the Queen's Drawing-room, by Lady Charlotte Schreiber : after my marriage, by the Countess, now Marchioness of Grey and Ripon. I was presented to King Leopold at Brussels in 1855 ; and at the Italian Court, in 1875, by the Minister's wives.

We continually paid visits, as I have already said, to the country-seats of our friends for whole months sometimes. We were overwhelmed with invitations everywhere, and it was with difficulty and delight that we found ourselves once more at home in our dear little house opposite the sea, and the mountains of Carnarvonshire.

Besides domestic cares, I had a great many other occupations ; music certainly had not a large share—sometimes I did not open my piano for three months at a time. I had a mania for collections. I collected autographs, stamps, old buttons, monograms, and coins. I cut out the monograms with true art, and gummed them in books. Everything I had was arranged with apple-pie order. The greatest "old maid" in the world is not such an old maid as I. How happy I was. My husband said he adored me. His way of adoring me showed itself in never being at home, in doing nothing, and in interesting himself in nothing. I would have wished to keep him at home, to teach him something—French, Italian, or music—or to get him to cultivate our garden, in which I used to go and dig myself, in the hope that he would be induced to acquire some love for the flowers, fruits, or vegetables. I had hoped he would have amused himself doing a little carpenter's work. No, in vain ! I have never succeeded in interesting him in any way whatever.

My children, I do not hesitate to recommend you to take me for an example—although proud, I was not haughty.

I always had had my lady's maid. Shortly after my marriage she married, because I could not keep her, and by degrees I had to learn that, in order to be honest, it was necessary to pay my husband's debts, and that we could not do so without the strictest economy. I have always held the opinion that a man who makes use of his credit to incur debts is worse than a thief. I have therefore maintained a severe struggle to carry out my views, and have doubtless appeared to be hard at times.

We did without wine, beer, or sugar; my husband left off smoking; and I even deprived myself of butter, but my husband could not do without that!

In the year 1862-63, when, in consequence of the war in the United States, there was a famine in Lancashire, every town in England contributed all it could to this unfortunate county. The subscriptions were very well organised, everybody was morally obliged to subscribe. To the great consternation of my husband, I refused to give anything. "No," I said, "you owe already a great deal money; you shall not give anything—it would be robbing your creditors." He had no answer to make to this. Finding him, however, unhappy and ill at ease as to "*what people would say*," I proposed to him to go without his butter, and said I would put by that sum weekly for the poor starving creatures. He consented; during four months, at least, he ate no butter, and was pleased to do "as others did," or as others do. This is the law of the sheep, the mules, and the geese. Superiority is an exile, and neither man nor beast finds superiority or exile supportable—they all must herd together. My husband, however, had two good and great qualities—great presence of mind, and he was an excellent sick-nurse. An opportunity arose when his presence of mind was rewarded by the happiest results.

We were at Macerata, in the Roman Marche. It was Good Friday. My husband and I were in the Syndic's loggia, close to the altar; it was at the moment when the men, bending under the heavy burden, were carrying, in order to deposit it in the tomb, an enormous crucifix which had to be exposed for a few seconds before the altar. The horrible conflagration of the Church of St. Jago had taken place shortly before, in which a thousand human beings had been burnt to death. The decorations and drapery had taken fire; the flaming petroleum poured down on the congregation, and a frightful panic had seized the crowd; the doorway was blocked by a pile of bodies, which in a few minutes became charred corpses, for the church was a blazing furnace.

All of a sudden, in the Church of Macerata, the flames were seen ascending and darting out from the drapery to the decorations under the great dome of the Cathedral, near a column. I moved to run away, as several others did. My husband, who could only speak English, took me by the arm and commanded me not to move from my place. He said, "We are in full view of the whole congregation, those who are with us and near us near the altar are on an elevation,

and can be seen by the crowd" (there were at least 5000 persons in the church). "If we leave our places," he added, "a panic will ensue, and the people will be crushed to death. Call to the bearers of the crucifix what I say; tell them to continue the chant, to fear nothing, that the lives of all in the church depend on their coolness, the flames will die out of themselves."

The men who bore the crucifix (there were a dozen)—the choristers, pale and frightened as I was myself, ceased singing; in vain I endeavoured to encourage them, the chant had ceased, and was not resumed. My husband, in a tone which I shall never forget, then said to me, "Take up the chant yourself," and, scarcely knowing what I was doing, I sang out as best I could the plain chant used in the *Roman Gradual*. My woman's voice, which fell on the ears of these men, so unlooked-for in church, especially at that spot and unsupported, gave them confidence, and the chant recommenced; they had had the time to see for themselves that they ran no danger; the fire, as my husband had foreseen, had no means of spreading, no one had moved, and the ceremony, which a moment of terror had arrested, was continued as if nothing had happened to disturb it. As for me I burst into tears, and that moment has never been effaced from my memory. It has caused me often to fancy I saw a great ship on a peaceful ocean suddenly struck by an invisible gust of wind, the vessel founder, and the sea remain as calm as ever.

I have forgotten till now to say, that my father resumed, in 1856, the name of Treherne, an old family name. By degrees his brothers followed his example. My eldest uncle, however, resisted this innovation for a long time. The name of Thomas is illustrious, and he had as much family pride as my father. I am not sure after all that he did not die and was buried under the name of Thomas. All our family, however, for at least the last ten years, bear the name of Treherne.

I have told you, then, my children, that my life rolled on in happiness and in peace. I was a philosopher. As I had made my bed, so must I lie on it. My husband would do nothing. I had abandoned the idea of seeing him occupied. He was not interesting, it is true, so that after having loved him very much, I took to loving my dogs frantically! They were magnificent pug dogs; the one I had first was the one I doated on most. I think it was for the same reason that I worshipped Gounod so much. He demanded all my care, and was a source of continual worry. I ought never to have loved anything, as it made me too great a slave. My poor Dan (Daniel Tucker) had a skin disease which for years seemed incurable—no diet, no medicine, no ointment, produced the slightest effect. Imagine a dog that was always taking medicine, or smelling more or less of some nasty liniment. I was always making coats for him of the stoutest stuffs I could find, for stout as the stuff might be, he rubbed his back against all the chairs under which he passed, and wore out, when he did not tear, the saddle of his coat. I was always mending his clothes, my poor, dear doggie! He was obliged also to

be muzzled to prevent him biting himself. Every one attacked me on account of my "mangy dog." He worried everybody, especially the gentlemen, because in performing his perpetual walk underneath the chairs, he caught hold of the skirts of their coats, and dragged them after him.

We had kept this dear dog, who was then two years old, from September, 1862, until the month of August, 1875. He had become so infirm, his hind legs had become completely paralysed. He suffered a great deal, and, as I was then surrounded with children, it was impossible for me to devote myself entirely to him. It would have taken up all my time to take care of him, and devote myself to him. With great grief I made up my mind to ask my doctor to come and bring him something which would kill a dog without causing him any pain. He came, and it was I myself who had the courage to administer the fatal poison to my beloved and confiding dog. At the end of a few seconds he had ceased to live and to suffer; he expired without suspecting that I could have given him anything which would not have been good for his health. The same evening, I gave the same poison to his little, old favourite wife, Jarba, who was completely blind and infirm. I laid them by the side of each other in the basket in which they had so often travelled. I covered them over in their blankets, with powdered charcoal, took them down to the garden, with one of my pupils. I put the coffin in the grave which the gardener had dug for it; with a great spade, I filled up the grave myself. There I laid the bodies of my two old friends, and there, under the mulberry tree of the garden of Tavistock House, rest these two darling little animals.

They had been the cause of much trouble as well as sorrow to me, but also during a long period, much happiness and much interest; moreover, my husband seemed to be so fond of them. He took more interest in our puggies than in anything else. It was only in the month of October, 1869, a French gentleman, the Baron Elisé de Montagnac, whose acquaintance we had made at Hanford at the Clay Ker Seymers, recommended me a specific for the cure of my dog. It was bricks of sulphur of potash which I dissolved in hot water. The disorder returned from time to time; but the baths reduced it, and cured him without his becoming mangy and horrid. He no longer ate his poor back. I was no longer obliged to dress him. My gratitude to Monsieur de Montagnac is boundless. I had a zinc bath made on purpose, and Dan would remain quiet, lying down in it two or three hours, provided I remained quite close by his side. He was so intelligent and so sensible. He had another little wife of great beauty—Titania, otherwise known as Tity and Mittie. She, Jarby and Dan were inseparable; they also sometimes inseparably caught the real mange. I then gave them all sulphur of potash baths, one after the other, and afterwards rubbed and dried them. I spent sometimes the whole day over them. The confinements of my dogs were delights to me. How I loved the little babies! No one knows how they tired me! During the first month I dared not leave them for a moment, for Tity was not a good mother,

she would trample on her puppies, she laid on them without paying the slightest attention to their stifled whines. Jarby was an excellent mother, but she, poor little thing, was almost blind from her birth. She used also to overlay her little precious ones, and when the smothered darlings screamed, she seemed to lose her head, she would get up, trampling wildly on them all in her confusion, the lives of the little creatures in real jeopardy. She had not so much milk as Tity, but, nevertheless, she was a better nurse than her more frivolous companion. I had then to coax Madam Tity to adopt one of Jarby's puppies. Jarby, who was very uneasy all the while, and could not understand what was going on, and Tity, who smelt the little stranger was not hers, lent herself with a very bad grace to my little manœuvre. I never went anywhere without my three pugs. If my pugs were not welcome I would keep away. I washed them every day in the summer time, and rubbed them perfectly dry. My poor Dan, therefore, no doubt, would have been with me yet if it had not been for this weakness of the hind legs, a defect from his birth. He never grew too fat: when he was fifteen years old he looked liked a young dog. I used to weigh out the food for my dogs. I also had an excellent medicine (Benbow's mixture) which I gave them every now and then. His health and disposition were excellent, saving this unfortunate skin disease, which was like a dark spot in my sun, and which caused me more worry, more annoyance, and subjected me to more bad feeling on the part of those who, heartless themselves, are jealous of the affection or devotion displayed by another for any person or thing, be it man, woman, child, dog, cat or parrot. My dogs were perfectly well-behaved, except Tity (or Mittie, as we often called her,) who was selfish, greedy and noisy. We had succeeded in making Dan and Jarby understand that they were not wanted as watch dogs. The bell might ring fifty times and they would not move. But Tity, all we could do was to no purpose, at the slightest sound she would be up in a moment, and give a shrill yelp. The hair on her fat little neck and back stood on end, she would hang down her head, she would stiffen her four paws, and scarcely touching the carpet with the tips of her toes, she would move gently in the direction of a low chair under which she ensconced herself, and under which she continued to growl and utter short yelps enough to split one's head, until out of all patience with her we would go and drag her out to give her a good whipping. All the time this was going on Dan and Jarby (their features puckered with disdain and disgust), stretched on the hearth-rug, seemed to reflect sadly on the stupid conduct of Tity, gazed complacently at the fire, watching the flames, and at each spark which flew out, prudently getting up and moving backwards at (what must have appeared to them as) a startling explosion from the grate, then lay down again with perfect trust the moment the dreadful danger was over! Dan sometimes appeared to be making sensible remarks to Tity. He would go near her, would seem to whisper something to her, and then they would return together. Never did these dear puggies beg during meals. Even when travelling, dining at a Restaurant, Dan

would remain quietly seated, and Jarby also, on their own chairs. But Tity, once our eyes off her, would slip away, begging for tit-bits right and left. Fortunately for us she was as fat as a dormouse, else we should certainly have been accused of starving the little monkey!

Really and truly with all my numerous little occupations, with my three pugs and their progeny, my life was pretty well filled, and it never entered my head to have another object in life, or to seek other occupations. Never had I experienced a moment of *ennui* in my life. And this is certainly not being like "other people." I have never been able to wear stays. When I was sixteen I was put into these horrid inventions till I was eighteen. It would be impossible for me to describe what I suffered during those two years from pains in the back. Although I was out of pain, the instant I drew out the whalebone (*à la minute*) it never occurred to anyone that it was the stays, although never tight, which were the cause of my agonies. Once the great discovery made, I gave up wearing stays, and have never since had the slightest pain in my back. Not like "*other people*"—How could I help it? Is it my fault? I was born with a very short back: a dress made to my figure was too loose, or too tight. As I never held the opinion that one must suffer to be beautiful, I gave up wearing stays, and I have never had a pain in my back since. As I did not care to lose time over my hair, I had it cut short. I strongly recommend you, my children, to do as I have done. Wear your hair short, it is so clean and comfortable. The only good of being beautiful is that it helps men, who are no good, to fall in love with you, and create enemies. These men are your foremost enemies, for if you wound their self-love in not granting them their desires, they hate you. If you remain virtuous you will be constantly told "*you have no heart*," and if you have any, so much the worse for you. This is a speech which has considerably and constantly annoyed me by being dinned into my ears; "*having no heart*" simply means "*having no passions*." People will try and do you all the harm imaginable if you are respectable and care for your reputation. The women will be envious, and the men will owe you more grudge because of that than because of all your charms, for the reason that people will not be able to rub their hands with glee at your downfall. Women who have resisted temptations, and who want no one's pity, must expect to be hated. Study earnestly, be good housewives above all, and then even if everything has failed, you will have the satisfaction left you of keeping your four walls neat and clean, of keeping your clothes well mended, and of preparing your simple meals with taste and cleanliness.

Notwithstanding all I have suffered, notwithstanding all I have lost, in spite of all the cruel and bitter deceptions I have experienced, although the Torch of Truth shines for me, and shows me things and events in a painfully clear light, that it has become impossible for me to believe in a single illusion, I have at the bottom of my heart "*the great, beautiful, and transparent nature of diamond which God has given me*" (as Gounod says, see page 163, No. II., *Letters, etc.*), the soul which God has illumined with the rays of eternal light, and

which is the cause, that, without hope, I pursue a mission, without perceiving the possible or probable issue. . . . Thus Moses led the children of Israel for thirty years without hoping himself to see the promise of the Lord. I firmly believe that if God has withdrawn me from a happy and peaceful life, since He has thought fit to assign me a place under the fierce blaze of a publicity which I was entirely ignorant of, and which I did not know how to attain ; if, in a word, from the proud position of a well-bred lady in fashionable society, a sought-after and admired Queen wherever I showed myself, by my beauty, my talents, and my prudent and irreproachable conduct, I have descended to the rank of an unclassed woman, who is avoided as dangerous, who is called a "*woman intoxicated with notoriety*," with whom no woman would wish her daughters or sons to be seen in public, with one who had always been considered as a model *chaperone*—one who has no longer honour or reputation, or prestige—one who could only regain a tolerable position by becoming the mistress of some Minister, Duke, or journalist, and having the tastes of a courtesan, I nourish, however, as a consolation for all that I have lost, the hope that one of you, my children, will be qualified to carry on the work that I can but foresee. Remember that it was I who prepared your meals—that, when ill, I nursed you—that you have slept in my room by the side of my bed, your hand in mine—that I have taught you to the best of my ability, and that you who are but poor homeless children should fulfil, without thinking it hard, the task, which will rejoice my spirit after my death, when it will hover around you, with permission, perhaps, to aid you, to counsel you. This thought will keep you from going astray, as you would know you were grieving my shade. Make me happy after my death, and console me for the love of Jesus, whom I wished to console in my own little way when a child ; lay the merits of your talents to my memory, of your acquirements ; let me see you busying yourselves with necessary household occupations. Be sober, do not eat much ; take an interest in the health of others ; seek the means of comforting others. In case of need, you might yourselves be useful as doctors, as I have so often been. Try to become skilful in bandaging in cases of accident ; try to be good sick-nurses ; be useful to your fellow-creatures, who, however, you will find in no hurry to repay you, except with ingratitude. If you be not convinced that you are doing that which is pleasing to the Supreme Deity, Creator of all things, in making yourselves useful to your fellow-creatures, bear in mind with certainty that you will rejoice my spirit, as also many others which will surround you. Be persuaded that, in leaving this transitory world, I shall carry with me the desire of making you happy, and through you of bringing happiness to many other creatures. Never forget that if I have not been able to do it, it is because I was worse than alone. Not being one of the people, I have not had their sympathy ; those of *my society* are of opinion that "we have duties to fulfil towards that society, in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call us." I ought, according to this dictum, to leave to nurses and governesses, the work which I am doing—"the conse-

quences are too terrible for me"—"I make my hands like a cook's!" "I must surely deteriorate in the company of common dirty children, naturally, and in virtue of their birth, vicious and incapable of gratitude."

Were I to allow myself to labour under such delusions, I should indeed be foolish. You, and all those who have professed to love me so much, would leave me probably to die in a ditch, or would have me taken to the hospital. I look for nothing in that direction. When you have read this incredible history, which I am to record, of black ingratitude, vile calumny, and infamous treachery, you will not be astonished at the apparently morbid state of my feelings. I am driven to it by the brutal force of facts. And why should I expect more from YOU than from HIM? I had believed for a long time that my perseverance, my artistic and personal value would have met with sympathy. I had thought that in proving by you the extraordinary results it is possible by my system of education to obtain from very young children (without fatiguing them), such as pronunciation, rhythm, power of sustaining the breath, the tune, the note, a perfect accent in three languages, before the age of three years, prodigies of facility of memory—would have encouraged some people to help me to found an establishment on a sound basis, by the aid of which I might have kept the fifty children with which I desire to commence this new school. With that number I would prove that all kinds of so-called *gifts*, or talents, are a mere matter of *training*, and that it is not more difficult to impart to any one, no matter who, an admirably clear diction, (or power of enunciating,) a magnificent memory, a fine and useful voice, than it is to teach people to acquire an easy and elegant carriage, or a graceful demeanour.

If any one took the pains to ascertain how many people fail to put the foot down straight, it would be found that not one in a thousand wear their shoes equally on each side; all this because grown-up people find they have something better to do than to trouble themselves about little people! Many a mother who is supposed to look after her children, finds all they do perfect up to a certain age, the age at which the child is able to make itself dangerously intolerable; then it is too late! You run the risk of losing "*this precious treasure*" in a fit if it gets into too great a rage, it must be allowed to have its own way. The parents even repeat, as if it was one of the greatest, the rarest, and most noble qualities in the world, "The fact is, the dear child is passionate; he has an astonishing force of character;" "He has a strong will of his own;" "He will have his way, bless him!" "He would cry four hours without stopping; we are bound to do what he wants in self-defence!" Victor Hugo, however (with whom I join issue most thoroughly in many things which he has written about children in his admirable work, *L'Art d'Etre Grand Père* ("The Art of being a Grandfather"), said of his daughter in the *Contemplations* :—

"She never said 'I will,' and often said 'I dare not.'"

It is by no means desirable that all the world should have indivi-

dually a strong will, or be desirous of having a will of his own. The world could not go on at all if everybody had their strong idiosyncrasies, and sought to impose them. The world goes on very badly as it is. I find that in France it goes on worse than in many other countries in which I have resided. I ascribe this state of things to the manner that the French have of *corrupting* (*spoiling* is not strong term enough) their children. They are allowed the greatest familiarities, to put questions and to make replies of the most rude, pert, and coarse description; and to speak of everything without any respect for either persons or things. Victor Hugo (p. 30 of "The Art of being a Grandfather") has recorded the greatest and most precious truth, without intending it, I believe :—

"Yes ! it is with indulgences such as these that nations are led to ruin."

The most precious gift which can be conferred on a child is the *instinct* of obedience. He must obey without knowing that he has been taught to do so. This can be instilled into it according to the age and precocity of the child (from six weeks to three or four months old). The child then grows like the young plant, which is attached to a prop or framework before it begins to take its own twist. The plant would not bear the fine fruit which it will yield later on, if it were not compelled to grow straight. After a certain age, there is no longer the same need to tie up the plant—it shoots up straight, can guide and support itself. The finest fruits are those produced on trees cultivated in *espalier*. The tree, itself is more productive, as healthy, and as robust as the wild tree. Children and men are like plants. We cannot all be trees ; most must be contented to be shrubs. We must accept what civilisation brings us. The necessity for a moral culture—more careful, more artistic. He or she who has been cultivated the most, are as the *espaliers*, and will be the one to yield the greatest abundance of fine fruit.

Jesus has said, "Let him who would be first among you be the last of all and the servant of all." It is an inevitable law. There is no servitude to be compared with that of princes and of men in power. They cannot, if they be conscientious, approve of their position, or be satisfied with it ; better than any one else they see the faults and the abuses which they are powerless to remedy. My father was a Member of Parliament, but he only became so after he was sixty years of age. His temperament was as confiding and as unsuspicious as my own. He ought to have been elected at Coventry when he was thirty, but a cabal caused him to lose the first election, although his uncle had spent £30,000. Although my father—who was a splendid orator, with inexhaustible voice and lungs—had the chance of being elected for several other constituencies at different times, he remained faithful to Coventry, and contested that seat at all the elections during thirty years. During the whole of that time the same member, Mr. Ellice, maintained his seat, and with him a colleague, on the Liberal side. My father was a Tory, *i.e.*, a Conservative of the old style. As a proof of what votes and voters are worth, before Mr. Ellice was hardly cold my father was elected

by a large majority, and brought in with him shortly afterwards another Conservative in a town which had for thirty years returned two Liberals! Once in Parliament my father, although cranky, soon found out that "love of your country" meant "love of good places," that "party spirit" was everything, that Whigs were no better than Tories, and Liberals on a par with Conservatives. He who had been so enthusiastic for reform and for politics all his life gave it all up. Had he but known, he said, he would never have troubled himself about them, and he would not have come forward as a candidate in the event of another election. I therefore found out what my father did, twenty-five years earlier in life than he did, and I hope to help the world to profit by my experience.

I should never be done if I were to write the tenth part of all I ought to say, but I wish to do justice to my father. He was of a thoroughly superior mould, although his temper was tiresome, violent, "infernal" even. He was endowed beyond measure with all kinds of qualities and talents. He had a great turn for mathematics, poetry, foreign languages, music, an exceptionally fine voice, great dramatic power, an irresistible comic vein, a smile and an infinite charm of manner. He captivated every one. Why then had he that painful temper? Because he had been the pet of his mother who had spoilt him. His eldest brother had had to give in to him because he was the youngest; his youngest brother had had to bow to his wishes because he was the eldest. He was fearfully proud: he had been the favourite of his uncle. My mother had refused to marry him for ten years, during which time he sighed for her. This must have greatly soured his temper. My mother spoilt us, and this infuriated him. In fact I pitied my father very much (not but that my mother was the most excellent of women and the best of wives), but he chose as his companion (whom he never left for a day, and to whom he was passionately and profoundly attached) the person who in all the world was the least able to appreciate or manage him.

I myself who naturally am one of the sweetest tempered and most patient creatures in the world, have at last been driven to bay, and finished by getting a great rage. Since the first time this occurred, in December, 1873, I have lost a good deal of my calmness and even temper. My nerves had been over-strung—too much worked on—and I now feel myself irritated pretty often. I understand, then, that my father, having been unable to subdue his irritable temper, had his brain affected. He was too much of a Don Quixote by nature not to have been wretched and distracted twenty times a day. Notwithstanding my earnest desire to find everything good, I am constrained to agree with Solomon *that all is vanity!*

I trust, my children, that I have written enough to prove to you that I am not "*a woman on the town*" as Mr. Charles Gounod and his friends endeavour to make people believe; that I am not, and have never been, at "the call of the first comer." I have occupied I can say a quite exceptional position in society; as any one may ascertain if so disposed, by taking the pains of enquiring into my past history. The letters composing my correspondence and my

journal, which I have regularly kept since 1852, still exist. They will confirm all that I tell you there and much more besides, after my death, should you require it.

My portraits by G. F. Watts, R.A., John Brett, R.A., J. R. Parsons, Sir Robert Collier, Val Prinsep, R.A., Mr. Pinel de Grandchamps, my bust in marble by Charles Fuller, a very bad one (in plaster) by Franceschi, as also the mould of my face by Franceschi, and numerous photographs will prove that I am not a "horrible dried up witch with great teeth starting out of their gums, which bewitched poor Gounod to that degree that for three years and a half this woman held him bound by her spells and the charms of her factitious beauty, who made him sign papers which beggared his wife and his children of all which he possessed (and which he might possess), in the past, present, or *'future if Providence had not saved him from the gulf into which he had fallen.'*" I yet hope to remain a pretty old woman for you, since at forty I look about twenty-five years of age, that the outline of my face is girlish, that my smile is frank, and my looks, as you know very well, little monsters, very gentle, but also, at times, very terrible. . . . I hope always to keep my merry ways, my happy temper, to play and laugh with you, and (if needs be) to punish you without wincing.

In the meantime, I will begin by telling you how it is that from such a happy and peaceable existence, I find myself drifted into such a stormy and unhappy life.

In 1866 I made the acquaintance of a young girl, Gwendoline Jones. She was the eldest daughter of a Protestant clergyman in North Wales. The family was poor, and there were ten children. Gwendoline's godmother was my husband's godmother. That godmother was a real little mother to me. I loved her, she adored my husband whom I adored, and I really believe she was as proud of the wife of her godson as if she had been her own daughter. She and her husband (the village doctor), like ourselves, lived at Beaumaris. We therefore were neighbours; Gwendoline used to come visiting her godmother, Mrs. Wynne Jones, and as this young girl had a great taste for music, and as I was the great musical oracle of the county, she brought her to me to ask me to give my opinion on her voice and musical capabilities which her family wished her to turn to account. I found that her talent was very mediocre. But it was a serious matter! This young girl, people said, had an artist's soul. Her rustic neighbours had flattered her up. They considered she had *such a sweet* voice, that she sang *so charmingly*. I was asked my candid opinion. I gave it them frankly; I could say no more except that her voice needed cultivation.

Advise her!!! I scarcely knew what to say to her. I had never given any one any advice. Mrs. Wynne Jones told me that the greatest ambition of this young girl was to sing a duet with me at a concert in aid of some charity; that if I would accompany her, take her under my wing, and sing with her, that it would do Gwendoline good, and give her (the little godmother) so much pleasure. It was a pleasure to me to do anything which would please her. I made

friends with the young girl, and I taught her myself two duets, which I sang with her.

The year 1867 passed away thus quietly enough. Gwendoline came sometimes to her godmother, and she favoured me with her visits quite as often and oftener than I at all cared for! It never occurred to me that I was giving this child valuable lessons. I was not aware that I had a peculiar talent for teaching. As a young girl, however, I had made my sisters work hard, although neither were hard-working, or seriously inclined (as I was). They sang the most difficult trios with me *to perfection*. I had also taught some of my friends. There are two, whose names I may perhaps mention some day, who are considered great musicians, and to whom I taught the trio in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" (Balfe). Mercy on us! it is impossible to exaggerate the difficulty I had in getting them to keep time! I taught secretly the choir of one of our parish churches—*secretly*, because my father, for no reason whatever, except that of being contrary, had put his veto on our doing so!

After my marriage, I gave concerts in Canada, in 1861, during the war of the United States, for the English Volunteers. I had only a few amateur blockheads, one more stupid than the other, but the concerts went off with a tolerable amount of spirit and success. The newspapers then (as I was not a professional singer, seeking to gain my own livelihood, or that of others) loaded me with compliments. They went so far as to say that "*Mrs. Weldon was the very Napoleon of Music!*"

My husband was captain of the Artillery Volunteers at Beaumaris. I used to organise every year a concert for the benefit of his corps. I selected what voices were passable among the artillerymen, and taught them for three weeks some choruses (tenors and bass). I got hold of some little urchins to sing alto; I myself alone sang the soprano part, and I can assure you, I never got a choir to sing better than that one. I was the wife of the commanding officer; we were a band of thirty, and it had to go well, I can tell you! What astonishes me is, that I should never have sought to create a circle for myself, or to be at the head of anything. I had, without realising it, no little experience, and a great deal of taste in getting choirs to work, and in conducting them as leader. Evidently I had a great deal of capacity, but no ambition. During the year 1868, Gwendoline Jones was very ill for some long time past. She had been suffering from some mysterious complaint which the physicians could not make out, and to which they gave the name of *Hysteria*.

She was no more hysterical than I was, who am not at all so; she, without knowing why, suffered from not being developed as a medium. I recall all her symptoms well, and when I heard Spiritualism talked of, and learnt a little about it myself, I was able to comprehend what had ailed this poor girl.

In 1869, she returned to Beaumaris and then told me that she was resolved to study singing seriously, to settle in London, and to take a singing-master; she wished to follow the profession of a singer, and she begged of me to recommend her a master.

Her voice seemed to me weaker, and not so true ; but I believed one had simply to take and learn of a master, and that he would give one voice and ear. I reasoned thus because I had neither had a singing or pianoforte master. I had a voice, and I sang ! therefore it never entered my head that any one needed a master if they had a voice.

I turned over in my head all the masters that I knew—Benedict, Campana, Deacon, Pinsuti, Traventi, Vera, Randegger, etc. I chose Randegger—for I had heard that he took pupils as apprentices, charging them nothing until they had earned money by the talent which he knew how to bestow on them. I wrote then to Randegger, proposing Gwendoline to him as a pupil. He replied very graciously, that he would be delighted to do all in his power for my *protégé*, but that he no longer took apprentices on the terms which I thought of, as they always turned out ungrateful, and invariably cheated him. I took Gwendoline to him. He came to hear her at my mother's, when we were staying in London at that time ; after which he said, "My good lady, the poor child has neither voice nor ear ; are you mad to wish to make her sing?" I hung my head, and felt dreadfully concerned for Gwendoline and her family. I had not the heart to disappoint her, so I bade her come to me every morning from half-past ten to one o'clock. Although it was in the height of the season, and that I went out a great deal into society, I gave her all the time I could. She came regularly, and by degrees I discovered that in making her go through the same exercises that I had invented for myself, I had created in her an organ which she in truth did not possess. On the 11th June, I made the following entry in my journal :—"Gwen, who is returning to her parents in the country, came to me to-day for the last time. It will be a month to-morrow since I took her in hand. Her progress has been marvellous, and I have told her that nothing can prevent her succeeding perfectly, if she be blessed with life and health."

During the month I taught her, I tried by every dodge I could think of to hammer into her voice the same clear, *whip-cord* quality of tone which I possessed. I wished to hear *something that had a backbone behind the sound*. When I perceived I could obtain that for only a few seconds out of one single note, I was satisfied. There was then a possibility of instilling some *body* into that soft, uncertain, cotton-wool sort of sound, to which I could only compare what voice she had.

She understood of herself, without my telling her, that she knew nothing, that she had nothing, that she could do nothing ; her voice, of which she had been so proud, inspired her with disgust ; her manner of singing made her die of laughing.

I had gained a great deal. She had become aware of her own defects. She returned to her parents to study courageously four notes in the middle of her voice, *Sol, La, Si, Do*. I absolutely forbade her to practise any other note.

We then set off, my husband and I, with our dogs, to pay visits—first to my Uncle George Treherne, in Switzerland, at his chateau at Mülberg, and then to my cousin, Countess Butler, at Haimhausen. On

our return to England, I hastened to rejoin my Gwendoline. Not only did I look forward to ascertaining what progress she had made, but I went to her father's rectory, with the intention of giving lessons to all the family. I had recommended Gwendoline, in her own interest, to gather all her brothers and sisters into a class, and to get them to practise with her, according to the method I had discovered, every day, and all day long if possible.

The passion for teaching possessed me. My husband was very glad of it, very pleased with the result. We spoke of establishing ourselves in London the following May, and of founding a school for fifteen young ladies of good family, who, thanks to my instructions, should at the end of two years make a triumphant entry in the professional world. I had taken Gwen in hand for two years. Her mother and I had decided that she should not sing before any one, not even to friends, before the two years should be over without my permission.

The joy and exultation I felt on rejoining Gwen knew no bounds. Her voice had become round, firm, full, and she sang in tune; and the *Re*—that horrid *Re*, which she had not seemed to possess, except as a hole—was as beautiful, as sonorous, and as clear as the *Do* and the *Mi*. One of her sisters especially, Gertrude—who from her birth had been supposed to have absolutely *no ear*—had now succeeded in taking up rapidly the note which she was required to reproduce. The family pronounced it to be simply *miraculous*! I was in ecstasies! I told Gwen that I would bury myself with her in Switzerland at my uncle's for the whole winter, that we would work together there like mad, and in less than two years I would present her to the musical world as a great singer by the name of *Gwendoline Bradwyn*. She had already changed her name.

This took place in the month of September, 1869. Mr. Weldon and I then visited several friends in the country, and it was on 16th December that we set out for Switzerland with Gwen, and my three precious puggies.

Benedict, who had been one of my most constant admirers since the year 1858, took a lively interest in all that I did; he spoke to me of Wartel, professor of singing, who at that moment was the most in vogue at Paris. He gave me a letter of introduction for that friend and begged of me to go and see him. I give here the exact wording of that letter, as it is an additional proof of the great musical prestige which I enjoyed (if there be any doubt about it), and that I don't owe a single musical introduction to M. Gounod, except that of Mr. and Mme. Viguier.

Letter from SIR JULIUS BENEDICT to MR. FRANCIS WARTEL.

"MY DEAR WARTEL,—These lines will be handed to you by one of my best friends, the most accomplished woman, and the most remarkable talent in the United Kingdom, and, I might say, in the whole of Europe—the most perfect artistic organisation that can possibly be imagined, but who, unfortunately for the cause of art, does not engage in it except as an amateur—by Mrs. Weldon, who, *en route* for Switzerland with Mr. Weldon, her husband, a distinguished officer, and a charming gentleman, proposes staying two or three days in your

capital. She has asked for this line, so that she might make the acquaintance of the illustrious professor and artist whose renown increases each year; and I dare flatter myself that she will be received by him as grace and beauty united to unbounded talent deserve.—Yours most cordially,

“JULES BENEDICT.

16th December, 1869.

Benedict came expressly to my house to hear Gwen; he was enchanted with the manner in which she gave out her voice. He said to me:—

“There is no one who produces it out so well, and she is sure to have a brilliant career.”—*Extract from my Journal.*

Poor Gwen, on the road to London from her home to rejoin us, experienced a slight shock from the effects of an unimportant accident on the line. The shock to her nervous system was such that her illness in a fortnight took hold on her again; her mother became so uneasy that she, at the end of three months, came to my uncle's to fetch her. Gwen had, however, worked as hard as she was able. I sang to her and taught her as much as was possible. She had succeeded in singing so well that my uncle and aunt, when she sang with me in a room away from theirs, could not distinguish if it was Gwen or I who was singing. When she parted from me, we consoled ourselves in thinking that her health would return on breathing her dear mountain air, and that she would get her sisters to practise.

We had succeeded in getting Gertrude received at Queen's College (London). In the month of February, 1870, Hullah, one of our first professors of singing, heard her sing, and offered to teach her. I recommended her to decline his lessons; nevertheless, I was enchanted with this incident, for it proved, although she had been practising so little, that the young girl—who had not known before making my acquaintance how to sing a correct sound—had become so superior to her schoolfellows, as to call for the special notice of a man like Hullah, who had singled her out of a large number of pupils. Later on, this same Gertrude carried off the first prize for singing at the new Training College for Music at South Kensington. Such was the progress achieved by a young girl, who had always been held to be devoid of all musical ability. It had always been said of her before she knew me, that she had not the slightest idea of music!—*no ear! no voice!*—at the same time, they extolled the genius of Gwendoline. It appears to me that the only difference between the two sisters was that of disposition and temperament. Gwen was nervous, delicate, ambitious, and lively, with a great deal of initiative; and Gertrude was the direct opposite of her sister.

Gwen was the eldest of the family. When her mother was able to attend any country festivities, which was seldom the case, it was always the eldest she took with her. Mrs. Wynne Jones, her god-mother, had often kept her for weeks when on a visit to her. In the eyes of that family, shut up in a poor rectory, in the solitude of the mountains, Gwendoline was a fashionable young lady of society, who had seen all, had heard all! That child who, so to say, was engrossed

with herself, her importance, and her learning, was in reality a little wild colt, and it was so *my* world and *my* family considered her. This raised a prejudice against her, and difficulties cropped up for me in consequence, from which I have never since then been free. . . . And, then, she was not pretty! We used to be called "The Beauty and the Beast."

Gertrude had an iron constitution. She was the picture of a good-natured, robust, country lass, who had seen nothing, and been nowhere. From her point of view, her sister warbled like a nightingale. She tried to imitate her; she could only bring forth the coarse notes of a powerful contralto. It was frightful, and made every one ask her to hold her tongue! Gwen, on discovering and on learning to train the voice of her brothers and sisters, awoke to the conviction that she was not a Phoenix, and she was as eager to get them to study as to practise herself. I rejoiced at having discovered so easy and amusing a method, which interested the person who taught as much as the one who learnt—which induced the forgetfulness of self, and shut out emulation. All kinds of dreams of an "*universal school*" then sprung up in my brain. And those dreams have never left my thoughts. I still dream, and still believe. Gwen, when at the piano, kept her little sister of two-and-half years of age quiet and amused for hours together during the day. One of her sisters, Amy, who was believed to be consumptive, acquired a healthy action of the lungs; she began to learn how to draw her breath for a second, then for two, then three, and then at last for thirteen seconds! She became fat, strong, rosy, and healthy. A large abscess in her chest broke and discharged; she had been ill for years!

This method of teaching children, then, was perfection. It gave health to those who had diseased lungs; peace and happiness to a whole family. My method developed an importance I had never suspected it to possess. My heart swelled with joy! What good I should be instrumental in bringing about by devoting myself to it! How my classes would be thronged! What divine melody I should be able to listen to from those young crystalline voices—those fluted long-drawn notes so sweet, which I know how to sing, but how they, in their turn, would greatly surpass me, with my old, worn-out, neglected, strained voice, used to loud singing. I seemed already to hear the *voices in the heavens* as the voice of *many waters* of the Revelations.

This, then, was that voice of babes and sucklings ordained to perfect the praise of the Lord, that I should hear from those young throats. This, then, was the harmonious sound, the pure note, the powerful song, the perfect anthem, which should swell upwards to God, in the full chant and beautiful psalmodes of the Church—that voice, which no one had yet so much as dreamt of, which no one had as yet heard!—that voice, which no one knew where to find! I had discovered it; not only dreamed of and heard it, but actually found it!—that powerful voice, clear, luminous, *ethereal*—that voice which should emanate from the healthy lungs of the innocent, passionless child—from the child who would not be calculating whether he or

she was a singer, an artist, a soloist, who would not be thinking of "effect"—who would not say, "*I have a voice*"—from the child who would learn with delight without saying to himself, "*When shall I sing in public?*" This, alas! was already the calculation of Gwen; instead of the two years of study and practice, for which I had stipulated, her progress had been so surprising that she said, even at the time I returned from Switzerland and Haimhausen, in 1869, "*next year!*" I felt vexed. I had, however, ended by yielding. I also had said, "*next year!*" The year had passed and another came, and poor Gwen, through illness, had scarcely been able to study at all.

In the month of May, 1870, Mr. Weldon and I had returned from Switzerland, where I had spent the winter, and we had remained in London for the season. Gwen continuing too poorly to return to study, three of her sisters came to live with us, and occupied the apartments we had taken expressly for them. My husband, thoroughly convinced of the immense amount of good I was doing, was of opinion that I ought not to take pupils who could not afford to pay anything for their board. "It was giving all, and too much," said he. I was the governess of these young girls; I scarcely left the house, I was always occupied with them, either seeing that they practised their singing well, or superintending their needlework and their writing, and drawing them out as much as possible. This unceasing occupation in London did not suit my husband over well, and he dwelt with some degree of perseverance, justice, and even a little temper, on the expense which these young girls put us to. I was in despair; I was doing them so much good, and their mother and Gwen wrote me such nice letters. This is the exact copy of one of the letters that the mother had written me. It is not surprising that I was elated, that I had my head turned, and that I, who up to that time, had so grieved at having no children, was too happy in finding the void supplied by an occupation which developed my maternal as well as my artistic instincts.

Letter of MRS. JOHN OWEN JONES to MRS. WELDON.

LLANGWYFAN RECTORY,
16th June, 1869.

MY DEAR MRS. WELDON,

I have not words sufficiently enthusiastic to express my extreme obligation for the great improvement you have effected in Gwendoline, not only in her voice, but in her understanding also. And when I think of the short time on this the second occasion she has had the privilege of being taught by you, it seems incredible that your instructions could have produced such an immense change. It seems as if her voice had burst through some net which held it in thralldom, and it was now free and strong to work out its own course, and soar higher and higher. I have no knowledge, and cannot express (*secundum artem*) what I think and feel of vocal music. I cannot tell Gwen as you can how to sing rightly, but my *instinct* (it is no higher knowledge) tells me when she fails to express the poet's feeling, and with music's magic aid, paint in more vivid hues the thought he essays to express—deepening its shadows, and enhancing the brilliant glow of its lights. Thank you very much for sending me a copy of the circular relating to your proposed class. How grateful people ought to be, when they find that out of the abundance of your knowledge and genius, you will let them come in for a share and learn of you. Nothing can

be better. What an immense privilege it would have been to Gwen had such a chance been afforded her when she first went up to town. God has given you great talents, and you have wisely determined not to wrap them up in a napkin and bury them. Sons and daughters He has not seen fit to give you, but instead has richly endowed you with the power to create for yourself sons and daughters of harmony. Vocal music is intangible. It is as the odour of incense, and comes to our remembrance, but we cannot bind it down to earth to abide with us, and be within our grasp as we can the genius of the poet and the painter in the works they accomplish, and which remain with us after they are gone.

"God sent His singers upon earth
With songs of sadness and of mirth,
That they might touch the hearts of men,
And bring them back to heaven again."

God's singers, then, are as angel visitants; they stay but for a season, and come to raise to heaven the thoughts of those who are of the "earthy, earthy." You have received the good and perfect gift of music, and if, by the employment of your talents, you can increase the number of these singers, and by your knowledge cultivate "the various gifts to each

"To charm, to strengthen, and to teach,"

which the Father of Lights may have given them—then, indeed, you will have done a great and good work in your day.

Some few may, perhaps, think that in teaching others you are recklessly "casting bread upon the waters;" but I certainly think it is sure to return to you, after many days, in the tenfold honour and respect which some of your singers will surely win, and lay as their tribute at your feet, and I humbly trust that Gwen will strive to be one of these.

In conclusion, I thank you very much for saying in your last note that Gwen must not go anywhere on a visit. I have now your authority for saying it is not good for her to go from home. I have already had occasion to say so. Heartily thanking Mrs. Treherne* for all her kindness, and with compliments to Captain Weldon,

I remain ever, dear Mrs. Weldon,

Very faithfully yours,

ALICE JONES.

The first letter of this kind was dated the 5th March, 1867. Such letters as this helped to turn my head, and I said to myself, "How can I manage to keep my girls?"

What should I do? Why should I not, as so many others do, give a benefit concert—a concert in London? I exclaimed to myself, "That will be the very thing; it would give my friends the opportunity of making themselves agreeable to me. How happy they will be to be able to show their gratitude for all the pleasure I have afforded 'society' for so many years! How pleased they will be to think that a lady of their own circle—one so charming and so gifted as herself—will now devote herself to teach others to be as charming and gifted as herself, who has till now spent her time in enchanting the world!"

My husband shared my satisfaction at this bright idea. My school, in our imagination, assumed at once the dimensions of a gigantic and superb fairy castle. We thoroughly agreed that London was the only city where so great a scheme could be carried out with dazzling success; and we decided to buy a house in London, with a fine gar-

* My mother.—G. W.

den for the pugs, and to leave Beaumaris, where we had our furniture, our library, our treasures in the shape of large quantities of porcelain, and old Italian *faïence*, which we had collected since we were married.

The Earl and Countess of Dudley lent me Dudley House for the concert. The Hon. Captain Seymour Egerton, whose name so often appears in the letters of Mr. Gounod, of 1871, and in my pamphlet, *The Quarrel of the Royal Albert Hall Company*, offered himself good-naturedly as my *business manager*. He took everything under his charge—got my tickets and my programme printed, and I sent them out according to custom, with letters explaining my object, and begging my friends to help me to do good.

I have already given an idea of the select society in which I moved and reigned, which was only too happy to frequent me, and of which I was the “Peri”—the Queen of Song—the “Semiramis”—the “Corinna”—the “Nightingale”—the Muse, etc., and all those other pretty flattering names which are accorded to the worst amateur, as well as to the greatest artist. I was acquainted with all the richest and noblest among those who were in the habit of throwing their money out of the window, and as my runaway marriage, beneath me and *sans façons*, had not been the signal for a shower of wedding presents (such as I should have received under other circumstances), I thought that my friends would have seized this opportunity of repairing their want of generosity ten years after my very happy marriage, in order to give me proofs of their regard, their appreciation, their admiration and their gratitude. How often with eyes, suffused with tears, with smothered sighs, had I not been accosted with—“Ah, Mrs. Weldon, what ought we not to do for you who lavish so bountifully your divine gifts on your fellow-creatures! What have you not a right to demand of us?” I graciously supplied them with the opportunity demanded, and I did not expect a result of less than £3000.

Well, instead of the £3000 on which I reckoned, I collected from my vast audience, so appreciative, so admiring, so enthusiastic, the sum of one hundred and ninety-nine pounds sterling! Yes, my children, such was the reward of fourteen years slaving in the interest and for the amusement of society.

The best of it was, that the ladies who helped me to get tickets taken, were precisely those at whose houses I had never sung, and for whom I had never done anything! What was yet more *touching* still, was that those friends of mine, for whom I had put myself out the most, and at whose houses I had sung the most, sermonised me, or wrote me letters full of reproaches, informing me of the objections which this one had on these grounds, and that one on some other! The principal objection was, that “it could not be pleasing to my husband.” The affection and esteem which were suddenly displayed on this occasion for my husband (who had been considered up to that time more as a fifth wheel to a coach than anything else) was remarkable. I was so astonished and so indignant, I vowed never to give another concert under such conditions. “No; I would appeal to the

public, to the real public, and never—oh! NEVER—again would I sing a single note for *my* 'Society,' so false and so ungrateful!"

I was really indignant, and I made up my mind to make them suffer, in never allowing them to hear me again. When they wished to do so, they must pay to listen to me. I organised, always with the same object in view, a series of concerts in North Wales, where I was well known. A small county agent, as honest as he was ignorant, acted as *impresario*. Gwendoline and her mother were so anxious that I should allow the young girl to make her *débüt*, that, in spite of my own intimate conviction, I consented.

She had been scarcely able to practise at all, and sometimes she sang very much out of tune. We set out then bravely, both of us together. In thirteen days we had sung at sixteen concerts, and oh! wonderful to relate! I had not lost any money. Without reckoning the expense of my dress (which had not been bought on purpose), I pocketed £17. The country papers paid us a thousand compliments—Gwen had a great success. Her mother considered that she had "no longer any necessity to have recourse to my charity," that "she was in a position to sing in public and to earn her own livelihood." Gwen really had not been able to profit altogether by more than about six months of my lessons, and those she had not been able to take regularly. We were therefore a long way off the two years that I had stipulated for as conditions upon taking her as a pupil. Her health being always so uncertain, her singing was far from what I wished it to be. I offered her mother £50 a year to leave her alone and give her the necessary time to perfect herself with me. I had begun to sniff the poisonous exhalations of the musical profession—instinct told me that she could never battle against such a crew. The mother, an ambitious woman, ignorant, foolish, and obstinate, had the law on her side; the law gave her full powers, and although, at that very time, I was keeping four of her daughters free of charge, she paid no deference to my advice.

Poor Gwendoline died a few months after.

This was my first sad and serious check. I then resolved only to take orphans of both sexes from the lower classes; but, as luck would have it, unfortunately (with the exception of Nita Gaëtano, who treated me as badly as if she were not an orphan) children having poor parents always fell to my lot until 1874, and who from the first to the last caused me endless trouble, and turned out ungrateful.

My husband was much delighted at my personal success, and one day at Birmingham, where we had gone to hear the first performance of his oratorio "St. Peter," conversing with our great ally Benedict, the latter said to me, "Ah! you did very wrong twelve years ago in not having followed my advice. I never have counselled any one but yourself to adopt the musical profession; but" (turning to my husband) "she is so gifted—she is a star which the world has lost. It is a real misfortune that you did not make me your *impresario*—we should have both made our fortunes long ago!"

"Well, my dear Daddy," replied my husband, "all perhaps is not

yet lost. I promise you that she shall sing at your concert next year!" This was the first word that was spoken about engaging me seriously to sing in public. It was my husband who mentioned it, it did not emanate from me; but I took advantage of it to persuade him to consent to allow me to adopt the musical profession, which would be carrying out the ante-nuptial agreement, as a career, and to earn the sum of £2000, which I then considered the amount necessary for the accomplishment of my dream.

It was in the month of September that this was settled, and it was on the 13th September, 1870,* that, having decided that we should like to live at Tavistock House, a nice large house in London, surrounded by gardens and large trees, as pleasant for the pupils as for the pugs, my husband wrote to the owner offering to buy it. His proposal was accepted, the contract was signed 3rd December, 1870. I beg you will bear these dates in mind, my dear children, when later on I shall speak to you of Mr. Charles Gounod.

Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, had then become our property. We spent the winter, however, at 23 Bentinck Street, a nice apartment, where we paid £18 a month, to oblige Mrs. Davis, who had occupied Tavistock House for twelve years. Charles Dickens had resided there before that time, which had made the House a celebrated one. The beautiful house which Mr. Davis was building in Grove End Road was not quite finished nor perfectly dry; Mrs. Davis' health was very delicate. In order to save her the inconvenience of two removals, we consented to defer taking possession until the fine season in the month of May, 1871.

Through Benedict I soon received engagements, which brought me in £20 to £30 each. I was getting on! I suffered, however, terribly from nervousness when singing in public. I would not listen therefore to those who told me "that my voice was too good, and that I should spoil it by singing in choirs." I would have done anything, no matter what, to cure myself and to get into the habit of singing in public. I would not listen to flatteries, nor false shame, nor pride, and I entered several choirs in London, notably into Henry Leslie's. The newspapers, by way of parenthesis, tore me to pieces, without rhyme or reason, or passed me over as beneath criticism.

You would, I dare say, like to understand why, after having been invariably lauded up to the skies by the press, and having had such success, this phenomenon should occur? At that time I could no more understand it than you can, but experience has afforded me the explanation! Music, I had not the remotest conception thereof, is purely and simply so much merchandise. That "*divine art*," from the moment that it is embraced as a profession, becomes an article on which journalists, editors, concert agents, theatrical touters levy taxes. All those "*heavenly gifts*," those "*divine perfections*" have to pass through the *custom house* of the *reporter* and the

* Curious coincidence; it was on that very day, in that self-same year, that Gounod with his family, fleeing before the Prussians, landed in England.

advertising agent. In one way or another you end by leaving your skin there if you wish to succeed. To "get on," you must be "hail fellow, well met," with all the mud and slum, and I, a lady! . . . I was a lady of good birth and breeding. I shrank from it. I was to this band of brigands, a stumbling-block, a *bête noire*, a scare-crow! A lady who had enjoyed a good reputation for so many years, there was no chance of pinning a lover on to her, there was no way of seducing her—therefore no way of trading on her. Benedict had undertaken to protect her. The only way to "do for her," then, was to disparage her talent as much as possible; that would annoy him; he was known to be sensitive and weak-minded; he would give her up probably, and then she would fall a legitimate prey into the arena where prowls the band of agents; she would be compelled to pass under the Caudine Forks of professional intrigue, or be stranded high and dry! Study my book, "*Musical Reform*," as you would your Bible; all then will be made clear to you! I do not explain there however clearly enough, I fancy, the way to set about gaining the public ear.

It will be better for me to confess at the outset that it is those women who know how to get themselves most talked about, who are on intimate terms or in some kind of way related or connected with the great impresarios such as Strakosch, Carvalho, or other agents and publishers, who are the prima donnas who succeed the best; there is no disadvantage in being known as the mistress of a duke, to be known to hoodwink him, to be a regular loose woman, "a jolly dog," to swill down champagne, to smoke, to cough, worn out by nights of dissipation and orgies; this is one way by which it is very possible to succeed.

As to the men, they succeed *through the women*. They make the acquaintance of women in fashionable society, stupidly spooney on the calves of their legs or what not; they take care to compromise them, and then oblige their mistresses in high positions to exert themselves with Ministers and the men of distinction of the age on their behalf. These skip-jacks who succeed, frequently only possess *airs*, without a particle of talent to recommend them. If I have suffered so much, if I have struggled so long, my children, it is because I hope to have been for your sakes that element of scandal necessary to all success, and that, thanks to this, I may have been of use to you and leave you a name worth having.

Once before the public at seventeen or eighteen years of age, I firmly believe that your irresistible superiority will carry all before you, and that you will, in yourselves, be a band complete and strong enough to stand alone. I reckon then on seeing or knowing you, my children, either on the stage of a theatre or concert-room, without having had to pass through the sullied hands of any agent whatsoever. That I shall have caused so much talk and fuss about you that others will do the same through sheer force of habit, and because they will not be able to do otherwise. This, again, is what may yet be attained after twenty years of struggles and of perseverance!

Let me, however, continue to explain how, in our day, the attention of the public and the favour of the press are secured.

Putting aside the ordinary familiarities that every musical critic deems he has a right to indulge in towards a woman, who, in virtue of her profession, is literally *at his mercy* for food and raiment, it is impossible for her to "get on" without the disbursement of money by or for her in one shape or another; *i.e.*, an agent who "farms her out" for a lease of three, six, nine!

Shape No. 1. Of securing the attention of the public. Your name displayed on the hoardings at every street corner, and on the advertising stations in as large letters as possible.

This is the "*Great Attraction*" No. 1.

Shape No. 2. Of retaining the esteem of the public, to obtain notices in the newspapers. But . . . How? to *obtain* notices in newspapers; do not they appear as a matter of course?

What! pay musical critics?

Not exactly—sometimes,—but not in any way that can be *proved*.

You might leave your purse *by mistake* on the mantelpiece of these gentlemen's houses. You forget to enquire after it! Yes! this is done. Yes, you can send them barrels of choice wines, *pâtés de foies gras*, game, presents, in fact, of various kinds.

Sometimes even a good dinner will secure their good word. But . . . all this is not *legitimate*. The true method of enlisting the favourable criticisms of a paper is to advertise largely in the musical columns. You must remember that a newspaper is the private property of a single individual, of a clique, or of a company. This newspaper constitutes a revenue to that single individual, a speculation, perhaps; a medium for levelling hush-money, probably; you may, perhaps, purchase shares in it as if it were a railway, a mine, or a bank. Do not imagine for a moment that the papers exist to satisfy a public want! Little do people care for the "public want." The proprietor or the shareholders have their own "private wants," and a very real desire to fill their own pockets at the cost of, it matters not whose reputation, and they give themselves very little concern as to the falsehoods or baseness to which their journal gives publicity, provided that they make it a *good paying concern*.

Advertise extensively whatever you choose! it is the *legitimate* way of buying the press; it is the *honest* way, which no one can characterise as robbery or corruption. The editor of the paper then takes you under his *own* protection; you stand to him in the light of an income; he and his partners will protect *that* against the personal malignity of the musical critic. The editor would not consider that he were carrying on a *legitimate and honest business* if he allowed his client to be passed over in silence or to be libelled.

What chance, then, has any vocalist of "getting on" fairly by his or her own merits if he or she cannot bring the money question to bear on the matter. If this were a clearly understood and recognised FACT, would there be so many unfortunate persons of talent who struggle and drag on year after year an uncertain existence of false hopes and delusive beliefs in their own merits, during which time

they have wasted their energy, their time, their best years, and their constitution? WHY?—by what right should a “soloist” get on unless £5,000 or £6,000 can be spent in advertisement? If £5,000 were spent, is it probable that the press gentlemen could behave with such signal injustice to Messrs. Gye, Mapleson, Halanzier, Carvalho, Chappell, Novello, Boosey, Metzler, Heugel, Choudens, Pasdeloup, Colonne, Costa, the Crystal and Alexandra Palaces, Albert Hall, Philharmonic, etc., as to cry up a singer who was not *in the swim*? All these people play, to a certain degree, into each other’s hands, and they represent hundreds of thousands of pounds to the papers. How can one poor little concert singer contend against all that? . . . What would become of God Himself, my poor children, if the church bells did not remind the public of Him outside, and if appeals were not made on His behalf incessantly inside the church?

And just think of the money that all this represents!!!

Would it be right, would it be just that he who could only afford £5,000 a year, should receive a profit equivalent to those who can spend £50,000? No!—certainly not. Reputation is sold, bought, and has the same commercial value exactly as Peter Robinson’s, Whiteley, Rimmell, “Jeyes’ Perfect Purifier,” Hanford’s Bronchitine, Sozodont, Richmond Gems, Mrs. Allen’s Hair Restorer, Colman’s Mustard, Holman’s Pads, etc., and many other things which the public learns about and appreciates according to the size of the letters of which the advertisements are composed.

When I first commenced my public career, I was in the most profound ignorance of all these mysteries. I had been cradled with the choicest flattery since my entrance into society, and I was convinced that I had but to show myself in public to turn the world upside down! I imagined that I was going to make the fortune of concert managers. That they would tear Mrs. Weldon to pieces amongst them!!! A misgiving never entered my mind. I saw London—all my London—all the “upper ten thousand” thronging in mass to hear their idol sing in public. However, my children, not a soul troubled their heads about me. Not a soul spent a shilling to hear Mrs. Weldon sing in public, although she had deprived the world of the ineffable happiness of hearing her in private!!!

My pride here certainly received a severe shock!—Heaven knows, I was certainly not at all vain, but I was ingenious and credulous. I had taken as sterling coin the assurances to which I had been treated all my life as to my charms and my perfections, and I had believed that people cared for me. Not a bit of it! The papers had not cried me up, therefore in the eyes of all who had hitherto considered me a prodigy, I became of no account, and it really after all had not even been worth while listening to me. The press has the power to make believe white is black, and black, white; it has the power to make you, or to ruin you—and as for me, they ruined me! At least, if I am not ruined beyond redemption, it will not have been their fault!

I have, however, often laughed at poor Mrs. Weldon! My experience is, however, the experience of almost every one. We see, by

our side, inferior artists attain success under our very nose ; we feel ourselves to be unjustly dealt with ; we are hurt, we are disgusted, we cannot understand why a girl who is the daughter of a cobbler, a street walker, a person without education, without talent, should be magnificently dressed, and should meet with engagements, whilst you—who are not of that class—who are in every way superior, cannot secure any, and have not the means to purchase even the most simple and modest toilette. You cannot fathom the reasons. You draw back, pure minded, draped in your own dignity, your virtue, your conscience, your scruples, and your . . . powerlessness. You will find yourself reduced to give up the fight, or to do “like other people.” Well ! my children, if all that has happened and all that will happen prevents me from forming you into a battalion of mutual defence—if I do not succeed in enabling you to attain the place which you will have the right to occupy ; farewell to dignity, etc. ; pass under the Caudine Forks ; swallow all !—Only, when you have ascended your pedestal—Remember ! and say as I do : “ I have humbled myself, I have mixed with blackguards, I have soiled myself, I have sold myself, because the conduct of a great man of genius, Charles François Gounod, having destroyed all that she had dreamt of, all that she had built up with self-sacrifice, loving tears, at the hour when her brave and pious efforts were being crowned with success,—she, our poor protectress, our friend, our mother, was not able to cope with the formidable league which encompassed her, or to leave us a sufficiently powerful protection ; I will continue her task, and I will myself create apostles and priestesses of art ; I will found a school of music, which, in time, shall be acknowledged and hailed *universally* in every country of the wide world, as a DIVINE ART, instead of being what it is, at present, a SATANIC TRADE.” Remember that if you are to be known as orphans without a name (except mine), as charity children, you do not owe this opprobrium to me, but to Mr. Gounod.

In 1870 it had not entered my head to found my School on a charitable basis. I had reckoned on earning *my own* money, of spending *my own money* on *my own* School, and I should never have thought of being beholden to anyone for help, or of asking anyone for a single penny.

I never had the slightest doubt, and I have none now (I have had so many offers made me since), but that some Agent would have “farmed me out,” and that I should have made a good thing of it for him as well as served my own purpose. I was on very good terms with everybody. I had no enemies, at least that was my belief ! When one has need of nothing, what does one know of life or of the world ?

* * * * *

I have already said that I belonged to Henry Leslie's Choir. He had selected me to sing a solo part at one of his concerts at St. James' Hall. I was rehearsing with the choir, when, at that very moment, Mr. Charles Gounod, accompanied by Madame Gounod, by his mother-in-law, Madame Zimmerman, and by the Abbé Boudier,

1st Vicar of St. Cloud, entered the Hall (*See Autobiography of Charles Gounod*, page 39, and *Quarrel of the Albert Hall*, p. 7).

The Agent of *my Faith* had found me! He, who in my most ambitious dreams I should never have conceived even as coming across my path! By *his* admiration I found myself suddenly raised to the rank (which, conscientiously, I knew was mine by right) of one of the most celebrated artists of the day.

Now this is the way, by a singular chance, how it was on the 26th February (1871) I had made the acquaintance of this strange mortal who bears the name of Charles François Gounod. Ever since 1862 when, for the first time, I heard the name and the music of this new composer, I was charmed and interested. Being of a faithful disposition, I had remained constant to my old Italian Masters, and I had not conceived that it could have been possible to meet with finer music than Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Rossini, etc.

In 1858 I had been persuaded by Benedict to study the music of a great favourite of the King of Bavaria, Richard Wagner. While admiring and admitting the great and powerful qualities of this legendary music (I never have been partial to legends, I am of too positive a nature,) I must confess I did not take to it. One had to pay for, by hours of spiral and labyrinthian passages of almost unbearable weariness, a quarter-of-an-hour of dazzling music—majestic in its splendour and brilliancy. I have conscientiously studied it, but soon left it to take care of itself!

It was on hearing the Duet in the Garden of *Faust* "*Laisse moi*" (miserably squealed by two weak amateurs) that something was revealed to me which I had not yet experienced, and which induced me to go to a good old lady who was in the habit of spoiling me, and say to her, "Will you make me a present of the score of *FAUST* by Charles Gounod?" She gave it to me, and I then went to Benedict. "My dear Daddy, I absolutely must have a box for *Faust*." And I got my box for *FAUST*. I no longer dreamt of anything but *FAUST*. I played nothing, I sang nothing but *FAUST*. I compare Wagner to a brilliant sunny garden plot, where tulips, and gaudy flowers, with long branches, and curious leaves bloomed, before which one stands and gazes, bewildered by their beauty; but Gounod appeared to me as a mossy dell in some wood, lit up by great rays of sunlight athwart the foliage,—a dell where, in dreaming repose, hours might be spent, upon which one sinks as on heaps of soft sweet-scented hay,—a dell, where lay encrusted precious stones,—a dell, sparkling here and there with pebbles overlaid with soft moss, green as the lizard, yellow brown, pale blue green, hardy lichens—a dell, where the young oak sapling would rear its head (an acorn having been dropped there by fairy hand)—a dell where lay hidden dark, grand spreading roots in the deep shade, violets, periwinkles, fox gloves, tangled ferns waving in picturesque disorder by the side of the purling brook, in which the forget-me-not peeps, where the light dragon flies dart to and fro. What did not the beautiful new music speak of, say to me? Of cathedrals, of incense, of anthems, of plainchant, of processions!

It was a world in itself! *my world*. It spoke to me of simple farm-yards, of courtly castle-yards, of hell, of heaven. This music satisfied me! And then I longed to know what Gounod was like. I had been told that he had been a Trappist. A silent young man, pious and holy. Was it astonishing then, that his music had such hidden depths, was so divine! I who had such a love for solitude and silence, I envied him. . . . And then I was told I sang FAUST "*as nobody else*." People used to say to me, "How beautiful! I had always found it so long and tedious before hearing you!—have you had lessons from Gounod?" "No," I would reply, "Gounod is a Trappist, but I am sure I have understood him. I feel it!" At that time few admired Gounod. He had not become "the fashion," and I was considered not *like other people* for being so enthusiastic about his music. It was admitted that his music was beautiful when I sang it, but not otherwise! I was often told that Gounod was no *composer*. "*It is not composition!*" How often I have been told this! I would blush with vexation, and would say, "No! it is more than *composition*, it is INSPIRATION."* Then they would tease me! and chaff me! However, all allowed, "Gounod's music is very beautiful when you sing it. He really ought to hear you! If Gounod could only have a chance of hearing you!" I constantly heard the same thing repeated. My way of singing Gounod's music seemed to have a special interest for people, for I have never been told the same concerning Rossini's, Verdi's, or Meyerbeer's, etc. I felt fast enough that others did not interpret Gounod properly, that his music became vulgar or insignificant. I felt that a peculiar delicacy was needed to avoid depriving it of its effect or of rendering it coarse, or absolutely devoid of attraction. When I began to teach in downright earnest, I resolved that my pupils should be the interpreters and the Apostles of this Messiah of the Gospel of New Music.

To my taste *Mireille*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, one after the other, had the same charm as *Faust* (which I could never consider as superior to his other Operas). I acknowledge, however, that in *Faust* as in *Mireille* and *Romeo and Juliet* there are Solo airs which I do not go wild about. I found his *mélodies* adorable. I suppose that I had naturally quite a special weakness for Gounod, for I took a dislike to Faure from the day that I heard him relate some farcical stories about Gounod, making fun of my "Saint" and my "Trappist." I was furious when I heard that Gounod was not a Trappist, and that he had a wife with whom he wrangled continually. The war had broken out between France and Prussia. Faure and Gounod had taken refuge in England. Benedict had often proposed to take me to see Gounod, for he said it was *my duty* to let Gounod hear me: that he would be charmed to hear me! Gounod was always "at home" on Wednesdays. Nothing was said of Madame Gounod, and I said to myself that being a *Lady* it was not for me to go and see an artist under existing circumstances. Benedict asked us also to come to him on a Sunday evening; Gounod went there at times, but

* This is what I replied to Sir Michael Costa one evening.

I had no wish to go and stare at him, as though he were a wild beast, or to meet him. He was not a Trappist! He had deceived me. I felt sulky with him. Five months of Gounod's stay in London passed in this way—we had never been possessed of the mania for running after people, however celebrated they might be.

Well, the 26th February arrived. My heart was very sore that day on account of something unkind the brother of my old sweetheart, Pedro, had done to me. I loved this Tommy (as he was called) because he was the brother of the *other one*, and he took advantage of it to worry me. My husband and I had gone to dine with Mr. James Clay (Fred Clay's father), whom Gounod calls *Padrino* in his letters. (See page 91, THE LETTERS, 27th October, 1872.) Fred Clay having argued with me on my dreams about my school, and my "absurdities," I found him very disagreeable, and I proposed to Mr. Weldon to go and say good-bye, at Benedict's, to one of his daughters who was on the eve of returning to France. We arrived therefore at Benedict's pretty late. He was delighted to see us; he seized hold of my arm, and said to a gentleman dressed in a brown suit (coat, waistcoat, and trousers to match), "Ah! my dear Gounod, this is Mrs. Weldon, of whom I have spoken to you; don't go yet; sing something to her, and then she'll sing for you. You'll be delighted!"

This, then, was Gounod! At last I stood face to face with the Gounod of my dreams. Gounod, on being introduced to me, gazed at me with a look of surprise, very searching and interrogative. He looked as if he recognised me; he seemed struck, he seemed to hesitate. I said very gently to him, "Monsieur, I would not have dared to ask you, but I should be very pleased; allow me to present my husband to you," and I introduced Mr. Weldon.

Gounod, without saying a single word, went and reseated himself at the piano. I took my usual place in Benedict's room on a sofa, from which I could watch the hands of the pianist, which I always like to do. Benedict's daughter sat by my side, and next to her an ugly little brown woman came and sat herself very familiarly by us. Her dress, and the way of dressing her hair, were equally vulgar, and I immediately took a dislike to her, for my instinct told me that she watched Gounod with a sneering look. Although Gounod's appearance did not charm me, because he had a muddy complexion; his hands seemed dirty; his clothes scrubby, and too short,—I thought of Faure, and resented the idea of any one making fun of him. Gounod seemed to me *round*; his closely shaped beard *round*, not a hair longer than the other (bristles like box-hedge trimming); his short neck, his *round* stomach, his *round* shoulders, his *round* eyes with which he had glared at me! and then he was fat and old. This was no lean, young, silent Trappist. Gounod, to speak the plain truth, displeased me, disappointed me—excited in me even a feeling of repulsion; but it was he, after all, the author of the divine music that I adored, so he was sacred in my eyes; and the little brown woman, with broad nostrils turned up all round like those of a Japanese crockery dog, with a mocking smile on her lips, an impudent look about her, offended me. Gounod, casting serious (but *round*)

glances at me from time to time, played the prelude—rather a long one—of that admirable song, "*A une jeune fille*" ("*To a young girl*"). He began to sing, and I heard only the words, which went straight to my heart, which stirred every fibre of my being, which, at each line, moved my soul more and more.

Those lines seemed addressed to me. Gounod looked straight at me (always quite *round*) from time to time. He seemed to be specially addressing himself to me. I did not know which way to look. My tears, which had begun to flow at the first line, had become a rivulet, the rivulet had become a stream, the stream a torrent, the torrent sobs, the sobs almost a fit!

These were the words of Emile Augier which pained me so much, and yet did me so much good; for, although I am very unhappy, I have been so happy, and I am so still, sometimes with so profound a happiness, thinking of the happy past, I do not regret what I have gone through:—

"Poor child, who would'st struggle against nature,
Who doubttest of Love and would'st ignore its laws.
What hast thou then suffered? and from what wound
This heart of eighteen has it lost its faith?
Do April flowers, for ever fade
Because of one breeze from the Northern blast?
The cup of your life, is it for ever poisoned
Because a tear from your eye has dropped on its rim?
I, who am already old in human experience,
Although my heart has bled oftener than most people's,
I do not regret the pure blood which has reddened
The shrubs where I searched for Love.
For what the thorns and briars have taught me is—
That in all the world nought is so good as Love;
That even the pains of Love are divine, and that
'Tis better one's heart should break than to close it."

Gounod sung several other songs, but I heard nothing more. I had gone to hide myself in a window behind the curtains, to drink a glass of water in the hopes of getting calm. My husband was furious, and wanted to take me away. This was the first time that I had ever given way in a room, although at the theatre I have always been very impressionable. I get worse every day. I avoid the theatre and all emotions of the kind, for they really make me too ill.

After almost everybody had left, I emerged from my retreat, and inquired of Benedict—

"Who is that ugly, little old brown woman who came and sat herself down by us on the sofa?"

"Madame Gounod."

"Good heavens! Madame Gounod! I exclaimed, "what did he marry her for?"

"Because she had a fortune and a position which he had not."

I went home with my husband somewhat dissatisfied with my evening. I had, as he said, with equal frankness and justice, "behaved like an idiot." Gounod, my God, my Saint, my Trappist, was *round*; he of whom Faure had spoken so slightly had not a good, honest,

natural look, and he had married for money the ugliest, the most common, sneering, disagreeable, little woman in the world !!!

On the 28th February, two days after this, Gounod, accompanied by the little brown woman, by his mother-in-law, and by his Abbé, entered the hall where I was singing the prayer of Mendelssohn—"Hear my prayer, O Lord" (words of the Adagio). In the words at the close, I seemed to breathe a prayer which it appeared to me would be granted—

"Oh ! for the wings of a dove,
Far away, far away would I roam !"

After I had finished, the choir applauded ; Gounod, in ecstasies, left his seat precipitately to congratulate me. He introduced to me *his ladies* and the Abbé, who were all very amiable. I left directly to go and sing at a concert that had been got up for the benefit of the French wounded (at the Hanover Square Rooms), a song specially composed for the occasion, the words being written by Baron de Moyecque, the music by Fred Clay. The song itself was sold for the benefit of the wounded ; and, at this concert, where I did not forget to tell everybody that Gounod had heard me sing, and all the compliments he had paid me, I was advised to go and see him, and ask him to get me to repeat the same song at a concert which he was getting up for the wounded at the Alhambra in Leicester Square, for the 4th March.

So I went the next day (which happened to be a Wednesday), the day on which the Gounods were *at home*. I made my request, and brought him the song in question, entitled, "*Albion, ô Sœur Généreuse*" ("Oh ! Albion, generous Sister"). I was asked to sing it. It was now my turn to cause everybody to weep. Madame Gounod wept ; she forgot to sneer. Madame Zimmerman, and many others, burst into tears. Gounod pressed both my hands, with his eyes full of tears, exclaiming, "What a singular voice ! it is the voice of both sexes !" It was a perfect shower of tears and compliments. Gounod sat down to the piano. He began FAUST ; Gounod and I sang it right through from beginning to end ! Thereupon followed bravos and sighs without end. Madame Gounod became enthusiastic ; she told me herself that I was "*born for Gounod !*" Madame Zimmerman, in tears, said the same thing. Gounod was jubilant. "This is the Pauline I want ! this is the Pauline of my dreams !" In a word, never was success more complete. I was in ecstasies ! I left those dear Gounods with a letter of introduction from Gounod to Rimmel, who was the principal organiser of the Alhambra Concert. The matter was arranged with Mr. Rimmel, and I was joyfully happy and satisfied with my day. I was full of enthusiasm for Gounod, and of sympathy for his wife, who had been so amiable, and I reproached myself for having judged her so unfavourably. I argued with myself, that if she were ugly it was not her fault ; and that if Gounod had married her, it must have been for some great qualities which she possessed which were not apparent at first sight, and not for her fortune. This is what happened the next day, the 2nd :—

(Extract from my Journal.)*

March, 1872.—Gounod (the angel from heaven) came and stayed two hours with me, brought me such a letter . . . (See Letter 2 Mars, 1871, page 1, LES LETTRES.) He played me his composition for the opening of the Royal Albert Hall, which he says I have inspired him with, and I am to sing the solo. It is divine! He says I have done him such good, that I have such an extraordinary voice as he has never heard (voice of the two sexes). He says he has found the Pauline of his dreams, the heroine of his new opera, *Les Martyrs*. We looked through *Mireille*, *Romeo and Juliet*. What a blessing from Heaven that Gounod, who I have worshipped as divine for so many years, knowing his soul was in mine, should stretch out the hand of his heavenly genius to me, in the time of my life, when in my sore trouble I never wanted it more.

On the 4th March I sang "*Albion, ô Sœur Gênéreuse*," at the Alhambra Concert, and on returning to make my curtsy after the song, my foot slipped, and I sprained it very badly. The next evening, my foot, bandaged in starch by a surgeon, my husband took me in a carriage to spend the evening at the Gounod's. I was placed in the corner of the drawing-room, with my leg upon a stool near the piano. I particularly describe this position, because this accident prevented what otherwise might very innocently have happened, *i. e.*, I might have talked in corners with Gounod, which might have served as a pretext—without my being conscious of it myself—and so roused the jealousy of Madame Gounod, which later on did so much harm; but no, I was consigned to that corner, in full view of everybody, and I could not move all the evening. On this occasion I saw Gounod's son and daughter, and I made a note in my journal that "neither of them was well brought up." That evening Madame Zimmerman, who saw that I could only go out quite in the quiet way, asked me to come again the next evening, because her daughter was going out, and they wished to make up a party for whist. We returned next evening, and were much disappointed. Gounod told us that when he had asked me to sing the solo of "*Gallia*," for the inauguration of Albert Hall, he had completely forgotten that he had promised Madame Conneau to get her to sing it on that occasion; that he considered it most unfortunate for him as the music did not suit her voice at all.

14th March.—I was singing in my place among the choir (Henry Leslie), Gounod, who conducted a composition of his, came and spoke to me twice during the evening.

15th March.—According to his wish, I went in the morning to hear the orchestral rehearsal of his *De Profundis* and *O Salutaris* at St. James's Hall. He hardly said "Good morning" to me, being so busy with the rehearsal.

20th March.—Madame Gounod came with Jeanne (her daughter) and Mme. Zimmerman to pay me a visit.

5th April.—Gounod paid me a long visit. Jean de Reszke was there. Gounod is going to set to music "*The Sea hath its Pearls*."

14th April.—Gounod brought me "*There is a Green Hill far away*," "*Be-ware!*" and "*The Daisy*." That day my husband and I left London for Beaumaris where we went to pack up our furniture. On leaving, he kissed me on the forehead in a most solemn manner.

* I have kept a journal since 1852.

This I can swear is an exact account of the terms which subsisted between Gounod and ourselves. A woman is keen enough to discover when a man has an out of the way preference for her. Gounod had not shown more admiration for me than that to which I had been accustomed all my life from everybody. I had always been told that I rendered Gounod's music "*as no one else could do.*" He had never addressed me but with the greatest respect. I looked on him as a saint, as a father. Madame Gounod had no more reason to be jealous of me than if I had never known him. GOD KNOWS THAT THIS IS THE REAL TRUTH, therefore let them talk and slander as much as they like. I know, and Gounod knows as well as I do, that we had not made love to him as I have often seen others do. We, in no manner or fashion, ran after him in the slightest degree, and he certainly did not run after me! We did not return there on Wednesdays—not that we knew anything about Madame Gounod's jealousy, but, in the first place, artists' society was not what we habitually frequented, and, in the second place, their rooms were small, and to go often to any house whatsoever was contrary to our somewhat reserved habits.

29th April.—We returned to London.

1st May.—Opening of Royal Albert Hall. We went the same day to congratulate the Gounods on the success of *GALLIA*. We only found the dear old lady Madame Zimmerman (I always called her the "dear old lady," she appeared to adore me so much), Jean and Jeanne Gounod. Madame Zimmerman asked us to go and spend next evening (2nd May) with them, which we did.

9th May.—Gounod came to see me, and told me as a great secret that he had been offered to conduct some large choruses which they were thinking of getting up at Albert Hall for the season of 1872. He told me he had accepted, and this caused me immense pleasure. He brought me, that day, his new song, "*The Sea hath its Pearls.*"

11th May.—We went to spend the evening at the Gounods. Madame Zimmerman and me, Abbé Boudier and Gounod, played at whist. Gounod took possession of my gold pen which I am so fond of, but I was obliged to give it him. (I write the reflection)—"What beautiful things he will write with it!"

12th May.—Day of our taking possession of Tavistock House. Gounod and Madame Zimmerman came to see us. Madame Gounod had promised to bring Jeanne, but did not keep her promise. They asked us therefore to come back that evening to them to hear Gounod read his *Trilogy Redemption*. He is full of nothing but composing it for me and my children's voices.

14th May.—Gounod and Abbé Boudier brought me the photographs of the ruins of St. Cloud. Kuhe came that day to ask him to stay in London for his concert, Benedict having persuaded him to stay for his and accompany me in "*Oh that we two were Maying.*"

Kuhe ardently wished me to get him to do the same for him. I had known Kuhe and his family, who lived at Brighton, for the last twenty years. He gave one concert in London every year, and several at Brighton during the season.

On the 15th May M. Louis Van Waefelghem, who had been recommended to me by my old friend M. Jules Devaux, Chef du Cabinet of the King of the Belgians, came to ask me to take him with me to Gounod's, so that he might get a few hints from him about the violin obligato of "*The Sea hath its Pearls,*" in which

he was to accompany me. I sent for my Victoria, and off we went to Gounod's. No one at home, so we waited in the carriage before the door. Gounod and Abbé Boudier came quietly on foot from the Park; Madame Gounod and Madame Zimmerman returned home in a cab. We were still there. There was a policeman there who was asking explanations about a certain sixpence which had been given to a policeman another evening. Madame Gounod was quite upset; she appealed to me to interpret. I forget the end of the story. The policeman went off, Van Waefelghem made his request, he obtained the explanations he wanted, and I returned home.

16th May, memorable day! Gounod and the Abbé Boudier came to pay me a visit. Gounod was in a frightful state of over-excitement. Now I had never seen Gounod anything but calm, dignified, and serenely angelic! Never was there the slightest appearance in him of haste, precipitation, or excitement. He never gesticulated; he never raised his voice. His step seemed the reflex of his soul; he never seemed to be in a hurry; even on the day that I was waiting for him in my carriage with Van Waefelghem before his door, I admired his step, so calm, so measured, which, with the pleasure I thought he would have experienced at seeing me, it would have been but natural if he had hurried a little. I internally approved every word, every gesture of Gounod. By degrees I discovered that Gounod grew more and more like the ideal I had for so long imagined him to be. I had imagined him just, without earthly desires, wrapt up in God, and his heart full of love for his fellow-creatures. He kissed all those who came near him, men, women, children, and animals. The little he said was full of goodness, and of consideration for all. He would discourse of his absent friends in France with an amount of feeling which filled me with joy, for although he seemed to wish me to perceive that my singing enchanted him, I could not expect to become other than one of the last pearls of the necklace on which were strung, in loving unity, so many of his beloved friends. I felt *so honoured, so blest*, to be able to aspire to become even the *last* pearl of all, provided I was thought worthy to be a pearl at all—the smallest, the least cared for, I should however be attached to him, and I should, humble though I was, be an atom in the thoughts of that great man, so good, so affectionate, so child-like! He seemed so ingenuous! so innocent! My husband, I, all my friends were delighted with him. He reproved in tones of sadness the sneering remarks of his wife. He tried to give an amicable turn to what his wife turned into ridicule. He seemed to wish to hide his wife's faults, and I never heard a word which seemed like a quarrel between them. To my eyes he was not a man—he was a god! I said to myself that it was a case of a modern Socrates and Xantippe.

At their house I had constantly heard Madame Gounod, Mr. and Madame Pigny, Madame Zimmerman, and other of their visitors deplore Gounod's want of *business-tact*. The question of *£ s. d.* was a never-ending topic of conversation. They accused Gounod of taking no account of money; he seemed to spend more

than he ought. Gounod seemed to submit to their reproofs as though he deserved them, and would say, "Here is a dear little woman" (pointing to me) "who will help us wonderfully!" Fancy how I swelled with pleasure and pride. I never perceived the slightest symptom of displeasure in Madame Gounod when he said this; on the contrary, Madame Gounod like the rest, was always asking me for information about English matters of all kinds, and as to Madame Zimmermann, she seemed simply to adore me. We were moreover at that time all in a state of enthusiasm for the poor French, whose beautiful country was so bitterly tried.

The misfortunes caused by the war and by the Commune had for the last six months stirred our hearts in warm sympathy for the unhappy French. Madame Zimmermann had had her house burnt down at St. Cloud, the beautiful garden destroyed; the chalet of Gounod in like manner, the room where his Jeanne was born, the piano of his mother, a thousand manuscripts and musical notes lost; they were nearly ruined. They had thus (over and above the sympathy and admiration with which Gounod's presence would naturally have inspired us) all our pity and our hearty desire to help them for themselves, for their Abbé, and for the poor of St. Cloud. They ceased not to assure me that I would make Gounod's fortune and my own also. Gounod, without seeming to say too much, gave me to understand that never would such a success as mine have been witnessed in Paris. I believed all that they told me; if only out of pure gratitude for all the good that Gounod and those around him were going to do for me, I would have done anything in the world to please them. Abbé Boudier, who had been presented to me at our second interview, and who was collecting money for the poor at St. Cloud, gained my sympathy, and I obtained a considerable sum for him. . . . I received several letters from him; the following one, full of feeling and gratitude, proves that my collection had borne fruit, and that they had been very glad to make use of me and my friends.

Letter from the ABBÉ BOUDIER, Vicar of St. Cloud, to MRS. WELDON.

LONDON, 14th May, 1871.

Madam,—I thank you with all my heart for the obliging and aimable charity with which you have so kindly undertaken to interest yourself for the poor of St. Cloud.

I could not desire a better advocate or a more gracious interpreter than yourself, with your worthy friends who will have the charity to entrust their generous alms to you.

Thanks in the name of eight hundred families completely ruined by Prussian barbarity.

Thanks in the name of four hundred of this number who are temporarily lodged in wretched stables. Thanks in the name of old men, of workmen, of the poor, and of children for whom your devoted and benevolent aid will have provided bread, clothes, and may be a roof.

Thanks, dear lady, in my own name, unknown to you, and having no claim on your goodness. I am the more flattered at having you in the ranks of our benefactors since you generously and spontaneously devoted yourself to this cause.

Accept, dear lady, the homage of my profound respect and my eternal gratitude.

(Signed) L'ABBÉ BOUDIER,
1st Vicar of St. Cloud.

The "profound respect" and "eternal gratitude" of the Abbé have had just the same value as the "profound respect" and "eternal gratitude" of Gounod ; for I cannot believe that if any one, knowing us as the Abbé Boudier knew us, had firmly and with dignity opposed the mad, cruel, and despicable conduct of Gounod towards us, in leaving us, *in the manner in which he left us*, after his living with us for three years, that he would have dared to have acted as he has.

* * * * *

Gounod and I, each in our own way, were mad on the subject of Religion. He would bring me religious fragments in prose which I found splendid, and in verse of which the following is a specimen.

" Oh ! Lord Jesus,
 May I know myself, may I know Thee,
 May I not desire aught but Thee,
 May I hate me, and love Thee,
 What I do, may I do it because of Thee,
 May I think of nought but Thee,
 May I mortify me, and live in Thee,
 All that happens, may I take it from Thee,
 May I fly from me and follow Thee,
 May I ever desire to follow Thee,
 May I shun me and take refuge with Thee,
 May I be of the Elect by Thee,
 May I mistrust me and trust to Thee,
 Look at me, that I may see Thee,
 Call me that I may love Thee,
 And that through Eternity I may rejoice in Thee.
Amen."

My life drifted along in this frame of mind when the *16th May* arrived. Can you imagine my astonishment, my disenchantment, and my fright on that day, on seeing Gounod burst into my house like a thunderbolt, beside himself . . . foaming at the mouth !

The Abbé Boudier, who, it must be said, never left him, in vain tried to calm him. In vain. Gounod swore he would separate from his wife. He would remain in England, he would go to America, never mind where—anywhere where his wife could not follow him. He stamped and tore up and down the room with feverish steps. Words blurted from his mouth. "For twenty years he had led a life of hell upon earth. He would lead it no longer ! There was an end of it, once and for all ! Never would he be dragged into it again ! Never ! Death itself would be preferable !" I was amazed. I was struck dumb ! Faure's words came back to my mind. I wanted to know what was the matter with Gounod. Gounod did not explain himself, it was a soliloquy, an imprecation without end. "It is nothing !" said the Abbé, "it's the same story every three months—they will make it up again !" He did all he could to pacify Gounod, who did not cease storming up and down, or his gesticulations. He was quite incoherent and almost crying. "He could," he said, "do no good whatsoever by the side of that woman. She breaks up all my ideas, she makes a martyr of me, she makes me *die of grief*; it is now twenty years that she has made me lead this life of hell upon earth !"

"But what have you done then?" I asked at last (believing it to be some money matter or publisher's quarrel). "Nothing; really nothing!" replied he, piteously. "But you must have done SOMETHING or other! What is it then?" "Nothing—nothing at all!" replied Gounod, working himself up still more. "What is the matter with *her* then?" I insisted. "Hang it all!" said Gounod, indignantly, "She is jealous!" "Jealous!—jealous of whom then, good gracious!" I asked, perfectly stupified, for with the exception of the fraternal but perpetual embraces bestowed by Gounod on all who approached him,—men, children, women and animals—I had never seen a man who was less gallant, a man who paid less individual attention to women than Gounod. I considered him just the contrary of "*gallant*." "Jealous of *whom*? Jealous of *you*!" exclaimed Gounod, *furibond*. I burst out into so hearty and frank a laugh, that certainly, if Madame Gounod had heard it, her jealousy would have instantly ceased, and the deplorable consequences of this baneful passion would not have brought with them the troubles and griefs of which this narrative is a faithful record. "Jealous of *ME*! Can she be capable of imagining, by any chance, that I could be in love with *you*?" . . . I asked still laughing. It would never have occurred to me that *Gounod*, a married man, such a saint, too! could seriously be suspected of being in love. Equally monstrous and impossible did it seem to me that I, a married woman, could fall in love. Still, it seemed less impossible for me to be in love with Gounod than he with me! And at our age! No! that seemed too droll altogether. It is true, I had said out loud often enough, according to my custom, that I worshipped Gounod, that I lived but for his music. Could Madame Gounod have taken this in earnest? She had herself told me that I was "*born for Gounod*!" "Ah! my dear good friend, I hope not indeed! but she has always behaved like this about all the women I have ever known; she has always been violent and unjust!" I, at last, felt it was too much a joke: this unjust suspicion was abominable. I was indignant at the idea that this poor dear old man, this SAINT, should be tormented in this way, on my account . . . Never, never had any man paid me less attention than Gounod had. If Madame Gounod was jealous of me, she must be a hyena, a tigress, a lunatic. What! "at our age! at *his* age!" The idea that Gounod, who was fifty-three, could be loved by me at thirty-four, that Mme. Gounod, at forty-six years of age, could be jealous of me and of her husband at such venerable ages filled me with disgust, with horror, and with incredulity. "And even" (I made the remark aloud) "if it were possible to be in love with Gounod, one would not dare to let him see it—he is such a SAINT. He would be disgusted with such a woman for evermore!"

Gounod, seeing me indignant and giving utterance to the thoughts I have just penned, with a conviction and a faith that he and the Abbé (knowing how the land lay) must have looked on as a *naïvete* nothing less than *sublime*, grew calm and poured out for my benefit one after the other the history of a Rosalie, of a Pauline, of a Catherine, of a

Cécile, of an Edith, and finally of a Benedicte (to whom he alludes in his letter of 15th May, 1871) who was very ill. This "*sainted girl*" was the subject of constant naggings from this "*Megeza who could not conceive a pure affection, an ideal, as he and I (pure and undefiled spirits) conceived such.*" He told the Abbé "that nothing ever could change his firm resolution to sue for a judicial separation from his wife; that if his wife persisted in leaving him just at the height of the London season, when he was assured on all sides that he ought to remain another month longer—and when he had accepted engagements at several Concerts, that he had given his word, *which was more sacred to him than his bond*; that he would not knuckle down to a woman's caprice; that Jean had his term to finish at his school, and that he would not leave his son alone in a strange country, if his wife were to play him this trick he would never put his foot inside her doors again."

The reasons which Gounod gave seemed excellent, and in reply to the Abbé, who implored me to unite with him in persuading him not to separate from his wife, I replied that Gounod had shown far too much patience—that in his place I would not have lived twenty *days* by the side of such a "harpy!" I asked the Abbé, however, as a straightforward question, whose fault it was, and he replied that "Madame Gounod was terrible! TERRIBLE!" The Abbé, it must be said, seemed to have great affection and great respect for Gounod. A single word of blame, honest and serious, spoken out before him—as would have been befitting in a friend and an *Ecclesiastic*, above all, to pronounce at that juncture, would have opened my eyes, would have put me on my guard, and would have saved a young ingenuous woman (as I was for my age) from compromising herself as I have done with a man who has the reputation that Gounod is known in Paris to have. Everything conspired to make me believe Gounod an *angel* and Madame Gounod a *demon*.

18th May.—M. Van Waefelghem came again to see me; in consequence of his visit I had a good many places to go to. He asked me to go to Gounod to ask a question of him about his "*Romance*." Madame Gounod being out, I waited in my carriage at the door and would not go in, as I was informed that Gounod was alone in the house. Gounod came to the carriage door for a few moments to speak to me, and then I drove off. He had requested me to bring M. Van Waefelghem with me the next day in the afternoon to practise "*The Sea hath its Pearls*."

We repaired to his house at the time appointed. We found Mr. and Madame Pigny and Jeanne Gounod there in an indescribable state of commotion. Madame Gounod had lost £320; she vowed that they had been stolen, and she had gone to fetch the police. Gounod, returning with the Abbé, bid us quietly not to be uneasy, that it was the custom of his wife to turn everything topsy-turvy, to put a thing here or there and forget where she had placed it, and then to lose no time in accusing everybody in the house of having stolen it! Madame Gounod, who returned a few minutes later like a volcano, set about looking once more for the lost notes, and very

soon discovered them under a heap of linen where she had hidden them. "I was sure of it," said Gounod, calmly. He was most affable to Mr. Van Waefelghem. He agreed to give him an *obligato* alto accompaniment instead of the violin. Gounod promised him that he would compose another song with *obligato* for alto, and that he would leave "*The Sea hath its Pearls*" without altering it. He went and brought his selection of poems, and I chose those beautiful lines of Kingsley, "*Oh that we two were Maying*."

20th May.—The Abbé Boudier came to give me notice that Gounod's piano having been taken away, he would come to me at four o'clock that afternoon to let me hear the new song, and that I should go and give the publishers (Duff & Stewart) notice to hasten the printing of "*The Sea hath its Pearls*," and to prepare them for "*Oh that we two*." Mr. Stewart then told me that Gounod ought to have a *fac-simile* made of his signature with which to stamp all the printed copies. I went, therefore, to speak to Madame Gounod about it, and explained the matter to her. She professed not to understand anything about it—any more than I did. She called Gounod, who told her he had a similar one in Paris, that he required one for use in England, and that he would ask his friend Mr F. D. to stamp the copies for him. I took myself off quickly with his signature to the engraver; at the end of two days it was ready; ultimately it was entrusted to us since Mr D. refused the responsibility. It was not, therefore, a compliment paid us by Gounod—it was a kindness of us to accept the charge. In the afternoon he brought me "*Oh that we two were Maying*," one of the sweetest and most touching songs which were ever composed, and which made me cry with all my heart.

21st May.—I wished to give little Jeanne Gounod a little souvenir, as much to please Madame Gounod as the child; it was a beautiful trinket which had belonged to my grandmother (a lovely cornelian heart), which, when I was a good little girl, they used to fasten to my left shoulder. It was on 20th May that I said "*à revoir*" (for I would not say *adieu*) to Madame Gounod. I could not get into my head that she was really jealous of me, or that she could entertain any ill-feeling towards me. I knew the facts, and could not believe in such folly on her part. She had, moreover, always in appearance received me so amiably. Perhaps she felt slighted to know, after she had left, that I had taken her mother and her husband to my mother's; this perhaps turned her spiteful against me; I really am so innocent of anything, except that, which she could have taken umbrage at—but I do not think anyone will blame me for not introducing to my mother persons I knew she would not have approved of.

We kissed each other as usual, and she said to me—

"Good-bye, my dear, good-bye; I shall, perhaps, never see you again!" as if she were grieved at the thought of losing me.

"Oh!" I replied, "don't say that; if you cannot come to England, we shall be going to France; we could no longer be without you both!"

She was odious, I confess; but I pitied her. Why had God made me so amiable and her so disagreeable? She seemed to brighten up

when I was there ; I used to make her quite merry. The quarrel of of the 16th May between her and Gounod had blown over—forgotten. Gounod had not spoken again of separating ; on the contrary, he was to rejoin her with Jean on the 15th June. This was a grief which I kept to myself ; for I should naturally have wished him to have remained the rest of the season, so as to make the most of me, and to accompany me everywhere. I took good care, however, not to show it, or to make a sign, or to say a word which might persuade him to remain for my sake, or in my interest.

23rd May.—My husband and I went to see "*Grand Mère*" (Mme. Zimmerman), and Gounod and the Abbé, who had moved to other apartments since the departure of Madame Gounod. I asked *Grand Mère* how she could have made up her mind to let her daughter go without her?

"I remain with my dear Gounod, who is an angel ; it would kill me to be with my daughter. You do not know Anna."

She lavished affectionate speeches on me, and the same afternoon she went with us and Gounod to pay a first visit to my mother, who was charmed with Gounod. I had awaited the moment of Madame Gounod's departure to be able to present Gounod to my mother. Madame Gounod was so common, and looked so vulgar, that, unless she had been a Countess, I should certainly not have dared to present her to my mother. That very day Gounod made me a present of the rough copy of "*Oh that we two*," and of the *Eucharistie* of Bossuet (which he gave me as a birthday gift), and in which he wrote :—

"24th May, 1871.

"*A Brother to his Brother.*

"ONE FAITH, ONE LOVE, ONE HOPE."

I believed he was a man of fervent piety ; he was always speaking of religion.

The accounts from Paris during the Commune kept us in a state of terrible anxiety. The massacre of the hostages had nearly driven him mad. The poor Archbishop of Paris, Abbé Deguerry, the serious illness of Bénédicte Savoye—all came together at one time. When he could not see me, he would take refuge at my mother's, whose head he quite turned. He found his mind diverted from these harrowing subjects, and the consolation he needed with us at this painful moment—a period doubly painful to a French heart, and this remembrance alone should have sufficed to have secured for us an abiding gratitude and affection in his heart—*his* heart ! Has he got one ?

But at that time we used to say to each other, "What a divine creature !" "What an excellent man !" "What a good heart !" "What eloquence !" "How fortunate I was to have secured the esteem and admiration of such a being !" "Poor, dear man !" Mamma pitied him, I pitied him, we all pitied him, and we sang his praises together.

24th May.—My birthday (I was 34 years of age). Gounod brought me what he called "my penny bunch of flowers," a new song, pretty and simple, "*Queen of Love*,"* and a penholder in exchange for the one he had from me."

"*Queen of Love*," published at Novello's.

26th May.—Gounod gave me the *Confessions of St. Augustine*. He spent all his time in weeping over the misfortunes of France, between *Grand Mère* and the Abbé—sometimes at our house, sometimes at my mother's. Jean would pass his half-holidays with us. Abbé Boudier implored me to "*cheer up that poor, dead great man*" at this time. *Grand Mère* seemed to adore me, and was not sparing in her confidences to me concerning Anna's failings and Gounod's perfections. She wrote in our Book of Signatures, "*Hortense Zimmermann, very happy to have made the acquaintance of the amiable Mrs. Weldon, of whom she will ever retain an affectionate remembrance.*"

She would take me in her arms and kiss me! My husband gave Gounod lessons in English. The most friendly intimacy was established. How easy, however, would it have been for Madame Zimmermann to have warned me against the reed upon which I was leaning. How charitable it would have been to have sent Abbé Boudier to say to me, "My poor woman, my poor friend, I see you thus confiding, affectionate, generous, cradled in delusions. Be warned! In France we know Gounod, he is a *Tartuffe*, a Proteus, and a renegade Abbé; he affects religion, but he has none. It is the honey with which he catches flies like you. He has had a hundred mistresses; his wife has a right to be jealous; he has been guilty towards her of a thousand infidelities; he is devoid of dignity or honour; he will not scruple to sacrifice yours; he is a libertine; his senses are degraded—in a word, *Gounod is a girl!*" The pain it would have caused me even then would have been extreme, but I would have listened—I would even have believed, and readily—because what had been inexplicable to me for some time past, thanks to this warning (if it had been made to me), would have become intelligible. But no, nothing was said; and when I heard Gounod spoken against, it was too late; it was only when we had a right to ascribe it to slanderous jealousy. I was very fond of Jean Gounod, who was then 15. He was badly brought up; my husband could not tolerate him. Jean blamed his mother for all that happened. He called me, "Ma Reine" (marraine), and seemed to adore me.

29th May.—I expected Gounod. He did not come. I was anxious. I went to see grand'mère. She was not at home. Gounod dragged himself to the carriage; he could scarcely stand, he was livid, he was trembling all over. "Poor angel!—[*Extract of the Journal*].—I found him in a pitiable state. With the greatest difficulty I persuaded him to come and take a drive in the Park (I was in my Victoria). I obliged him to tell me the cause of his grief. How sad he made me. How good he is! They have killed the Archbishop of Paris, the Abbé Deguerry, and sixty-four priests, in the Prison de la Roquette, and Paris is in flames."

He wrote constantly to my mother.

31st May.—It was Benedict's Concert. Gounod accompanied me in his new song, "*Oh that we two were Maying.*"

"He was better."

June 6th.—One of Benedict's daughters paid me a visit. I had known her intimately for many years. She said to me, "Every one says Gounod is in love with you!" I replied, "Don't say that. He

would become in my eyes a fallen angel!" One day Gounod had said to me, standing at his door, by the side of my Victoria (I do not recollect the circumstance, but I must have mentioned it in the manuscript stolen by the *Gaulois*), "I thought," said he, "that a woman instantly instinctively perceived when a man felt a preference for her!" I quickly replied, "You—you are not a *man*! you are a *god*!" He perceived that I was embarrassed by what he had said, for, in spite of myself, I blushed, and when I next saw him he gave me the *Eucharistie* of Bossuet without waiting for my birthday.

I said to him one day, "I should be so grieved if you had any preference for me, in the first place, it would not be fair towards the pearls of your 'necklace,' and then, if the sun shone for only one flower, it would soon fade!"

I have been told that I must have bothered Gounod dreadfully with all the ideality and the exaggerated sentimentality I imported into all my relations with him, and by the opinion that I entertained of his goodness and virtue—his virtue especially!!!

This, however, I do not believe, and this is why I think he was sincere at that time. The extraordinary restraint which he was able to impose for so long a time on his speech, his gestures and his demeanour, would have been unaccountable to me, if I had not discovered, by what was revealed to me, and later on by my acquaintance with spiritualistic matters, that Gounod was what is termed (among spiritualists) a *medium* (unconscious), or sensitive, fitted to receive strong (spiritual) impressions, liable to be influenced by the stronger mind with which he might at the time be controlled. Gounod, on seeing me, became attached to me as iron is to loadstone. He vowed to me that, on seeing me for the first time, he had *recognised* me. He had doubtless seen me in a dream or vision. There is nothing mysterious in this. I myself felt myself peculiarly attracted to him and his music. For years past, ever since I had heard the first note of it, I was drawn to it in a special manner. It was a new thing which had entered into me. It was a revelation to me. Inspiration in him had a greater hold than science; I would have composed like him if I had been encouraged, and if I had had a musical education. I composed *The Brook* when I was eighteen. It is an entirely original composition, well worked out and developed (which came naturally to me)—not at all in the style of any music with which I had ever been acquainted, but not astonishing if I had been a pupil of Gounod's school. I did not even know Gounod's name at that time, nor even Fred Clay's music, who, after Gounod, was, to my mind, the composer of the greatest talent that I had known till I made the acquaintance of John Urich; and, as for me, that young man "*hears better*" all to himself than Gounod, Fred Clay, and Wagner combined.

The *Sands o' Dee*, a composition written by Fred Clay when he was eighteen, gave promise of a great future, but his social position clipped his wings. He is the son of a member of Parliament (a rich man), and private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs. His career was affected by it, for he has never written anything serious. John Urich had incurred Gounod's ill-will, in the first place through jealousy, and secondly, because he did all he could to act as a peaceful intermediary between us two, in the hope of avoiding the publication of those books. He took the proofs to him. But his efforts were useless. Gounod refused to make me any reparation whatsoever. I was thus reduced to the necessity of defending myself as well as my husband, too indifferent, in truth, to all we had sacrificed, and to the object we had in view, first cause of our imprudent devotion. I here address myself particularly to the spiritualists who may read this book. They will easily comprehend that between Gounod and myself there are spiritual ties that nothing can break.* I myself wrote in my journal (without knowing the first word of Spiritualism) at our first meeting, "I knew that his soul was mine." Since then, all that he said when he was light-headed, the visions in which he saw me (at four o'clock in the afternoon, even in the summer-time) illumined, covered with a white light, the visions that I have had by his side and about him (the only visions I ever had in my life), prove that there is between us something which can never be destroyed. Is not his own mother my guardian angel? She watches over her son, she watches over me.

It is true that when I first saw him he was wrapped round in bad atmosphere, and I felt repulsion for him; but my stronger nature and my more positive ascendancy dominated him and moulded him in my own mind such as I wished him to be, such as I believed he was. He was irresistibly led (by reasons which suffice me) to be as I *wished* him to be, to become the reflex of my ideal; he unconsciously played a part; he appeared to be a personage (with which he had in reality nothing in common) without premeditated hypocrisy. That personification of sanctity was put on without his being conscious of it.

The perfect empire which I acquired over him without my being conscious thereof, was without doubt aided by the charming accessories of my pretty dresses, of my soft, golden, wavy hair, of my beautiful house, the fine trees, and by the admiration with which Gounod saw me surrounded. He knew that we moved in the best society. At my mother's all was luxurious and artistic. My sister was always splendidly dressed; and my husband, a fine tall young man, with a superb figure, very gentlemanlike. He had a most imposing carriage, and was altogether a grand-looking being; calm in his manners, and irreproachably well-dressed. . . . For months I retained in this way the Gounod of my dreams.

One day only during this period, I witnessed an extraordinary ebullition of temper, which exhibited itself on a most trivial occasion. He actually roared with passion. (*See page 60, "Business."*) It pained me, very much. I did not love him then as I loved him since (with a purely maternal love); I loved him at that time as the Apostle loves his God; as the forest loves the sun. I loved him as

* See the note at the end of the book on DESBAROLLES.

an inferior being loves a superior. I felt myself raised by being at his side, exalted by his grandeur, and blessed in having (as I believed) brought him recreation and consolation during the very painful period through which he and his country were passing. Pleased in the feeling that I could be of service to him by doing for him that which would have been beneath him to do for himself. I called myself the "*Mouse*" of the "*Lion*," whence comes the name of *Raton* (*Mousie*) by which he called me. (*See his correspondence pages 7, 35, 38, etc., of vol. Letters, etc.*) Benedicte Savoye's illness caused him unceasing anxiety. He had told me that Benedicte Savoye was a young woman thirty years of age, whom he had loved from the first day he had seen her with a love beyond expression—a love without hope; she was a virtuous, religious, hard-working girl. She and her two sisters taught the pianoforte. They had lately lost their mother, and that death added to the horrors of the war seemed to have dealt a fatal blow to this poor Benedicte, from which she never recovered. Gounod had given her his own confessor, Monseigneur de Ségur. Edith de Beaucourt, about whom he had been also "toqué," was in his confidence. They were both "*saints*" worthy of me, . . . and . . . his wife—his "*Odious*,"—his "*crockery dog*"—his "*Megara*," was jealous of these "*saints*"!! That did not surprise me, since she could be jealous of ME! and I said to Gounod, that to have a person by your side incessantly accusing you of committing crimes, which never so much as entered your head, would be the way to get you to set about committing them.

After Benedicte's death, her sister, Marguerite, gave Gounod the letters which he had written to her. Madame de Beaucourt and he read them over together and burnt them. Gounod himself told me this: Madame de Beaucourt must know if it is true. I could never understand how, if these letters were a "*holy correspondence*"—(I pictured to myself the letters of St. Jerome to Ste. Paule)—why they should have destroyed a correspondence which had lasted over three years—letters, moreover, of Gounod!! of which I certainly should never have destroyed a word!

I also began to think he was, after all, NO SOLON. On 10th June, he received a letter from Paris, informing him (officially) that if he applied for the post of Director at the Conservatoire in Paris he would get the appointment; at the same time, he was informed, that he would receive an invitation from the President of the Republic asking him to dinner, for the purpose of giving him the opportunity of applying personally for it (it was a matter of *étiquette*), and a few days after this he received, sure enough, an invitation to dinner from M. Thiers (I have these documents). He wished at first to accept, because, he said, he would then be enabled to offer me a class at the Conservatoire, and to get me engagements everywhere. As for me, like a great and never-to-be-forgiven simpleton, instead of urging him to accept this splendid chance in my own interest, I dissuaded him from it, reminding him that as Director, his DUTY would be to show no favouritism; that since he had already complained of his attendance at the INSTITUT (which took up so much of his time), what

would it be if he became DIRECTOR? he would no longer have a moment of his own left for composition. It would certainly be necessary, he said, either to give up the Directorship or composition, but *for my sake he would make any sacrifice!*" I did not hesitate a moment, I would not listen to it for a moment. He however, hesitated a great deal; he thought over it for three days, and on the 13th June, sent a letter declining to take any step to obtain it, as also the invitation of M. Thiers.

Grand'mère, always very affectionate to me, left on *the 13th June*. We had proposed to Gounod and to Abbé Boudier to come and stay with us for the remainder of their sojourn in London. Some other friends (*two young girls and their mother*) of Gounod and of the Abbé had also invited them to spend the rest of the season with them. The first invitation had come from us; we had also asked, I think, Grand'mère. The house was large enough to quarter a regiment, but—oh, mystery!—the Abbé, who would willingly have accepted the young ladies' invitation, dared not come and live *with us for fear of Madame Gounod!* (*See page 6, "The Letters."*) The letter which Gounod wrote the Abbé is of inestimable value to me, for it proves at this early stage that Gounod but too well knew all the evil that bad tongues would say of me if he stayed with us, however short the visit might be. He, therefore, with the full consciousness of what he was about, brought upon us all this miserable, ruinous scandal and opprobrium.

How, even after this one letter, he could behave to us as he has done after leaving us is inconceivable! At whose door does the blame lie? I reply: at that of the poisoned atmosphere with which he was surrounded! No other explanation is possible.

Gounod established himself at our house *on the 19th June*; the Abbé came constantly to see us, and on leaving for St. Cloud he wrote in our Tavistock House Book:

"Abbé Boudier,—

"*Very grateful to Madame Weldon for her generosity and her devotion towards the poor of St. Cloud.*"

Gounod remained with us up to *the 31st July*. During this time he got through a considerable deal of work. He composed "Pauline's Dream," the finale of the third act of *Polyeucte*. He worked assiduously at the score of *Polyeucte* (an opera which he had thoroughly sketched out before 1870), and at his *Redemption*. He arranged the whole part of Pauline for the piano for me, and he composed a number of charming songs.

The day that he left us I wrote in my journal:—

"Arthur Blunt and Freddy Warre came to dinner, and at 8 o'clock started with our dear old Gounod in the Victoria, for Charing Cross Station. Fred Clay came to the station to see him off. I was the only one allowed to go to the carriage with him, and I saw him carried off from us at a quarter-past nine, and so came to an end the happiest period of the whole of my life. No disappointment in him. He is all I could wish, careful, thoughtful, kind as an angel, good like a saint, economical, without a grain of vanity, tenderer than the tenderest woman, firm in his honour. No words could ever make any one feel enough how good and how great he is."

And I religiously believed this, my children ! Gounod seemed to me such as I have described him for five whole months. I can scarcely believe it now. There it is, however, in my own handwriting. All his letters, all his actions harmonised. I was not deceived, everyone saw as I did. He was called "The Divine Being," my husband gave him that name. He also called him "old man," because I called my husband "my old man," which Gounod converted into "the old man" for fun, and my husband retaliated by dubbing him "old man" also. Everyone was much amused by noticing the resemblance of tastes and character between myself and Gounod. We had the same little manias, the same little habits. The fact is, that, without being conscious of it, he imitated me !

The day he arrived at our house with his portmanteau, on unpacking it, he showed me a long cord. It made me shudder—me a Protestant—telling me it was the discipline or scourge with which he flagellated himself. I implored him never to use it again, and he promised me he never would. He gave me a pretty little "*Imitation de Jésus Christ*," and a rosary. We were up to our necks in religion. This made me very happy, although, in reality, I did not believe in those things then as I do now. We excited each other mutually. All I seemed to hear at the end of it all was the future voices of my pupils, and my heart overflowed with hope. Gounod seemed as anxious as I to found my school. He practised his voice continually according to my method, this made it more powerful and less uncertain. We had given him an india-rubber bath, and had persuaded him to resort to cold ablutions frequently, which were of much benefit to him. He was a martyr to dyspepsia ; he said that the continual worryings of his wife had turned his blood into vinegar, and destroyed his digestive organs. Before leaving us he seemed quite cured of this disorder. He became quite lively, although always anxious and grieved at the bad news which he received of his poor dear Bénédicte.

He had many objectionable habits which made my husband shudder, and me also ! But I had only to give him a hint about it once. He never did it again. He would spit on the ground, on the staircase, and even in the rooms ; he would pare his nails at table. He discontinued all this with the best grace in the world.

Why do people in France spit about all over the place ? The foot-pavement is quite disgusting in consequence. You scarcely see the poorest of the poor in England spit on the foot-pavement ; and in France men of "distinction" spit about everywhere, without caring where they spit. They spit in the train, in the omnibus, everywhere ! And then the lavatories in France, how horrible they are. What a contrast to those in England. It was very distasteful to me his smoking ; my husband had given up smoking since our marriage, but I thought it my duty to put up with anything for the sake of the *Divine Being*, and Gounod continued to smoke and to take snuff as before.

Well !—he was gone, and his letters are there to show for themselves the exact state of our relations and of our way of living.

What struck me most in his letters is, that he began to sign himself *Charles*—Charles, and nothing more. It is thus he signed in writing to Bénédicte, to Edith de Beaucourt, to Cécile de Ségurs, etc. I did not like it. . . . I had told him so. I had made him understand clearly that he was too old to sign himself *Charles*. I never would call him *Charles*. It neither appeared to me respectful or natural. My favourite way of addressing him was "*my dear old papa-mamma*." Robust as a father, tender as a mother, after the extreme veneration in which I held Gounod's genius, such was the light in which I regarded him.

I wrote to him, therefore, to tell him not to sign *Charles*, and it will be seen in his letter of the *10th August, 1871* (p. 16), that he signs, as he has always signed since, *Charles Gounod*. I soon perceived the excited tone of his letters, and above all his curious repetitions respecting the time of arrival and departure of each letter.

He had already warned me that his wife was *infernal*. She was quite capable of bribing the postman to get hold of our correspondence. I looked upon this, at that time, as a sheer impossibility, but the experience which I have since acquired has taught me by this time (*March, 1878*) that there would have been nothing so very astonishing in that! I was so innocent at that time! I cannot say how many things Gounod repeated to me to represent his wife to me under the most odious colours. He had been a long time *without a wife*, he said, because, when in an interesting state, her ailments worried her, and her confinements frightened her. She allowed herself (if her *martyr* is to be believed) at all times a *cavalier servente*, which her Gounod, as a good Christian and philosopher, did not make a grievance of. He was complaisant to a degree, and set music to the verses of his wife's adorners! I remember especially some verses, which I adore, by Albert Delpit, "*I dare not hope*," which Gounod supposed to be addressed to his *better half*. I found it sublime of him! I was greatly moved with these tales, for he did not relate them in their nakedness as I have done. He had a genius, quite his own, for wrapping up a particular story with the aid of beautiful words (and then I had been very good natured to my husband in the first years of our marriage), so that I scarcely took in their meaning, still less did they inspire me with the ridicule and horror which they produced in my mind later on when my Gounod no longer took pains to express himself delicately on such ticklish subjects. Later! alas! after his severe illness and his wranglings had placed us on a footing of equality, and that I loved him as one loves a naughty child, and not at all as a God, I would scold him and make him stop when he attempted such conversation. Later on, he no longer minced his expressions, nor his anecdotes. Moreover, he had something or other to say about each member of his wife's family. The only son, Charles Zimmerman, was so vicious that he ought not to be allowed to exist, and had been obliged to disappear. Zéa, his sister-in-law, was cracked, etc., etc., etc., so what chance had his "poor children"? Upon which I would say to him sometimes:—"I tell you what, old man, you are none so very pleasant! You are nothing to boast of!"

His letters give a precise idea of all our plans; I studied and worked assiduously; I thought only of my *début*. I spun four and five hours a day while practising my voice, and I had succeeded at last in knitting in time to the music without the least effort.

31st August. He came back for a few days for the Littleton lawsuit (see the second part of this narrative, *Business*, page 60). He made me cry a great deal by his interminable arguments on suppositions and suspicions about everybody and everything!—sale of *Polyeucte*, the arrival of his letters and mine, the machinations of Madame Gounod to prevent the concerts at Albert Hall, my *début* at the opera, a parcel of things which he could not prove, and that it was worse than useless to discuss. Then, because I would not fall in with his fancies, and would not allow my head to be turned by them, he would say I was sulky! My husband and I perceived an incomprehensible change in Gounod at this second visit of his. He would shake my husband by the hand every time he saw him enter the room, and would ask him *how he was*, as if he had not seen him the whole day. Already they made use of me as their scape-goat and the depositary of their complaints. My husband would say: "How the old man worries me, he asks me fifty times a day how I am!" He complained so often that I ventured to speak to Gounod about it: "How singular your husband is, my dear! What objection can he have to my taking an interest in his health?" "That is precisely the thing," I would reply; "he says that if you listened to his answer, you would remember what he said, and that as one's health does not alter twenty times a day, especially when one is not ill, you would not need to ask him so often!" "Ah! is that the way he speaks of me! I shall never ask him again!" "Not so! Ask him once a day and he will be pleased; you are not aware, I am quite sure, how often you repeat the same thing!" "I weary you already!" our Gounod would reply, hurt, "you would not have found me tiresome six weeks ago!" "Dear me! I could never think you tiresome!" (quite alarmed at such a sinister suspicion)—"Yes, yes," Gounod would reply gloomily, "you find me a bother, you, in fact, as good as told me so two days ago!" It was true; it had so happened. I was practising at the piano, and Gounod (who was "off") was interrupting me incessantly relating his suspicions of his wife, Choudens, Barbier, Carvalho, and the lot, and turning round sharp I had blurted out "Bother!" He seemed so hurt that I asked him on my knees to forgive me. The singing was completely interrupted, the reconciliation was not of speedy accomplishment, for I had offended "His Majesty." His forgiveness was very sweet, however; I reproached myself for my impatience: poor man! He had changed so. . . .

This was the fruit of his return to France! And then, all that Madame Gounod had said to him about me: that I was penniless, that I was avaricious, that I did not know how to sing, that I was hideous, Bénédicte was so ill, her sister Batos so ill, St. Cloud in ruins. I called myself *inhuman* to have been so impatient. I regretted to see him leave the second time because he was a real companion for me who never had had any except my pugs. His only

consolation away from his new *home* seemed to be Morainville. I loved Madame de Beaucourt for all the good she did him. He seemed to be so fond of her that I thought he was happier there than with us—a great consolation for his absence! You see I was not jealous!

Since the fatigue caused me by Gwendoline Bradwyn and her sisters (especially since the death of that poor girl) I had scarcely ever been well; scarcely a day passed that I did not complain (in my journal) of something that went wrong. My sprained foot had affected my health; and then there was the serious illness of our dear friend Freddy Warre, of which Gounod speaks in almost every letter between the *20th September* and *15th October, 1871*. It is evident I was not strong, and the state of constant excitement in which I was kept by Gounod's real misfortunes and his imaginary woes, his suspicions and his arguments, were not calculated to contribute to my getting stronger.

At last the time arrived when I was to leave London in order to sing at the two first concerts of the Conservatoire at Paris. My husband was not able as yet to accompany me (our friend, F. Warre, needed all his care). A friend of my husband's, Nellie Craven, who was to have taken his place, lost her father on the very day of my departure, so that I was obliged to go to Paris alone. My husband therefore confided me to the good care of Gounod, and in spite of a fearful cold from which he suffered and a misty morning, he was at the station of the Northern Railway at 7 A.M. to receive me. I shall never forget the feeling of pain I experienced in seeing him. He had the appearance of a poor, driven, hunted, wild beast. He was so amused and he laughed so heartily on reading the letter in French of my husband, in which he commended to his care "sa share pteet fam," that he seemed to become once more the old Gounod of Tavistock House, and I felt somewhat relieved. He told me that his wife drove him mad—raving mad! That he could stand it no longer! How can I tell you, my children, all the terror these words conveyed to me. It meant for me—to wake one morning, to wait for him, to wait for a letter, the day to go by, nothing, and then to discover that he had been locked up at Dr. Blanche's. I had already been told that Gounod had been mad, and had been confined in an asylum. I had not believed it possible! Gounod! Gounod mad—confined in a *maison de santé*! I asked him if it was true. He replied that it was true. He told me the why and the wherefore. Always the fault of "that woman," "that execrable woman!" . . . He had even attempted suicide. I had the proof that this was true, for when I put him on poultices, as I often did, I saw from his belly to his breast enormous scars, caused by the knife with which he had attempted to rip himself open. He had on one occasion worn a strait-jacket for two months, so he told me. Was it true? I cannot tell. Sometimes I think he trumped up all these stories to get me to take pity on him. . . .

These six weeks that I spent in Paris were an inexpressible martyrdom to me. He sent me almost out of my mind with nervousness

by the way he used to burst like a typhoon into my apartment every day with the detailed account of the scenes which he brought from his own home, and which he acted all over again in my presence. I was wretched! Jean, a fresh source of torment, had resolved to leave the maternal roof, to go to sea, and was full of going in for the examinations at the Naval School. Gounod was at the height of exasperation and despair. One day he arrived more like a bomb-shell than ever. He had "struck his wife—a woman! Struck a woman! He had torn the sleeve of her dressing gown. He had called her a 'vile wretch!'" He had forgotten himself! A man should never forget himself towards a woman, but she was too diabolical! He was so ashamed of himself that he did not know what to do." What had irritated him past bearing was that Madame Gounod had told him that, before making his acquaintance, Mrs. Weldon was a *woman on the town* who slept with the first comer for £5 a-night! Driven by him to declare to whom she was indebted for this infamous slander, she said that it was Madame Gueneau de Mussy (the wife of the doctor of that name whom I had known for twelve years) who had confided to her this audacious and infamous lie. I was tempted to run away, but Gounod said: "My poor child, take good care not to do such a thing. That is all she aims at, so as to be able to say that you do not dare to sing in Paris. Remain, and remain as long as you can. Courage!" He told me to have courage—I never had much. The little I had seemed to choke in my throat.

How I succeeded in singing at the Conservatoire and at the Opera Comique I shall never be able to understand. I pleased the public, but I was too paralysed by fear and by emotion to carry it by storm. The papers were complimentary enough in their mention of me. . . . Choudens sold GALLIA. . . . Private letters, however, praised me up, therefore I do not think it could have been so very bad after all! Among others I select one from Ernest Legouvé to our friend Benedict:—"I do not think I can reply better to your letter about Mrs. Weldon than by informing you of her success at the Conservatoire. I did my best to help by applauding as heartily as I could, and with the intelligence which distinguishes men who are born *claqueurs*, a gift I know I possess. You know that the audience at the Conservatoire are very hard to please, deeming it due to themselves to be very severe, by according their plaudits as though they were awarding diplomas. The success of Mrs. Weldon is so much the more honourable. The instant she appeared she pleased, her reserved attitude and well bred looks and manners seemed to please; she had no appearance of a professional singer. As soon as she opened her mouth her voice struck one as '*bien timbrée*,' her manner of singing natural, simple, and in good style. She had a great deal of success in her first solo, and was applauded at the end of it. In the second a little more power would have been desirable, and the voice was unavoidably overpowered by the choir; added to which she was frightened out of her wits. I perceived that in the first introductory bars, and before her turn came, she had difficulty in getting her breath. I think on Sunday it will go better still. Gounod's

work was also very well received. What pleased me the most was the introduction which I find full of desolation. The effect produced by the horn alone is one of touching sadness. I like Mrs. Weldon's first air very much, and the last piece, although it appears to me not quite so new, but it is full of spirit and effect. Altogether it was a success for both composer and *interprète*."

I seemed to be much applauded and to have a great success; but I was only the tenth part of myself, and felt ready to drop each time I sung. I was quite demoralised, Gounod kept me in such a nervous state of excitement.

I was very comfortable at 21 Place de la Madeleine, where M. and Mme. Viguier had taken apartments for us, and they had engaged an excellent cook, Victoire was her name (the same as that of Gounod's mother), and Victoire was a true type of a French Southerner. Now Victoire took a great deal of interest in her mistress. The last performance of *GALLIA* was to take place in a few days; Victoire appeared to me in the guise of the tempter. This is what she said to me:—"Madame, you know, you have a great deal of success. Well, you must do like other artists do." "And what do they do, Victoire?" "They get bouquets thrown to them, Madame." "How dreadful! Fie for shame! Victoire, how can you imagine I would do such a thing? Besides, if you say everybody does so, that would be just the reason why I should not! I should be sure to be suspected." Victoire's words, however, produced their effect on me. I thought over what she had suggested. . . . I would have been very pleased to have seen the stage strewn with flowers in my honour. I should much have liked to have a souvenir of my *Gallia*, besides the Conservatoire medal which had been presented to me, and which has *GALLIA—CHARLES GOUNOD* engraved on the border. My imagination busied itself over Victoire's words, and this was the result:—

"Victoire!" said I, "I will have no bouquets; flowers fade, they are very expensive, buy me a garland of immortelles, and have the words *GALLIA TO G. WELDON* put on it. You shall bring it to me anonymously, and if the idea is approved of, it shall be given to me at the theatre!" Victoire was enchanted with her commission, and she lost no time in getting the wreath, which she presented me with when Gounod and my husband were present. She quickly left the room for fear of bursting out laughing. She took care to listen, however, at the door. I felt very much inclined to laugh myself, but I was able to keep my countenance. I was in ecstasies over my beautiful wreath; my husband wondered who could have sent it; as for me I pretended to wonder also. M. Viguier came in at the moment; he was charmed with the *delicate attention* shown me; he decided that it must have been from the *Association of the Musical Artists* for whom I had sung at St. Eustache. "What intelligent people! This was much better than a bouquet—much more within their means. And appropriate! *GALLIA*, an elegy—nothing could be in better taste than this wreath of immortelles in commemoration of the occasion presented to the graceful interpreter." Other.

people who called during the day thought the idea very original, very graceful, etc.

But I was not happy! . . . Gounod alone, who had been troubled at the sight of this wreath, kept a mournful silence. What could be the reason of it? I asked with the most innocent air in the world, "What do you think of my having this wreath presented to me on my farewell night?" "Not for the world!" Gounod hastened to reply; "I see something behind all this that you do not perceive, my poor child! Who tells you that it is not my wife, in derision, who sends you this funereal wreath? I suspect it is only an enemy who could have sent you such a foolish thing—for it is a piece of foolery they are playing off on you, my poor child, believe me! The meaning of it clearly is, that GALLIA is a *fiasco*, Charles Gounod a *fiasco*, and G. Weldon ditto. My poor child! What persecutions! good God, what persecutions!" Poor Gounod's lamentations had no end. He worried himself with conjectures. If he could only discover a clue, some little clue! the shop where the wreath had been purchased. Where was the paper in which it was wrapped up? "Lost! the only chance lost! Ah! my child, do not throw away paper like that again!" I could bear it no longer; he had quite torments and worries enough of his own without my adding to them, I who would have done anything, no matter what, to keep them from him. Every day his state became worse, his complexion more ashy, his eyes more haggard, his physical and mental sufferings kept pace with each other, and held the sword of Damocles over my head. "If I can only hold together till the end of the month—it is the only hope which keeps me alive!" he would say, looking at me with dull, sunken eyes. He was to return to London for the Novello law-suit (p. 60 *Business and the Royal Albert Hall Quarrel and Law Documents*; also p. 42 *Autobiography*).

So I knelt down before him, I kissed his hands, I hid my face with them, I felt so ashamed. "My good old papa-maman," I said, imploringly; "forgive me my naughty trick. No one sent me that wreath. I bought it myself. Victoire was in the conspiracy, and brought it to me!"

Poor old man; he looked at me, while raising my face to his, with so much sorrow.

"Little scamp!" (and the tears ran down his cheeks), "I never thought my Mimi capable of such a sly trick!" It was my turn now to cry, to be in despair, to repent, to swear that I would not do it again. He placed his hands on my head; he raised me, he kissed me, "You are a little naughty puss, Miss, but it is the first, and will be the last time. You swear it, . . . and . . . I forgive you!" I swore most heartily, and I kept my word. This is the first and only time that I attempted to get up a little plot for my own advantage!

There was no sacrifice that I would not have made to render myself worthy of so pure a soul. I ask myself now, when I read over again his letters full of contradictions, how I managed to be so blind. I seem to have been exactly like Tom Pinch, blind in his

faith in Mr. Pecksniff's merits. Everybody knows the novel, "Martin Chuzzlewit," and its celebrated author, Charles Dickens.

My husband and I were absolutely a second Mr. and Mrs. Tom Pinch, for we were both equally foolish about him.

During our visit to Paris, Gounod every two or three days would come and tell us seriously that he was going to get a separation from his wife, that they had even both gone on one occasion to the notary or lawyer to settle the preliminaries; nothing however was arranged; Gounod continued his domestic scenes in the conjugal domicile, and when he came to ours could speak of nothing else.

Gounod, moreover, although occupying an apartment in the same house, had lived apart from his wife for many years. His apartments were on the third floor, those of his wife on the ground floor. He had a bed-room, a dressing-room, and a study, the shelves of which were full of religious works.

In the courtyard of the house he occupied, was the studio of the sculptor Franceschi; he, as well as his wife, seemed to adore me. Franceschi was never weary of praising and admiring my "chiselled features," my "sculptural beauty." He made me sit for my bust with my head-dress as *Gallia*, and also for the statue of *Music* in honour of Gottschalk, which was to be placed in the Bois de Boulogne at New York. They could not speak badly enough of Madame Gounod, nor sufficiently pity Gounod.

They seemed to adore Gounod. They tried to console him, they caressed him, they fondled him. Franceschi was so afraid of the scenes Madame Gounod made because he was making my bust, and the harm she might do him, that he locked himself in his studio, or took refuge with us to avoid Madame Gounod. He would tell us what Madame Gounod said. He said to Gounod in our presence, that if that "*infernal Megæra were his wife, he would long ago have broken every bone in her skin with the thrashing he would have given her!*"

My bust was finished; it was exactly like me; it was a *chef-d'œuvre*; Franceschi himself, every one who saw it exclaimed that it was the best thing he had ever turned out. Mme. de Beaucourt was charmed with it. We made great friends. She and her husband looked on Gounod as an angel, and Mme. Gounod as something *grotesquely* wicked and horrible. Everything contributed to confirm me in my erroneous impressions—to twist the cord yet tighter round my neck.

All Gounod's people, thank goodness, thought me "*divine*," etc. He knew, and saw very well that I pleased everybody; if, by any misfortune I had not been appreciated, I feel I should not have retained his good opinions for two days! Fortunately, it happened otherwise. At the Church of St. Eustache, especially, my voice had come out with almost all its natural brilliancy. I was well muffled up, for it was horribly cold. I fancied that less of me was seen, I was hidden by veils and furs, and I did not feel so nervous. If I had a screen before me when singing in public, I do not think I should be nervous at all. It would be the same thing to me, I fancy, to feel that six thousand were *listening* to me if no one could see me.

I was not so terrified at the Opera Comique as at the Conservatoire. At the Opera Comique, I had the orchestra between me and the public; at the Conservatoire, I could not avoid seeing a host of eyes staring into mine. The gentlemen in the stalls almost touched me. The Opera Comique was, however, an ordeal formidable enough. In the first place, I had never appeared on the stage excepting quite privately, only two or three times in my life, and always in short dresses, or without a train. In my costume of GALLIA, I had an enormous train. I had to step backwards without treading on my train—although I was not to look at it—till I reached a stone upon which I had to take my seat. *Gallia* was a scriptural part to play; *Gallia* was an emblem, not a personage, and it would have been quite out of character for *Gallia* to remember her train, or to give it a kick, as is so adroitly done in society, or as becomes a lady of fashion, Countess or Dalila, when on the stage.

It was necessary, in order to act the part well, to remain almost motionless, and yet, however, not to stand stock still. I was 17 minutes on the stage alone. The chorus behind me (which were lamentably out of tune) were supposed to be *my brothers*, and did not support me at all! I had had only *one* wretched little rehearsal. What bothered me most was my train and my stone! The chorus singers seemed horrible to me—it was the first time I had ever had a near view of them—they were so horribly painted. At the moment when, at last, seated safe and sound on my stone, I had to look round and gaze sadly at the Gallic-Israelites as they passed at the back of the stage, I felt inclined to burst out laughing when I thought that these were the creatures I had to address as "*My brethren!*"

Gallia, to be candid, was miserably out of place at the Opera Comique. I felt it but Gounod was almost out of his mind at the idea of my refusing to sing it there. He said that if I did not sing it, his *crochery dog* would say that I was incapable of doing so—incapable therefore of sustaining the character of *Pauline*. It was necessary at all risks that I should go through with it. Now it would have been quite another matter to play a part such as that of *Pauline* with success, for SHE certainly had not to "keep the stage" ALONE for seventeen minutes. *Pauline* is a part full of movement, and very dramatic; she might dance on her train if it got in her way. It is a part full of feeling, very easy to sing and to perform for a dramatic temperament; and Gounod had promised me four months of rehearsal (at the Opera). On those conditions I would engage to play and to sing *Pauline* better than anybody even now! I am convinced that if the public only knew under what circumstances Gounod had promised me the part of *Pauline*, and all that I have sacrificed for him, they would hiss off the stage the actress who will come out in that rôle; for, after all, the great heart of the great mass of the public is always just whatever nationality it may belong to. . . .

So I had made a deep impression. Jules Simon and Charles Blanc had shed tears; my husband could not bear to look at me, I managed to look so profoundly and so abjectly wretched. I threw such dejection and extreme desolation into my looks and gestures, it made

him quite miserable. Dulocle (the Director) and the others said that I had the "*genius of gesture*." Choudens was in raptures. The Directors begged Gounod to write *for me* a sacred oratorio, "*Ruth and Boaz*,"* of which that "tremendous genius," M. Jules Paul Barbier, would write the libretto, and which would be performed during the winter, 1872. They called me "*scriptural*," "*sculptural*," and pieces and operas could be written for me, which no one would dare to think of writing for any other artist. They settled that there would be time for me to make my *début* in the character of *Ruth* before doing so, at the Grand Opera in *Polyeucte*. They said Halanzier had no tenor, and that he would not be ready. Why did I not press Gounod to do this for me? Alas! I had no thought but for Gounod, for his mountains of hard work, his bad health, his *crockery dog* and I in Paris—this too fruitful source of torments to him. I besought him not to think of it. Dulocle and Barbier were furious. And I, now, am in despair, and mad with myself when I think of all I have refused and sacrificed for this man, who has made such a bad return for the *naïve* and maternal affection which animated me in all my actions and dealings when his repose and health were at stake. Whilst I was in Paris, Mme. Gounod made the following avowal to her husband. She said that as almost all the men who visited at her house made advances to her (only she explained herself much more coarsely than this) she was convinced, for that reason, that *Gounod was the lover of Mme. Weldon*!—a reason which made me almost die of laughing, for I felt convinced that, except from interest, no one would care to touch her with a pair of tongs! Gounod was green with rage and grief: it was pitiable to see him. Mr. Gavard (from the French Embassy at St. James's), who was at my house one afternoon when Gounod arrived, half dead with cramp in his stomach, must remember well the frightful state in which he was—and no one can really find fault with me for not having exerted myself to force him back to what he called "*his hell*."† Oh no, never would I have let him be "*taken*." How often has he not said to me, ill and well, "Mimi, you will never let me be *taken*, will you?"

Ah! my poor old man, forgive me, I allowed you to be *taken*; but when you bade us *au revoir* you went off with Gaston de Beaucourt; you went to the de Beaucourts, your "*Paris Weldons*." I thought them as devoted to you as we were. How could I have dreamt that they were capable of inciting you to such infamy? How could I have foreseen that they did not know how to protect you against the *hell* which awaited you, when the demon by which you have been possessed since you were no longer sheltered under the wing of your poor "*little mother*" seized you? Ah! that is what I have said sorrowing to myself a thousand, million times.

Gounod arrived in England with us on the 1st December, 1871. He fluttered into our nest like a wounded bird; he crouched down in his bed like a poor hunted animal, and there he lay for several days without moving. He had come for three weeks, and he was

* See page 74 "The Letters." † *Ibid.* page 174.

taking his fill of rest. He was to return to Paris for Christmas ; besides this, he was most anxious to return to vote for Ernest Reyer at the *Institut*. Ernest Reyer had given me a most significant look on parting, and had said to me, "*Gounod must be here, I count upon you !*" That meant "I am the musical editor of the *Journal des Débats*, and you will not have me for a friend any longer if I am not received at the *Institut*." It was settled that Gounod should return at the desired time.

In leaving Paris, at the railway station (*Gare du Nord*) my pocket was picked of 275 frs. in notes.

My husband ran after the thief and overtook him ; he had money enough about him ; I might have got my money back, but the *Commissaire de Police* interposed all kinds of difficulties, and the train was starting. Gounod was frantic to be off, and said to me, "If I remain here a day longer, I shall die. Devil take the money, I'll make it up to you !" We let the thief go, therefore, and we arrived just in time. The train was just starting !

What strikes me as the most singular part of this affair was the name given by the pickpocket—CHARLES GASTON. *Charles Gaston* had robbed me of 275 frs. on the 30th November.

This was wrong, certainly.

CHARLES (Gounod) and GASTON (de Beaucourt) his accomplice, returned to France on the 8th June, 1874.

The one had robbed one who was a stranger to him of a small sum of money. The others were returning with the proceeds of £20,000, the honour of a family, the peace, the happiness, the reputation of a woman who, during three years, CHARLES had called his *little mother*. *Justice* would have awarded to the first *Charles* hard labour or penal servitude. The other *Charles* has been decorated with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour !

Our physician, Dr. MacKern, came the day after we reached home to see Gounod. He said to us, "The poor man is in a far more serious state than you suppose. He is poisoned with eczema, and the state of his pulse leads me to fear he may be seized any moment with a cerebral attack." Dr. MacKern did not know the name of his patient, and if he had known it, it would have revealed nothing to him, for he belonged to the sect known as *Plymouth Brethren* ; they are very pious, shun music as the work of Satan, and he had never heard either the name of *Gounod*, or that of *Faust*, any more than any other of his brethren had. This remark terrified me, and I renewed my precautions to save my *old man* from any kind of worry. The doctor ordered him a course of hydropathy, and gave him his own homœopathic medicines. His advice to me was "Give him rest and quiet." It was Mr. Weldon's month of attendance at the *Heralds' College*. My husband packed him in wet sheets and in blankets every morning, and poor Gounod would remain sometimes for six hours smothered in blankets, furs, and waterproofs without being able to perspire. I used to give my lessons all the morning on the ground floor. The class lasted from 9 to 1 o'clock. I would go upstairs fifteen and twenty times in a morning to the

third floor where he was imprisoned, almost day and night, in what we called the "hot room," during class-time, to see how he was, to give him his food, his drink, to cheer him up with a kind word or caress. The cistern of boiling water was there which heated the water for the baths at all hours of the day and night, and the atmosphere was always at the same temperature (60 Fah.) This therefore is the sort of thing which went on nearly all day—"Has Mr. Gounod perspired?" "Mr. Gounod has perspired to-day after five hours and twenty-seven minutes!" "No! Gounod has not yet perspired." Dan kept faithful company with him all the morning—he and the old man, my two darlings, Nos. Two and Three. My No. One darling would go off in the morning after having packed up *his* old man with care and art! On leaving he would say to me, "I hope the old man will perspire to-day." He would come back sometimes three times in a morning from the City, where the Heralds' College is, to see if the old man perspired, in order to release him from his blanket prison. On returning, the first thing my husband would say was, "Has the old man perspired? How long will he be to-day before he perspires?" He would set off again with a heavy heart if at the end of two hours-and-a-half he had returned and his old man had not perspired. . . . He would know at once by the look of me if the old man had perspired. If by a lucky chance the old man had perspired and was waiting for my husband, I would be looking out for him with impatience from the top of the stairs, at the top of the house, I would hear the hall door open, and before seeing him I would call out joyfully, "The old man perspires!"

The skin of the old man was in such a state that it was like parchment; it was not sensitive when pinched, but the itching occasioned by the eczema drove him mad and fatigued him horribly; his shirt would be covered with blood. The doctor who had carefully sounded him, found both lungs highly congested, and the bronchial tubes to be in a state of chronic irritation. He had absolutely forbidden his smoking or taking snuff. Everything that was pleasant to him was at one stroke denied him; this state of immobility (the first days of exhaustion over) weighed upon him frightfully. To be happy, Gounod must be occupied. It was necessary to take the greatest care about his food; I cooked everything for him myself, on a gas stove close to him; I never was without my apron, and wore my dressing gown; and thus it was, I fear, that he got to look upon his goddess as his nurse and his slave. At first he gently tyrannised over me; little by little he became more exacting: I did all that he asked. There was nobody but I to cheer and console him. Poor man! The doctor at the end of eleven days, seeing that he got no better, and that he was devoured with an anxious desire to return to keep his promise to vote for M. Reyer, and to pass the Christmas holidays with his family, said outright that he would give up coming to see him at all if he thought of going back to the troublous scenes he had described. I took the doctor, therefore, on one side, and I told him all that bad tongues and his wife would say against me. They would say that he was not ill, that he was shamming for the purpose of remaining with

his mistress ; that all this gossip and scandal drove Gounod out of his mind, and prevented him getting well ; that he would be much better if he went to Paris as he had promised to do, and to return here later to be properly nursed. The doctor replied only by saying gravely, "The life of that man hangs by a thread, I daily fear a grave cerebral complication, and you must not shrink from saving a man's life on account of what scandal may be spread."

As for me, I used then to value above all things my reputation, and I was really frightened. I replied that I could not take on myself to keep him, that I was expecting my husband to return home—it was about his time—and that he had better wait for him and see what he would say !

When my husband returned, the doctor reiterated to him all that he had said to me, and I repeated to my husband all my objections. Mr. Weldon laughed at them thoroughly, and replied without a moment's hesitation : "Most certainly we shall keep this poor old man. Little do I care what all the blackguards in Paris may say. He is ill, he must be cured !" Gounod was greatly relieved in his mind on learning that the doctor was determined to *keep him by force*, and he got Dr. MacKern himself to write to his physician in Paris (Dr. Raymond, I think) telling him the decision he had come to about him. He was constantly repeating, however, with alarm :—"Good heavens ! what will they say, my poor Mimi ! and Reyer, there is another enemy that we shall have to reckon on, my poor Mimi !" Five minutes afterwards :—"After all, I don't care a straw for them ! You will keep me, my good little mother—you will take care of me, my dear little girl, and that good Harry ! You know whether I am ill or not ; and if I am to die I wish to die in your arms. You have taken such care of this poor Freddy, you have saved him ; you will save me also. As to the harm they may do you, my poor Mimi, if God preserves my life I shall know how to protect you. Come, don't worry yourself !"

Does he remember all that ?

It was during this long and painful illness that we in a great measure adopted the second person in speaking in French together. I was "his hen," he was "my chicken." Hens must certainly address their chickens in this style. Another time I would be the old pussie cat which nursed the little kittens ; cats, most surely purr to their kittens in the second person, kittens must do the same to their mothers ; thus it was, half from love, half in fun, we started what is called in French "*tutoiement*." Gounod had not failed to tell me that it was a compromising habit I had got into, and had taken care to warn me not to address him thus in public ; but at the end of a year it had become such a habit with me that I could not have said "*vous*" to him for the world. After all, Madame Gounod had spread everywhere the report that her husband was my lover before there was even the slightest intimacy between us. "They say the same thing, it is clear, of a woman who has only spoken to a man two or three times. '*It is a case* !' they say. They will say, and they have said, '*it is a case*' of me and of you. Well ! it amuses them, and since

you are a good old saint, no one will seriously believe that you could be capable of accepting everything from a young man—all—attentions and hospitality—and then to take his wife from him!" And I reassured myself, although very much put out by it all, in reality. We used to play a great deal at cribbage. For hours together I amused Gounod at this game. He would tell me I was "*his Odette*," that he was "*my old Charles*," and that he would compose a pretty lullaby for me on the words of a Romance which he knew:

"Rock, Odette, your old child on your knees."

Berce, Odette, ton vieil enfant sur tes genoux.

But this was like many other of his promises. Nothing came of it.

Although we were very happy together, Gounod was constantly tormenting himself about one thing or another, such as I described in the second volume "*Business*," so that my existence was not altogether a bed of roses.

On the 22nd December, when my husband took him out of his sheets, he went to the Turkish baths. On the 23rd he was seized with a frightful colic; on the 24th he was suffering from dysentery. He finished by monopolising my whole day. I had not a bit of peace! The doctor came twice a day. On the 27th I began to get him out a little, and to walk him about in the sun.

The Turkish baths seemed to do him good far more rapidly than the packing in wet sheets alone.

On the 1st January, 1872, Gounod caught cold. On the 4th he was so bad between his shoulders that he could not budge. He suffered so much from piles on the 5th that from that cause he could not budge. On the 7th, owing to rheumatism and hemorrhoids combined, he suffered agonies. On the 8th he was a little better. On the 9th Abbé Boudier paid us an unexpected visit—from Paris. Gounod was full of suspicions. He thought it was Madame Gounod who had sent him to spy; to see if he were really ill or if he were shamming. But Gounod was suffering too plainly from all kinds of diseases. The Abbé did not require much to convince himself of that!

See the fac-simile notes (page 76, THE LETTERS). The remark will there be found (*Boudier-affaires? . . . à Londres*). That his wife who had seen him so frightfully ill should not believe in his suffering, was one of his greatest griefs.

Mrs. Louisa Brown and her daughter (Mrs. Louisa Brown had been at school at Madame Zimmerman's) came also the same day, and by accident met Abbé Boudier. It is possible that Gounod suspected that Madame Gounod wished to get witnesses who would report that Gounod was in perfectly good health. She lost her time, for Abbé Boudier, Mrs. Brown, and her daughter bore witness to the state in which they found him, and I took care to leave him quite alone nearly the whole time their visit lasted with his friends and those of Madame Gounod. Dr. MacKern also came whilst they were there. He was a man of sixty, very grave and serious, and I think he was well able to satisfy those who had been sent to see how the land lay. If Madame Gounod had really loved her husband, or if she had

thought for a single instant that her presence would do him good, would she have abandoned him as she had done with strangers, ill—almost dying—as he was? In consequence—thanks to these inquisitorial visits—Gounod got so excited that *on the 12th January, 1872*, he quarrelled frightfully with me because I could not be got to discuss or to share with him his suspicions, which could produce no result, and which were only a pure loss of time. We argued so over it, and it made me cry so frightfully that I was quite exhausted. This was the first time that we had a real quarrel. Alas! it was not the last!

But, my children, you must understand that for him to insist on extorting from me suspicions, counter-suspicions, and contradictions on such a trivial subject was insupportable.

He would begin after this fashion—"Mimi, you are sure, are you not, that the Abbé was sent here by Anna?"—"Yes, my old man!"—"Well, Mimi, it is very strange I have the same notion as you have."—"But, my old man, this notion has come into my head, because you have put it there!"—To which he would rejoin (quite disappointed), "But then it is not your own idea!"

ME.—"No."

HIM.—"What then, have you formed no opinion of your own on the subject?"

ME.—"No; why do you wish me to, what good would it do me?"

HIM.—"But I have an idea; why can you not have one also?"

ME.—"Because it is not in my nature to be suspicious."

HIM.—"You wish by that to imply that I am very suspicious!"

ME.—"Yes, that you certainly are!"

HIM (getting angry).—"Well, this is the first time in my life I have ever been told that I was suspicious!"

ME.—"What, you are not suspicious?"

HIM.—"Certainly not, I am not suspicious by nature as you would wish to make out!"

ME.—"Well, no, I never thought you were suspicious by nature, quite the reverse; but trouble and the misfortunes which have befallen you all your life cause you to waste your time in imagining things which are perhaps true, perhaps false, but which, true or false, will result in nothing!"

HIM.—"What, I waste my time; but you yourself always say that nobody works like I do!"

ME.—"Oh, yes, old man, you are a very hard worker."

HIM.—"A worker never wastes his time; I cannot be for ever at the treadmill, and it is a relaxation to think and talk a little."

ME.—"Talk as much as you like, old man, but what is the use of troubling yourself about such useless matters?"

HIM.—"Useless!!! not a bit more useless than your dogs, your children, and your classes."

ME (annoyed, but very calm).—"Neither am I always bothering you with my dogs, my children, and my classes!"

HIM.—"I bother you then?"

ME.—"You do not bother me!"

HIM.—“I annoy you then by making a few simple, little harmless remarks.”

ME.—“You do not annoy me either.”

HIM.—“What effect has it on you then?”

ME.—“I have never considered what effect you produced on me; you well know that I love you with all my heart!”

HIM.—“There was a time when you were very much pleased to be with me; but now, scarcely do I say a word but you find that I am suspicious, and that I waste my time. I dare not open my mouth in this house.”

ME.—“I must say you do exaggerate nicely!”

HIM.—“Now, I exaggerate, do I? I ask you a simple question, and you will not vouchsafe a reply!”

ME.—“Not vouchsafe a reply! I answered you perfectly!”

HIM.—“You call that an answer, ‘*I have no idea!*’ Many thanks for your *answer!*”

Silence on my part.

HIM.—“Confess the truth; you cannot bear me to speak of my wife!”

I shrug my shoulders.

HIM.—“You shrug your shoulders, you are silent, you see I speak the truth. Confess that you would rather not have me so much as mention the name of my wife.”

Continued silence on my part.

HIM (in a caressing tone).—“Come, darling Mimi, it is so, is it not?”

ME (indignant).—“I am at a loss to know, upon my word of honour, where you can go and get such absurd notions!”

HIM (delighted to have extracted a reply).—“There, you see, you get angry; if I had not hit right, you would not be so furious.” . . .

ME.—“What do you see furious about me?”

HIM.—“Say at once that you are pleased.”

ME.—“I am not at all pleased, you grieve me, that’s all.”

HIM.—“And you think you don’t grieve me! I speak of that which interests me most, and you refuse to listen to me and spell out your answers.”

ME.—“What do you mean?”

HIM.—“You know very well what I mean.”

ME.—“I have not the slightest idea of what you mean.”

HIM.—“Come, look me in the face, and repeat that!”

ME.—“Well, I look you in the face, and I repeat that I do not know what you mean, or what you are driving at!”

HIM.—“That’s cool! I ask you, politely and quietly, if you think the Abbé was sent here by Anna, and you reply off-hand that you have not the least idea on the subject.”

ME.—“I said nothing of the kind! You asked me if I was sure that your wife had sent the Abbé here, and I replied Yes.”

HIM.—“You told me a falsehood then.”

ME.—“In any case I said *Yes*, and I did not *answer you off-hand* as you try to make out, or *that I had not an idea*. I have a great many ideas, but not on that subject.”

HIM (interrupting quickly).—"Because it is about my wife!"

ME—"Your wife! much I care for your wife; if it were not for you I should never hear her horrid name, and I should forget that there was such a woman in existence! It is not surprising that I have no desire to hear you always abusing her, and always harping on the same string. She is the *very devil*!—agreed! Leave me in peace, and her also!"

HIM (very much offended).—"Thank you, my dear, for the lesson you have given me."

ME (puzzled).—"A lesson! What do you mean by that?"

HIM.—"Never mind, I shall learn in time to know how to be silent, but I beg you for a few days to have a little patience with me. You had accustomed me to be free in my conversation with you. I will in future keep a guard over my tongue, and I will select with care subjects of conversation which will be pleasing to you, so as to be spared the torture of your reproaches, your silence, and your displeasure."

In a word, my children, he had a way of keeping up conversations of this kind for hours together. They provoked me to such a degree that I felt quite *idiotised* by them, and I would cry with all my heart at being thus tormented. If I replied, it was wrong; if I did not answer, it was worse. I did not know which way to turn. You must follow up our quarrels in the volume "*Business*," because it was generally on business matters that he tormented me most.

January 19th.—Gounod nearly fainted away. Dr. MacKern said that he had no organic disease, but that he was *to pieces*, in a precarious state, like to that of a woman at her change of life. He told me that that state would certainly continue for some years; that there was also fear of a cerebral complication, of which repeated attacks might cause a softening of the brain.—*Extract of my Journal.*

January 25th.—He was worse. He had had for some days past a glandular swelling in the neck which caused him considerable pain. The poor man was a real martyr. He could not help crying; as for me I sat and cried by his side in sheer sympathy. I was in despair; nothing could be found to relieve him. The doctor and my husband then scolded me, telling me I was good for nothing. My sensibility, however, was pleasing to Gounod; he was consoled in seeing me weep. He would say: "Mimi, you are kind; you weep for your old man!"

27th.—He was still suffering.

28th.—He was improving—thank God.

February 3rd.—We went to Brighton with Gounod and Nellie Craven, our pugs, and our birds for the Festival. We had Nellie almost always with us. We were very fond of her. She was my companion. I had engaged Mademoiselle Ottilie Schmidt (3 Sonnenberg Strasse, Wiesbaden, also a friend of my husband's family) to come and live with us as *chaperone*. She was then ill, and till she could come we had adopted Nellie in her stead. My husband, naturally, did not like to drag about among professionals, and I had

been recommended to take a lady with me when I sang in public instead of having Gounod for *chaperone*. Gounod was getting on better just then, and the doctor had given him leave (the two months of continuous treatment having expired) to go and fulfil our engagement at Brighton.

5th.—We went to the first rehearsal of GALLIA, and of the MESSE SOLENNELLE at the Dome. Never in my life, never! could I have dreamt of anything to equal it. The Choir did not know a single note of their parts; and Kuhe, the conductor of the Concerts, had written to us that the *Choristers knew their parts by heart*. Instead of 76 musicians in the band, there were only 29! Not a horn! Not a hautbois! Not a big drum! We took the *raging lion* for a walk to calm him. Gounod was beside himself!

7th.—Gounod slept very badly; he received a letter from Madame Zimmerman* which vexed him extremely. The rehearsal went off better that day! At all events the musicians were at their desks in full numbers. Benedict, who arrived that day for the rehearsal of "St. Peter" (his Oratorio), nearly went out of his mind. The performance of his Oratorio takes four hours, and he had only one hour for rehearsal! My husband led him back to the hotel for fear he would throw himself into the sea.

I can assure you, my children, that the existence of a composer is not all sunshine; I pity Gounod, therefore, greatly, and always shall. The public, so ignorant, know little of the martyrdom good musicians suffer! Gounod went through tortures from all this music, atrociously got up and performed; but he did not seem to be ill; the sea air seemed to do him good. He was greatly worried; there was either a harp missing or some instrument wanting; but after the first horrible rehearsal he seemed to be resigned to everything during the remaining ten days of the Festival.

February 14th.—We had been photographed at Mayall's, and the same evening we played, all four of us, at cribbage. Gounod was not ill. Towards half-past one o'clock in the morning I was woke up by fearful groans. I can never forget that sound; I have since heard it again at different times; it was like the cry of a wounded and hunted beast. I felt frozen with terror each time I heard it. Nellie Craven's room was on the same floor as ours. Gounod's was on the first floor, next the drawing-room. I went to Nellie's room to see if it was thence the sound came. I found her aroused, as I was, by these lugubrious "cries." My husband was asleep. Nellie and I ran down stairs to see after the old man. It was he who was uttering these unearthly sounds. He was sitting up in his bed; he did not recognise us. He was shaking his head to and fro, he was looking with a fixed gaze in front of him, and muttered "that for a long time past they had wished to put him in the churchyard; that Mimi was

* Gounod kept all these letters carefully, saying: "For your defence, my poor Mimi!" and, in fact, I feel really protected by the possession of all these documents which a providential chance left in my hands. The expense would be too great if the tenth part were published.

not a Catholic, that she could not be laid by his side ; that the time had not yet come, and they should not take him and put him in the churchyard." I called to him, I kissed his hands, his head, I took him in my arms, I said, "It is Mimi! She will lay down by your side! She will be a Catholic, she will do all that you wish, you shall not be put in the churchyard. . . ." He heard nothing, he continued to utter the same kind of howls. I left Nellie with him, and I ran quickly to awake my husband, who got up at once.

My husband went down, and seeing the state he was in, took him upstairs as he would have carried our little child, and laid him in my bed in our room. He made me lie down in his, and advised me to remain very quiet, as I had to sing that evening. He, however, watched by the side of the old man until the doctor, whom we had telegraphed for, arrived from London. He gave him a dose of medicine, ordered a hot bath for his feet, and recommended me to rub his legs well. At the end of about two hours he seemed to come to his senses again, but he continued to weep bitter tears, and continued to repeat, "I have but a little time to live, Mimi. I should die happy were you to promise me to become a Catholic. Promise me!" I promised him ; you can well understand I would have promised him the moon had he asked for it! He seemed then to become more composed.

The next night, or rather in the morning, from 3 o'clock till noon he kept on the same howling. I thought he was going to die. We were in a most terrible state of anxiety. I was more dead than alive! I had written to Madame de Beaucourt, to Jean. We did not know what to do. . . . Madame de Beaucourt replied that we must telegraph for Dr. Blanche, but Gounod having spoken of him to me with so much aversion and horror during his fit, and having previously warned me against him, saying he was an accomplice of his wife, I took no notice of her advice. Dr. MacKern, to whom I spoke about it, told us that what Gounod suffered from was not at all in the province of a mad doctor ; that it was not a case of insanity ; that Gounod was like a woman in hysteria, and if he were a woman he would be said to have *an attack of hysteria*. It was only necessary to watch him, and prevent his hurting himself, to keep him as quiet as possible, and with the help of bromure of potassium and another very simple remedy which should be given him, the fit could not be of long duration. Dr. MacKern had been expecting this cerebral attack from the first day he saw him.

February 17th.—Gounod seemed to be going on much better.

18th.—He who had cried for hours because I was not a Catholic, or because he feared they would "*take him*," was quite jolly. I amused him all day with cards. We then returned to Tavistock House—our dear Tavistock! How we loved, and how I love that dear house!

19th.—The old man wrote to Legouv   to say that he would give the *droits d'auteur* on FAUST till the Prussians had left France, to pay the indemnity.

Did he expect that I would combat this resolution which I found

just and generous? I do not know. As it was, it so happened he did his best to argufy with me all day long.

Extract from Journal.—"The old man was very unkind to me, and all the horrid old *crockery dog's* fault always. I cried so. He is so easily put out. He is so good himself."

He was too ill to conduct his rehearsal at Albert Hall. Perhaps it was that which put him out; it was all then visited on me! It was a good thing I was naturally of a patient disposition, for it never came into my mind to be angry about it.

I was so broken-hearted to see him in this state, and to experience from him this new feeling of wickedness towards me, who would have suffered anything to soften his irritation, that I felt myself *literally ready to die of grief*. Next day I was so nervous that I cried *the whole day* without being able to stop. I had never been angry in my life, and in all these scenes, which kept increasing in frequency and violence, I only felt overcome with a sense of profound discouragement and despair at finding that I could not succeed in rendering this idol of my soul happy.

21st February.—Fresh scenes: A letter from Dr. Blanche who (as the Abbé had pretended) announced that he was coming to London *on business*; that he would arrive on the 22nd. "Another spy from the *crockery dog*!" said Gounod, furiously. I must say that Dr. Blanche seemed to side entirely with Gounod saying, "We *all* know what Madame Gounod is!" He returned to Paris with a solemn written declaration* of Gounod's to his wife, to the effect, that he never—no, *never*—would set foot again in France until she came to fetch him, and remain with him two months in London in a house which he would take for her and himself—a resolution which Dr. Blanche highly approved of.

February 27th.—Gounod got a chill. The next evening he was very ill. He was obliged to keep his bed. He was somewhat light-headed.

The 29th.—He did not sleep at all. He was rather ill for some days, and unable to conduct the rehearsal of the 4th March.

March 4th.—He was composing, however, incessantly, and we spent several hours daily at cribbage.

March 5th.—A gentleman paid him a visit, and talked on *business*. Great altercations in consequence.

March 15th.—A furious dispute took place about the letter of Mr. P. J. Barbier, which Gounod replied to. (*See page 72, "The Letters"*) He wished to call him out. He argued as to where the duel should take place and the choice of arms! Heaven knows what absurdities he did not propose. All his chivalrous defence of "*my honour*" left me completely indifferent. I did not know Mr. P. J. Barbier. I had only one theme—"If Gounod wishes to stop the scandal, he has only to oblige his wife to do as he requires of her in his letters, and to return peaceably to France with her." I did not approve of his

* A document of which Gounod retained a copy. (*See page 71, "The Letters."*)

quarrelling with his friends on my account. I did not blame Mr. Barbier in the slightest degree for what he said; he was but Mme. Gounod's* parrot. As I did not agree with Gounod, he got up a row with me, as he could not do so with Mr. Barbier, and said that *I took Barbier's part!* . . . And Gounod was so weak, . . . the least emotion exhausted him, and made him faint.

Mr. Viguier came *on the 18th March* on a visit for a few days. This visit gave Gounod great pleasure.

Now Mr. Viguier has seen me bestow on Gounod all the attention and nursing which I think it due to me and to my husband to describe, for he remained several days at Tavistock House. From the hot and cold water douches in the bath-room, the soaping, the rubbing, the medicines, or food, which I was obliged hourly to administer to him, the constitutional walk, the going to bed early—Mr. Viguier has seen, as so many others have likewise, that I was, in fact, under the necessity of worrying Gounod all day long on account of his miserable health—that I was, so to speak, a slave, not knowing what to be at between my husband and Gounod. Not only did I make it a matter of conscience to comply with all the doctor's orders on my own account, for the sake of the health and welfare of my patient, but if I relaxed at all at the thought of the bad will, the cross look, the sulky exclamations which my old man, teased to death at my constant and ill-timed interruptions, did not spare me, I was called to order and to duty by my husband, when he instituted his inquiry every evening on his returning home to dinner—

"Well, the old man! has he been out for his walk to-day?"

"Yes."

"Has the old man had his egg at eleven o'clock?"

"Yes."

"Did the old man have his powders before his lunch?"

"Yes."

"Did the old man take his broth at four o'clock?"

"Yes."

"Did the old man get his brandy, with egg beaten up, at five o'clock?"

"Yes."

"Have you rubbed his back?"

"Yes," etc., etc., etc.

Bad luck to us all, and and above all to me, if I had to answer "*No*" to any of the questions which my husband put to me. I can assure you it was no joking matter.

It was also with a profound sense of discouragement that I would say to my husband when we were alone:—"Oh! you don't know how hard it is for me to do and get the old man to do all that he detests so much. I watch the right moment; but if you

* Madame Gounod had, on leaving England, spread the report everywhere that she had been obliged to leave England on account of me. It was my mother whose ears this tale reached first, shortly after she had left her husband in London with her mother, and after her wishing me good-bye in the most friendly way.

could see his look, almost of hatred, when I come to disturb him, your heart would be as pained as mine is, and it would need all your courage to get yourself hated by the dear old man, who, I am sure, dreads the very sight of me, the sound of my steps, and cannot help shuddering when he feels that I move my chair for fear that it should be for the purpose of coming to interrupt him in the middle of a sentence or a phrase, by, what he calls, '*obedience to health.*' You do not know what I suffer from it!"

My husband would encourage me tenderly, and I continued my thankless task, like the poor blind horse of the mill. . . . It was the rock of Sisyphus. That is, and always has been, my lot, however!

After the old man had "*dictated his wishes*" to his wife, by the intermedium of Dr. Blanche, Gounod had been (apart from the Barbier incident) in a good temper, and charming since the 24th March. But this date was one of the most terrible periods that Gounod made me go through.

On the 23rd the great Oxford and Cambridge boat-race had taken place. Gounod, my husband, and I had passed the day at Mortlake, at the house of some friends who lived just opposite the winning post. We had dined with Mr. and Mrs. Brunton, our neighbours in the Square, of whom Gounod often makes mention in his letters.

I was very tired, and I did not insist with enough perseverance on preventing Gounod partaking too freely of an apple-pie, of which he ate a large plateful with cream and sugar. He was expressly forbidden to touch pastry, not only by Dr. MacKern, but also by Dr. Wilberforce Smith, a younger physician of the same school, who came to see him still oftener than Dr. MacKern did. I foresaw all the disastrous consequences of this plate of apple-pie. I was in the habit regularly at each meal, of taking away the fat and gristle from his meat, of cutting his bread, and of giving him only the crust. The care of his health was for me the work of each moment of the day.

We got home very late, all three very glad to get to bed.

The 24th March was a Sunday, "That blessed day with the English!" as Gounod called it (in London there is no postal service on Sunday). Charles Rawlings (one of the sons of the blind man, of whom Gounod speaks in his letters (*see page 16, The Letters*), who was then about 14 years old) brought me up the letters which he had forgotten the day before to put in the usual place. I had, therefore, forgotten them on the Saturday evening. They were letters which had arrived after the morning delivery on Saturday, and as we had been out all day, there was a goodly accumulation of letters. I was in the habit of opening and answering all Gounod's English letters, and even those from abroad, excepting family letters, and those of Madame de Beaucourt, of the de Ségur, of the Savoye, etc. To save discussions, suspicions, and maledictions, I received and replied to them (for the most part) without breathing a word to Gounod. When I thought of the apple-pie I would have liked to have hidden the letter from the *crockery dog* (for there was one from Madame Gounod), and not to have given it him till the Monday morning, by which time I hoped the pie would have been digested;

but I did not dare to do so, because Gounod, full of occupation as he was, and always *overburdened with work*, as he pretended to be, had a singular habit. He would examine each postmark carefully, minutely, conscientiously before undoing the envelope, which he opened with an extreme precaution, as if he feared a dangerous explosion. If I had ever taken into my head to keep back a letter (awaiting the moment when the ill humour would leave him, and the good temper re-appear), I should have caught it for the whole day, just as I did on the 24th March, 1872, when he received his letters twenty-four hours late, and which I brought him at 8 o'clock in the morning—the letters from France—which had been posted there on the 22nd.

He was awake when I went to wish him good morning, and instead of saying "Good morning, my Mimi, have you slept well?" and addressing me with tenderness as usual, his eyes fastened eagerly on the letters which I held in my hand. I passed them to him, and I opened the shutters, asking how he felt and how he had slept.

"Badly—that cursed pie has kept me awake all night—and if I dropped off I would wake with a start."

ME—"Little glutton, who tried to prevent his eating it? Who would not listen to his dear good Mimi?"

HIM—"The fact is, I am deprived of everything! If you were in my shoes you would see how you would like it!"

ME—"Come, kiss me!" I had picked up his clothes which were in disorder (contrary to his custom), thrown about in all directions, all over the room, and I went and sat at the foot of his bed to hear the news. "Come, what does your *crockery dog* say to you?"

Gounod was sitting up in bed, with his envelopes in his hand, which he was turning over and over.

HIM.—It's curious! I can't decipher this post-mark. Is it a W, is it an N? I can't see! This cursed fog! Those post-office clerks might take the trouble to stamp their letters more distinctly. Printing ink is cheap enough, and they have not got to pay for it out of their own pockets! In this cursed country it is not light enough to see at nine o'clock!"

ME (hoping to make a diversion).—"It is not yet a quarter-past eight, old man, and to-day it is uncommonly light for the time of year, although it is awfully cold. There is a nasty rain falling."

HIM.—"Well, since it is so bright, and since you can see so clearly, you always can see better than anybody else, do me the favour to tell me what this post-mark means. Is it a W or an N?"

ME.—"Give it here, let me see." But no! Once Gounod held a letter in his hands he would never let it go, he held it tight as if he suspected some one would play him the trick of snatching it by force. I had to get off the bed and get close to him to examine microscopically this stupid post-mark.

ME.—"It is not very distinct, but it must be a W!"

HIM.—"As for me, I think it is an N!"

ME.—Very well, let it be an N."

HIM.—"How disagreeably you say that."

ME.—“How do you wish me to say it? You say that it is an N, I say it is an N.”

HIM.—“But you do not speak as if you thought it was an N.”

ME.—“Certainly not! since I told you that I thought it was a W.”

HIM.—“What a temper you have; well, just look again.”

ME.—“What is the use of my looking; N or W, or a P or a Q; how can it possibly interest me?”

HIM.—“To me it is a very interesting subject, but I have not your pretensions!”

ME.—“Good Heavens! . . . Give it me then that I may look. . . . Let's see: It is *23 Mar. 71* × W.C. We are in that district, it *must* be W.C.—there is no N.C.”

HIM (almost satisfied).—“*23rd March, 1871*, a cross! what does that cross signify?”

ME.—“I don't know.”

HIM.—“You don't know the English post-marks?”

ME.—“No! After all, what can it matter to us? Be quick, and read your letters! I am dying to know what they say!”

HIM.—“But the *23rd*! that was yesterday, the day of the boat-race; I ought then to have received these letters yesterday, for they have all yesterday's London post-mark, the *23rd*.”

ME.—“I can tell you why, Charlie had forgotten to put them in the usual place; and that is why we did not get them last night when we came in!”

HIM.—“That's it! that's how the work of this house is done by your blessed children. Do you know that the delivery of letters is a serious matter; letters ought to be received regularly, and here they are not received regularly. Master Charlie keeps them for himself! A curious house, I must say! It is really charming to be living in a house where nobody is answerable for the post, where there are no settled regulations for what is considered in every country of the world as the most important thing there is!”

ME.—“Good gracious me! such a thing scarcely ever happened before, old man; you know well that Charlie always brings up our letters every hour, and when we are out, the letters are put on the table in the hall. If we had looked in the letter-box we should have found them there, as it was there that Charlie had left them. You are not reasonable!”

HIM.—“Hang it, the moment one happens to say a word against one of your famous Rawlings, one is a fool. I know that very well, and I shall not venture again to permit myself to take the liberty of making a single remark about any of your prodigies again!”

ME.—“I never said you were a fool—I said you were not reasonable.”

HIM.—“At my time of life one may be allowed to consider oneself right, and to have reason on one's side in insisting and affirming that it is impossible to be vexed about a more serious matter than that of delay in the delivery of letters. It is considered so in all countries all over the world. The Postmaster would be fined if it were proved that through his fault a letter

did not reach its destination till the day after that on which it should be delivered."

ME.—"Do you wish me to fine Charlie every time he forgets anything?"

HIM.—"This is no laughing matter, it is very serious; but you look over anything in your children; they are Phoenixes, prodigies! Don't let's say a word more about it; it is your pleasure that I should have my letters brought to me when it pleases the Messrs. Rawlings—Amen. That's the best thing I can say!"

ME.—"But, old man, come, don't grieve me; I will scold Charlie when I go down-stairs, and I'll tell him that I am very much displeased."

HIM.—"Ah, yes; that's it! I can just fancy I see you scolding one of your precious treasures—you will not dare even say a word to him!"

ME.—"Well, you'll see!"

I rang, a maid came; I told her with a dignified air to send Charlie to me. While waiting for him to come, Gounod sneered, jeered, and snarled at me.

"Oh, what a scolding he will get! Oh, that poor Charlie! Oh, how I pity him!"

I began to feel somewhat provoked, and when Charlie presented himself I said to him in an angry tone—

"Really, Charlie, you ought to be more attentive; I must say, you might as well have no head at all on your shoulders. How is it that you forgot to give Mr. Gounod his letters yesterday evening, or to put them in the usual place? If that is the way you attend to your duties, we shall not be able to keep you at all!"

GOUNOD (then).—"It doesn't matter, my good Charlie! Never mind!" in the most kind and friendly tone.

This was too much; I dismissed Charlie hastily, and said to the old man—"Well this is, I must say, too bad, old man—you leave me no peace till I scold the child. I send for him to scold him before you, to satisfy you, and then you say to him '*it doesn't matter!*'"

HIM.—"You had no necessity to speak to him about *my* letters, you could have spoken to him about your own; I am quite old enough to scold on my own account when I choose!"

ME.—"What an idea! Well, how can any one answer you when you say such things? What need had you to make Charlie think that it was I who was cross and unreasonable and that you were his friend? The fact is, you are as cross as two sticks this morning; it's that nasty apple-pie which has upset you. Be a good old man, kiss your Mimi, then you shall read your letters, then you will dress a little. I will go and do my writing, then you will call for your little mother, she will take you to the bath-room, she will douche your old head and your shoulders with nice hot water, then she will pour nice cold water over you; she will rub your dear old head, she will dry your hair, make you a beautiful mane, and you will be so lovely, so beautiful, such a darling, such a pet, such an old man as is not to be found in the whole world beside."

This is how I would speak to him, and sometimes quite in vain ! That morning he did not wish at all to kiss me, nor to be lovely, nor to be a darling, nor to be a pet ! He continued to keep a firm hold, while grumbling to his heart's content, of those two unfortunate letters. I could not help thinking he was like a dog snarling over a bone, hoping that a fellow-cur would come and dispute it with him. At such times I really believe what would have done him most good would have been to take the letters from him and to have given him a good thrashing. He continued, growling and grumbling, to turn over the letters—

“One letter, I can see clearly, is from the *crockery dog*, but the other, . . . it is posted at *Boulogne-sur-Seine*. Whom do I know at Boulogne-sur-Seine ? Who the deuce would post me a letter from Boulogne-sur-Seine ?”

ME.—“Is'nt it then from Marguerite Savoye ?”

HIM.—“It is something like her handwriting, but why should she post me a letter from Boulogne-sur-Seine ?”

ME.—“If you open it, and if you read it, you may perhaps find out. Come, do be quick, or I must go, as I have my writing to do.”

HIM.—“Dear me, what a despotic temper you have, if one does not everything Madam wishes Madam must take herself off ! How much you must be like your father.”

ME.—“And you, how much you must be like a little beast of a wild cat, which snarls, which is wicked, and which is a wretch—and which is a grumbler, and—which is a glutton, and—which . . . loves, for all that, his l-e-etle Hmee-Hmee !!!”

At the word “*wild*,” I pinched his right eye ; at the word “*naughty*,” his left eye ; at “*wicked*,” I pinched his nose ; at “*wretch*,” I pinched his right ear ; at “*grumbler*,” the left ear ; at “*glutton*,” I pinched his lips together ; and at “*Hmee-Hmee*,” grand explosion of playful grunts. I threw my arms round his neck, I kissed him near his ear, and whispered in it : “If you are naughty much longer, you will make Mimi cry.” At last after I had tried everything I could say and think of, I succeeded in bringing him round a little, and he began to undo the envelope with the greatest caution, and to read the letter, which was not the one from the *crockery dog*. As he could not read a strange writing so well as I could, I bent over to help him read it. He covered the letter with his hand.

“Don't be impatient ; one can never get on fast enough for you.” It was a letter of no consequence, not from Marguerite Savoye.

“Read *crockery dog's* letter first,” I said, “and you can finish the other one at your leisure ; that letter is not from any one you know. You can give it me.”

HIM.—“Not at all, it might possibly be of great importance ; it is, perhaps, some one who wants to buy *Polyeucte* of me. I think I caught sight of the word *Polyeucte*.”

To relate in detail all the discussion Gounod had the *genius* to raise and to sustain for hours together for the least thing would fill, not a chapter, but a volume—not a volume, but three volumes ! He then opened, always with the same caution and deliberation, the

envelope of the letter of the *crockery dog*, to which he replied aloud as he went on reading it. It was a letter which made him furious, and I saw, with great distress, that his ill-humour had set in for the day.

"To think that if I had not gone to that cursed boat-race, I should have received this letter at ten o'clock yesterday morning, nearly twenty-four hours sooner! To think that if your Charlie had not forgotten to give it me, I could have replied at once, and that she-devil of a *crockery dog* would have had my reply, and a tidy one I promise her this evening. Now, because of your cursed Sunday, she cannot have my letter till to-morrow evening—Monday, and not before half-past eight!—not even then perhaps! She will probably have gone out to tittle-tattle and gossip about me; she is quite capable of not returning till midnight, and all this because your Charlie has thought fit to forget to give us our letters!"

"If you had received it last night, you might have had a still worse night—you would have written a letter which I would not have allowed to go. You know very well I do not like you to write naughty things; therefore, it is all for the best if Charlie did forget to give it."

Gounod continued to scold, but it was nine o'clock, it was full time to get up. I kissed him again. I told him to be quick, and to call me when he would be ready to go to the bath-room. I went off to warn my husband privately of the state of the *Gounod barometer*—*privately*, for if Gounod had had a suspicion that we had spoken to each other, he would have suspected that I had been complaining of him; and I then went to my writing-table to reply to my correspondence. At the end of a quarter-of-an-hour Gounod called me; he was more contented, he had prepared his reply, and retailed it to me as I soaped, douched, and rubbed him, through the suds, through the douches; while I was soaping his head, his ears, his neck, his shoulders, beard, and arms, he did not lose a moment exulting over his epistolary vein. The pails of water did not stop him; his voice trembled while I rubbed him (I rubbed him with all my strength, because the doctor had recommended me to do so). I arranged what he had of hair into a splendid mane; he then became gentle and caressing. The water always did him a great amount of good. I felt the hope revive in me, that the fit of bad humour had passed away. He told me that I was good and patient; he called himself a "wicked old man," and promised "he would not do it again."

My husband, Gounod, and I went down to breakfast *together* at half-past nine, and, according to my custom on Sundays, I returned to the morning-room, after I had finished breakfast, to work, leaving Gounod and my husband to smoke together. For the last month, the doctors had permitted him to smoke in moderation, but not to take snuff. That dirty habit he lost altogether while with us.

I had begged of my husband not to leave me too long alone with the old man that day. Gounod stood in awe of my husband, who was an excellent screen for me; my husband was imperturbable—he had the gift of not hearing what was said. Gounod might grumble away for half-an-hour without stopping, my husband (I do not know

how he managed) had not answered a single word. He had only perceived in a passive manner that Gounod was in a tiresome humour. Gounod wore himself out before this deaf and dumb resistance, which seemed to treat him with all the lazy contempt, and that kind of non-chalance which a large Newfoundland would exhibit towards a yelping cur. . . . My husband had therefore promised me to return home immediately after church, and on the way to bring some one from the Club, who would divert the thoughts of our old man, and he desired me to have the lunch ready at half-past one precisely.

Gounod, when my husband had gone, came up to our sitting-room, and found me at my table writing.

HIM.—“To whom are you writing?”

ME.—“To H——.”

HIM.—“Has he written to you?”

ME.—“No; he has written to you.”

HIM.—“What! a letter for me, and you do not give it me!”

ME.—“It does not concern you. You know very well that you have always begged and prayed of me to save you the trouble of receiving and opening all useless letters, which only waste your time, and——”

HIM.—“Well! what does H—— say?”

ME.—“He asks you when you can see him; as I know you do not want to see him, it is very easy for me to write him two lines from you to say that you are very poorly, and that you are unable to see him. You have only to sign the letter.”

HIM.—“But how do you know he may not have some good reason for wishing to see me?”

ME.—“He can write his good reason. I have asked him to do so, and then we shall know what it is.”

HIM.—“Perhaps it is something he does not want to write.”

ME.—“Very likely! What’s that to you?”

HIM.—“Very much, for I should not be surprised to know that H—— wants to see me *officially* from those Albert Hall gentlemen.”

ME.—“Exactly what I suspect also; but as these gentlemen ought to treat with you *officially*, let them write what they want, and not employ a drunken little skip-jack like H—— to be their go-between.”

HIM.—“You are very hard on poor H——. What has he done to you?”

ME.—“To me? Nothing at all!”

HIM.—“Then why do you not wish me to see him?”

ME.—“Me! I not wish you to see him, . . . but it is you who never would see him, who used to get out of his way whenever you saw him approaching you; you have abused him as much as possible; you hate him; you abominate him. I have avoided even mentioning his letter to avoid hearing you pitch into him; now, you take into your head you wish to see him, and if I let you have your own way, it’s me again would have to bear all the grumbles and swearings because I had not prevented you losing your time *uselessly with useless people*.”

HIM.—“There’s no making an observation to you; you won’t listen to anything. I tell you H—— may want to see me about something they wish to hide from you and——”

ME.—“Just so! All the more reason why you should not go rushing into a wasp’s nest without witnesses. People are laying plenty of traps for us without your giving yourself the trouble of walking into one. Let them write what they want. I see you receiving spies when one can so easily avoid it!”

HIM.—“Heavy abuse from you immediately! Drunkards! spies! brigands! why not assassins? Ah! my dear, when you do not like people, you do not mince your words!”

ME.—“And you, Boudier! Blanche! etc. Now where in the world have you fished up this sudden and fiery desire to see H——?”

HIM.—“I am not a prisoner, at least I suppose not, in your house, and if people naturally enough ask to see me, where do you see I go and *fish* up the desire to see *them*? It appears to me it is quite natural I should wish to see the people who wish to see me!”

ME.—“If you take that view of the question, you’d receive all London and his wife, and then where would your composition go to, for which I sacrifice everything?”

HIM.—“That’s all you think of. How much you can make me work—work like a galley-slave. It is only when I am at work that I please you. You then get rid of me, and are free to go and gossip with your old father Rawlings.” (The blind father of the Rawlings boys.)

ME.—“Good gracious! how cross you are this morning. Oh dear! you drive me silly! Remember your apple-pie last night. What did I prophesy?”

HIM.—“It appears to me I have a very good reason for being cross. Letters are sent to ME; not only are they kept back for twenty-four hours, but they are completely abstracted from me altogether; not only that, I am not even told about them, and they are answered without my being consulted in any way as to what answer I may wish sent. I begin to think, my dear” (he was always furious when he called me *my dear*) “that my friend Barbier is right when he speaks of that unjustifiable influence which has set itself up as judge over my affairs, my works, my ‘co-laborations,’ my friendships, my life, my duty, and even over my conscience” (see page 74 *Les Lettres*), “over my letters, my answers, over every single, mortal thing! Everything must pass under Madam’s nose! Very well, I *will* see H——, I *will* tell him to come here at half-past two o’clock to-morrow, if, however, I am at liberty to give a *rendezvous* in your house to a friend.”

ME.—“H—— is not your friend. There is nothing in common between him and you. I oppose myself to his coming here, for I should never hear the end of it if I allowed it. You have given me your *orders*, and I abide by them—*No useless people* are allowed except on Sunday afternoons.”

HIM.—“Very well, as you will not allow me to receive who I please, I’ll go and see him!”

ME.—“You’ll do as you like! That’s settled!” and I was making up my mind the affair was indefinitely postponed, when to my horror, Gounod said: “Very well, I am going out!” . . .

ME.—“Going out! You can’t go out. You are ill, you have a bad cold, the weather is horrible, the wind is icy. You cannot go out, old man. I beg of you, do not go out!”

HIM (stiffly).—“I do not suppose I am prisoner in your house.”

He was enchanted inwardly, for he knew he had found out how to put me in perfect despair.

ME.—“I do beg and implore of you not to stir out, my dear old man. It is snowing, the wind is cutting; you’ll make yourself much worse; I’ll take you to-morrow to see H—— in the carriage, since you have this sudden and violent desire to see the man.”

HIM.—“His letter is already twenty-four hours late, he must have expected his answer last night. He will think me very impolite if he hears nothing of me to-day.”

I held my tongue, for when he set about making those sort of arguments, it was useless to say a word—the more I begged, the more he would have insisted. My heart ached, but I said no more; I pretended to be entirely absorbed in a translation; I searched for imaginary words in the dictionary, so as to appear occupied. Gounod was stamping about the room, pretending to look for his great-coat, etc., so as to let me hear he was saying: “Ah! I am not to go out—I’ll go! Ah! I am not to see the people I wish to see—I’ll see them! Ah! I am not to receive my letters—I’ll have them! Ah! I’m to be a prisoner in this house!—they shan’t keep me!”

Gounod went to dress. He put on his great winter coat, my seal-skin cap, a great comforter, his strongest boots; he rummaged the things on his table for a bit, hoping it would give me the chance of saying something which would enable him to recommence his “row,” but I held my head down, my eyes fixed on my books. I took good care not to open my mouth, I was nearly crying. He went off without another word. I heard him go downstairs; I heard the front door shut. I got up with a heavy heart; I went and gazed at the great black plane-trees swaying to and fro their branches, and the horrid dark, cold weather. . . . Five minutes had passed. I heard the front door re-open, steps on the stairs—my Gounod had returned!

I offered up a prayer of thankfulness; had I been a Catholic I should certainly have crossed myself. I blushed with joy. I quickly sat down, and I again appeared busy searching for words in the dictionary. I said nothing. I waited—my heart throbbing as though it would burst.

HIM.—“I forgot to take his address. Give me his letter.”

I passed the letter in silence to him; he left the room again, he went downstairs, he shut the hall door again, he was gone. This time he did not return.

At one o’clock my husband came home to lunch, and with him Mr. Ernest Gye, son of Mr. Frederick Gye, lessee and manager of Covent Garden Opera House. Gounod had been gone since eleven.

So he had had time to go and return. I was all in a tremble—one o'clock—the half-hour—and—no Gounod!—We went in to lunch—I could neither speak nor eat. At a few minutes past two, Gounod came in. He was very pale, in a great perspiration. He appeared not to understand anything. He barely bowed to Mr. Gye who my husband presented to him; I welcomed him as a mother welcomes her child. I wiped his forehead, neck, the inside of his cap which were running down with water (he must have scampered as hard as he could go); I made him sit down on his chair; I put his cap on his head again; I made him keep on his great coat for fear of his taking fresh cold; I rang for his broth which I used to make for him myself, or which I got made on purpose for him. The servant brought it. I placed it before him. Mr. Gye and my husband were talking as though nothing was the matter. "Drink your broth, dear old man," I whispered. Gounod pushed the broth away, he seemed to be stifled. He said nothing. I think he felt stifling because he did not dare burst into a passion, my husband and a stranger being present. "Go upstairs, my old man," I whispered, "and I'll bring you your broth." Gounod got up, left the dining-room; as I reached the door I heard the hall door slam to!—I very nearly upset all the broth. I uttered a piercing cry: "Harry! the old man has gone out again in this weather; for God's sake, run after him and bring him back!" . . . My husband, before I had had time to finish my phrase, and in less time than I take to write it, was in the garden, and before Gounod had got as far as the railings, had got him safe under his arm, as in a vice. My husband was quietly bringing him with him; he took Gounod upstairs, placed him on an arm chair in the morning-room, then looking at him with two eyes which, when he was not pleased, looked like two blades, said very dryly, but with terrific politeness:—"Another time, old man, when you take into your head to kick up a row, please to choose a moment when no strangers are present!" "But," hazarded Gounod, "am I then a prisoner here?" "Don't be so childish!" returned my husband severely, "you are not a prisoner here, you are perfectly aware of that, but you are not free to make yourself worse, and to keep me as well as my poor little wife (who you make perfectly miserable) in a state of constant and profound anxiety concerning your health." Gounod did not dare say another word. My husband left us after he had tenderly kissed me, and telling me good-naturedly to make the dear old man drink up his broth, to take care of him nicely, and to prevent his catching fresh cold. My husband had no sooner turned his back than the black fury of Gounod burst out in all its violence. "Ah! he dares speak to me in that sort of way, he dares to make me come back! Me! Gounod! Gounod dragged back by the arm as a thief, as a pick-pocket! Brought back in a shameful manner before all London!" It will be as well to explain here, so as to give still more point to Gounod's exaggerations, that Tavistock House stands, with only two other houses, alone in the middle of large enclosures of grass and trees which surround them, and completely isolate them. We had no neighbours opposite, and the only people who might have seen

what had taken place were our next door neighbours, had they happened to look out of the window. This is what Gounod called *being dragged home by the arm before all London*. "Brought back by that stuck-up jackass! that gendarme! by your husband who is not fit to black my shoes! Oh! my God!" (and he fell sobbing on his knees) "What have I then done, O Lord, that Thou should'st expose me to such bitter humiliation! Death would be sweet, O Lord! Let me die! Death alone can wipe out such an insult!"

In vain I called him; in vain I tried to calm him. It was useless to try to reason with him, poor man! . . . I tried to take him in my arms and coax him: he pushed me brutally away, almost with blows. . . . "Don't touch me!" he shrieked, "It is *you* who have incited your husband to insult me, to outrage me, to defy me; it is *you* who are the cause that this man with his bull strength, his brute-beast force, has dragged me about before all London! To drag me! Gounod! through the streets as an assassin led to the scaffold!" He, he was howling with fury, sobbing with rage! I was howling and sobbing with despair! "I will die!" he shrieked, "and all shall perish with me!" I was terrified. The thought struck me he meant to set the place on fire, but I followed him with my eyes, hoping that my look might subdue him. He rushed like a madman to the cupboard where the orchestral score of POLYEUCTE was carefully stowed away. He seized hold of it, crying out, "POLYEUCTE first; POLYEUCTE shall burn!" It was his custom, at the least contrariety, to burn the manuscript he was composing.* It was his best way to get anything he wanted out of me. It made me wretched to see him destroy his work. I often could not prevent him. He used to tear his pages into four pieces, and had soon burnt them, especially in winter. He did all he could to give me a nervous attack, followed by a frightful headache and vomiting enough to tear out my inside, and so ill that the doctor had often to be sent for. Then all Gounod's good humour would return. He would become charming again; he would worship me again; could not coax me, beg my forgiveness, or repent himself enough. He would accuse himself of all his faults, would cry most bitterly, confessed his bad temper to me and my husband, and was such a darling we could not help adoring him—that, still suffering agonies, incapable of moving or of opening an eye, I would give him my hand to hold for hours. I should have been much better alone, but I feared to sadden him by asking him to leave me.

Never did it enter my head to owe him a grudge for these scenes—these *dreadful* scenes; so, when I think over all the love, the patience, with which we treated him, I say it is impossible he can have forgotten it! He must remember it. At the bottom of his heart he must surely love us, and will return. . . .

He had, therefore, said—"Polyeucte shall burn!"

* A great scene of *Redemption* thus disappeared, as well as several lovely songs, amongst others, one, the verses of which had been dedicated to me, and began, "*Saint Cecilia*." It was called "*The Maestro to his Saint*."

With strength lent me by the horror of despair, I threw myself on Gounod with all my weight; I knocked him down; I rolled on him; we tussled violently for the possession of the treasure. I tore it from him; I flung it on the sofa; I suddenly picked myself off the floor; I sat upon it and I screamed: "You shall kill me first, but you shall not burn *Polyeucte*!" My strength then gave way, I burst into sobs, I stretched out my arms to him—"My old man! my old treasure! Why are you so wicked to me? Don't you see you are killing me? I suffer too much: I can bear it no longer. I do all that is possible to save you useless trouble—useless work. It is in vain. When you have got out of bed on the wrong side you turn and twist everything the wrong way. You treat me as though I were your worst enemy because I insist upon carrying out your own orders, that I do as you beg of me. I give you all your time. *I save you from useless people!* It is I who wish to die, for it makes me too unhappy to see you so cruel!"

Gounod, to whom the fight had done good, had calmed down, thank God: the score of *Polyeucte* was saved. You will see, later on, my dear children, when the idea of burning *Polyeucte* entered my unhappy brain which of the two was most excusable—Gounod or I.

When his stomach was out of order, Gounod was simply diabolical. My husband came up to us about four o'clock. Gounod, though appeased, was sulky, contrary, contradicting everything, would not take his medicines, went to bed not having quite made it up with me. The fact is, I had not yet been sick, and I was not half dead with headache.

At half-past five next morning I heard him coughing most dreadfully. I got up to take him the dose he had refused to take the day before. He was not in his bedroom; he was in the morning-room (next to mine), *without a fire!* (He had come there so that I might hear him.) I persuaded him to allow me to wrap him up in his blankets on a great arm-chair, I put his legs up on another chair, I wrapped myself also up well, I lay down on the sofa near his chair, he got quieter, and I went to sleep. As the morning wore on he got sad again—began to harp again on the "insult Harry had perpetrated towards him of dragging him into the house before all London, before Gye's son,—his mortal enemy"—and I began to cry again. In the evening he recommenced the quarrel in his best approved style, and I went to bed ill as a poor dog—vomiting and exhausted, and with a headache enough to madden me.

Tuesday, 26th March, two days after the *POLYEUCTE* row, I could not get up all day. I was dead! All day long I suffered agonies from pains in the head and stomach. Hot fomentations had to be kept on my head and stomach during the day, for hours at a time, and he, poor old man, he did not ask for anything but to be allowed to help hold my head. In the evening I just got up to have my bed made. Gounod, in consequence, became gay and perky again.

From *the 29th March till the 12th April* there was the commotion of Jean Gounod's visit for the Easter holidays, which passed over quietly enough—only, during this time the controversy concerning

the *non-registration* of FAUST was in full bloom. (See page 70, BUSINESS; page 57, AUTOBIOGRAPHIE DE GOUNOD.) Gounod was like a devil again! As it was I who had the misfortune to discover that the LAW was on Gye's side and against Gounod, Gounod pretended "*I took the part of his enemies.*"

The 13th April I was half dead, I had cried so much. Till the 1st May, in spite of Albert Hall worries, in spite of my bust from Franceschi not turning up, although in Strakosch's presence I had missed the run after the shake in the *Air des Bijoux* of *Faust*, which Gounod had declared to Strakosch I sang to perfection (*Ah! je ris*) . . . although Marie Roze, at the Opera, had been a great deal too much applauded in *Faust* which she sang atrociously in 1872, in spite of his *crockery dog*, I had peace; and when he was good I assure you there was not a happier creature than me in the world, nor a more adorable one than Gounod! But the 1st May was a deplorable day, and I shed tears enough to deluge the apartment (see page 79, *Les Lettres*). Mr. Viguier paid us a visit, and, without intending it, added fuel to the flame. The least thing said by a third person, once that person had turned his back, he twisted it against me somehow. The discussion ensued, as I have already described, and ended in the same manner.

The 4th May our dear friend, my companion, Mlle. Ottilie Schmidt arrived from Germany, which caused us much pleasure. Almost at the same time, I took into the house, out of the purest charity, a young mulatto girl, called Nita Gaëtano. She has behaved so very ill to me since I wrote the second volume, that I shall not pretend to keep her the incognito of her initials (see page 41, BUSINESS). Moreover, I wish my children to know other details which will edify them as to the way in which those on whom I have lavished it have recognised my goodness towards them.

I had written to the agent who had got her away from me, that I reserved to myself the right of prosecuting her for her want of good faith, and for the money she owed me, as well as for several articles she had carried away with her when she left us, when I thought the time had arrived when she would be able to return to me what I demanded.

In 1877 I learnt that she was giving a concert (to buy her *trousseau*) at the house of some friends of mine, who, I have every reason to believe, she had set against me, and that she had got a good deal of money by this concert. At the same time I heard she was engaged to a Captain Lynedoch Moncrieff, a man forty years of age, a poor sailor, but of good family, and in a good position. One of my friends, who was acquainted with the Captain's mother, told me the old lady was in despair at the match, and said that she thought that, as it was entirely through me that this person had got known in London, I ought to write and let Mrs. Moncrieff know what I knew about the young woman. I did as she advised me, and, at the same time, my solicitor wrote to Miss Gaëtano to ask her to return me £20 in cash which she positively owed me, without saying anything about the damages she would have been condemned

to pay me. She answered me through her solicitor that she had paid me, and she owed me nothing! and she sent her "*young man*" to insult me, to tell me I was "*an infernal liar*," that I was mad, that everyone knew it, and that I ran the risk of being prosecuted for libel. I answered: "By all means prosecute me! The public shall judge between us!" I knew very well he did not dare do so. The story concerning Miss Gaëtano was well known among the artists' *clique*; but I had not pressed that in my letter to Mrs. Moncrieff, I dwelt on her cruelty to my dogs, her love of dress, etc., which did not strike me as likely to afford much happiness in a poor "*ménage*"—unless, indeed, the Captain speculated on her voice there would not be sufficient to dress Milady! All the Gaëtano-Weldon correspondence is there for everybody to read, in which our contract will be read, as well as the detailed account of what she owes me in her own handwriting. I could no longer legally attack her; Gounod had abandoned me, my husband was of no account: she had the *best of it*. She had given out she had left us from virtuous scruples, that "*Gounod was Mrs. Weldon's lover*." That alone was enough to open wide every door to her. The world is so delighted to be down on a woman who has never been talked of before with any man, a woman who perseveres in trying to do good, and sticking to her text. . . . I am quite certain she found it much easier to get her patronesses to raise money by selling tickets for her concert with the noble object of furnishing her with a *trousseau* than I did when I gave concerts to provide orphans with food and clothing.

She was a lovely girl, most graceful, quadroon type, with superb eyes; her body a serpent—lithe and yielding. I had taken a great fancy to her, I quite loved her, I lent her everything I had. She even carried off, by sheer carelessness, I feel convinced, my beautiful coral necklace worth, at least, £40, but that I desired her to send me back immediately. Several other things disappeared about the same time. I have a little girl (an orphan) the very image of Nita (although not so pretty), both physically and morally. I look after this child specially, and warn her, although she is barely three years old. She is envious, sly, lazy, hypocritical, coquettish; dull with us and the other children; all charms and graces in the presence of strangers, especially gentlemen. No sooner established in our house, Nita was sulky and insupportable with me and Miss Schmidt, deliciously coaxy and affectionate towards my husband and Gounod.

15th May.—The old man in the devil's own temper. He tormented me so, I cried to break my heart, and had to go to bed at about 5 p.m. The old man would not go to Silas' Concert.

16th.—I was too ill to get up till 5 o'clock.—(*Journal*.)

9th June.—Gounod went to see the Viguiera. He came back rather annoyed by reports from Paris. Row with the old man.

10th.—I in bed all day.—(*Journal*.)

11th.—We dined with some friends of Miss Schmidt at Mortlake. We did not get to bed till 3 o'clock in the morning. On the night of the 12th I was awake by the unearthly howls of the poor old man.

My husband was holding him in his arms. Gounod did not know us; he repeated without ceasing, "he saw the black hole where they wanted to put him," and wanted other imaginary persons to see it by pointing to it and telling them *to look at it*. *They wanted to take him*, he said. He whispered, "I hear them behind the door; but Mimi sees them too. They are all there to take me—there—behind the door. Mimi is all white, she sees them too. She sees the great black hole with her light which is so white. Mimi has promised me. She is there—Mimi won't let them take me. Mimi! Mimi! hold me; hold me tight!—I am slipping, you see, I am slipping into the hole. Mimi! I am lost. Mimi, if you do not hold me you will not be able to save me. . . . Lost! Lost! I am so cold. I shall be so cold in that black hole. I am nice and warm when Mimi holds me; do not take me! Hold me! Mimi is all white! She is gone, yet she had promised me." He cried and sobbed; he ground his teeth, he appeared to chew something he had not got in his mouth. He clung to me, felt my face, looked around him with a frightened look and whispered, "Blanche—not Blanche" (alluding, as I suppose, to the mad doctor of that name, and at whose asylum he had been shut up several times). He seemed to try to hide himself from the persons *who wanted to take him*. We sent for the doctor, and at 4 o'clock that afternoon he had regained consciousness and recognised us all. It is not possible for there to be more beautiful moments of joy in this world than those which I felt when I saw the light of reason again illumine the dear eyes of my old man. I had sprained my back that day in pulling Gounod up on his pillows. When Gounod cried out "Hold me, Mimi, I am slipping!" I held him with all my poor little strength, for he really did slip in his bed with a great start (like when one wakes suddenly); I pulled him on his pillows all I could. I was obliged to stay in bed all next day on account of the pain in my back. Doctor Meuriot (the medical man who had succeeded to Dr. Blanche's business at Passy) came to see us *on the 14th*. *On the 15th* his wife and he came and lunched with us. I had such a dreadful headache that day I could not give lessons to my class.

The only consolation (when I was made ill through his fault) was that Gounod kept in perfect health; and his temper, usually, under those circumstances, was charming.

The 25th June, 1872.—A person trod on his corn which made him quite ill.

The 7th July.—The old man picked a quarrel with me—I cannot remember why. It was Sunday. He had most likely heard some tittle-tattle which irritated him, or some *bore* had button-holed him. He had a pain in his knee. The doctor had sent him an ointment I was to rub his knee with. I was to rub in a morsel the size of a pea-nut. Gounod, who was sulking that Sunday evening, went upstairs to work (as I supposed). Only too happy to remain quietly with my husband, and escape his naggings, I took very good care not to go upstairs till it was time to go to bed. My husband came upstairs with me to *protect me*. Imagine my feelings of worry

and anxiety when, instead of finding him writing in the morning-room, I found *our old child* in bed—sulky as possible, and complaining terribly of his knee. “My poor old man,” said I, taking his head and kissing him with all my heart, “my old man, you are in such pain as all that, all alone, and you don’t call your little mother. Why do so? Naughty old cat should have told me—you know very well I would have come up with you and rubbed your nasty knee!” I went to get the pot of ointment which I had cautiously put in my own room, for the doctor had warned me it was something frightfully strong—cantharides. It had disappeared. On returning to Gounod to tell him of its disappearance, what should I see, on the drawers in his room, the very pot!!! It was open. I took it up! It was almost empty! I felt ready to drop.

ME.—“Good Heavens! where have you put this ointment?”

HIM.—“Where should I put it, but on my knee!”

ME.—“Oh! you poor old man. What *have* you done? It is cantharides!!!

HIM.—“I suffer agonies, Mimi; it is enough to have my leg cut off!”

ME.—“Oh dear! oh dear! On your knee! my poor darling old man” (I wailed, weeping), “you may have to have your leg cut off! What will become of us all?”

My husband went off immediately for the doctor, he did not come, but said we need not fear anything; that Gounod would suffer torture for twenty-four hours, that he would itch like mad, that one must keep the knee cool. I put on, therefore, wet compresses, day and night, besides starch powder. He never slept a wink all night, but I cried so much, he bore his sufferings gaily, and repented himself of the bad temper which was the cause of his torment.

The 11th.—I was ill with sick-headache.

The 14th July.—He caught cold. He was very hoarse at his Concert on the 15th. *The 16th* he got worse. On *the 17th* he had to keep his bed, and was very ill for several days.

The 25th July.—His bad temper broke out again because a certain Mr. Jarrett brought a vocalist, Miss Clara Kellogg, to see him. He told Gounod that Choudens asked 10,000 francs from Märetzek in America for the Score of *Mireille*; so on *the 26th* he was something *too* odious! I was in despair when people told him these kind of things—for he would blow *me* up as though I were to blame.

The 29th July.—Gounod, Schimdtchen (as we called Miss Ottilie Schmidt), Werrenrath, Nita Gaëtano, I, Dan and Tity (in a large basket), left Tavistock House for Spa. It was my husband’s month at the Heralds’ College, so he followed us a few days later.

Schimdtchen went home to Wiesbaden for her holidays. A serious illness, which lasted two or three years, prevented her returning to us. Besides, on account of Gounod’s health and tempers, it was useless for me to think of singing. It was impossible for me to sing anywhere, Gounod being with us. In the first place, he would not let me go anywhere without him, and would not go with me unless

he was paid £100. I could easily get twenty or thirty guineas, but as Gounod was almost unknown in England at that time, and as the Musical trade had set themselves against him because he had taken me up (I not being *in the swim*), no one would have given a sixpence extra for the honour of *his* presence. This rubbed him up the wrong way dreadfully, and all these *slights* which he received were vented on *me*, and probably left a lasting impression of spite in his mind against me. Then, I knew a shoal of artists before I knew Gounod, whose music I used to sing, at whose concerts I had sung, and who wanted me to sing for them as usual. I would willingly have obliged them as far as I was concerned, but not only was I never sure of being able to keep an engagement, thanks to the scenes Gounod would annihilate me with, especially when I had to go somewhere, but I did not wish Gounod to drag himself about with me to little concerts to which people would have pretended I trapped him with me for my own pleasure (which I can assure you was no pleasure to me at all)—and I am thankful, after all that has happened, that I protected his tranquillity and his dignity so well as I did.

This line of action for me was most unfortunate. It alienated from me all my old friends, for as I would sooner have died than let a soul suspect a syllable against Gounod, or give him as an excuse for not obliging them, that I would not for the world have let anyone so much as nourish a breath of suspicion of the difficulties Gounod's illnesses, accidents, and tempers caused me. They supposed, no doubt, it was I who had taken to give myself "*airs*." As for Benedict, he did not dare get me another engagement. He did not even dare let me sing at his Benefit Concert in 1873 (nor since) because of the animus of father Gye against me on account of the FAUST affair. So that through Gounod I lost everything,—absolutely EVERYTHING!

I abandoned, therefore, altogether all idea of singing in public, or that of an artistic career. Miss Schmidt's presence, therefore, was no longer a matter of necessity, and we only regretted her as a dear, kind friend.

After Gounod had left us, she told me it was *she* who had put into Gounod's head to pay us for board and lodging; indeed, he did not like her very much; the reason he gave being that she was a Prussian! He had been with us almost entirely since the beginning of June, 1871, but had never thought of giving us anything, and it certainly had never entered our heads. Since then, the money he paid Mr. Weldon did not come from France, but with that which we may be said to have earned *with the sweat of our brows* in spite of everything, in spite of the opposition which, alas! was slowly but surely ruining ME, and that, in *England*, where, before he knew us, he had hardly earned a farthing.

We had missed one train; Werrenrath started off with Miss Schmidt. Gounod, Nita and I alone arrived at Brussels, at 7 o'clock in the morning on the 30th July. We had started with our pugs, but oh misery! oh horror! oh despair! we arrived without them. I had enquired after them at Baisieux, the

frontier, and I had been assured that they and their basket were in the train! And—They were not there!—I burst into tears. We believed Tity was expecting little puppies, she was always as fat and smooth as a mouse; I worked myself up in my despair to believe that from her desolation at finding herself lost, she would be confined, and that the famished parents would eat their little ones. I imagined Tity mad, poor old Dan slobbering with despair! . . . and . . . oh! dear me . . . where, oh! where could they be? The Telegraph Office did not open till eight A.M. I ran all over the station, accosting each "*official*," begging and praying of them to open the office for me and to send a telegram. Gounod, on his side, was furious. "Those brutal dogs," said he, "Why have brought them? Why submit ourselves to such a *nuisance*? All the better if they are lost! You, you can't live without your pugs! Is there a thing in this world more insupportable than a woman who cannot move without dragging after her animals of all kinds, birds, beasts, parrots, frogs, tortoises, hedgehogs? If they are found I insist on your opening their basket and letting them run wherever they please! As for me, if those pugs darken our doors again, I take the first train, I return to Tavistock, and you'll do the season of Spa without me!" The omnibus was waiting. Nita, very much bored,—quite the martyr all over in one spot—was waiting in the 'bus. Gounod wanted to force *me* into it with him, and to abandon the poor dears to their fate. As you may imagine, I refused to budge an inch till the Telegraph Office was opened. Gounod, all the same, not liking to leave me at the station all alone, or to let Nita go to the Hotel alone, with a very bad grace promised to stay and telegraph, and bundled me into the omnibus, crying and sobbing, helpless with grief.

Nita and I were off.

On arriving on the Place des Palais, I luckily remembered my old friend, M. Jules Devaux, chef du Cabinet of the King. I got the omnibus to stop, I got out and sped across the Place to the Palace, where I asked a footman for M. Devaux. M. Devaux was in bed. He was asleep. I told my lamentable story to the servant, who seemed to listen to me with much sympathy; he got me to write a little note for M. Devaux, promised to give it him immediately, and I got to the hotel feeling a little comforted.

In the meanwhile Nita had engaged a bed-room with two beds for me and her, and one, unfortunately, close to ours for Gounod, from whence, when he returned from the station, he continued cursing and swearing at the poor unfortunate dogs.

I had begged M. Devaux to telegraph to every station on the line and to repeat in each telegram that some water should be thrown to the pugs. The basket was locked with two good padlocks. The pugs were worth at least £40 each. I implored M. Devaux to keep me posted as to the situation, and after five hours of anguish and suspense a telegram came to say the pugs had been found, and that the precious treasures would arrive at five o'clock, and . . . that they were all right, and . . . that water had been thrown into the basket.

Gounod then became more good-natured, for really, at the bottom of his heart, he loved the dogs. *Dan* kept him faithful company when he was ill, he amused himself with teasing *Mittie*, and *Farba* he would keep for hours on his lap. We did not bring Jarba with us when we went travelling—she was too blind. Poor little Jarba!

At last the darlings arrived. They were in perfect health, and their basket was quite clean. They were neither hungry or thirsty; but poor little *Mittie* sprung out of her basket, came and put her little nose in my hand, and with touching and admirable confidence, looking up in "mothers" eyes with her pretty little dove-like smile, she hastened to . . . Well! . . . I will not say what she did. . . . Gounod immediately took them out for their little walk, and by the time he brought them in I had got a nice bath ready for them. I washed and rubbed them thoroughly dry (I always had a great big sheet with me on purpose for them), put them to bed again, locked them up in their basket in the passage, where they remained perfectly still all night. Gounod's stockings had been forgotten; this did not improve matters; he kept on grumbling about it, because, if "*they had been father Rawlings' stockings they would not have been forgotten!*" I had to write to my husband to bring them. The letter which I sent him with the description of our adventures is very amusing, as well as one which I sent him from Spa. I transcribe some of it here, for it so exactly describes the state of affairs.

HOTEL LEROY-TAYLOR, SPA.

Monday, 5th August, 1872.

MY DEAR OLD POOMPS,—I struggle in vain to write to you. We get up rather late (me, at 7.15!), and then I take the waters—then we breakfast. At twelve the old man and I, with Nita and Werrenrath, go and take waters again, the old man complaining he is not with us, and reproaching me for *making* him go to Gambart's; then we dash or dawdle home (but it always *ends* by dashing!), then he goes back to Alsa, as his game is, he is too much of a prisoner to be allowed to lunch out, and we lunch with Werrenrath; then at five the old man and I take a mineral bath, which bubbles like champagne, and then we come home to dress and dine, and we all go to Alsa sometimes. What with arranging rooms since I have been here, Nita no use at all except to curse and swear at poor *Mittie*, and grumbling at my taking them out with me, in fact at *everything* which does not exactly suit her or flatter her ladyship. Making the two practise, my day is pretty well chalked out, and I am by the way of being out as much as possible. The weather is disgusting—rain! rain! rain! The children are well. *Mittie* seems as if she were going to have little puppies, but I fear 'tis only a false alarm. I have hardly got over my horror at losing them yet! I was obliged to send off my letter to you on Friday without even signing; my head got so much worse, and I was so sick—the old man ready to die in a fit.

Another note to my husband of the 6th—

DEAREST POOMPS,—Please send Goddard my note and cheque for £100. I daren't say "*nothing*" to Gounod at present about a ha'penny, because his game is *he has not a ha'penny IN THE WORLD*; so I have patience and pay it myself!—Your loving
POOMPS.

Jean arrived at Alsa with his servant Victor, and his visit was the signal for still more frequent Gounodian fits of fury, for his "*darling son*" greatly preferred a boat on a little pond at the bottom of the garden to his "*darling father*." Jean, too, had changed, very much

to his disadvantage. He was very dirty, made use of very coarse words, quarrelled with Victor, and did not at all care about accompanying his father to the Sauvenière, where Gounod had to drink the waters every morning. As the spring was the other way out of town, Gounod was obliged to go there alone—and he hated being alone a minute—for, although I had the best will and desire in the world to satisfy him, it was too far for me to do so.

The 10th August.—M. Gambart had a long conversation with me. He advised me to be on my guard with Gounod. He explained all the FAUST story to me, and warned me that it would be impossible for me or an angel from heaven to satisfy him. That he was a “*man of sand*,” that inevitably with him we should lose our time and our money. All this did not make the slightest impression on me; Gambart was an excessively crabbed man, autocratic, and jealous of the rather tiresome affection Gounod appeared to have for us, and of which he made a special display in public, which used to annoy me intensely. Gambart felt, of course, that Gounod, at Alsa, behaved like a tied-up dog; I would not have owned to a soul but my husband that Gounod nearly worried me to death. I was convinced that had I been *his wife* Gounod would not have tormented me as he did. I attributed all his ill-temper to his feeling chafed by his *crockery dog*. Her yoke fell heavy upon him, although at a distance, and I pitied him. Nita and Miss Schmidt found Gounod unbearable, but I used to get them to be patient by proving how much he was to be pitied. Miss Schmidt felt very anxious about my health. Werrenrath, of course, saw how the land lay, but (he has told me so since) he would not have dared to appear to take the slightest notice.

Not only would I not *listen* to a single word against Gounod, but I should have owed any one a deep grudge, *for the whisper of the suspicion of an idea* against him. Jean Gounod appeared strongly to take his father's part against his mother. My husband had written to me, and Gounod copied the passages out (and I have got them in his own handwriting)—

Beware of Jean. He is a double-faced little boy. He goes and speaks ill of you and his father to his mother, and ill of his mother to his father. Madame Viardot says he is such a liar she won't let her son have anything to do with him.

It was Alice Boulan, one of Benedict's daughters, who had told this to my husband.

Speaking of Madame Viardot, I have never heard her spoken of as a *saint*, but Gounod has always spoken of her to me in the best of terms, and, as for me, I believe, had it not been for Madame Viardot, Gounod would never have pushed his way. The world would, for ever, have ignored him. It is a real service to humanity she has rendered, for which I feel very grateful, although it has been the cause of all my misfortunes.

Gounod had told me that his wife had even been jealous of Madame Viardot, and, as an instance of her coarse and filthy jealousy, recounted the following anecdote :—

When Gounod fell into Madame Zimmerman's trap (who was laying out her nets to get her daughters married, no easy job, in spite of their dowry), and when she succeeded in landing this unfortunate little composer who became as a galley slave rivetted for life to Mlle. Anna Zimmerman, Madame Viardot sent a bracelet as a wedding present to the youthful bride. This innocent young girl sent it back with a few insulting words, saying "she did not accept presents from her husband's mistresses." When Gounod told me this I crimsoned with indignation. "What!" said I; "what could a young girl know about *mistresses*? What a horrible girl—not to be *ashamed* to own she had ever *heard* of such horrors! What did you do? Good heavens, what an insult!" Gounod looked rather sheepish and hung down his head. "What did you do?" I asked, still more imperiously. "What would you have me do? What was I to do?" "You! What you *ought* to have done! I should have taken my wife by the arm, I should have made her go down on her knees, and I should have made her say to Madame Viardot—'Madam, I ask you sincerely pardon for having behaved so rudely to you; I beg you will give me the bracelet you were kind enough to send me again.' If she had refused, I should have left her there and then, and I would never have gone near such a coarse and ignoble woman again."

Mme. Viardot had been of inestimable value to Gounod; and all those who admire Gounod's genius owe her a great deal. She was good to Gounod and his mother when they were in want. She is married; she is a grandmother. It is nobody's business if she has or has not been Gounod's mistress. As for her talent and her person, they are in the "public domain." I never admired her in any way; I am therefore quite impartial when I speak of Mme. Viardot. She, like her brother, Manuel Garcia, have benefited by the name of their father, and that of their sister Malibran, who, my mother has assured me, was a real, great artist. They were born in an artistic circle. I will prove, by my children, that one must be born an absolute idiot, deaf and dumb, if in this century of profound ignorance of music, and affluence of miserable mediocrities, one cannot easily acquire sufficient vocal "means" to figure as *stars* in the musical world of the present day.

As I have written in my second volume, never was Gounod so unbearable as during the seven weeks his visit to Mr. Gambart at Alsa lasted.

Every day there was something new to grumble at, besides the daily quarter-of-an-hour of lamentations, because *he* was at Alsa and *I* at Spa! Then prophecies as to Nita's ingratitude. He made himself quite ill—me also. The 14th, 15th, and 16th of August, I was ill in bed nearly all day; I did nothing but cry. The old man ill too. Werrenrath lazy. Nita also. My husband suffering *agonies* with *tic-douloureux*. To top it all up, about the 1st of Sept., Gounod had got into his noddle that he would go and spend the winter at Capri—"his *dear* Capri!" We were to abandon everything in England. The choir, the classes, the children—all "*could*

go and be hanged," and Gambart, enchanted with the impending shipwreck, encouraged him.

I had my little class at Spa: Nita, Werrenrath, little Marguerite Berardi, little Frédérix, Mlle. Louise Macau, Mme. Henriette Francotte—*gratis*, of course, as usual!

Gounod's lamentations increased instead of diminishing. A great maypole of a girl, by name Logé, had arrived on a visit to Alsà. There was a nasty little wild boy there who would not be tamed by Gounod, in spite of all the *great composer's* wheedlings. He would escape "*from his prison*," and stay with us all day.

It was at Alsà he finished the "*DEUX REINES*."

The 12th September.—An awful row. *The 13th:* I was all in a heap, obliged to stay in bed all day. Gounod no longer able to bear himself, came and established himself at our hotel. He had caught all his old symptoms again—dyspepsia, eczema, heartburn, salivatory gland, etc., etc., etc. He required *Mimi* to trim his meat for him, *Mimi* to cut his bread and take away the crumb. We had then known Gounod eighteen months. You will not make me believe that the "*mad passion of a lover*" lasts so long, living with the object of that *passion*. I insist upon it, Gounod was never in love with me; he had found in me a creature who allowed herself to be tyrannised over like a machine. I declare it was absolutely necessary to his welfare to have some one or some thing handy to victimise, and upon whom he could constantly give vent to his evil feelings! It somehow had never occurred to me to kick against this sort of treatment; I cried, I endured, I fell ill. Gounod produced an effect which procured him some kind of satisfaction; he gave himself the opportunity of repenting himself, of begging pardon, of promising "*he would never do it again*." How often! Ah, yes! thousands of times I have said to myself since then, "If it had only pleased God to have taken me then, I should have died completely happy;" for what is strangest of all, I never was so happy in my life!

The 18th September.—Gounod fell seriously ill; his brain was attacked. My husband carried him down from the second story where his bedroom was, and put him into my bed in our bedroom. A little bed was put for me in the drawing-room adjoining it. He was in bed five days. We had another sick person under our care, Mrs. Henry Porter, a pretty little American lady, a friend of Nita. She was seriously ill; my husband had to carry her from place to place as though she was a little child. We could not leave her in this sad state. She was obliged to consult a good surgeon, and there was none at Spa; so we left Gounod at Spa with the Bérardis, and took her to Brussels. Upon my word of honour, I do not know where any one went and fished up the idea, that I kept strict watch over Gounod—that I monopolised him, or was jealous of him. Madame Bérardi was beautiful; he liked very much being with the Bérardis. They had the means of being much more useful to him than I could be. I only wished to serve him by nursing him. I was in the eighteenth month of my "*Gounodysee*." I loved my old man better than ever; but, I do not deny it, it was a relief to be separated

occasionally from him. He was so adorable with strangers. They used to love him so. I received so many compliments about him, I swelled with joy and pride to see him appreciated, and I was convinced more than ever that he required a *scapegoat* upon which he could constantly "bang away," and that it was very fortunate for him that he had one!

After a few days, Gounod hastened to rejoin us in Brussels. My bust by Franceschi at that time (1st Oct.) was a ceaseless source of worry. My husband had taken Mrs. Porter to Paris; he went to see Franceschi with Captain Bingham. The little man told them the bust was finished, and that he would send it. We passed a couple of weeks at Brussels very peacefully. Gounod triumphed over me, because his predictions concerning Nita Gaëtano had been fulfilled. The girl had played us false, and sold herself to an agent. He was rid of her. He could not bear the sight of her! He only made me one scene in Brussels, and that because Werrenrath sang badly at his concert, . . . as if it were my fault!

I had caught a dreadful cold, and when we left Brussels on the 15th October, I was extremely ill; I had a fearful sore throat. We started for London, *via Calais*, Werrenrath, Gounod, the pugs, and I. As though it were on purpose, the pugs in their basket were again left behind at the frontier. I had, however, taken the precaution at Baisieux to ask if they were in the train. No; they had been forgotten at Blandin. . . . Werrenrath continued his journey to take our news to my husband, who was expecting us. I was so very ill I was too glad to get between the sheets at the Hotel Dessain, Calais. The pugs arrived at five o'clock. Gounod was furious. I was too ill to speak to him; I was so ill in the night I was obliged to call him. I was suffering agonies in my throat, my tongue was covered with a thick white skin, I feared I had got diphtheria, and was dying—I was inaudible, and Gounod was so impatient and hard; my husband was always so good to me when I was very ill. Gounod could not understand what I wanted, and was so cross about it, I could not help crying. I could not leave my bed during the whole day on the 16th. I was covered with wet bandages; without them, I should often have died.

On the 17th October, I could just travel. We arrived at our dear Tavistock the same day. Harry (my husband) was very anxious about me, as Werrenrath had brought him the bad news. I coughed after that for months. The doctor sent me off to Brighton on the 26th. This is the third time I left my old man without a pang. (*See Correspondence, page 90.*) He saw me off with great regret, and longed to see me return to the "*Home*"—I was the "*Flower of the Home*." * I returned on the 1st November, and everything went on pleasantly enough till the 16th. That day the old man made me a scene, because Werrenrath and the choir did not read music well!

On the 20th, for the same reason, he got so angry while we were in the carriage, that he almost fainted away. I made the coachman

* See page 58, Correspondence.

return home at once. He was like a stone. I had some stone-bottles heated, and made him sit down in an arm-chair near the fire. He got better so soon that he went to Bertrand's, the fencing master, to finish the afternoon.

About the 23rd, new subjects of suspicion and lamentation; he took into his head that Harry had something against him. Now my husband had never said a word against him, and I attributed this new phase of mind to the imagination of the old man, and to his desire to find some new subject for worrying me. I perceived, however, later, by his first letter from France, *9th June, 1874*, that he really had pre-occupied himself with the idea.

• We played at that time constantly at the games of *Patience*, *Sympathy*, and *Star*.

The 26th.—Old man bad with pains in his head and neck. He could not move from his bed till the 4th December. On that day he went to the Turkish bath and felt better.

5th December.—The old man (as I told my husband) got up with the "black dog" on his shoulder. He came to interfere with and worry me during the class, showing his dissatisfaction with Werrenrath and the choir singers. I left him alone to have it out with them, and went up stairs to write. He had not in reality the least idea of drilling a choir. He is a very excellent conductor of an orchestra and choirs, but to teach them their parts, he had not the least capacity. This he discovered very soon when he found himself at the head of about two dozen ignoramuses without me, and that he found he could not leave them, as I was gone. As for me, I was upstairs in peace writing away!

Gounod, however, found means to revenge himself on me for the good time I had spent, and the mortification he had endured. He went out without saying a word. I waited for half-an-hour; I thought he had gone to drown himself as he had so often threatened.* I could hold out no longer. I went to two police stations to give the alarm and his description. He came back quietly and began tormenting me again in the evening.

The 6th.—I kept my bed thoroughly exhausted—vomiting and headache. The old man in bed till 3 P.M. He began quarrelling again in the evening, and rushed out of the house like a madman.

The 7th.—He was like an angel all day long.

The 16th December, 1872, was a happy day for me. Harry is so good and excited about our Academy. Alfred sang so well, I feel so thankful and happy. For the first time in my life I feel I want to thank God—He has performed the miracle, and shown me the sign of Harry's conversion, so I feel happy, and the old man so happy in religion,—the Peace which passeth all understanding. I let my hair grow to please Harry.

The 18th.—My poor old man so bad with his chest. I put him on immense poultices.

19th.—He had a fit of something, and I think his brain was affected; but I no longer remember (in March, 1878) the history and patho-

* Besides the threat of drowning himself, he actually had a loaded pistol which he kept in his little travelling bag, carefully locked up, and whenever he went off into these *tantrums*, he would scare me to death by invariably carrying off this dreadful bag and pistol with him!

logy of his illnesses as I knew them in 1874 or 1875, when this first part was written (of which the manuscript was stolen from me by the *Gaulois*). My journal was not precise enough sometimes, and does not give all the details which would have been so useful to me. I drew up the exact account of it for Dr. Blanche in 1874, asking him to return it to me. I have asked him for it several times, but the only notice he has taken of it is to thank me for the interesting and intelligent work I had had the kindness to undertake for him. On the whole, all the month of December was pretty peaceable.

17th January, 1873.—The old man was in a very bad humour, he continued grumbling all day long. At six o'clock the next morning, I heard a noise in the morning-room; I got up—it was he! He had not been to bed all night long.

Thank God, this row blew over without making me ill.

The 27th.—He put himself in a diabolical temper, because one of the chorus (a certain Mr. George Smith) told him that the Gounod Choir was a small one. There was nothing astonishing in its being small. Each member had to pay an annual subscription of £2 10s.; no other society required more than a guinea—often even nothing at all, and great advantages (such as amusements *gratis*) were afforded by the others. But Gounod (being the *great Gounod*!) considered that one should pay him for the honour of belonging to the "Gounod Choir," and then he would fly at me as if *I were the great Gounod*! He expected to succeed in England in artistic and commercial enterprises, of which I learnt later in France there could not have been even a question; he would not go to bed; he would not eat anything; he was terrible. I do not comprehend clearly from my journal if his brain was attacked or no on that day. I wrote in my journal:—

"I was just about to go out with Mrs. C— when I found I had better stay with the poor old man. It is enough to wear me out, the constant state of worry and uncertainty he keeps me in, and always the dread of what Gambart said coming true!—so Mrs. C— had to go off without me. He could not move, nor come down to dinner. He went to bed. I had to conduct the rehearsal. All went well, except the *Introit* and the *Kyrie*. When I went to bed, I found the dear old soul beaming, hungry, and good as gold."

There I was, quite happy! He repented himself, he caressed me, he held me, he could not leave off blessing me—kept on telling my husband how naughty he had again been; but that Mimi had not cried very much; and then we embraced him, then we worshipped him, then we fed him: he was really such a darling, it was impossible to remember his naughty ways. The old man felt very weak all the next day, and, as for me, I was ill for days together.

I cannot describe the effect these scenes had on me. I became as though I were iced, inside and out, the top of my head shivered, and I felt prostrated with extreme desolation. I adored this old creature who was killing me. He harassed me, he tormented me for a whole day or two—he would hardly let me go when bed-time came; but he had so schooled me into the belief that he would die without me, that when I felt my patience give way, I would accuse myself of bar-

barity and of cruelty. My husband, too, had more pity for him than I—he hadn't him bothering after him all day long as I had.—Do not think, my children, that I had not made inquiries respecting his character and reputation after what Gambart had told me. On the contrary, we asked everybody, but could learn nothing unfavourable about him. The tone in which people spoke did not reassure me, however. I did not feel completely satisfied, and I wrote to a lady, who I knew had been acquainted with Gounod and his family for a long time, to ask her candid opinion, telling her what Gambart had told me, and asking her if we ran any risk. I appealed to her as a young woman would appeal to an older one; I appealed to her as a wife, as the mother of a family, to tell me honestly if the terms "cat and dog," which Gounod declared had existed for twenty years between his wife and himself, were his fault or that of Madame Gounod; "*decide for me, so that I may know what I have to do.*" This was more or less the gist of my letter:—

1 November, 1872.

DEAR MRS. WELDON,

MANY thanks for your sincerity. I never heard anything against our mutual friend in France. I did not see Mrs. G., because I was in Paris while she was at Fécamp. As to his mother-in-law, she often spoke of him, and with the greatest respect and love.

You ask me if I wish to judge fairly between husband and wife. I do not wish to judge at all. I have known Mrs. G., her father, mother, and sisters, long before she was married, and we were most intimate.

As to Mr. G., I put him on a pedestal for his art long before I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance during the war. Since then, I have found him a charming friend. Therefore, why should I listen to anything that could lessen these agreeable feelings on both sides?

What you mean by *awful stories* and *insinuations* I do not know. You mention *your* iniquities; but you do not look as if you could commit any.

As to telling our friend anything that I heard of him or you from his wife, which you seem to wish I had done, I simply could not, because Madame G. never hinted anything about her husband this year, *Elle tient un noble silence* (she keeps a noble silence), although I can imagine she is far from happy, not having seen her husband for such a long time.

Now, dear Mrs. Weldon, you wished to know whether I had heard anything against G. in France, and I have answered you as sincerely as you wrote to me.

I saw Madame G. a great deal while she was in England after the war; and I saw her afterwards in Paris more than a year ago. If anybody loves her husband, it is her.

You seem to have unlimited influence on G., and I can well understand it.

Your grand power of executing, or rather expressing, the highest musical ideas of this century, must gratify, in many ways, the composer.

I will be *entirely* sincere.

Use a part of this influence to remind G. that *besides* the great English work you are so nobly helping him to carry out, there is his family in France which, perhaps, need not be entirely neglected. A short visit to his relations would stop many of these suspicions you talk about, and I believe the wrong you mention would be lessened by *seeing* instead of *hearing* of his family.

I hope I did not say one word to add to those troubles you allude to; I am always enchanted to see him, and if I cannot go to Tavistock House, it is on account of the distance and my many home duties.

You who are blessed with the presence of your husband can afford to do a good turn to others less fortunate.

Believe in the sincerity of an old friend of the Gounods. This letter is like yours, *quite confidential*.

* I do not therefore add the signature to this precious tissue of sincere falsehoods and frank hypocrisies. The French will appreciate it still more highly than the English. I should not be at all surprised, if in return for this very unchristian letter, she did not come to suffer through her children. (*See Note 160, page 97, The Letters.*)

It is possible that she did not wish to compromise herself in *writing*, for she must have known very well all that had been said of Gounod for ages; one word from her (being at Brighton alone), I could have gone to have a talk with her and learn all that I ought to have known. I wonder what this lady thought of the "*success*" of the "*short visit*" Gounod paid to his family! She can congratulate herself! I had some influence over him for what was great, honourable, good, and reasonable, for what was worthy, what was noble. Madame Gounod has influence over him only for what is vile, what is infamous, and what is cowardly! When I thus let you behind the scenes, I prove to you how I fought and how I suffered to preserve him from his caprices, and from the ridicule those caprices would have entailed; it is clear that my influence was not very formidable, that it was a desperate conflict between the spirit of good and the spirit of evil. When he went to France in 1874, it was not at all with a view of returning to his family . . . but I anticipate. . . . I am desirous of replying to all the questions which have so often been addressed to me,—“What, you did not know what Gounod was! You could never have asked.”

Yes! I did all that I ought. I have been deceived. That is all.

I wish to copy in the order of my Journal an extract concerning Nina Gaëtano. I came across it in going through it on Gounod's account, but her “young man,” Captain Lynedoch Moncreiff, having informed me that I lied in saying it was Madame Gauldrée Boilleau who had told me that Nita was *half-caste* (although it was self-evident) I copy from my Journal what that lady told me about this undesirable young lady:—

8th February (Saturday), 1873.—Forgot to say, Madame Gauldrée Boilleau paid us a long visit on Thursday. She told us all about Nita. Her father was not married to her mother, who was an octoroon or half-caste of some degree; so Nita has nigger blood in her veins! which Madame Boilleau thinks must be the reason of her bad conduct. That it was no use treating her kindly, that she had to treat her as though she were an animal! Curious!!

“Nigger blood!”

Another subject rife with wrangling between Gounod and me. . . . The pictures he painted for me. Gifted as he was with so rich an imagination for music, he seemed destitute of any when he painted. He had no idea of painting anything but sands. I who asked for nothing better than to possess any *souvenir* of my idol, I preferred, nevertheless, to see him turn out something more lively than sand scenes! “Come! my old man,” I would say to him, “your sands

* These people, in reality, were amongst those who worried Gounod the most; he speaks of them in his correspondence. (“*The Letters.*”)

are very pretty, very sweet, very soft, but you have no distance. Put at the back on the line of the horizon to the left a little hill." "But," Gounod would say, "there are no mountains in the desert!" "Never mind!" I would say, "it need not be the desert—come now, put a little mountain"—and I would end by getting a mountain. "Now, then, old man, if you had a little sunset to the right, that would mark the horizon!" "There it is, the sunset!" Gounod would say. "Don't you see that faint crimson line? there it is!" "No, I can't see it!" "What, you don't see it?" "No, all seems sand to me, and you have little crimson dashes all over the place, so one can't make out the sunset at all!" "You, you are particular over trifles; any one can see it is a sunset." "*You* know that it is meant for a sunset, and therefore imagine that others must know it also. I can assure you that no one would dream of its being a sunset." By degrees, when he was in good humour, I would get my sunset. That gained, I would say, coaxing him judiciously, "Now, my dear little old man, you must really draw something in the foreground; a few briars, a little brushwood, a little stream . . . the sunset being behind all the landscape, the foreground must be cast in the shade." . . . Sometimes he would hand me his brush. I would then show him what I wanted. Sometimes it would be a palm-tree. Sometimes he would take offence, and would not add another stroke; he would drop it altogether; but, another day, he would be a very good old man, good natured and pleasant, and I would end by getting all I wanted in the way of pictures. He had a very pretty touch, and if he had studied drawing, I am sure he would have become as celebrated a painter as he is a musician. His son had great talent for drawing, and if he inherits two of the good qualities of his father, *i.e.*, application and sincerity in his art, he ought to become a charming painter.

Another way in which Gounod delighted to render himself unhappy, dissatisfied, and discontented with his lot, was by always wishing to do what he saw others do. If he saw children skipping, he must do so also; if the boys ran races round the garden, he must run with them; and if he did not skip as rapidly or run faster than they, he would bewail his departed youth! When he fenced, he would quite fret if the Professor or another pupil was more agile than himself. When he saw Carpeaux often, then he would lament for hours that he was not a sculptor. He spoke of throwing up music to devote himself to sculpture. . . . He was such a dear old baby! He would fret so over his mistaken vocation that my husband and I would laughingly say to each other, as well as to him, that if he were to see children making mud-pies in the streets he would go downstairs to help them make them, and if his mud-pie did not gain the prize, he would have been quite miserable, and never ceased working away at mud-pie making till he had, at all events, been awarded a medal! Gounod is indisputably a great man, a man of genius. I am persuaded that it is only out of pure jealousy of Jeremiah that he has succeeded in rivalling him in the *art* of lamentation. I should say he has attained the summit of the genius of lamentation. It is not

surprising that GALLIA should be, perhaps, his finest composition. Jeremiah and Gounod are *Master Collaborateurs*, united by a profound sympathy, and Jeremiah certainly never could have dreamt that in the ages to come a *collaborateur* would be raised up more in accordance with his own views than this poor dear old man, who would find cause for lamentation in trifles of the most utter insignificance. As for me, who have always been too proud to complain, we were unlike each other in that respect as day from night. When I relate all that has happened to me, it is by no means by way of complaint or with the view of exciting pity. I simply relate facts which have happened in this nineteenth century of ours, calculated, as I consider they are, to amuse, interest, and instruct my children and my readers generally, and which will give them an idea of what the public tolerates in a man who has behaved in the unworthy manner in which Gounod has behaved towards those with whom he has had business as well as friendly relations. It is a warning which I give the public. Beware of great men!

It was ordained that I had to go through all that I have suffered. I was so ill during the whole month of February, the old man was almost angelic! I left him *for the fourth time on the 28th of February*, and was absent during a week.

The Carpeaux had been in London all the winter; Gounod and Carpeaux had become great friends, and, when I returned from Brighton, the two *great men* had conspired to prepare me a *surprise*. Gounod took me to Carpeaux, to show me his bust all but finished. As I had been absent, and he had eaten several times at Carpeaux's, he was suffering horribly from heart-burn, cramps, and spasms in his stomach. I applied hot water fomentations to his stomach. The water was so hot it nearly scalded my nails off my fingers! *Till the 20th March* peace had reigned! Then, as though weary of this pacific interlude, he began, on that day, at the Carpeaux's, to be quarrelsome and argumentative.

We returned home, where we found Werrenrath, who I asked to stay as a kind of protection; the old man in the devil's own temper. Awful!—poor old Antonio* came with a parcel from Italy. He seems to think I do not care for him; I am so hard worked and worried into the bargain by the old man, it loses all my time; it is more than I can bear these eternal wrangles about nothing. Silas came too, I was obliged to receive him, Pague, Harper, Colyns and wife, Wiener, Blagrove. The old man did nothing but quarrel. I could not stay at dinner, I cried so, and I had to go to bed quite ill, and I got so sick. The old man so hard, I feel quite broken-hearted. He is so nagging.

This quarrel was got up by him because we were going to rehearse a piece of Silas, and that I ought to have prevented either he or myself losing our time and energies over it; that he made nothing by it; that I made nothing by it. What was the good of it? Where was it ever to do good to anybody either directly or indirectly? . . . And yet, it was probably through his own false civility or friendliness exhibited most gushingly towards Silas which had entailed upon him this *infliction*. . . .

* Mamma's butler, who had been with us thirty-eight years.

21st March, Friday.—I in bed all day. The old man also. What a loss of time!

24th, Monday.—Great talk about *Jeanne d'Arc*! *Polyeucte*. Carpiert wrote. Such arguing till midnight.

25th, Tuesday.—Upset by old man. I am getting dyspeptic with his constant railing against fate. He wrote a capital letter to his *crockery dog*.

We had been a little quieter for a few days. The Barbiers were in London. They used to come every day. They seemed to be very fond of me. The *Great Barbier* seemed to understand and to appreciate his commercial combinations, which was a great cause of satisfaction to Gounod. We had shown him all the accounts, books, etc.

Madame Franceschi wrote at the same time a very affectionate letter to say that my bust was at last dispatched. This increased his good humour.

At last, *the 15th April*, my bust (so called) *GALLIA* arrived, but alas! alas! nothing to do with the old one. We are afraid the original one has been smashed by the *crockery dog*! It is a horrid thing now, evidently put together from memory and the cast of the face. It is such a disappointment!

Good only to pitch out of the window. Gounod told every one who would listen to him, that it was his wife who had destroyed my bust, and that Franceschi had allowed her to do so as the *price of her favours*. (*See page 122, The Letters.*) Franceschi, to whom this was repeated, told me that he had had the intention of coming to London to fight Gounod for having dared to say such a thing. He went in fear of Madame Gounod, who, out of revenge for his having made my bust, had managed to get several good orders he had obtained, countermanded. Then, as now, he said that Gounod and his wife were *swine*, but they help him to get useful acquaintances, who order their busts of him, which I should be unable to do—therefore he dare not take my part openly.

20th April.—Jean, unexpected, arrived with Victor about 6, for his Easter holidays. He had got to fisticuffs with his amiable Mamma, and had left her there and then! Gounod was in Heaven! His visit lasted four days, and passed very peaceably. (*See page 133, The Letters.*)

25th April.—Gounod, who expresses himself in ecstasies with ancient music (but in reality loathes it) took into his head to do something which always put him in a vile temper. He *laid himself out* to go and listen to the music of one of his *Colossusses of Art*—Bach. This music bored him to extinction. He brought home the programme (which I possess) covered with invectives. The next day he was in a *massacring* temper, and nagged for hours with me over the system of *royalty*.

The 27th.—He began to be very ill. *The 28th, 29th, 30th April, 1st and 2nd May.*—He was quite ill, and had to keep his bed.

The 3rd.—He was able to get up.

The 9th May.—The old man decidedly hipped. *The 10th.*—In bed all day, very bad state of spirits, grumbles, and chest. *The 14th.*—The old man coughs. *The 16th.*—The old man bad. Sent for Dr. Hamilton (this made three doctors). *The 17th.*—Old man in bed all day. *18th.*—Ditto. *The 19th.*—Old man is a little better. *20th.*—Old man coughs quite badly. *21st.*—Old man spits less.

The 22nd.—Me in bed all day with headache.

The 23rd.—I broke the gold pen the old man gave me two years ago. I do not know how it happened.

The 24th.—Old man and I walked a little in the garden.

We continued both of us to be ill until the 9th June. I then took him to Blackheath, and I left him at Mrs. Paterson's (one of Madame Gounod's friends) for change of air, and I went to Hampstead Heath, in the opposite direction, for change of air.

This is the *fifth time* that I had *left* Gounod (and it was pretended, remember, that I *never let him go out of my sight*). This change of air did us good—at the end of a week we were back again at Tavistock House.

The 23rd June.—He got into a most horrible rage; he was indignant (as he had good reason to be) at the verdict in the Littleton Novello suit, which he had just lost (*see pages 82-94 "Les Affaires," French edition of Business*). Mrs. Paterson was trying to calm him, saying all that pacifying rubbish which people usually lard out to any one in a rage, and which only serves to heap coals of fire on it. He worked himself into something frightful; I would not stay to listen to him saying such dreadful things (as, indeed, I only heard him but that once), and I left the room.

It may not be out of place to relate the following anecdote:—

Gounod had been condemned to pay forty shillings as a fine for having used the words, "done again," in a letter, speaking of Novello & Co. (Littleton), and the expenses, which amounted to £118. Gounod, considering himself, with good reason, unjustly condemned, refused to pay. When he appeared before the judge, Lord Chief Justice Bovill, he repeated the same thing, and declared he would go to prison rather than pay a sum so unjustly levied. I encouraged him loudly, for I had my little plan ready laid. Besides, I had prophesied that they would not put Gounod in prison. After waiting three weeks, I got his solicitor to write to ask what it meant. Littleton's solicitor replied that a lady had been to pay on behalf of Mr. Gounod, and that the affair was at an end. We did not believe this for a single instant—for I was persuaded that Littleton would rather have paid £2,000 out of his own pocket than give Gounod the advantage of the publicity that it would have given to the affair had he been twenty-four hours in prison, and, by this means, raise the indignation of the public against the infamous intrigues of the great publishers. Publishers are pretty well known, and it would have been easily understood that, when a composer complained, it was not without reason; therefore, if Gounod had been sent to prison, I should have obtained from the public in twenty-four hours more than enough money wherewith to discharge this disgraceful debt. I would have advertised a concert to pay his costs. He would not have been longer than that in prison, for we would ourselves have paid the amount rather than have left him there longer than one night. I was then very much disappointed at having been baulked of my opportunity.

When my husband and I went to Paris for the first performance of "*Jeanne d'Arc*," in the month of November of the same year, I related this story triumphantly to Franceschi.

"What!" said he, "did you not know that the money had been paid?"

"No," I replied, "it was Littleton's dodge! He pretended to be paid; Gounod would not pay him. It was his only way of getting out of the dilemma."

"But I tell you Littleton was paid!" insisted Francheschi, "he was paid."

"But I say No," I persisted still more loudly; "he has not been paid; I would not have him paid for all the world before having taken advantage of the publicity that would have accrued to Gounod by going to prison—a single hour would have sufficed; but he should have gone!!! Just fancy, Francheschi, how the papers would have made capital out of it! All the world would have known how Gounod had been put in prison for having been robbed by an English publisher; all the world would have flocked to see him—the poor martyr! You think, perhaps, that it is merit which attracts the public, merit which fills your pockets. Alas! I have learnt quite differently; it is only absurdity and publicity which draws. Never mind what is advertised, people will speak of it everywhere, and they will be bamboozled into believing it necessary to existence. Take, for instance, '*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*,' placarded everywhere in France, as if they were lost articles, and worth a great deal of money, although common sense teaches you that these are three things which have never been, which do not exist, and which never will exist!"

"Good heavens!" said Francheschi, "what a woman!—she will not listen to anything! You are quite right in what you say. I do not dispute it; but I, Francheschi, tell you that the money *has been paid*."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"Do you think I would tell you a falsehood? I swear to you, we did not pay it!"

"I know that very well," said Francheschi, "for it is Madame Zimmerman who paid it. Are you convinced now? . . . Madame Hortense Zimmerman, I tell you, his mother-in-law!"

It was my turn to knock under—to look small, to feel furious, awkward. Gounod had formally forbidden his wife to pay Novello, and had sworn to her that if she paid him, *never—oh, never*—would he ever put his foot inside her door.

"Good heavens!" said I, "I regret most bitterly, Francheschi, that you should have told me this. Here is a thing I shall certainly have to keep from Gounod, for I do not know what he would do if he knew that his mother-in-law had done this. Forget that you have told me about it. I shall never dare to tell him!"

I never mentioned this to my husband about it. He ignores to this day the truth; but Gounod seemed sometimes to entertain so much resentment against me, if I kept anything from him, which I sometimes did for a few days when I saw he was in a bad temper so as to avoid a scene, that I did not dare—fearing some stray gossip might divulge it to him—risk keeping the story from him. When he was in a very good humour one day, I said, in a most coaxing tone—"Now, darling old man, I have a great secret to tell you; but when I shall have told it you, you must swear to me beforehand that, for all eternity, it shall be as if I had never told you, and as if you did not know it!"

He swore to me, so eager and curious was he to know the great secret! He was furious, and then swore he was not bound to keep

his promise ; but I succeeded in smoothing him down, and the matter remained a profound secret between us two.

Well, would you believe it possible that Gounod, once back in France, brought up the affair. He turned it *against me*, insinuating, I really scarcely know what cock-and-bull story. I had, he said, shared with Littleton the £120 of his mother-in-law ; that I had arranged with Littleton from the very beginning to bring an action against him, to plunder him, to cause him to lose money, to get him laughed at, etc., etc., etc. Such extravagant ideas that it seems curious to me that any one can be found, all the world over, to believe a word that he says about me.

Gounod had vowed to me that he would never divulge what I had told him in confidence, and which I had only done in his interest and that of his family.

You must remember that, at that time, I believed Gounod to be a very determined character, and that he really prided himself on keeping his word by his promises. I feared that the payment of the sum by his family would have widened the breach between them.* It was to avoid the possibility of this occurring which induced me to act as I did, so that he might not avail himself of it as an additional reason for not returning home.

I return, then, to the 23rd June, 1873. I was so upset by the scene that Gounod had made at the Patersons, that I could not stop crying helplessly ; but my husband had counted so on accompanying me to Albert Hall that evening, to witness the reception of the Shah of Persia, that notwithstanding my headache, we went there. The consequence was, I kept my bed the whole of the next day through dreadful sickness, and was not able to get up till dinner-time. My husband who, all his lifetime, was of a gloomy disposition and hypochondriacal temperament, owing to an affection of the liver, must, I think, have suffered a good deal from these incessant rows, but he seemed to be like myself, unconscious of the reason which made these symptoms worse, and endured all with an astonishing amount of stoicism. Sometimes I said to myself, that if Gounod made my husband as ill as he made me, I would not have him two hours in my house ; I should have quickly shown him the door.

We were bothered by a great many people. There was a Pole, who, thank Heaven, died since then as a pauper in a hospital, a very clever adventurer, who worried Gounod with offers of all kinds from publishers, which resulted in nothing : Werrenrath, who would not work ; Naudin, who stole my jewels ; Maurin, Rivière's agent, who offered us, no matter what, if I would sing at the Covent Garden Concerts ; Madame Franchi, Valdec, Blanche Parèdès, etc. He was in a fever to finish *Jeanne d'Arc*. Then a crowd of incidental worries besides, which were constantly causing much commotion in the Tavistockian equilibrium. I should never end if I were to detail the

* A chance might any day have revealed it to him.

whole, or even, if I were to make mention of all we had to oppress and irritate us, even without giving the details.

Aimée Désclée was in London, where she was quite the rage. She adored Gounod, and paid him a court which I certainly had never done. She was a charming girl. We both were very fond of her. She was about to leave London. We went, after having sung at a concert, to wish her good-bye. She was dining alone in the garden with a friend. She begged of us so much to remain that, although my husband was expecting us home to dinner, we could not refuse her. I sent, therefore, the carriage with a note from me to my husband to say where we were, to send me a morning-gown (I was in full dress), and to say that if Gounod and I were absolutely wanted for anything, to give our address.

It was the *9th July*, and the weather was superb. While we were at dinner, the garden-door bell rang, and the maid came to say that it was a young man from Paris who wanted to see Mr. Gounod. He was asked for his name; he sent his card, "*H. Noble, from Régnier.*" Gounod was delighted. "A friend, a pupil of Régnier, let him come in!" A young man then presented himself, a North American, with the true Yankee accent. He must have been about seven feet high, with a beardless face, and hair frizzling all over his head in disorder, with a mop at the end of it! He put me in mind of a broomstick. Gounod and the rest of the company received him very graciously. He needed to be set at his ease, poor boy, with a neck, arms, and legs as long as his! Well, it was a mistake. The youth was endowed with charming assurance and superb vanity. The opinion and esteem he evidently entertained for his talents and his person were really consoling. Gounod, who is very satirical when the humour takes him, began to make fun of him, and set me on thorns. I was so afraid that the young man would perceive it; and, besides, I could not bear to see Gounod so. I did not think it charitable of him to make fun of a young man who had come to ask his advice (as Régnier said). Noble said he was about to appear as *Hamlet*, but a serious difficulty was to find a stage large and important enough for him!

"Come," said Gounod, "would not Covent Garden be spacious enough?"

"No," replied Noble, "that is not the theatre I require." He finished up by owning that no theatre could do him justice, and that a building ought to be constructed for him in London! I suspect he fancied Gounod might possibly be inspired to head a subscription for the purpose of building one worthy of his genius, so thoroughly did Gounod befool him!

"Behold!" said Gounod, pretending to be in ecstasies. "See if it is not just such a figure as you find on the Greek bas-reliefs—a head of Theocritus!"

I don't know what he did not invent to try and make us giggle. In spite of his being very droll, and that I could have laughed heartily, I felt quite nervous.

"Oh no," I said, "Mr. Noble, to break you in for the theatre, no matter what talent you have, you must begin in the provinces, and

learn to make use of your arms and legs !” more especially, I thought, when one is formed as he is, like a grasshopper !

At the end of an hour the gentleman took his leave. He was only passing through London on his way to New York, and was going straight to Euston Square Station ; the hansom was waiting for him. Gounod accompanied him to the street-door, and returned to us, laughing merrily, after the cab had carried off “Theocrites.” Aimée Désclée and I burst with laughter, and I reproached Gounod, laughingly, for having helped to plunge this poor young man still more deeply in the ocean of his vanity and unheard-of self-complacency. The evening was delightful, and we returned home gay and happy. Before coming down to breakfast next morning, I had told my husband all that had passed, and the way in which Gounod had made game of “Theocrites.”

Gounod had got up that day in his best and most jolly temper. At breakfast, the conversation was of the most agreeable kind. Suddenly we heard a loud ring at the door ; the servant came to say that “the cab had come.”

“I am not going out,” said my husband, “it must be for next door.”

The servant went out and returned.

“No, sir, it is for here ; the cabman wishes to speak to the master of the house.”

My husband went out, his napkin in his hand. In a few minutes he returned to the dining-room, his face clouded over.

“Really, my old man,” said he, addressing Gounod very coldly, but very politely, “it is insufferable ! The cabman comes to ask you to pay the fare of the young man who went to see you yesterday evening at Mdlle. Désclée.”

GOUNOD.—“I ! pay the fare of that young man ! And why ?”

MY HUSBAND.—“He takes you for his father !”

GOUNOD.—“What, his father ! what does he mean ?”

MY HUSBAND.—“He says that you took leave of him with so much affection, that you kissed him on both cheeks, he naturally takes you for his father ; and as this youth gave him the slip at the station without paying his fare, which comes to seven shillings and sixpence, and went off by the train, he expects in consequence that *the father* will pay the debts of the son ! See, my old man, what comes of kissing everybody ; see what you bring on yourself. Now, after having made such fun of this youth, I am much surprised that you should have taken so much pains to show him such tender affection ; it does not suit our English ideas, and we should simply call this sort of thing humbug !”

GOUNOD.—“What ! you insult me—you call me a humbug !”

MY HUSBAND.—“I do not insult you, I do not call *you* a humbug.”

GOUNOD.—“But to say that I humbug, or that I am a humbug, is absolutely the same thing.”

MY HUSBAND.—“However, there is no occasion to put yourself in a passion about it. Will you pay the cabman’s fare ? Yes or no ?”

GOUNOD.—“No! a thousand times no!” thundered Gounod.

My husband left the room. Gounod then turned to me, who, during the scene, had had to bite my lips to avoid laughing. “Ah, it is you, you wretch, you cursed hypocrite, who have gone and betrayed me to your husband; it is you, cursed hypocrite, who told him that I made fun of Theocrites. In future, I shall know how to be on my guard before you. To go and repeat everything as you do to your husband—you slander me, get me insulted by this dragoon, who never says one word louder than the other—it is all your fault. I know you. It is insufferable!—it is infamous!—it is past bearing! A humbug! I, Gounod—a humbug!! I, who am frankness, conscientiousness, and scrupulousness personified! Are you false, deceitful enough! It is enough.”

ME.—“I beg of you, dear old man, do not be cross with poor me. I naturally told Harry all that happened yesterday evening. Could I have imagined this horrid cabman would have come? Did I know you had kissed Theocrites?”

GOUNOD.—“Hold your tongue, don't add falsehood. You have been laughing at me with your husband—you tittle-tattle everything to him; you tell him all I do, all I say; it's a system of perpetual *espionnage*. I won't bear it any longer; I'd sooner drown myself!—that I would!” Upon which he left the room, leaving me alone, pretty easy about him.

My husband, I knew, was arguing with the cabman at the door, and certainly would not let the old man escape. He had gone, perhaps, to blow up the coachman—that I did not care for. On the whole, I was rather amused; it was as good as a play. . . . When my husband returned, I said to him—“And the old man?”

MY HUSBAND.—“He scampered upstairs, four steps at a time!”

ME.—“Thank God! he has gone off to work quietly.”

And we remained very contentedly finishing our breakfast together, reading the papers, and chatting about the old man, his extraordinary habits, and the rage he flew into with me immediately my husband had turned his back.

“And Harry,” I said to him, “do not leave me this morning, for goodness' sake, stay with me to protect me. I will not go up to him this morning; he will begin again his cursing and swearing, and will make me ill. I'll leave him to wear out his tantrums alone!”

Our happiness did not last long. Twenty minutes after this Gounod returned to the room. He had completely dressed himself anew. He had put on his best trousers, his new waistcoat, his black frock coat, his neatest shoes, his red socks, a clean white shirt, a black neckerchief (the bows most carefully tied), and he had on his head his Algerian fez. Under his arm he carried some music paper. He entered ceremoniously, like a person who fears he may be in the way. He approached the table where we were at breakfast; he stood opposite my husband, took off his fez, and made a profound salaam.

“Sir,” said he, deliberately, “I have reflected that it must be as disagreeable for you to have a *humbug* in your house as it is for me

to remain in it. I have the honour of wishing you a very good morning."

He replaced his fez on his head—he did not so much as give me a look; he walked slowly, with inexpressible dignity, towards the door. My tears began to flow; I joined my hands, and I looked at my husband in the most imploring manner. My husband understood; he flew towards the door; he turned towards Gounod, with his back to the door, and, fixing his bright eyes on him, he said—"You shall not go out."

GOUNOD.—"To-day I am a prisoner; the other day I was brought back by you by the arm before all London; another time I was a *glutton*; another day I am a *liar*; now, to-day, I am a *humbug*. It cannot be pleasant to you to have a person in your house with all these faults. Open the door, if you please."

MY HUSBAND.—"Come, my dear old man, what has come over you this morning? Look at Mimi, who is crying, why do you grieve us so?" and my husband drew near Gounod, who took him in his arms, and, crying, embraced him with all his might.

"Oh, my dear Harry, what a naughty old man I am; I am always making my poor little mother cry, and making her ill!" and he sobbed—as for me, I was sobbing also.

"Good heavens," said my husband, alarmed, "the old man is fainting!!!"

He caught him in his arms just in time to prevent him falling, and laid him full length on the sofa. My husband loosened his waist-band, his necktie, dashed water in his face. He and I had both taken fans, and fanned him with all our might. At the end of a few minutes, tears began to flow under his eyelids, and he sighed—

"Mimi, you forgive me!"

"Yes, my dear old man—yes, yes, yes! a hundred times yes!"

HIM.—"Harry, you are not angry with me?"

MY HUSBAND.—"No, my old man, no, never."

The dear old man kept our hands in his.

"May God bless you, my children, you are my guardian angels!" He then embraced us; I kissed him.

Seeing that peace was restored, my husband said—"Well, now you are all right, I must go out; good-bye, my old man—good-bye, my darling, and take good care of the old man; give him his medicines regularly; walk him about in the garden, and, if you behave well both of you, I will bring you some little *grabs*."

My husband often, when he came home, used to bring us some little presents, for which the family word is "*grabs*."

After my husband had left, I asked Gounod—who continued very much prostrated, and remained lying on the sofa—"Tell me, my darling old man, whatever did you intend to do?"

He was beginning to laugh at his own naughty temper.

"I don't know; I wanted, at all events, to go and let off the steam outside the house!"

"But what were you taking music paper with you for? You must have had some idea in your head: where were you going, you funny old man?"

"Well, Mimi, I confess I meant to spend the day in the underground railway, and note down on the way musical ideas, which I think would have occurred to me." Upon which I kissed him, laughing with all my might, saying—"You funny old man, that you are!"

All went on greased wheels till the 17th July. On that day Jean Gounod arrived to spend his holidays, and the description I find recorded in my journal of him is not flattering:—

"Jean is as cross and as contrary as a witch. Frowns, is *blase*, and growing like his amiable mamma. 19th July.—Jean odious."

However there was not a word between me and the old man until the 16th August. Besides, I remarked since the *Theocrites* scene Gounod had worried me much less. Jean, during this month, was insufferable; the father and son wrangled incessantly. There was such a quarrel between them one day that I must absolutely amuse you by mentioning it here.

It was the 9th August. After lunch, Gounod and Jean were chatting together, and I was busy up and down, in and out of the room; so I did not hear how the row began. Gounod used sometimes to take into his head to "go in" as a man humble (but great) *to listen to and accept the counsels of youth*, for "*Our Lord hath said*" (that was the burden of his song); so Jean often gave advice to his father! His father that day was taking it all in good part till I heard these words:—

"You must allow, my dear little Pappy, that you were under no obligation to kiss Mme. X——, and that it was quite natural mamma did not like it."

"Let us see about that," said Gounod; "you are not going to have the cheek to back up your mother on that occasion, you insolent little fellow!"

"If it comes to that," retorted Jean, "what's that to me! Hang it all, kiss her on her —— if it so pleases you!"

Gounod exploded like a thunderbolt; he repeated the word which it is impossible to write.

"Where the deuce did the boy pick up such words as those?" Jean had left the room, and had skedaddled upstairs. "How rude he is—how badly brought up! He is just the very image of his infernal mother! What an infernal child! My poor Mimi, tell me, have you ever heard a child speak like that to his father? But it is the last time he shall speak to me so, . . . the last, do you hear? He shall remain in his room, and shall not leave it for two days. He shall have nothing but bread and water. I swear that's what I'll do with him."

"If I were you, my old man, I would do nothing of the kind. It is too late in the day to correct Jean. He will mend of himself later on, or not at all. I advise you to let it blow over; if you punish him, he won't attend to you; and if you are not obeyed, you can understand that you will be allowing yourself to be set at nought by your own child. Listen to me, and don't put yourself in this false position."

Vain words ! Gounod was ready to quarrel with me, because (he said) *I pleaded for Jean.*

"Not at all ; I do not plead for Jean, but I warn you what will happen."

Gounod, firm and determined, left the room immediately ; we went up stairs, Gounod swearing he would make himself obeyed, and would prove that he knew how to make himself obeyed. When he had reached the landing, near the door, of the morning-room, where we believed Jean was, Gounod hesitated, and whispered to me—

"What was it I said I should do to him ?"

I smiled. "You will do better not to say anything at all."

"Not at all !" said Gounod. "I had said that he should keep his room for a week, did I not ?"

"Two days," I replied.

"Two days ; so it was !"

He opened the door. Jean was amusing himself with his paint-box and brushes.

"Go to your room, sir, and you will not it leave for two days. I order you to obey me." And he sat down to his writing-table.

Jean got up immediately, put away his brushes and paints carefully in the box, and quietly left the room. Gounod gave me a look which seemed to say, "You see, my son obeys me !"

"Ah, indeed ! don't you wish you may get it ?"

I heard Jean scuttle down stairs like "greased lightning," and the hall-door closed behind him. Gounod had also heard ; he rushed like a shot, and, from the top of the steps, bawled to Jean, in a voice of thunder, to come back, swearing by all the gods, and every oath he could think of ; but Jean had already, I am sure, turned the corner of the square—Jean had got clear off. Gounod, in a white heat, sat himself down again at his table, and wrote the verses which are to be found on page 276, "*The Letters*." In that volume there is an error in the date. It was on *the 9th*, and not *the 12th August* that the row took place.

We saw no more of Master Jean again that day. Gounod and I went to spend the evening at the Egyptian Hall. When he saw Jean again the next day, he followed my advice, and did not say a word about what had happened.

Jean, Gounod, and I often spent our evenings playing whist. I played dummy, Gounod and his son were partners. Neither of them had the slightest idea of the game. In vain I explained that the player on the left should play through dummy's high cards, and the one on the right up to the low ones. It seemed impossible for them to understand this. I play well, so that, although I usually hold a very bad hand, I used sometimes to win the rubber by a point. Jean grumbled all the time, cursing and swearing and lamenting, Gounod was not at all pleased either ; but I must say this for the old man, I never heard a coarse word from Gounod. Excepting the word "*sacré*," he never made use of an oath, except when he was quite out of his mind with rage and fury !

I now return to the *16th August, 1873*. We were playing, we three, at whist. Gounod and Jean had had superb cards (we never counted honours), and the rubber had lasted three-quarters of an hour. I won it, at last and scored *one* point. Jean was furious; Gounod cast down, but bearing his misfortunes gaily. It was my turn to deal, and as I turned up dummy, which was superb, on the table, Gounod said to me, "You are not going to say this time that you have bad cards!"

"Dear me, old man, you are not going to be *grumbly* like Jean, are you?"

GOUNOD.—"No one can say two words to you now without your accusing everybody of being *grumblers*. I beg you to believe that you can look just as disagreeable, and be as cross as the rest."

ME.—"Well, yes; I am cross, Jean is so *coarse*."

Upon which Gounod jumped up suddenly from the table and said—"There, you say we are as *coarse* one as the other."

ME.—"I have said nothing of the kind; I said that Jean was *coarse*, and since you were in a perfectly good humour, and that you had not said a single *coarse* word, how could I have said you were *coarse*?"

HIM.—"You did say so—you made use of the word *coarse*."

ME.—"I said nothing more than to ask you not to become *grumbly* like Jean!"

HIM.—"You said we were as *coarse* one as the other!"

ME.—"Nothing of the kind; since you said nothing *coarse*, how do you make out that I said you were *coarse*? I said *grumbly*!"

HIM.—"You said *coarse*—you never said a word about *grumbly*!"

ME.—"The fact is you are so overwhelmed at not having gained the rubber that you have heard wrong!"

I was treating the matter quite as a joke, and had not perceived that the old man was really beside himself with rage. I was busy looking through my hand, and when I am absorbed with one idea I have no room for two. Play, above all, absorbs me completely. I said, "Now then, Jean, play!" Jean was on my left.

HIM.—"I will not play any more if you will not admit that you said the word *coarse*!"

ME.—"I said no such thing; I said the word G-R-U-M *grumbly*, which word is pronounced *grumbly*!"

HIM.—"And I affirm, and I swear by my soul and conscience, that you said the word C-O-A-R-S-E, which is pronounced *coarse*!"

ME.—"Oh! you understood me to say *coarse*. I do not say you did not, but I know I said G-R-U-M *grumbly*—G-R-U-M-B-L-Y!"

HIM.—"Will you admit that *perhaps* you said *coarse*?"

ME.—"I cannot admit anything of the kind, but I *believe* that you understood me to say *coarse*—I admit that!"

HIM.—"Then you admit that it is quite possible you may be mistaken, and that you may have said *coarse*!"

ME.—"Not at all; I am positively certain that I said Jean was *coarse*, which he is most decidedly, but of you, it would never have

come into my head to say you were *coarse*, for that is certainly not one of your failings!"

HIM.—"But since I heard you say so with my own ears."

ME.—"Very well, then you heard me!"

HIM.—"Well, then you *did* say *coarse*."

ME.—"If it so pleases you, I will admit that you heard *coarse*."

HIM.—"What will please me will be to get you to confess the truth. I can't conceive why you should take such pains to tell a falsehood about it!"

ME.—"It wouldn't matter at all to me to admit that I had said *coarse* if I had done so, or if even I thought I had, it would be simply a slip of the tongue; but I am so certain of the contrary that I should be telling a falsehood if I were to say that I had said the word *coarse* when I am so thoroughly convinced that I said the word *grumbly*."

HIM.—"You really are very odd sometimes!"

ME.—"It is you who are very odd! I give you my word that you have not been *coarse*, that I could never have thought that you were *coarse*, that I had no intention of saying you were *coarse*, and that consequently I did not say so; that I admit that you are not saying what is untrue in insisting upon it that I said *coarse*, since I say that I believe that you thought you heard the word *coarse*: it is a matter of complete indifference to me, and I cannot understand why you should wrangle on such a trifling matter. I beg your pardon for the word *coarse* that you heard—there's an end of it. Sit down again and let us go on with the rubber!"

Gounod flung his hand violently on the table, making everything on the table jump. "I will not play any more with a liar like you!" Then I felt cross, I rose from my chair, looked him full in the eyes, and said very quietly, "*You know that I did not say the word coarse!*" Upon which my old Gounod left the room, slamming the door with all his might, leaving me and Jean alone. Jean laughed outright, and I said to him indignantly, "It is all your fault, little rude beast!"

. . . I put up the cards, and followed by Jean, who had heard just as I had said, I went upstairs to rejoin the raging old man. He was not in our sitting-room, he was in his own. I went to open the door—it was locked. Quite delighted, I did not lose a moment in taking refuge in my own room. I was undressing for the night and washing my hands when I heard the outer door of my room open. I guessed it was the old man! "You can't come in," I called out. I heard a sort of roar like that of a wild bull—the door closed again. "O Lord protect me," I said to myself, "he is going to continue the discussion!" I hastened to put out the gas, to slip into bed, quite determined not to answer a single word, and to pretend to be fast asleep. Five minutes passed, the first door opened again, some one knocked at the second one. I did not answer—enter Gounod and Jean. Gounod's tone was that of triumph. "I only came to tell you that Jean heard exactly as I did, that it was the word *coarse* you said."

ME.—"And I have only to say to you in so many words that I have to beg you will leave my room, and as for Jean, he knows perfectly well that he is telling an untruth, although you may not

know it perhaps ; all I have to say is, that he shall no longer remain in this house, that to-morrow you will find apartments for him, and that we shall then have a little peace ! All this will be the death of me !”

GOUNOD.—“ So then you turn me out of doors !”

“ You will do just as you like, settle it as you think fit. Leave me alone, and let me go to sleep !”

Gounod continued to stand at the door, and to repeat over and over again that I was a liar, that I was turning him out of doors—him and his son ; but I did not care—let them both go to the devil ; I was weary, weary, weary. . . . Not being able to elicit any reply from me, in spite of his tears, which caused him to speak with broken voice of being “ turned out of doors,” and of being “ *found dead on the door-step of my house*,” he went off with sorrowful steps ; and as for me, my heart beat as if it would burst at hearing him sob, but I said to myself, “ Courage, my girl, it is better so.” I tried my best to go to sleep ; impossible. The hours passed away, and I heard nothing more of them. At last my doors opened again. It was my husband (Mr. *Go-to-bed-late*, as Gounod called him) who had returned.

“ Are you asleep ?”

“ Not I,” I replied ; “ I have not closed my eyes.”

MY HUSBAND.—“ What is the matter with the old man ? He is there in his room with Jean, both sobbing away ! Gounod has packed up his portmanteau ; he is dressed for a journey ! You never saw anything so pitiful—what is the matter ? He says that you have turned him out of doors !”

I related the affair just as it had happened, and even at greater length than here, for there are a great many little details which I have passed over.

My husband and I had tried *everything* with Jean ; for days together we would not speak to him—he was forbidden to meddle with the children (we were, however, far from suspecting what was taking place). Werrenrath, Freemantle, Father Rawlings complained of him, but I did not understand why, except that he was troublesome, a liar, and insufferable, and that he would not leave Freemantle (who slept in the same room) alone. He got round me rather by very often taking out walking with him a pretty little fair-haired boy, five years old, one of my pupils, whom I called Baby. I thought there was some good in him, and extenuating circumstances. *He was fond of children !!!* Since then, obliged to know a great many things of which, I am sure, not one English lady in a million has ever heard, I have understood and duly appreciated the complaisance and the kindness of Master Jean Gounod towards this child. His familiarity towards everybody, moreover, was revolting in the extreme—with Freemantle, the Rawlings, and the young girls who came to my class every morning ; and I had told his father several times that it would be impossible for us to remain at Tavistock House when Jean came for his holidays—that we should be obliged to spend them at the sea-side or in the country, so as to be spared all the daily worries

caused by this young devil. . . . Gounod saw the necessity as well as we did, and it was the last time that Jean set foot in Tavistock House. My husband thought that I was quite right. "But that is not the question now," said he, "you really must get up and go and console that poor old man; he dare not come near you; he seems stupefied, his eyes look wild, it is quite dreadful to see him, all I can get out of him is '*She has turned me out of doors!*' As for Jean, he sobs like his father, and you cannot get a word out of him."

"I! I get up? certainly not, I am tired of it, thoroughly wearied out; if you spent the whole blessed day with them as I do you would see how much patience you would have left."

MY HUSBAND.—"But you cannot leave him like this all night." (It was half-past twelve.)

ME.—"I will not see him, I won't go near him. I want to go to sleep; tell him yourself to go to bed; undress him and put him to bed."

My husband then left me, but soon returned—"Come, darling. Poor old man, he does not listen to me, he is like a stone. He seems paralysed; come, don't be cruel, get up, I do beg of you." With a very bad grace I got up, and slipped on my dressing-gown. We went to the old man's room. Poor old man, he was the picture of desolation. He had pulled my sealskin cap over his ears; he had on his thick winter overcoat (the weather was very fine and hot—16th August, 1873), he had his little travelling bag, which contained his loaded pistol, in his hand, his warm trousers, his thick shoes; he was sitting on his bed with his legs hanging down. He took no notice of Jean, who was sitting crying on the portmanteau. Never were seen two beings so profoundly miserable! I was still so indignant with Jean that I hardened my heart. I said therefore to the old man, "What are you doing there?" in a dry tone of voice. Poor old man, he clung to me as a child clings to its mother's skirts. "*Oh! Mi—mi,*" he sobbed, "*You—have—turned—me—out—of—doors! You—have—turned—me—out—of—doors! Your—poor—old—man. You—can—never—have—the—heart—to—do—it!*" "It is not you I turn out, (I said) it is Jean; you know it—he is unbearable." Thereupon Jean implored my pardon out of pity for his father, shedding copious tears of penitence. I would not give in, and I did not. I sent Jean to bed at 2 o'clock. I tried to persuade the old man to get into bed. He was perfectly incapable of moving, so thoroughly had his emotion weakened him. My husband undressed him, lifted him into bed, tucked him up, and, when Jean was gone, my husband went himself to bed hoping that matters would settle down. Well no; will you believe me? The old man would have the last word; he continued his grunting and grumbling, and it had struck 6 o'clock in the morning before I could leave him. I got up again at 10 o'clock, half dead. The old man still half mad with despair. At last I forgave Jean, there was no help for it—my husband insisted on my making the old man happy—and we went to bed again in peace. The old man slept till nearly 6 o'clock, and I till 4 that afternoon.

1st September, 1873.—Jean left, thank God ! Since the great scene of *Grumbly-Coarse* he had behaved better, but we were very pleased to get rid of him. Gounod's temper was delightful, but on the 20th September, being very much worried about the Polès-Ricordi discussion, his brain was somewhat affected, and he wept bitter and copious tears without any apparent reason. On the 21st I sent him with my husband to take a Turkish bath, and he got merrier. My little puggie Tity give birth on 20th September to four little loves of puppies, one of them was Whiddles, who, as it turned out, became the innocent cause of our losing our old man. . . . Was it a presentiment, a psychological phenomenon, the distress which he experienced the day this little puppy was born ? He cried the whole day. As for me, I was full of joy, I loved my *little grandchildren* to distraction.

On the 27th September he got up a dreadful row, and this is why. We had gone with our children to see Punch and Judy at our friend's, Sir Charles and Lady Dilke. Dan and Tity were with us. All of a sudden I perceived that Tity seemed to be doing all she could to attract my attention, and to have a great deal to say to me. I recollected, with horror, that Tity had been absent from her babies for more than three hours. I had brought her out with me on purpose ; the little wretches were always suckling, and she had become a very good mother ; they exhausted her, and to give her a rest from them, I had brought her with me. I started off without a moment's delay ; the old man insisted on leaving also. I took leave of nobody. I was quite ill with anxiety at the thought of my little treasures, who were scarcely seven days old, dying of hunger. I told the coachman to make the horse fly home ; when Gounod spoke to me, I could not reply to him. Tity, always much excited in the carriage, barked furiously. She seemed to know it was on her account we were going so fast. I arrived at Tavistock House like a hurricane, I rushed up the stairs four at a time, to get at my little ones. Tity scampered on before me, and behold ! the frightful spectacle of the four little martyrs lying in their cradle like faded lilies presented itself to my eyes.

They were dying. Tity licked them anxiously, in despair, rage, and frenzy. They could no longer suck—they seemed lifeless. What was to be done ? I told my maid to fetch me the brandy. I put a drop on my finger, and touched Whiddles' tongue with it ; he moved slightly ; I then held him close to one of his mother's teats. I pressed it, the milk dripped into his little mouth ; he at last revived and sucked for himself. He, the most precious, saved, I did the same thing to the three others, and at the end of an hour the whole of them had finished their repast, and were sleeping sweetly ; the little mother was happy, and I in heaven, if it had not been for my grumbling old man, whom I had mortally offended by not answering him when he spoke to me in the carriage—“*paying more attention to Tity than to him, and showing an exaggerated amount of solicitude for the puppies, such as I had never evinced for him, my Gounod, whom I had made a pretence of so greatly worshipping.*” We spent a fright-

ful night. He had not argued so very much, although he had managed to make me cry a good deal. "*You love the dogs more than me!*" That was the burden of his song. But the incident had affected his brain. I was awake at one o'clock in the morning by the unearthly cries of my poor old man in the passage. I got up instantly; I found him in the passage in his night-shirt, catching hold of everything to prevent my husband, who was holding him, from taking him back to his room to his own bed. My husband* had been suddenly aroused by finding Gounod sitting huddled up on his bed, muttering all kinds of fantastic things. After having tried to reason with him, and seeing he did not understand anything, he had got up to put him to bed. He seemed to know who we were until five in the morning; he then went completely off his head, and did not recognise us or the place where he was. My husband went to fetch the doctor at five in the morning. He seemed to have taken a horror to his bed. He kept trying to get out of it till one o'clock in the afternoon. I had the greatest difficulty to prevent his throwing his sheets off himself, and to succeed in keeping him in bed. At last I found a means of quieting him. I lay down by his side on his bed, with the door wide open, and whispered in his ear that "Mimi was so tired, that she wants so much to sleep." I put my arm across him, and so kept the clothes over him. Of what can I be reproached when it was a question of finding a remedy for him? . . . He went to sleep peacefully; he awoke very much refreshed; and when the doctor returned, he no longer remembered he had had a fit at all. We had turned his bed round the other way; he did not observe it. Next day he got still better, but the day after (30th September) the fit seized him again, he was very bad, and made me suffer dreadfully all the day. As he remained ill, and these frightful fits came on continually, the doctor advised us to take him to the sea-side. We did so, and on the 6th October went to Margate, where we spent three weeks. It was during this time that my husband instituted the *Laws of Draco* (see page 139, *The Letters*).

You see, then, with what scrupulous care we devoted all we were possessed of—as far as care, time, thought, and intelligence was concerned—to repair this poor, old, broken-down machine. The doctors had told us that if he got over two or three years he would be saved, and that he might even live a long time. How scrupulously and with what tenderness we took care of him—watched over and tended our *Old Plant*. You are astonished at our patience, are you not? I no longer understand it myself; that is all I can say now.

* In all these fits, even when he was completely off his head, Gounod always went to find my husband, he never called me. On the contrary, he would murmur, "*We musn't wake Mimi. She is so tired! She works so hard! She needs rest so much! Poor Mimi, who works so hard! We must let her sleep!*" I thought he loved me so much! Even unconscious, his first thought seemed to be for my good, which made me feel all the more, when he was in his diabolical tempers, that he was irresponsible for the wretchedness he caused me; and so helped me to keep up my courage and my patience.

At the sea-side he began to recover after a few days, and at the end of thirteen days he set to work composing a *Miserere*. We had passed these thirteen days dawdling about out of doors with our pugs and their little family, playing cards, and at back-gammon, which we had taught Gounod. We all came back to Tavistock House on the 31st October, 1873.

November 4th, *Saint Charles's day*. I left for Paris, leaving my husband with the old man. Gounod would not come to Paris for the first performances of Jeanne d'Arc, but he most ardently wished we would go, so as to give him a faithful report of the manner in which the affair went off. My husband did not wish to leave him longer than was absolutely necessary, fearing always for his health; he only joined me for the first performance, which took place the 8th November, at Paris, at the Théâtre de la Gaieté.

Gounod availed himself of my absence to take up his pen and write to Vizentini, the conductor of the orchestra, a letter of abuse, because he had received a letter from his friend, Q——, who had told him that at the general rehearsal the Funeral March in Jeanne d'Arc had not been played at the place designated by the authors. He had not even waited for my report to attack this poor M. Vizentini, who really had given himself all the pains in the world to assure the success of the piece, and who was an out and out Gounodian.

This is the letter that Vizentini wrote me on this subject; and as people have tried to lay on my shoulders the disagreeable or annoying things which he never lost an opportunity of trying to do, I am fortunate in possessing this one proof, at least, in writing, of what I maintain, and shall maintain all my life, that it was Gounod or my husband constantly pushed me to the front; and when they were not successful so easily or so quickly as they had expected in carrying the day, would then wish to beat a retreat. It was I, then, it is true, who carried on the war alone, as my theory all through is and was—"If I have moved at all it is on principle; therefore, I must either boldly acknowledge my *mistake* or continue to advance." It consoles me now to think that I have always been honestly in the right, and that I have only been beaten, I, a unit, by thousands against me! I prefer to have been beaten by force, by stratagem, and by treachery, sooner than to have given in!

This, then, is the note that I received from Vizentini the day of the first performance of Jeanne d'Arc, 8th November, 1873:—

Cabinet du Directeur.

Théâtre de la Gaieté.

DEAR MADAM,—I received yesterday from Gounod a hard letter—worse than hard—wounding and unjust. Yours consoles me a little. I am going to try to improve many little imperfections. Dartaux, of whom you speak, finds everything beneath her. So then! à ce soir! . . . I have done all a man can do.

Yours,

A. VIZENTINI.

My husband was to return to London on the following day and to leave me in Paris. There were several people whom Gounod had asked me to see for him—his lawyer, Delacourtie, among the rest—but I felt an internal presentiment that the old man wanted to see

me, and that I should do better to return with him. We left Paris, therefore, together at seven in the morning. At Charing Cross we found Freemantle (a young man who, I should, perhaps, have explained, before, was one of my pupils, and who, at the present time, I look upon as my child, and who lived at Tavistock House during nearly all the time of Gounod's stay with us). Freemantle told us that the old man appeared very strange, that he had not spoken a word to anyone all day long, that he had eaten nothing, and that there seemed something "funny" about him. He had not even played with the dogs, which was a great resource of his. I got into a hansom, and, without waiting for my husband and the luggage, drove home immediately. I entered as usual: I asked where Gounod was—"Down stairs." I went into the drawing-room, and there I found my old man lying in an arm chair, stretched out quite still, with his face turned towards the fire. He did not look round to see who came in. I went and knelt by him, and kissed his hand. He opened his eyes wide as though he were awaking from a dream, looked at me with an inexpressible look of joy, took my face in his hands, stroked it as if he wanted to feel if it was really me, and said—"Is it really you, Mimi?" Two tears rolled down his cheeks as stream from people's eyes when they recover from a fainting fit. How happy he was to see me again. "I felt that you longed for Mimi, my old man, so I came." "May God bless you, my darling!" Without us he seemed to fade like a flower which thirsts for rain and sunshine. *This*, at least, was not acting! He loved us, he longed for us, he clung to us. How could he ever . . . how could he be so cruel? How can you suppose I could ever cease to care for him? I shall care for him as long as I live. Even were I to swear to the contrary, it could never be true that I could hate him, when I have loved him so intensely from my soul as I have loved him. The jealous woman may hate, perhaps; but as for me, having seen him so ill in body and mind for so long and so often, in my heart I say to myself that when he left us he must have been affected in the same way again, and then, at a moment like that, a poison may have been infused into him which wounded his brain; he cannot get rid of it. I cannot turn against him for this. I retain my pleasant dream, and will not believe in the grievous reality which has crushed my heart.

When my husband arrived from the station the old man had scarcely recovered, and I was still on my knees before him. At the end of half-an-hour he seemed to be completely restored, and I wrote in my Journal—

"I found our precious old man quite ill; but he perked up at seeing his little father and mother again, and worked well at Rehearsal."

The old man then got better. Health, temper, both charming until the *6th December, 1873*. Then, unfortunately, he was very nagging and ill on the *7th*. I had rather seriously knocked my head on the *29th November*; after four days I had had to keep my bed for three days, and I suffered from continual headache. I had not

been able, I suppose, to amuse him as much as usual. However, at the end of a couple of days he had recovered, and I was getting on better.

All went well until *the 17th December*, then

Extract of Journal.—"Old man poorly. 18th. Old man grumbly. 19th. Old man odious."

The 19th December is a celebrated date in my existence, for it was the first day in my life that I got in a passion—this is why, and this is how! I must tell you, first, that Gounod was most curiously avaricious. To hear him speak you would have thought he hadn't a farthing of his own. To get him to buy anything or to take money out of his pocket was like swallowing the sea. His poverty was a source of perpetual *Feremiads*; when he lost at cards (N.B.—We never played for money, not even for counters) the lamentations of Jeremiah were not so poignant as Gounod's; he would begin by repeating all the history of his life, beginning with the death of his father when he was five years old, the struggles of his mother, she so poor; she burnt his manuscripts to light the fire with!!! The odyssee of his Opera *Sappho*—drowned—like *Sappho* herself. The *Médecin Malgré Lui* which had brought him nothing, the *Nonne Sanglante*, a complete failure. *Faust*, all the difficulty in the world to get it performed. The loss of his author's rights, Choudens brigandage, etc., etc., etc., there was no end to it. And with all this avarice, this *parsimony*—when out walking with me he wanted to buy you everything he saw! As for me, I was and always have been very economical, and I never allowed him to buy anything for me. But I had common sense, and when he really required anything I did not hesitate to order it, I paid for it, and then I waited for a favourable moment (when he had won at cards) to get him to refund the money. As far as clothes was concerned, Gounod had a pretty good wardrobe when he came to us, therefore, it is not much he spent in England, more especially as he borrowed all my husband's clothes (or those belonging to me which suited him in any way), and he constantly wore a magnificent Chinese dressing gown (which, by way of parenthesis, was new when he came to us), which he completely wore out. . . .

But although Gounod could wear my husband's coats and waistcoats, his trousers were a great deal too long and too wide, and it was out of the question his wearing them. Gounod had really been in need of a pair of trousers for some time, and my husband had often said to me, "The old man is disgusting, you absolutely must get him a pair of trousers!" I had often suggested it to Gounod, but as it didn't take, and that the *Feremiads* begun immediately, to spare them as well as the scene which would have ensued if I had insisted, I would allow the subject to drop.

The New-year was drawing nigh, and in England it is the custom to put on as many new clothes as possible on New-year's day. They say it is lucky. My husband continued to reproach me about the old man's trousers, and, daily, I would say to the old man, "We

really must go to the tailor's, to-day!" "Yes, Mimi!" The afternoon would come, he would find some excuse for not going.

The next morning I would return to the attack, "My dear old man, Harry has been again at me about your trousers!" "Oh, yes, what a good fellow that Harry is! I must think about it." In the afternoon when we went out—and regularly—in the carriage, I would say, "Let us go to the tailor!" Then, oh, no!!! If he did not find out that it was indispensable to go somewhere else, he would begin again to complain that he had not a farthing, *and that he was owing several months' board and lodging to Harry*. He had at that very time at least £50 in gold in his drawer. At last the 19th December had come, the trousers had not been ordered. My husband said to me, "Come, it is absolutely necessary that the old man should have a pair of trousers. He is not respectable. Scarcely any work is done from the 23rd December till the New-year. You are only just in time, you really must take him this very day to the tailor's!" When I went to wake the old man, to open the shutters for him, etc., I said to him, "Do you know you must be a dear, good little old man to-day, and go with your Mimi and order a pair of trousers so as to be a beautiful old man for New-year's day!" But, oh, dear! was not he horrid that morning! "Well!" said I to him, "it is no use arguing about it any more, you must have a pair of trousers. For the last two months Harry has been at me every day to get you a pair of trousers. At last, I can tell you it quite worries me. He should take you himself to the tailor's, only he is afraid of a fuss, and, therefore, it is I who must bear it!" I escaped that morning and passed two hours in peace in the Turkish bath. When I came back he was more agreeable; my husband, "DRACO," had told him that he must have a pair of trousers for New-year's day, he had agreed to go, and Baron Alfred de Rothschild had just sent him £100. Both of us, very pleased, went off that afternoon, first to the bank to pay in the £100, then to the publisher "Smith;" but, alas! his vile temper had returned. He began to say, "Mimi, I assure you, I don't require a pair of trousers!"

ME.—"Come, just look at those you have on; you have had them for three years. They are the only winter pair that you have had excepting those with feet, and those you can only wear in the house, you have had them seven years; just look at yourself, it is of no use for me to darn them, to mend them, or to piece them, the knees are worn, they are frayed at the heels—you are scarcely decent in them!"

HIM.—"But I haven't a farthing!"

ME.—"What do you mean by saying that? . . . You have £50 in gold in your drawer, and all the money at the bank besides!"

HE.—"But I owe Harry five months' board, and Jean's board; I owe Zaffira, in fact, you do not remember, my child, that I have heavy burdens to bear, and that I do not receive a farthing from France!"

ME.—"What do you mean? you speak of the *board* you owe Harry—for my part, I curse *the board*, and your idea of paying him any—one would say that you are obliged to go in rags because you *owe for your board*. You know very well that Harry is not pleased

at your paying *this board*, and that he is delighted when you don't pay it; do you not think it is humiliating to have *this board* constantly thrust down one's throat, as if we were lodging-house keepers who were dunning you!—immediately after we have been to Smith's we will go to the tailor!"

HIM.—"But, my child, I wish, above all, to be honest!"

ME.—"You must, above all, be decent!"

HIM.—"You do not let me speak. I wish to be honest. My mother was poor, very poor, but she never owed any one a farthing; she was *in tatters*, but she died honoured by the clergy and neighbours who knew her, she was a holy woman! I wish to follow the advice she gave me. I do not wish, at any price, to get into debt."

ME.—"Get into debt, bosh! you shall pay Harry first, then Zaffira, and then the trousers, you can pay all that at the present moment."

HIM.—"But you forget, my child, I must keep money in hand for the Orchestral Concerts, for Smith, who never has any money—I do not dare spend any."

ME.—"You have no need to keep by money for the concerts, for Smith, or for anybody—and then, after all, what does a pair of trousers cost? £2—what a sum! awful!"

HIM.—"If it were not for the board I owe Harry, it might be managed! but the *crockery dog* keeps all my money—I am really without a farthing!"

I then got quite angry—I spare you the details of his childhood, his youth, his complaints, at only having earned £40 a year till he was 30, at the Chapel of *Foreign Missions*; but to me he did not spare them. I was beside myself with rage; I ordered the coachman to return home, I hoped to find my husband there, and I said to Gounod, "I swear to you, that, if this very day, you do not write to Paris, and take the necessary steps to make them send you from there £300 a year regularly (£240 a year for your board, £60 for your pocket-money), I will not keep you another day!" Gounod was thunderstruck, "What, are we returning?" "Yes," I replied, "I do not wish to remain with you any longer, I do not wish to set eyes upon you again until that money's deposited at the Bank, and that I feel that you can no longer tell me that you haven't a farthing because you are owing money to my husband!" I wouldn't answer another word. He went on harping on the same string; I would not listen to him—for the time being—I really was out of my mind. Arrived at home, I ran to the drawing-room, dragging the old man after me by the hand, as a mother drags a naughty child; my husband was there: I said, "Here, I bring you back the old man, settle it with him as you please, I will have nothing more to do with him; he refuses to go to the tailor, he says he has not a farthing; he insults me without ceasing, telling me that he owes us *his board*, as if we were going to put him in prison if he did not pay us. I insist that he ought to have money sent him from France, as he has so much there, £300 a year, and then he will not be able to say that he has not the wherewithal to pay us, and to get himself a pair of trousers. I insist that he shall do so this

very day. I let him sit down there, in front of you. Make him write his letter, or I will have nothing more to do with him at any price. He shall return to France. He may do whatever he likes. I am out of my mind. I shall go mad! I can no longer put up with him!" Upon which I struck the table with my fists with all my might, and I went off, slamming the door behind me with a violence which made everything in the house shake. I did not cry, I was as red as if I had the scarlet fever; I was purple; I shut myself up in my room, rocking myself, screaming in such a state as I had never experienced in my life before! I had at last broken out; my rage (without doubt) restrained so long, had burst forth; I would have killed him, as well as myself, with pleasure; I had become savage. It is very clear that it would not be difficult to commit crimes at such a time! My husband knocked at my door; I said, "Come in," when I was sure he was alone. He was laughing heartily. "My darling," . . . he said, "I have never seen anything better acted!" (*see page 184, The Letters*). "It was perfection! You must renew the performance, for you have half killed the old man with fright; he is downstairs, crying in despair, making excuses, willing to do whatever you require of him. Come then, and console him. You have terrified him sufficiently." I said, "I am not acting, I can tell you, Harry, I feel quite mad! fit to throw myself out of window if you say another word to me. Leave me alone, I beg of you let me quiet down. I hope this will pass off," and I threw myself down on the bed; my husband wished to soothe me; he said, "Poor little woman, poor little pussie!" But I cried, "Leave me! leave me! leave me! or I do not know what will become of me!" He thought he had better then leave me. I remained alone for half-an-hour. At the end of that time my husband returned; this time with Gounod. Gounod went on his knees, throwing his arms round my waist, he wept as if his heart was breaking; he asked my forgiveness. I had grown calm, I kissed his bald head, putting my arms round his neck. I thought he had written to Paris! but my husband had not insisted, and never a farthing was either asked for, or sent from France!!! However, we went to order the trousers, and the same day he paid Harry the five months' board, Jean's board, his fur cloak, and the translations owing to Zaffra—£188 in all. This is the last sum of money he paid, and the last cheque he drew in England. . . .

This is what I wrote on the *31st December*, at the close of the year, in my Journal, as a résumé of the year 1873:—

Harry at his Mother's. Old man and I sat up to see the old year out, and spent such a happy evening. We are so much happier than we used to be, and quarrel so much less. In fact, hardly at all, except that dreadful one the other day. Jean did him a good deal of harm; and our going to Paris and leaving him, upset him. Poor darling old man! If I can only make him good, and make himself think he is good, that is a great thing to calm his everlasting discontents and suspicions about such very unimportant things. His health is a constant state of anxiety to me, and makes me feel quite haggard and old, but there's—all the doctors swear—there's nothing the matter with him organically—but he worries too, perhaps to worry me; sometimes one would think so, as he is always so afraid I do not love him enough. Harry is so good to him and so am I. We only live for him; so that is another ungrounded cause of worry.

However, he is very much changed for the better, and every year I hope to see him calmer, happier and gooder, although Jean and Jeanne (who is worse than Jean, they say) is a dreadful blot on his horizon and mine too. The paternal game, people are sure to make use of, is a powerful engine in their hands. They will only add to his misery, and he to theirs. No one can have the patience with him we have! though his bad spirits evidently add to Harry's natural low spirits and hypochondria.

After that follows the *résumé* of other things which have nothing to do with this book.

In the month of January, about *the 11th*, the old man caught cold; he coughed a great deal, and on *the 19th* he had one of his cerebral attacks: always pursued by the same idea that "*they wanted to take him,*" and "*put him in a hole,*" but that "*Mimi was while,*" "*that she saw the black hole with her light, that she had promised him that she would hold him, and not let him be taken.*" He fancied he was at *Blanche's* (the mad doctor). He did not recognise any of us. He cried, he called "*Mimi,*" he wanted to get out of bed, where I only succeeded in keeping him by lying down on the bed-clothes by his side. These attacks lasted sometimes twenty-four hours at a time—not more—sometimes not more than eleven hours. All the month of January passed by very favourably—not a cloud! All was serene. Moreover, since the famous *19th December*, according to my husband's suggestion, I used to pretend to put myself in a passion if the old man seemed inclined to argufy or worry, and everything settled down quietly—Thank God! How my husband and I congratulated ourselves on this happy change!

In the month of February I caught a dreadful cold, and so did Gounod. I was quite unable to leave the house. We had our hands full with concerts, rehearsals, and all the rest of it. Gounod added to my hard work. I could not sleep later than three o'clock in the morning. I would get up to work; one or two hours in peace were a real luxury, but I was killing myself! I had an unmistakable attack of bronchitis. I had to keep my bed for several days during their absence, and I was obliged to go alone on *the 27th February* to spend a few days at Margate at the sea-side. My husband remained to take care of Gounod. I returned home on *the 2nd March*. During my stay at Margate my little dog Whiddles, which I had taken with me (leaving Dan and Jarby at Tavistock), had a fit which alarmed me very much. Poor little thing! I was obliged to leave him a whole day at the veterinary; at the end of two days he got all right again. I had had a great deal of trouble in rearing my little brood. Pug dogs are very delicate and difficult to rear—they had all been dreadfully ill, but I had not lost one; I literally adored them.

7th March.—The old man, who seemed to be well on *the 6th*, and who had been to the theatre the evening before, had a fresh cerebral attack, which frightened us terribly—he was to conduct at the concert that evening. The doctor came; he set him on his feet again—thank Goodness!—and he was able to go to the concert.

The 8th.—My husband took him again to St. Leonard's, where they remained *till the 19th*.

The 28th March.—My husband and I went to the boat-race—the old man was not well enough to go. We got back at five. He seemed out of spirits. He could not bear us to leave him; but he had been busy, and had worked hard all day. As to my health, it is pitiable to read my Journal, and to see how ill I was. I worked day and night. Everywhere people had resort to the most miserable expedients to cause us annoyance, and put spokes in our wheels.* They were all stabs in the dark, nothing which could be legally prosecuted, but it forced us to begin the same work over and over again.

There was enough to make him sad, and nothing but my faith, my courage, my calmness, and my indomitable energy could have resisted so many trials.

1st April.—Gounod had another cerebral attack. Towards eleven in the morning he recovered consciousness. There was a remedy employed which never failed to set him right. It was either on this occasion or the *7th March* that he had the most singular attack of all those which he had had while in our house. He was possessed of the strangest fancies to which he had never alluded before or since. He imagined, among other things, that Jean was consumptive. "There she is, Catherine! What a noise, what whisperings and chatterings all round the mill. See they go in, they go out, all those people. I hear them, I see them all round the mill. They want to ruin me, they wish to kill me—they will take me, they will put me down the black-hole, and Mimi does not love me! How ridiculous she is! Mimi, she does not want to have children—she is always speaking of her children, she has none; but Edith has children; ah! Edith has children really her own! She likes to have them. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven" (he counted on his fingers), "mine—little Charles! Charles is mine; but Mimi" (and he laughed low and mysteriously), "it can't be, she has none! and she speaks as if she had! Ha! ha! ha! Harry has put these two pictures in my room, he thinks that I do not understand. It is a warning! He will kill me, . . . and Catherine will hide me in the mill. Mimi is with Harry—death by the sword, death by the axe, he gives me my choice!" You may fancy what I felt when I heard him jeering at me. I knew he was jealous of the children, and I think he was more hurt than he cared to show, because, in the interest of the children, we wouldn't have Jean any more at our house, and that we preferred to leave the house (my husband also) rather than subject the children to his pernicious contact! I really felt so hurt and grieved that I never mentioned the subject to him or my husband; and then his fancy about the two pictures—they were two beautiful proof engravings of the execution of *Lady Jane Grey* (Paul de la Roche) and of the *Duel after the Bal Masqué* (Gerome). We had hung them in his room out of compliment, these two engravings being after paintings by these celebrated French artists. I asked him when he got well, if he had thought about these two

* See notes at the end of the book.

pictures, and he confessed that he had had the impression that Harry had put them there as a warning that he would kill him because he was so unkind to me. What he said about Edith and her children, I kept that to myself; as for what he said about the mill and Catherine, they are millers in the family in which Zsa (Madame Gounod's sister) married; so that for the first time since he had been seized with these cerebral attacks, he spoke of something which really existed in his mind.

As for my *white light*, he several times had assured me that he saw me covered with rays of light. Even in full daylight, I have known him to say, "Mimi, don't move, remain as you are; I see you covered in white light!" It was always in the morning-room that this happened, while I was seated at my desk, or at my piano, or moving about the room. . . . I did not know what it could mean. I would look at him with surprise. At the end of a few seconds, during which he would gaze on me with an expression of beatitude, "Ah, it is gone!" and, with a deep sigh, he would go on with his work, and as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Ah! if I had been at all acquainted with psychological phenomena, what account I could have turned this to with Gounod, for he must be a great medium.

At Leghorn, I heard of and I have sincereflected a good deal about a phenomenon which, having relation to Gounod, to my theory on "*Sound*" as a science, and to musical gifts in general, will not be out of place if I relate it here. I was speaking to the printer, who was to print my book on Gounod, as to what appeared to me *his supernatural genius* for composition. I said to him—"I am a good musician, for instance, and yet I cannot conceive what he experiences when he composes. He seemed to hear something with his eyes closed, over which he would keep his hands clasped for a few minutes. My husband and I would then keep strict silence whenever we saw him thus inspired, for fear of rousing him from his dream. At the end of that time he would say, 'It is beautiful! I have got it all!' He had *heard*, in that short space of time, hours of music, which he immediately wrote down, as if something had copied (on some organ which none of us possess) photographed *sounds*, and which he declared he heard played by an orchestra composed of such beautiful sounds, that nothing on earth could give the faintest idea of their exquisite sweetness and power."

"Indeed," said the printer to me, "what you tell me interests me very much. I have an old aunt who is ninety years old. All her lifetime, she has said she heard celestial music so beautiful that she could not bear to hear any music of this world. The church organ was a torture to her, although it was a very fine instrument; military music gave her terrible nervous fits, and threw her into an indescribable state of convulsions—almost *catalepsy*. She could not hear any musical sound without it sending her almost into fits. For the last twenty years she has been deaf. She suffers no longer, she still hears her seraphic music. She has a happy old age, and enjoys good health."

"Ah," I asked, what kind of disposition had she before she became deaf?


"Insufferable, as bad-tempered as a witch—so much so, that at times she seemed possessed by the demon!"

"Like Gounod," I cried; "I suppose, therefore, that if he were to become deaf, as he pretended to be at times, he would become an angel! It is, perhaps, the same with all musicians who have *supernatural hearing*. Beethoven, by the bye, wrote his finest symphonies after he had become deaf. '*Those ears that hear*' must be like those ears of which Jesus spoke; it is only the elect which possess such ears, and we are not all of the elect."

The ears which can hear!

In my case, for instance, I hear sounds, but I beg to say, in all sincerity, that what I hear has only come to me by conviction, by experience, through teaching the children. I have heard fleeting sounds produced by them, so beautiful, so extraordinary, of so marvellous a compass—apparently fictitious and even incredible—that I have said to myself that these notes must be capable of training and culture, and that, with these baby voices, sounds might be produced far more exquisite than those which can be extracted from catgut, reeds, wood, copper, or metal. I have heard my orphans, for instance, before they were three years old, amuse themselves by singing up to F #, *an octave higher than the one on the piano*, and yet be able to practise as low as F. I used to make the children of that age, as well as those of seven, ten, or fourteen years old practise all



my exercises up to G .

I have heard and seen the youngest, when she was less than two years old, sing pretty little tunes to her own words to another child, so as to coax her to give her what she wanted. *I have heard* babies, who simply heard what was going on from morning till night, sing in time when they saw me or their meals coming, and that, long before they had the least idea of pronouncing a word—sing, not with voices like children generally have, but in tune, and in a sustained tone. At two years of age my children knew how to *read* and pronounce their alphabet with a perfect accent, in three languages. I have obtained things, by the most simple and mechanical means, which would be considered *miraculous*, but which inspired so much jealousy, that all the benefit we have derived from it has been THE HATRED OF EVERYBODY. It was a *crime* for me to devote my time to teaching all this to children who were *nobodies*, instead of bestowing these talents on rich children, "*born to shine and to be talented.*"

In Gounod's time, I did not feel this so much; the children were not so little. I was not so much with them. I did not *model* them as I have done since; and, although I was aware that the voice was an instrument as yet comparatively unknown, I had not personally proved to myself the truth of what was then purely intuition. Sound is without doubt the most powerful engine provided by nature for the purpose of leading and influencing man. With the *true education of sound*, disciplined sound, within the grasp of all, the rehabilitation of man may be looked for. In this, *true equality and true fraternity*

would exist. At the present period of our century, not one in every hundred men and women who talk knows how to make use of their singing-voice. The organ which God has given us—the one which is the first of which the human being makes use of at birth—is almost totally neglected; the cry which the infant utters when ushered into the world is produced by the musical chords in its throat. A song it is, and what a song for the mother! I, who was so proud when my little puppies gave their first growl, can picture it to myself with ecstasy, although I have never had a child of my own. Joking apart, it will be readily allowed, that there are all kinds of expressive notes in our throat, of which mankind in general makes no use. There is not a vocal organ so feeble, so harsh, but that it might be utilised in the interests of general harmony, if I could only once succeed in teaching it to many at a time.

All, and a great many more than all the sounds produced by the instruments used in orchestration, I could produce by the human voice *alone* (*in numbers be it understood*). You can easily believe me when you think of those few whom you may have known, who could imitate all kinds of animals, instruments—the wind even—the gallop of a horse, the drawing of a cork. The feet, the heels, the hands—all should be made use of in my orchestra, and the voices themselves would be something of which no conception can be formed; but to succeed in this, you must begin at the cradle—it is indispensable that the child should be obedient; he must never have fancied that he was doing anything but the most simple and most natural thing in the world. The meaning of the word “*nerves*” must never have been heard. No shyness, no false-shame, no conceit. As it is not possible to prevent all grown-up persons who approach an *infant prodigy* spoiling it with their ignorant flattery, it would be disastrous to create only a few isolated prodigies, instead of the numbers of which the great and numerous school of which I dream, might be composed. There, I should have at least as counterpoise to the agents who would hover like vultures around my brood, the *esprit de corps* which would keep my subjects together, and prevent their being bought and led away by strangers.

When I wrote to Gounod (*page 122 of “Letters”*) about *his temple and his instruments*, I was alluding to all that. I used to speak so often to Gounod of all my ideas on sound; sometimes, for instance, my voice would throw harmonics or double notes; neither I or Gounod could understand this. Nevertheless, *we have heard them* several times. They came by chance, and I never could produce them if I tried. But we used to say—and, I think, with reason—that a physical effect produced by chance, must be susceptible of being cultivated and repeated at will. If these experiments were made with children from their birth, it would be proved (as I have discovered and have proved to mine, and to the satisfaction of several musicians and medical men, with my children) that music, and all that appertains to sound, is imparted easily, mechanically, without any fatigue, amuses and occupies the child, who at five years old would

have had a more complete and serious musical education than all the *prima donnas* and all the vocalists of our day.

Is there anything which exercises a greater power over people than a fine voice? No. In vain might one be the greatest orator alive, if the organ of speech itself were not fine by nature or by culture, he would not succeed so well as a less eloquent orator, possessed of a more expressive or agreeable organ.

Is there a sound which thrills through one more vividly than the cry of "Fire"?

The voice then is produced naturally; it is the accent of truth which stirs you, which goes home; it is the expression of terror. Never do I hear that shout without trembling and without tears coming to my eyes, so truly does each voice re-echo the feeling of anguish, horror, and eager hope with which each heart in the great crowd is throbbing in sympathy, as the fire-engine rushes past with the rapidity of lightning, drawn by the excited horses, seemingly conscious of being the heralds of hope and rescue.

Think of the cheers of the crowd—of the happy crowd! Is there a sound more genial, or one more pleasant? The feeling of unity expressed by the great mass is something so beautiful; and all that—all those sounds in individual detail—are hoarse, nasal, coarse, vulgar!

The sound in unison has a grand and thrilling effect!

Even the "Ohs!" and the "Ahs!" of the crowd, when a balloon goes up, have sympathetic qualities. I always enjoy listening to and joining with them.

And, as I have said, in MUSICAL REFORM, there's nothing everybody enjoys so much as the sound of their own voice, and many would be kept out of mischief if they knew how to join in chorus.

Take chorus-singers, for instance, one by one, belonging to the most expert choir. They are something frightful! Just imagine, with Sound cultivated, as it might easily be done, and rendered universal, what wonderful effects might one not produce!—what an *Era* of joy for Composers, when Music will no longer cost at least two guineas a minute, as it does now, to execute; that everybody would be able to read and take part in any musical work, with the same facility and much more art, than the *masses*, of the present day, would read the simplest prose, no matter what!

Since this printer spoke to me of his deaf old aunt, and that I reflected that she must have heard the same sounds which Gounod heard, and which Beethoven must have heard with ears, I have no manner of describing otherwise than as *supernatural organs*, I have become more and more convinced that this music is to be obtained upon this earth by the system of education I propose to introduce. You will read in other writings of mine—why, because of the actual state of things and laws, it is so difficult for me individually to establish this school on the footing indispensable to its success, unless the money fell from Heaven upon me (£20,000 is what I require); and that I could keep my health, my energy, and my power of amusing children for twenty years more. These children

would learn to teach from their tenderest years ; they therefore would understand and interest themselves in what they were doing. This interest, I should say, would but increase with their years and their experience, and would create for me pupils, who would increase in number, and would be able to continue my work after I was gone.

Now, with Gounod as ally, I looked forward to a complete success. The day of persecutions must have come to an end. People would have "*come to us !*" He had said so, so often — "Be patient, my child, they *must come to us !* All *must come in time* ; believe me, they'll come !"

Oh, yes ! I believed him ; they were *coming !* It is true ; it was all coming right in 1874 !!! We had conquered almost all the opposition.

Now, what I know is this—*I am ruined, I know he has ruined me !* That people have *gone to him* ; but that *I and my school*—my children—we might starve to death at the corner of the street ! No one would bring us so much as a morsel of bread, so bitterly is one hated by people who have done so much injury to me, first—and consequently, to poor children born in poverty and neglect.

During the month of April, from the 16th, to the 2nd of May, my husband, Gounod, and I, with our dogs, went to take a fortnight's rest at the seaside at Hastings. The weather then was usually resplendently beautiful, and, during all my life, it will be the spot I shall remember as the most dazzling and most replete of happiness. Gounod had never been more charming, nor so well, with the exception of a little pain he had in his knee, which made him go a little lame. His health was good ; he worked away, zealous and happy. It was at Hastings he composed the stanzas of Lord Houghton to David Livingstone, "*ILALA*." He seemed to take more interest than ever in my little flock, and ardently wished to do all he could to hasten the accomplishment of our vows. He dedicated to me the Dedication printed in the first page of my little pamphlet, called "*La Destruction du Polyeucte de Ch. Gounod*," and in the list of music at the beginning of this book, and part of which I copy here, so that it may be quite clear to the minds of my readers that the following is an incontestable proof of the object we both had at heart :—

"It is to one of these, more humble, but not less courageous, representatives of patient and indefatigable devotion, that I desire to consecrate the profits (however modest or abundant they may be) of the sale of this piece of music. Mrs. Weldon, whose daily inexhaustible charity I grow to revere more and more, has consecrated her life to the material guardianship and to the musical instruction of poor children, whom her maternal care seeks to protect by education, trade, and the resources of talent, against the trials and the dangers of an artist's life. Her little *Nursery* of to-day wants culture and help to enable it to become an *Orchard*. Providence, who ever blesses the courage of Faith and the tears of compassion, will not refuse her aid, and the woman who piously strives to establish this noble institution will, I trust, ere the hour of her funeral, reap the joyful and consoling fruits, the blessing and reward of her generous undertaking."

Less than two months after having written this, M. Gounod employed the people at the French Embassy to come to our house to demand his things, which not only we had not refused to send him,

but which he had not even asked us for !!! Read attentively page 52 of his *Autobiography*. Read also page 82, "LES LETTRES," where he writes, in June, 1872, to the editor of the *Musical World*, speaking of the *Musical Institution which will be the most beautiful in the world*, and his hope of being able to earn enough to come to its aid. Could it have entered my head that he was lulling me with illusions—could I imagine that it would be so easy for him to renounce all his engagements with us, public as well as private—that Honour was worth so little, that Falsehood was bowed down to and encouraged; that HE would be rewarded, acclaimed and decorated; and that to ME, who had remained true to my children, true to my principles, would be cast stones, and that everything would be done that was possible to smother me in mud? No! I could not have imagined that. In a book, I will write further on the subject, I will give you all the details of the consequences of the false education I received, and the consequences of believing that, by being honest, one acquired the respect and good will of one's fellow-creatures (as if they were worth having *morally*, if you did !!)—

* * * * *

Gounod and us at Hastings passed a lovely time. I busy in the house—I used to watch him every morning go off pensively, hatching his happy inspirations. He used to go to a sort of little pier which projected a little way into the sea, and there—bathed in light, luminous himself from the brightness of the April sun and the sheen of the illumined sea, he would work the whole morning at his sketch-book, which he would bring back, content and proud to his "*little mother*." I was so happy; my husband, so happy too! No more "*out of spirits*!"—no more hypochondria. He would stretch himself out on the beach with the puggies, like a big old lizard in the sun; and from my window I contemplated, in one glance, all the creatures I loved, and of whom I believed myself the darling. . . .

I speak of the hypochondria of my husband. He had suffered from it all his life, more or less (having a sluggish liver); but these alarming symptoms had very much increased since a year. Poor old Gounod's temper, although my husband did not seem to trouble his head about them, must have engendered in him an inexpressible melancholy, for he would say to me—

"My darling, I am so out of spirits, I do not know how to bear myself, and without any reason."

I would answer, "The old man bothers you!"

"No!" he would say; "it is much worse than that—much worse than feeling bothered; it's something heavy, black like a nightmare, which I cannot shake off. Sometimes on board the boats, I feel I wish I could drop overboard and never be heard of again."

"Oh!" I would say, "you may not be aware of the cause, but, I tell you, the old man is enough to kill a whole colony with despair!" He would insist it was not so: but I'll stick to it all my life—that that must have been the cause of these dreadful fits of spleen. Gounod used to be quite sorrowful and troubled when he saw my

husband in this state. I think his conscience reproached him ! It was quite impossible to get Harry to smile ; and Gounod would try all he could to cheer him, which had only the effect of making him ten times worse, for no matter what ails my husband, he cannot bear any one to take any notice of it ; and he would say to me :—“When the old man takes me in his arms to comfort me, I don't know what I would not do to him ; I'd as soon be kissed by a viper as by one of my own sex !”

(See Gounod's letter to me, *10th March, 1874*, p. 138, “*LES LETTRES.*”)

“I told your Poomps I could not bear to see him sorrowful, because it made me so unhappy ; and I took him in my arms and kissed him so hard, so hard, it really seemed to do him good.”

In the one of the *11th March* :—

“He has had a good night ; he does *not* cough, and seems quite in good spirits.”

In the one of the *17th March* he tells me :—

“Your dear Poomps is excellently good for me, . . . and I am very happy to see the dear Poomps is no more sad !—unless he hides it from me ; . . . but I hope not. We have some nice walks and nice chats together, and I am pleased, because he does not look as if he were too much bored with me.”

My husband, as well as Gounod, therefore, was an immense source of anxiety to me. Not only had he his own lazy nature to fight against, but, except those who are in the business, no one knows what it is to be at the head of a choir, especially when there is a committee I here publish copy of a letter which I sent a member of the committee. It will give you some idea of the state of mind, and my despair at seeing my husband thus worried. I have written a good many letters of the same kind, to save Gounod and my husband. I had driven away the drones, but imagine how fond they are of me, and how they must buzz with exultation at seeing me crushed, and the fruit of all my efforts smashed !

Letter from MRS. WELDON to MR. T. C—, Member of M. Gounod's Choir.

“TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE,
23rd March, 1874.”

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Mr. Weldon was so exceedingly annoyed at the impertinence of some of the remarks made by Members of the Committee last time, that as he is not buoyed up as I am in the belief of a great regeneration, which must come sooner or later, this sort of thing makes him quite hypochondriacal : a state of mind most distressing to himself and to us all. Nothing can have been more courteous or more charming than Mr. Weldon ; but when, in spite of all his endeavours to bear it, I find he shrinks from these useless and disagreeable meetings, I step in and say at once—he *shall* not be bothered any more. Bother me ! I do not care one bit, and fancy I have the faculty of giving as good as I get.

“We who have toiled and slaved to obtain subscriptions for the ‘Gounod Concerts,’ are likely to be more full of regret at not having an orchestra than the Members of the Choir, who, I think, counting *everything*, must have obtained a sum under ten guineas for the whole of the five Concerts. The sub-

scriptions have been obtained among my own personal friends and by my own personal exertions; and I think the idea of the Members of the Choir giving themselves the airs of not approving of a programme without an orchestra is too fine!—really beautiful!

"Dear Sir, I take this opportunity of informing you, the 'spirit' (whatever that may be: first cousin to its '*dignity*,' I suppose) of the Society can never be maintained as long as there is such a grumbler as yourself in it. You frighten everybody away, and find fault with everything. You managed to thoroughly demoralise poor Werrenrath and Freemantle, and they were both very efficient and useful Members of the Choir.

"I was against a Committee from the outset. The idea of people who really risk nothing in the venture having anything to do with it, is ludicrous in the extreme. If Mr. Gounod loses the Metzler case, the money must come out of the Choir funds. The 'Choir newspaper' was adopted as a means of advertisement of the Choir (Gounod), and if the cost of those advertisements are increased by a lawsuit, it must naturally be paid as far as possible out of the profits, which we alone have any right to dispose of, as it is we alone who have worked to obtain them. The Committee is a farce. Next year, we shall not work ourselves to death as we have this, and if people who know I will not keep them next year, have not the good sense to retire of their own accord, I shall take upon myself to forbid them *my house*. I shall do it all myself, with the help of a few kind, pleasant *gentlemen*—such as Mr. Bare, Mr. Newbon, etc. I am not going to have Mr. Weldon worried any more; he was not born to have to do with such kind of people. He has not my enthusiasm or determination to sustain him, and he has been kind, good, and long-suffering quite long enough.—I remain, yours faithfully,

"GEORGINA WELDON."

The contents of this letter gives only a feeble notion of the way this Choir annoyed us. All the Publishers being furious at seeing they had not succeeded in driving Gounod out of England, and smashing us up, sent grumblers into the Choir to spread bad feeling and discontent. Gounod who was bored to death by it all (as well he might be) vowed he'd have nothing more to do with a Choir, and at Hastings worked hard at an *Instrumental Mass* (without voices). He was always making all sorts of plans for the purpose of getting rid of, and being independent of the Choir for our Concerts of 1874-75.

My husband feared Gounod's rows beyond everything. As the arrival of the post was a probable signal for tempestuous disturbances all day long, my husband took every possible precaution to avoid them.

Here, for example, is a letter he wrote my pupil Freemantle, who remained at Tavistock House, when we absented ourselves.

*Letter from MR. WELDON to MR. RICHARD FREEMANTLE,
and Mine on MR. WELDON'S Letter.*

"CLIFTONVILLE HOTEL, MARGATE,
8th October, 1875.

"MY DEAR FREEMANTLE,

"As the letters have only just arrived (noon), I suppose you posted them after 5.30. As we do not want the old man to see them before we have looked them over, so as to put on one side, for the present, any that might bother him, please send off the packet of letters before 5.30, so that we may get them at 7.30 A.M., without the chance of the old man seeing them first.

"I am sorry to say he is not so well to-day, having, perhaps, been out in the air too much yesterday. 'Madame' and I slept well last night, so are all the better for it.

"Our best remembrances to you.

"Yours sincerely,

"WILLIAM H. WELDON."

"P.S.—I hope you have posted that £1 worth of circulars at Charing Cross. It should be done, I think, between ten and four.

"I see the unnatural grandfather* has not given you tidings of the sweet little 'parpies'† who he is very partial to. Tell Kate‡ I will write to her; but our life is but a sorry one!—moving about from room to room. The furniture is new and *exasperating*—odious! We *all*—Mit, Dan, and selves—send love. Old man poorly, but he is painting—poor darling! Go and see Zaffira. Tell him there is a charming letter from Ricordi, and tell him I hope he is better. I hope Mr. James§ is kind to you. Love Jarby for my sake. Have you got the harness?¶ Tell him to go and show it to the 'Laurels' and at the Cosmopolitan.

"G. W.

"How are your spirits? Send us news. I *pine* for home!"

Here again is a pretty little letter my husband wrote to me about this period, and is a proof how he thought of, and cared for the old man's health. Besides, they used both of them to write to me daily, and the few lines at the ends of two of my husband's letters added by Gounod are not in the VOLUME OF LETTERS.

ROYAL SAXON HOTEL, ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA,
.10.10 P.M., *Sunday, 8th March, 1874.*

MY DARLING LITTLE WIFE,—Just a line to tell you that we have arrived all right, the old man keeping awake all the journey, and in the highest spirits. I wish I could say as much for mine!

Don't forget to have some attendance papers made out like those on my writing table, one for the gentlemen, and one for the ladies; now *don't forget*.

Remember me (and me¶) to the Man of Genius, I wish he were here with me.—Your most loving husband,

HARRY WELDON.

P.S.—I feel most anxious about you; tell the M. of G. to walk you out daily for an hour at least.

We are now going to have a little supper.

Whilst I have been writing to you the old man has been composing a "toon" to a hymn he found pasted in the fly-leaf of the Hotel Testament in his bedroom, and has written it down. His head was full of subjects for the piano all the way down.

Your old Mimi. Sleep well, and don't upset yourself with the practises. To-night there is one of the most beautiful skies possible to behold. I send you all its stars.—Your old Mimi,

CH. GD.

And next day—9th March, 1874—

DEAR MIMI DARLING,—I must not forget to tell you that Garcia, on leaving yesterday, told me he was entirely at my disposal for the Concerts, according to the terms we have adopted. So do not forget to put him in next programme for *Abraham's Request*. Poomps and I have been able to go out for an hour, from 4 to 5. It snowed all day till 4 o'clock. I am beginning my preface to *George Dandin*. Your poor old Mimi coughs a good deal still, but he feels this air is GOING to do him good. I kiss you, my dear Mimi, as I love you, and you know that is saying a good deal.—Your poor old man,

CH. GOUNOD.

* Mr. Weldon (*We* were the puppies' grandfather and grandmother). † Little puppies. ‡ Kate, my maid. § Mr. James, the butler. ¶ Harness for the advertisement cart with Gounod's name on it. ¶ Words written by Gounod.

Gounod, in truth, appreciated us as we deserved, when he wrote on *Friendship*, in reference to us, as follows:—

"The friendship of English people has the particular quality of not only being invariable in its constancy, but indefatigable in its activity. It is not a friendship which folds its arms, and is content with smiling at you when it meets you or when it wants you; it is a *certain* friendship which will not pay by a joke the pleasure of pulling you to pieces between friends; it is a *courageous* friendship which neither disguises its feelings nor its convictions, and with which one knows what one is about; it is a *vigilant* friendship, which, when once it has taken in hand the defence of your rights or your interests, will not give way before any obstacle, before any sacrifice to make them triumph; it is a *patient* friendship which trials do not dishearten, and which outlives persecution; it is an *even* friendship, to which that perpetual and odious alternative of bickering and tearing to pieces of which so many *soi-disant* friendships unworthy of the name they bear are composed, is unknown."

He was quite pleased with his page, and on passing it to me he said, "Is not that a good portrait of you, Mimi?"

I have already said that my husband, at his wits' end to invent some way of getting Gounod to pay proper attention to the doctor's prescriptions, had invented a little dodge to make him obedient, which really turned out very useful, and which saved us many a bitter moment. This dodge was called THE LAWS OF DRACO (see page 139, *The Letters*).

One morning my husband put on a most solemn face, and in a most solemn tone of voice he told us the following story. "This night I had a vision. A man of severe demeanour, dressed in a long white tunic, appeared to me. He told me that the old man did not take sufficiently regular exercise, that he did not take his medicine or his food regularly, that he went to bed too late, that he read at night in bed with his arms and chest uncovered, and that never, NEVER would his health improve while he behaved in so reprehensible a fashion. He then dictated to me a Code of Laws, which I wrote; he then said, 'I am the Spirit of DRACO,' and disappeared. Here is the code, dear old man; take it, my darling, and I hope in future I shall have but to say that *one* word, DRACO, to make you both return to order and obedience. . . ." He made us both swear obedience and loyalty to DRACO and his laws; even to the last day of his stay with us Gounod thought more of DRACO than of us two. Although we all three knew it was only a joke, we used gravely to make use of DRACO's name. Even in his worst rages Gounod never blasphemed DRACO!—he never said, "Bother your DRACO!"

The LAWS OF DRACO were drawn up regularly by my husband, and pinned up in our morning room. (See as examples pages 120, 122, and 139 of *The Letters*, as well as several other places where DRACO is mentioned.)

Gounod felt a childish pleasure in dedicating to my husband the slightest thing for which he expressed admiration—"Oh! Happy Home, Oh! Blessed Flower," "Come with thy naked feet," and that delicious Biblical symphony, "On the Sea of Galilee," for which he wrote him that dear little affectionate letter of the 3rd February, 1874 (page 131, *The Letters*). You may remark that Gounod some-

times signs H-MEE, or calls me H-MEE-H-MEE. This puzzles everybody who has read the volume of *THE LETTERS*. I had, to amuse Gounod, invented a kind of little amiable grunt before each consonant, which he *scored* by putting an H before each consonant. H-MEE-H-MEE was therefore a way of pronouncing *Mimi*.

Very often he gave me the same name as his mother—*Ma Mie*, and *Mimi*, in that case, is a corruption of *Ma Mie*.

I should have had much more numerous letters from Gounod when I was away from him, had I not implored him not to send me anything but *post-cards*. He so hated writing to his friends in France, and “cussed and swore” at the time taken up in *politenesses and exigencies*. I should not have liked to feel he would “cuss and swear” at me in that way, so, whenever we parted, I always begged him not to write more than what he could get into a post-card.

Another thing I used to save him from, and which would exasperate him in the highest degree, was the correction of orchestral parts. When, either because I was ill or for want of time, I had not made the first revision, the complainings were terrible, as can be seen, page 132, *The Letters*, note 159.

Gounod had tried to get up a tremendous row on the subject of *Mireille*; he wrote the letter of the 23rd March, 1874, to M. Dulocle, and any one can see very well by my letters to M. Dulocle, 18th March, 1874, to Mr. Delacourtie, 18th March, 1874, and to Mr. Barbier, *same date*, that *Mireille* at that moment was a fruitful source of argumentations, that Gounod had given me his orders and his explanations, had put me on my mettle, and on the breach, from whence he knew well enough I did not like to be backed out from behind by my petticoats!

That is however exactly what he did in his letter of 28th March, and shut my mouth by speaking of the “widow and children of Michel Carré.” To tell the truth, after the proof of bad memory he gave me in his letter to me about *Romeo and Juliet*, page 141, *The Letters*, I began to be doubtful as to the accuracy of his histories. He was nicely “sold” on this occasion, for I pretended to be charmed and touched by his letter, and he had hoped for a Row Royal!

Another matter had much annoyed him about that time—the Countess d’Harcourt, the wife of the French Ambassador, had asked him to help, in any way he could, the Fancy Fair which had taken place in aid of the funds of the French Hospital in London. Gounod sent her at least £12 worth of music, each copy bearing his *special* autograph. He had stipulated only that he should be paid £2 18s. on them, the cost price of the music. In vain he wrote, in vain he made me write to and receive several letters from Mr. Gavard, the Secretary of the Embassy. Gounod never got this money. Really, what, with one thing and another, he had good excuses for grumbling all day long when he was *mooned* that way. I allow that in spite of everything I have written in this volume and the next one, I can only convey a faint idea of the thousand-and-one reasons always cropping up to cause needless work and worry to him as well as to myself, and that I have not sufficiently detailed all the difficulties, the annoyances,

and the traps by which the musical publishers and newspaper editors managed to surround us. All the burden of this I had doubly to bear, and over and above all this, if I had the misfortune to forget anything, or if there were the slightest hitch in my arrangements, he would nag at me for hours, and would tell me that I was like his wife ! (See page 136, *Business*, note 168.)

Moreover, there was the serious question of Jean—when at Margate alone I had written to Jean the letter, page 136, *The Letters*. I hadn't his address, I therefore sent my letter to Madame de Beaucourt, begging her to give it to him when she went to see her son, who I knew was at the same college as Jean Gounod. She returned me my letter, saying that peculiar difficulties prevented her from giving it to Jean, and she gave me his address. I replied that I did not know if they read the letters which came for the pupils at College Sainte Geneviève, and that I did not wish Jean's masters to know what I had written to him. I sent it her again, asking her if she could not ask to see Jean and deliver it to him herself. She replied (returning the letter again), saying, that it was completely impossible for her to undertake any message for Jean, at the same time, giving me her reasons. I then kept the letter by me with the intention of giving it to Master Jean himself when I should see him. My husband and myself had settled between ourselves that when Jean came to spend his holidays at the sea-side with his father that we would abstain from seeing either Gounod or him, so as to avoid all chance of Rows ; but when we told Gounod of our plan, he would not listen to it, and we were obliged to give it up at once. He would have preferred doing without Jean !!!

On the 23rd April, at Hastings, the old man told me that he had had a *Revelation* as to what constituted *Divine Grace*, and began to write a book on the *Supernatural*. It was very beautiful, and I am very sorry I did not keep it. He was very much troubled that same day respecting a friend about whom he had received bad news, and which resulted in four years of hard labour for the unhappy man.

He wrote to Dr. Blanche to do what he could to help or to give him more information about his friend, asking him at the same time where he ought to spend the winter—he had a bad cold and coughed. Another time Dr. Blanche, or Dr. Foville, who came to see him, recommended Arcachon. Dr. MacKern, however, said that neither one or the other would be good for Gounod. Biarritz on account of the cold winds which blow from the Pyrenees, and Arcachon on account of the down of the fir cones which float in the air, and which would irritate his bronchial tubes. He recommended *Amélie les Bains*. My husband would have liked him to go to Bournemouth, because he would not on any account go to France himself ; but, as all the doctors were in favour of *Amélie les Bains*, and that Gounod loudly declared he would *prefer to die rather than be separated from me*, it was agreed that I should take one of my old governesses as *chaperone*, and that I should spend a few months at *Amélie les Bains* with Gounod, for I was quite as much, if not, more, in want of rest and a warm climate than he.

As to Jean, Gounod did not care to go after him to France with-out us ; my husband would not go to France at any price. Gounod was so sad about it, it made us sad to see him. His letter to Jean describes his feelings (*page 154, Lettres*), and seeing him so unhappy, I made another effort with my husband to get him to go to France with him, and he after all told the old man he would not abandon him, and that he would consent to go to *Villerville* instead of going to Wales or to Scotland. Gounod, triumphant, wrote to Jean another letter to tell him that all had been arranged as he wished. He forgot to tear up his letter of the *21st May, 1874*, and I found it in his blotting-book after his departure. It is a document that I am very glad to possess, for it clearly proves that his visit to France depended entirely on our willingness to accompany him, although my husband, and even I, insisted that he could very well go alone, as Jean and the de Beaucourts would be with him, and that he would be perfectly secure against the attacks of his *crochery dog*, whose visits he seemed to dread more than an interview with Satan himself!

The month of May, although not so agreeably passed at Tavistock House as the month of April at Hastings, was drawing to a close. I had completed my 37th year on the *24th* (Sunday), and Gounod had lavished on me all his protestations of affection and gratitude. He had made me a present of several of his father's drawings. The *27th* (Wednesday) was a magnificent day. Mrs. Louisa Brown had invited us to spend the day with her at Blackheath. We started from Tavistock House at midday, the old man and I, Dan, and Whiddie, in my *own* Victoria, with our *own* coachman and our *own* horse, as usual. Gounod was in good health—I was very well. "*Our hearts beamed full of sun, and The Fields beamed full of sun.*"

The weather was beautifully warm. A quarter of an hour before reaching Blackheath, my little dog Whiddles began to scream fearfully, and was seized with exactly the same attack as that which he had had at Margate in March, and which had so alarmed me. The coachman stopped—Gounod was terrified ; I knew well enough what was the matter, but I had much difficulty in holding my poor little boy, his screams pierced my heart and drew the attention of the people in the street and shops. Gounod wanted me to let him go, he was so afraid he would bite me ; the papers had been full of cases of hydrophobia, and the horrid boys which crowded round the carriage cried "Mad-dog." I was in a terrible state of mind, I was afraid my little darling would be torn from me and killed before my eyes. I cried out, "It is nothing at all ! I know what it is ! They are fits ! He is only a little puppy !" I got out of the carriage, and I went into a house to ask for a little water. I put his little head in it ; this stopped his maddening screams, but his poor little eyes were haggard. I put him down, he ran straight before him like a little mad dog ; he did not heed my voice. Gounod was in a most terribly nervous state, his face looked quite changed, and this increased my agony of mind, but abandon my little pet I could not ! We got into the carriage again. A nasty crowd had gathered round us, and I heard that dreadful word "*Mad-dog.*" As for me, I told

the coachman to drive for his lie. I held my little treasure tight, and we arrived at Mrs. Brown's (Whiddles having recommenced to scream worse than ever), Gounod more dead than alive, Dan surprised and uneasy. On my arrival at Mrs. Brown's I immediately explained what had happened, and asked where I could shut up my poor little boy. She had just got the very thing, an enclosure in the garden, an empty hen-house. There we shut him up and gave him some straw to lie on. After lunch, seeing he was no better, I put him in a hot bath, in which I held him with the greatest difficulty, and then, with the help of Gounod and Miss Brown, I gave him some castor oil, I dried him and wrapped him up as well as I could in a sheet, and put him back in the hen-house. At five o'clock my Whiddles was better, his poor little eyes were still wild, and I left him where he was. I begged Mrs. Brown to keep Gounod for the night. "He is so nervous," I said to her; "you see how upset he is on account of the little dog, it would be terrible if a new attack were to seize the unfortunate little beast on his way home!" "With great pleasure," said Mrs. Brown; "leave him as long as you like." Mrs. Brown and I went together to tell Gounod that Mrs. Brown wished him very much to stay with her for a day or two. Gounod made plenty of objections. First of all he would not hear of it; then he wouldn't and could not let me return home alone, but I then told him that it would make me so nervous to think that Whiddles might have another fit, and that it would make him nervous too, and I should so much prefer him to stay with Mrs. Brown, and that I would come and fetch him on Saturday—that to be in the country, in that beautiful garden, where he could sit out of doors all day long, would do him so much good. At last we persuaded him to do as we wished—he promised to remain. I promised to send him a portmanteau with some clothes next day. I sent him his *Molière* (so that he could go on working at his *George Dandin*), his crucifix, his brush and comb, his night shirt, and his every-day clothes, his slippers, etc.

In his little note of the 28th May, you will see that the same feeling of lassitude (me once separated from him, which had taken possession of him while we were away from him in Paris) came over him again. So I left the Browns that evening, where I left my precious old man, alas! and from whence I was destined never to bring him home again! I left at half-past nine in the evening, with my two dogs; Dan sitting on the seat by me, Whiddle fastened in a basket for fear of accidents. . . . Scarcely had I left the house, (without a shadow in my heart,) when I heard rapping at the bottom of the carriage. It was so loud, I thought the road must be in a very bad state, and that the coachman would do well to pick his way. I looked; I saw no stones anywhere, and so I told the coachman to drive on one side so as to avoid the stones in the road. "There are no stones anywhere, Ma'am," replied the coachman. "Well, it's curious," I said; "It feels as though the stones would break in through the bottom of the carriage, the knocks are so violent!" It appeared to me as if the horse's hoofs were kicking the stones

violently against the bottom of the carriage. I felt as if the horse was shying at everything; that the carriage was not driven straight; that sometimes it was drawn to one side, then to the other, as if something was trying to upset it. As I came near the lamp-posts I felt as if they leant over the road, and would fall over the carriage and crush us as we passed them; I seemed to see dark, shapeless forms, like black arms, with long flowing sleeves, hovering about twenty yards above the carriage, and I seemed to understand they made signs and urged me to go back. I fancied that the carriage advanced with short jerks. . . . I said to the coachman: "Decidedly there must be something the matter with the horse; he does not seem as usual!" "He's all right, Ma'am."

What could be the matter with me? I, who never felt nervous in a carriage, I trembled like a leaf. I felt as if an accident was going to happen, and that I should be killed before I got home. I had not even had a glass of wine. I was neither tired or over-excited. I had often left the old man; he was going to be quiet until Saturday, and, as for me, I was going to settle down quietly to work in peace. What could it be? Three times I stopped the coachman. Three times I felt choking under the impression of some great danger. Three times I got out of the carriage and walked on the pavement, nothing but false shame preventing me returning to fetch the old man. I was so frightened, and I did not like to own it; I felt so frightened to be without him; for the first time in my life I felt terrified! I, who had been nearly shipwrecked, I had not been afraid then. And I was afraid now! Once on the pavement, I saw that the horse was, as usual, walking quietly along, the lamp-posts looked straight. I no longer saw the dark forms hovering about the carriage; but the moment I re-entered the carriage, the same signs were visible, the same rappings recommenced, and the same terror-stricken feelings possessed me. Once across the Thames, and in London itself, the signs ceased. I, however, reached home more dead than alive with my puggies. Oh, my God! had I but listened to these warnings, and had I returned to fetch my old man, who would have been so delighted to come home with his little "coward" (as he would have called her), what sorrow, what misery, *what tortures* should I not have been spared!

Once safe at home, I thought no more of it, except to take good care not to say anything about it. I found a heap of letters awaiting me. I replied to them. I went to bed; I slept well. The impression had worn off.

30th May, 1874, Saturday.—I went to fetch the dear old man, but he felt so very much inclined to stay, I left him there. Dined there. She is a good woman is Louisa Brown, and takes good care of him, and I can get on with my work now (*Extract of Journal*).

As he seemed so pleased to remain, I took advantage of it to persuade him to remain until *Saturday week*. . . . He did not wish to remain beyond Tuesday. . . . "At all events, Mimi, you are not going to leave me all that time without coming to see me, you will come and see me on Tuesday." I told him that I had so

much to do, that if he really wanted me I would come on Wednesday,—that, at all events, I would send Freemantle on Tuesday to see how he was, so as to reassure me on the score of his health. He was quite well then. . . . “Try to do without me, my dear old man. I work like a hive of busy bees while you are away. Stretch yourself out in the sun like a fat old lizard, I make good use of my time in the meanwhile, I assure you.” Goodness knows what work I got through that week! He did not seem pleased, but really, I thought, he could manage without me for another week, and I had no intention of returning to fetch him before Saturday. My husband, he, and I were to leave on the *1st July* for Villerville. I had several concerts in London on my hands, all the house to arrange, a mass of papers to look over and classify. The Festival of Liverpool was under consideration, as also many other contemplated arrangements, and a quiet week without interruption, without cards or backgammon, was a real windfall for me. I had brought him his book on the *Supernatural*, he had his Molière, so he had plenty to occupy himself with. I left him without the least compunction, happy to see him so well and happy. I returned quietly home without being frightened by anything. Everything felt as usual.

Every day my old man sent me his little post card, and on Tuesday, faithful to my promise, Freemantle went to see him. He found him pretty well, but complaining very much of my not going to see him; as usual, very affectionate. He signs himself *on the 2nd June* by the name of my little dog “*Whiddie*.” Poor, dear old man, he would often say, “*If I were a dog you would love me more!*”

In the volume of *The Letters*, there is on page 159 a mistake. . . . It is not the post-card of the *2nd June* which is missing, but that of *3rd June*.* He not only was waiting impatiently for a letter from Edith de Beaucourt, who had promised to find us apartments at Villerville, but he had written to me very sadly. *I have written in my Journal—*

Busy till 4 P.M. clearing and arranging my table and the old man's. Depressing news of the poor, dear old thing.

Good Heavens! I ought to have gone and fetched him home, he bored himself to death without me. I knew it only too well; but I was possessed with the *mania* of getting everything in order for his return, so that he should feel pleased on returning to his dear “*Tavistock*” to see how his Mimi had done lots of things and worked hard in the absence of *her old child*, who consumed half, and sometimes, all her time.

On Friday morning I received the post-card (of *4th June*) the last words of which are—“*On Saturday, isn't it so?*” These five words which told me he expected me to fetch him on Saturday, that, at least, this time I would not leave him behind; that *on Saturday, for certain*, I would come to take him home, that he was tired, so weary

* This post-card I unfortunately gave to a worthless individual, who, when I begged of him to return it, said he had lost it.

of waiting for me. Almost at the same time I received from Mrs. Brown a telegram—"Gounod is very ill, come at once." I immediately started for Blackheath. I guessed that it was a cerebral attack with which he had been seized. I took with me the remedy which I considered infallible. I took a hansom to Charing Cross station, then the train to Blackheath; but I missed the station, so preoccupied was I by thoughts of the old man, and so I got out at the next, Charlton, where there was no conveyances of any kind, and flew, rather than walked to Mrs. Brown's house. There I found them all, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Brown, alarmed, agitated, frightened out of their wits, as we had been the first time we had seen Gounod in that state. This attack had come on at four o'clock the day before, after he had returned from posting my post-card. He had begun by repeating the same thing over and over again, and Mrs. Brown, although thinking him strange, had not felt frightened; but when he began to howl and to be violent, she had sent for the doctor, Dr. Kidd or Dr. MacKern, who lived at Blackheath, knowing that they were the doctors who were in the habit of attending him; that is to say, Dr. Kidd never had seen him, but Dr. MacKern was his brother-in-law; they treated their patients in the same way, and gave the same medicines. I cannot recollect now why they did not come. I think they were not at home, but their friend and fellow-practitioner, Dr. Tait, hastened to come to their assistance, and by the time I arrived Gounod was somewhat better; although Mrs. Brown said to me:—"You will know, perhaps, how to keep him in bed; we are worn out from trying to keep him in bed last night; we expected him every minute to throw himself out of the window and commit suicide!" I ran upstairs, two at a time, and there I found my poor friend in the state I so well knew. He smiled vacantly, and repeated mechanically, "Mimi," when I said to him, "Here is Mimi." He kept on repeating:—"Mimi will bring the papers, and then you will understand. Mimi never loses a paper—she has all the papers—she will explain it all. I have not a farthing; I have nothing, nothing! (and he cried). They will not pay me, and Mimi says Goddard shall pay me, and I have nothing. There are the accounts—the accounts. I do not understand it at all, but Mimi understands. I do not require to understand," etc., etc. "Fear is consumptive, very consumptive. He is my son," etc., etc. He heard, as usual, people whispering and saying in a low voice that they were going to take him and put him down the black hole.

Oh! how I reproached myself, how I accused myself! It was I who had persuaded him to remain at Blackheath. I had so much to do. He had not *seen* that he harassed me, that he tired me out, that I got up sometimes from 3 to 6, to do all that had to be done, and would go to bed again from 6 to 8, in order to find time to amuse and entertain him during the day. I had been so happy that week thinking he was at the Browns, and now I understood but too well what had bothered him.

My narrative on *Business*, and my letters to Smith, the music publisher, may not, perhaps, be very clear except to people in the music trade, so that the Browns, who, no doubt, had made enquiries

of him as to the state of affairs, and who doubtless had told him, with truth, that they could not understand it at all, had turned his head by tormenting him and making him dwell on the prospects of his position, which to them could not appear very brilliant. How could it be possible for any one to realise the powerful, immense, and hidden league which surrounded us? How make them understand the conspiracy of silence which hemmed us in, and which would have ruined even Gounod himself, without the element of energy which I infused into our plan of defence? They had covered up his silver crucifix in a little leather case, a thing which he had long asked me to do for him as he wished to wear it, but always overburdened with work, I had deferred doing so from day to day, until after all, it had been done by other hands. I reproached myself for not having done this little kindness for him. This crucifix, a rather large and heavy one, lay on his breast; I wished to remove it, it made him look like a corpse, and I fancied it impeded his respiration. He felt I wanted to take it; he ground his teeth uneasily, and seemed to grow much more restless, so I left it where it was. I lay down, as was my custom, on the bed by his side, and he then left off trying to leave it. At two o'clock, Dr. Tait, whom I had already seen, returned, and as Gounod had not yet regained consciousness, he consented to administer to him the remedy I had brought with me, and which, according to my experience, ought to have restored him to consciousness in less than two hours. I hoped most fervently to take Gounod home that day to Tavistock House.

My husband had arranged with me, that he would come and fetch us at half-past 7 that evening. Mrs. Brown had told me that she had telegraphed to his family believing he was dying. This added to my anxiety. I knew he was not going to die, and that if his family arrived it would do him no good. Every moment I expected to see his dear eyes look at me with the light of reason beaming from them, and I was turning over in my own mind that he had had a singularly sharp and very long attack.

At 4 o'clock that afternoon, I was sitting by him watching him. He was quiet, but continued to mutter "Mimi," "papers," etc.

"Ah!" I thought, "how selfish I have been." I plotted and planned to get a week to myself—without my old man—so as to be better able to work for us both, and I am nicely paid off. They've been tormenting him with his money histories, and without Mimi to disentangle them; they've made him ill for me. Ah! well—he may, in future, kill me with nagging, he shall bore me to death a thousand times over, never, NEVER NO MORE will I be separated from him. Bless him! poor darling old man!" . . .

Suddenly

At that instant I felt an immense net, with great meshes of rays of dazzling light cover my eyes and my whole body. I felt myself shine in a splendid white light. The rays which proceeded from my body streamed out towards, and went to mix themselves with those of a universe—what do I say?—WHOLE UNIVERSES of light! This light had neither end nor beginning. I seemed to know that what

I looked on was IMMORTAL LIGHT. It is impossible for human words to give the faintest conception of the resplendent glow of light in which I felt bathed. I have thought over it since then, and I suppose it must have been in that light Gounod had seen me when he used to tell me he saw me *covered with white light*. When Barbier translated *Biondina*, Gounod had said to me with bated breath, in an awe-struck tone, "Mimi, do you know the lines I like the best in the whole book,—

" 'The other tells, in her white raiment
Of thy guileless heart, thy pure faith,
It is, oh ! my darling girl,
White as thy soul.' "

"It is thus I so often behold you."

The vision I then beheld, which *filled* me, seemed to be formed of sparks of which every atom represented a world. They were worlds of light incrustated one upon the other. I seemed to understand the INFINITE ; my intelligence seemed able to reach it ; it seemed as though a thousand years had passed away in the twinkling of an eye.

"What then was TIME?" (I felt) "What then were a thousand years of sorrow?—NOTHING—since one thousand years in God's sight is as nothing." A fearful misfortune, a great overwhelming despair seemed to have passed over and through me. In this incrustation of Light I saw luminous signs float, and these seemed to tell me this sorrow would be forgotten, and that long years of earth-trials were as NOTHING by the side of Eternity, consisting, as it does, of instants composed of a thousand years each. These luminous signs which filtered into other eyes than my earthly eyes (rather than I can be said to have *seen* or *heard* them), which inundated me, which embraced me, and which passed through me (impossible to describe the exact sensation), seemed to proceed from JESUS HIMSELF.

* * * * *

They expressed :

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO.

They seemed to explain that the sorrow I was suffering was not understood by the persons who caused it. That all the evil in the world was rather the consequence of ignorance than of premeditated wickedness.

And in myself I said, "I am quite happy, I have no sorrow whatever."

* * * * *

Then I SAW (this is the shortest way of describing the impression I was receiving) :

MY GOD ! MY GOD ! WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME ?

"Do not thou believe thyself forsaken in thy most bitter despair. Thou wiltst doubt, even as I MYSELF doubted. The HOLY GHOST

showed itself no longer ; I saw nothing more ; all had become darkness. I felt forsaken ; and yet it was at the very moment that MY FATHER took me back unto HIMSELF, at the very moment MY Earthly trial was at an end—at the very moment I believed MYSELF forsaken—HE was bringing ME back to Happiness, to the Rest of the Higher Spheres. And thus it is with thee, MY child ; thou feelst thyself soiled, forgotten, forsaken ; thou dost not comprehend thy trial ; in this moment, when thou art the most unhappy and forsaken of women, MY FATHER will bring thee near to the HOLY SPIRIT, and will bathe thy soul in Light. Have courage ! struggle on—thou hast thy mission, and thou hast thy strength. Remember !”

And I, I, my very self, argued thus : “ I have no sorrow ; the old man is ill ; he will get well ; he loves me. He is there ! I see him ! ”

* * * * *

I saw again :

VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, TO-DAY SHALT THOU BE WITH ME IN
PARADISE.

“ Yes, ’tis the voice of the FUTURE which is eternally in Paradise, and which is eternally just. The voice of the FUTURE is ETERNAL JUSTICE. It judges things past and present. The voice of TO-DAY calumniates all new things, all which is worthy and noble. It calumniates thee as it calumniated ME ; it is the voice of he who hath not been illumined by the rays of FUTURITY. The two thieves represent the Voice of the FUTURE and the Voice of TO-DAY. In that dark night, think of the solitary hill—think of ME, forsaken by all, denied by all ; and yet acknowledged during my lifetime, defended by the thief on my right—emblem of the FUTURE—assuring me of Paradise ; the thief on my left representing that of TO-DAY—which, blinded by prejudice, denounces all that it cannot see and understand. Thou, therefore, remember, ’tis the voice of the FUTURE which addresses thee ; thou shalt, in truth, be verily with ME in Paradise ; it already overshadows thee, for thou sufferest unjustly. Thou say’st, why have laboured so much in vain—why so much suffered ? Thou wilt aspire to repose, thou wilt yearn for consolation. Then Paradise is ready to thee ; thou wilt conceive then that a thousand years are NOTHING in the scale of Eternity. Insignificant—for at the end of those thousand years, there cometh the joy of progression, where thou feelest the forerunners and the ecstasy of immortal bliss, when each thousand years is composed of instants of thousands of years each.”

And I thought : “ I have no suffering. I do not grieve because he is ill. The old man is there ; I will console him to-morrow. He is not going to die.”

* * * * *

Then I saw :

FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT.

"Thus in life must *thou* give into MY FATHER'S HANDS *thy* spirit ! Guide not *thyself*; listen to no one and no thing ; God will show thee the way, and if thou blindly followest the promptings thou receivest, thou wilt accomplish the Mission for which thou art destined. Shrink not from difficulties ; they are only apparent, not real ; and they will break like melted ice before thee. Thy spirit will be led to accomplish a great work, and from henceforth commend it into the hands of THY FATHER who hath sent His guardian angels to watch over thee."

Then I thought to myself that this meant I did not and had not understood my mission, and that I might be taken away from the children ; but I did not seem to mind, I felt perfectly passive. I thought it was a more important mission to tend the sick bed and preserve the troubled brain of a tiresome old man than to bring up children—one being a great pleasure to me, and the other being a sacrifice. I interpreted this communication as preparing me for some sacrifice, and yet I had a kind of supernatural *double* feeling that the sacrifice was past, the day of sorrow was over, and that my Spirit rested, part and parcel of a great IMPERSONAL, IMMORTAL LIGHT.

* * * * *

Then I saw : WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON.

"Thou art the woman. Thou hast the true heart, as the true mother should have it. Thou lov'st those thou lovest as mothers love their children, without jealousy, without suspicion, without reservation ; with devotion, with anguish—anguish thou wilt feel—terrible as that which MARY felt. She also did not understand, nor thou either ; thou dost not understand, and thou wilt, like HER, suffer martyrdom."

I seemed to understand that this meant the way I loved the old man, and wondered why I should be told this.

* * * * *

Then I saw : BEHOLD THY MOTHER.

"Every man should behold in each woman, whom he meets in the pathway of life, his mother. The Woman is the Mother of Man. Man should never forget this. If thy old man had thus always loved thee, thou wouldst not have been unhappy, and he would have been happy. Think not that it is scandalous that he should have lived so long near thee. The world may talk ; but forget not this: JESUS gave his MOTHER, not to a *brother*, not to a *son*, not to a *female friend*. He confided her to the care of a *disciple*—to *him* who loved HIM, and understood HIM the best. The world then cried out as it does now ; but that act alone proves that in those exceptional circumstances which knit souls together, without the *family*, the family is of no

account. MY MOTHER and my brethren are those who listen to my voice, and do the will of MY FATHER. God had sent thee thy old man. . . . Thou hast a mission to fulfil." . . .

I thought then, "Why say this to me. He is there; I have not shirked scandal. I have ever believed God had sent him to me to help me carry out a beautiful mission, a humanitarian purpose. I have not backed out of my responsibility. I have accepted it wholly, without reserve. I have sacrificed myself; that I know well. But why reassure me? I have not doubted."

* * * * *

Then I saw:

"I THIRST."

"Thou also wilt thirst to cease suffering. Thou thirstest for the hour when God will release thee from the heavy burden thou hast to bear, and with which HE hath entrusted thee. But bear in mind ever, the Almighty hath endowed thee with five talents—thou must bring HIM ten. Thou art armed with the power to persevere till the end, for God hath given thee the strength."

Then I said to myself—"I do not feel impatient; I do not thirst for the end. I know it must take time. The old man makes me unhappy at times. True, I am glad to get rid of him now and then, but he makes me very happy too. Everything cannot be all roses; everything cannot go on in our world exactly as we would wish. I do not expect it. . . . I could not doubt!"

* * * * *

Then I saw:

"IT IS FINISHED."

"This thou wilt likewise say. Thy mission will have been fulfilled. Thou wilt feel neither triumph, nor joy, nor satisfaction. Thou wilt have suffered too much. Thou wilt feel thyself the passive and obedient instrument of Providence. God leads those whom HE chooseth, and who allow themselves to be led by HIM in faith, without questioning or doubting. All human being is born for the purpose of working for and working out the problem of Creation, but most—nearly all—are hindered by the discouragements which beset their path. The work therefore is carried out in an interrupted and imperfect manner. Thou wilt fade away, but that which thou art destined to accomplish will be accomplished."

Then I said to myself, "I am destined to have fifty children and to nurse my old man. It is all I look for—I do not look for triumph, or joy, or satisfaction. All I do is for HIM. Perhaps, after me, I may have pupils who will be remarkable. I shall be dead. It does not signify!"

(*And Jesus had spoken EIGHT TIMES.*)

* * * * *

The light vanished, and I, who, till then, had felt myself bathed in ineffable happiness, light, and ecstasy, felt, left on coming to myself, bowed down under the cold load of a heavy grief, an immense, eternal sorrow which had lasted a thousand years.

It is impossible to me, I feel, to give in the smallest degree the faintest conception of the extraordinary beauty and heavenly felicity of this holy vision. I had never had any before, and have never had any since. I have described it in as few words as possible, for were I to write the hundredth part of that which had been revealed to me, and the philosophical reflections which *thronged* through me, which inundated me and filtered through me in great oceans of limpid and powerful waves of light, it would fill a large volume.

The old man was sleeping peacefully, and I ardently wished he would awake, so that I might tell him what had happened to me. I thought of what he had told me he had *seen of Light*, of what he had *seen on Divine Grace*, and his book on the Supernatural at Hastings.

But, alas! since that moment I have never known peace or happiness, as you will presently read! I was so upset the next day that I did not feel calm enough in my mind to write it down—not even to *him*—although I wrote to him less than a week afterwards that I yearned so to send him an account of what I had seen, and he answers me in his letter of the 10th June (*page 164, Les Lettres*), “*I should so like you to write me what you told me you would tell me about Christ’s Seven Words!* I beg you to write it to me—it would do me real good!”

Only the pen of Victor Hugo could put into a bearable shape the description of the heavenly beauties which visited me that afternoon.

Perhaps some day the moment will come when I may, after months of peace and tranquility, be able to sit me down at my table, to collect my thoughts, to absorb myself in contemplation and to record the details of this mysterious vision, which, after the first months spent in unceasing, maddening fits of despair, served to give me back all my Faith, all my Courage, and all my Energy.

* * * * *

The afternoon passed away; Gounod was quiet, although half asleep, and grinding his teeth. I was very sad, when my husband arrived at half-past seven o’clock, to be obliged to leave him without his having recognised me; he did not know my husband, he only smiled vacantly when he saw him. My husband remained with him all the night; and the next morning about ten o’clock he returned to Tavistock House. The news were bad; Gounod had not yet regained consciousness. Gaston de Beaucourt (Edith’s husband) had arrived, Gounod had not recognised him; and then my husband told me something, to which he attached no importance, but to me it planted the dagger in my heart, from whence it has never been drawn out. Gaston de Beaucourt could not speak a word of English, my husband not a word of French, but Mrs. Brown, who knew French thoroughly, told him that “*Gaston de Beaucourt had said that he had come to take possession of Gounod, and that he would allow no one to enter his room.*”

"Good Heavens!" I said to my husband, "He said that for *us* / he wants to prevent *us* seeing him. How could you have left him under the circumstances? I would not have budged had I been you!" "Oh!" replied my husband, "I do not for a moment suppose M. de Beaucourt could have said that for *us*. I remained all the time with him; he was pleasant enough! I think M. de Beaucourt only said that to prevent the Browns from coming in every moment to disturb him. I should do the same, if I were him. He finds them, perhaps, nervous, fatiguing, and troublesome for an invalid." . . . I shook my head sadly. "Well, you must go to Blackheath, and spend the afternoon there, darling: how can you possibly suppose for one instant that M. de Beaucourt could think of keeping *us*, *us* away from the old man's room, we who have, so to speak, nursed him day and night for three years? It is impossible!" It was but a presentiment I had, presentiment born, as I opined, in consequence of my vision of the preceding day, and of which I had not breathed a word. Arguments would have been useless! With a heavy heart, a prey to the most sorrowful forebodings, I left, after lunch, for Blackheath. I should have liked my husband to have accompanied me, but he had an engagement he was obliged to keep, he only ridiculed my fears. "What fantastic notions!!! Where do you get such ideas from?" . . . I arrived at Mrs. Brown's (it is quite impossible for me to remember whether her husband and daughter were present); she and Gaston de Beaucourt were in the dining-room. After having shaken hands with Mrs. Brown and Mr. de Beaucourt, the first thing I naturally asked was—"How's the old man, has he regained consciousness?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Brown.

"What joy!" I cried, "I will go at once to him!"

"Pardon me," said this man de Beaucourt, coolly placing himself before the door. "You cannot see Mr. Gounod." I expected as much, or I should have dropped.

ME.—"Not see Gounod?"

MR. DE B.—"No, Madam."

ME.—"He must be worse, you are hiding it from me, are you not? he is worse, he is dying!"

MR. DE B.—"No, Madam, Gounod is better, but you cannot see him."

ME.—"Why not?—oh! tell me why?"

MR. DE B.—"Mr. Gounod is still very weak, I am afraid the least emotion might bring on the fit again, and as he loves you very much, the sight of you could not fail to cause him strong emotions; I fear the consequences."

ME.—"What! I who have nursed him day and night for three years, he who looks upon me as his *little mother*, his nurse, his slave—he must, on the contrary, be very much astonished at not seeing me in my usual place. It is that which has doubtless been the cause of this long attack. With us he has never been more than twenty-four hours, at the most, unconscious (or without knowing us), he has now been thirty-six hours in this deplorable state. Oh, dear! Oh,

dear! you are hiding the truth from me; he must be worse!—go and ask him if he would not like to see me—you will see what he will say to you! All he wants is to see his *little mother*. He is worse, or you would go at once.” . . .

MR. DE B.—“I am persuaded like you, Madam, of the answer Mr. Gounod would give me; he would wish to see you, I know, but I am the person who has the charge of him at present, and I consider it more prudent to forbid Gounod’s room to everybody; ask Mrs. Brown.”

MRS. BROWN (sighing).—“I have not seen him!” . . .

ME.—“I understand that very well, but Mrs. Brown has not been with him, as my husband and I, with Gounod for three years. How can you suppose that either of us could disturb him, or cause him any kind of excitement! It is impossible—allow me to pass, Mr. de Beaucourt, I insist upon seeing my old man.”

MR. DE B.—“And I repeat to you, Madam, that you will not see him!”

Ah! if my husband had been there, he would soon have opened the door. I was indignant, furious. “By what right, sir, do you dare take upon yourself to prevent me seeing Gounod? Oh, Mrs. Brown!” I cried, with accents which must have touched her heart, “Open your door to me! let me, I implore you, let me see Gounod!”

Mrs. Brown appeared quite feeble and undecided, “What am I to do?” said she in English, “he says he has come to take possession of Gounod, and that no one shall see him. He behaves as though he were absolutely master of everything and everybody.”

ME.—“But by what right, sir, I ask, do you come and take possession of Gounod?”

MR. DE B.—“By the right that Gounod has given me himself: he wrote to me to come and fetch him!”

My heart stopped beating! “Show me the letter!”

MR. DE B.—“I have not got the letter.”

ME.—“No, indeed, but I have here his post-card to me, his last post-card, his *last word*, written and posted before he fell ill. You see, do you not, these words, ‘*On Saturday, then, it is settled?*’ It was settled, I was to have come for him! he expected me! Oh! Mr. de Beaucourt, you are not telling me the truth. He has not even written to you!”

MR. DE B.—“You are right, Madam, he had written to my wife!”

ME.—“Never would he have asked you to come and fetch him. He was to have gone to you on the 1st July. Why should he have written to me to come for him on Saturday, and also to you? There is not even common sense in such a thing! I will see Gounod. I will not leave the house until I have seen him! When does the doctor return?”

MRS. BROWN.—“He will return this afternoon.”

ME.—“Well, then, I will wait for him, we will then see if, in spite of the doctor’s orders, Mr. de Beaucourt will prevent me seeing him!”

I then sat down, devoured by the fever of suspense, of doubt, of suspicion, of presentiment, half crazy with the idea that there was only a door between me and my old man, my treasure, that creature who I had saved by my care, that being for whom I had sacrificed almost everything. He was there close to me, and the brutal force of a man separated us : for *he*, my old man, *he* must have been perplexed, *he* must have said to himself, "The morning is passing away, one o'clock, two o'clock, no Mimi ;" and, when he awoke, how his eyes must have wandered all round the room in search of Mimi. Oh ! my God ! what I felt, I cannot describe. Mr. de Beaucourt left the room to return to Gounod. Once I had made up my mind to wait for the doctor, I cried silently ; then I got tired of crying silently, I went upstairs into a room next to Gounod's crying louder, but his room had been changed. This I was not aware of. After I had been there, about an hour, crying my eyes out, Mrs. Brown and her daughter came up trying to console me, they had left the door open. I think it was then that Gaston de Beaucourt heard the noise ; he came out of Gounod's room, and said very angrily that the noise would attract Gounod's attention. I then cried, "I am too tired, too desperate, to wait ; you are going to take him to Morainville soon, and I shall not perhaps see him before he leaves !" Mr. de Beaucourt's tone suddenly changed. "What ! are you of opinion then, that he had better leave at once for Morainville ?"

ME.—"Certainly ! the change will do him good," Mr. de Beaucourt seemed quite surprised ; I cried more bitterly than ever—no words can describe my distress. "Why should not he go, it will make him so happy to go there. . . . He loves you both so much, but why, why prevent me seeing him ?"

MR. DE B.—"You wouldn't persuade him not to go !"

I did not then at all understand what he was driving at. Had I ever persuaded Gounod not to go where he pleased ? . . . He was fond of Edith and Gaston de Beaucourt ; he called them his *Paris Weldons*, just as he called us his *London de Beaucourts*. Why should he not go, where could he go better than to them, in the country, where he would sit out in the fresh air and sunshine ? Why did Gaston de Beaucourt seem to think that I was opposed to it, since it had been agreed to and arranged a long time ago ? He evidently perceived that he was on a false tack, and that there was nothing to fear from my opposition. "Any one can see," said he, addressing me in a very harsh tone, "that if I allowed you to see Gounod, you would certainly upset him, for you are perfectly unable to control yourself, that is quite clear !" I instantly stopped crying, "Oh !" I said, "if I might see Gounod only for five minutes, you would see how I could control myself !" "Well, then, promise me," said Mr. de Beaucourt, "not to stay more than five minutes, and I will consent to let you see him." I promised, as you may suppose, and at that moment Gounod appeared at the door of his room. "Mimi ! Mimi !" he exclaimed, "I will see Mimi ! I hear her crying ! . . . who is making Mimi cry ? Mimi ! where is she ?" Gaston de Beaucourt had got hold of him in the twinkling of an eye ; had taken him back

and had rescued him in his arm-chair, and, as for me, I rushed after him to rejoin my old man, followed by Mrs. and Miss Brown.

How happy and how consoled he seemed to see me; but how changed he was! I felt happy and consoled to see him, and to see him as he always had been—satisfied as the child to whom the mother is restored; but I felt cut to the heart at his appearance. Instead of the somewhat stout and robust man I had taken to Mrs. Brown's eleven days before, I found a little old man, thin, shrunk, his trousers hung on his shrivelled legs; he was pale, and had a grey and faded look; what could have happened to him? That was what I felt on seeing him. What had they done to him? Even at his worst, at the beginning of his illness, while with us, he never had got so thin as that.

"My Mimi," said he, folding me in his arms and kissing me over and over again, "what a long time it is since I have seen you! Why do you desert me?"

ME.—"I sat by your side all day long yesterday, my old man, and Harry all night, only you did not recognise us, my poor old man!"

HIM.—"That dear, good Harry, will he not come to-day?"

ME.—"Not to-day, old man, but he told me to tell you he would come to-morrow!"

HIM.—"And you also, Mimi."

ME.—"Yes, my old man, I will come in the morning and Harry also, for you know to-morrow afternoon is our Sunday; the people will be very disappointed not to see you."

HIM.—"You will be sure to tell them that I am ill, but that I will be there next Sunday!"

I gave Mr. de Beaucourt a look, who was making grimaces and threatening signs to me. He was sitting just behind Gounod, and he was making signs to me to leave, pointing to his watch. I, stupified, confused, agitated, pulled from behind by the two women, I said to him suddenly—"Good bye, my dear old man!"

HIM.—"What! you leave me already?—what were you crying for?"

ME (somewhat embarrassed).—"Because I had imagined that you were worse than yesterday, therefore I cried a great deal, and then Mrs. Brown and Agnes consoled me!"

HIM.—"I am a great deal better, Mimi darling, but you are going to remain to dinner with me; up here with me, by the side of your old man!"

Oh! Lord, how I longed to remain with *him*, but I felt my skirts being pulled, signs being made to me, and the watch of Gaston de Beaucourt. I mustered up all my courage. "My poor old man, alas! it is impossible; Harry is waiting for me; you know how we work so as to finish before the 1st July, therefore I cannot by any means remain this afternoon. We will return to-morrow!"

I took him in my arms, and kissed him with an aching heart, and he embraced me in his turn, as if he could not let me go, while blessing me for all the care I had taken of him; and going down

stairs I heard him still crying after me, "Mimi, *till to-morrow!*" I did not leave Mrs. Brown immediately, as I wished, at all events, to see Dr. Tait. When he came and I informed him of what had passed, he said that it was *simply monstrous* to have endeavoured to prevent my seeing Gounod. I left with him in his carriage. It rained in torrents, and I returned home, as I had come, by rail, with a heavy heart, weeping bitter tears of doubt and anxiety.

My husband was rather surprised when I related the affair to him, but he comforted me by telling me that the old man had recovered, and that the old man never would bear me to be separated from him. I told my husband also that I thought he was to start *immediately* for Morainville, but that I did not think the old man knew of the plan, as if he had he would have spoken to me about it the first thing, I was sure. . . . I was full of forebodings—I could neither rest, nor sleep, nor eat. Sunday morning I had got a little sleep; then waking up, after an hour, I had said to myself, "Shall I get up now, or shall I remain in bed until the servant brings me the hot water?" I looked at my watch—it was exactly six o'clock. I felt impatient to get up, as I had a great deal to do. I had to spend the morning at Blackheath with my husband, and then in the afternoon I had to receive our visitors at Tavistock House. My eyes wandered round the room, I looked at the pictures on the walls, the little ones painted by Gounod hanging near my bed. I continued looking about me in a dreamy way, and I felt my gaze fixed on the door. I saw a group of people enter, all dressed in the deepest mourning. All was sad, mournful, silent. I seemed to see my husband, and friends, and acquaintances, our usual visitors, and then I saw myself. I did not seem to walk—I appeared rather to glide mechanically. I was very pale. I wore a long black dress, a very long cloak, and veil of the deepest mourning. I said to myself, "What, I, Georgina Weldon! I see myself quite alone, all in mourning, without the old man! I who never found myself alone without him when out of doors. Even when I go down into the garden, he is waiting for me at the bottom of the steps; he offers me his arm, and we start off together on our little trot round the garden." Then I saw behind me a great immense hearse covered with a funeral pall, at the bottom of which was a great heavy fringe, at least a yard deep—quite black, but near the ground, I saw what seemed like silver tassels hanging from this heavy fringe, which nearly touched the ground and completely hid the wheels. "Ah!" I asked myself, "how is this? I have seen hearses, but I have always seen the wheels. What an immense fringe; I have never seen anything like it." I noticed myself from my bed, and although I knew I was in my bed, I wished however to know why my "*double*" was alone. Something then seemed to draw my eyes to the hearse and signified to me, "*He is there. You will be alone all your life.*" You can easily imagine into what a state of distress this fresh vision plunged me. I no longer had but one idea: "They will take my old man from me, he will die without me! I shall never see him again except in a great hearse!" I went, sobbing with despair, and told my husband what I had seen. He told me I

was silly and superstitious. "How do you expect anyone can *take the old man*? Let them take him! they cannot take away his free-will!" "But he will die! he will die!" I sobbed. "I shall never see him again. It is all over—he is going to die!" I cried so much that I was quite unable to go with my husband to spend the morning, as I had promised, with Gounod. I was afraid of not being able to help crying before him—of not being *able to control myself*, which Gaston de Beaucourt seemed to reproach me with as a very great crime. Then indeed I should have thrown myself in his arms, imploring him not to leave without us, I had such a dark presentiment of this departure. He would perhaps be killed on the railway! Could I ever have imagined the frightful reality. . . . I *feared* to know that Gounod had *perhaps* deceived me; that he had *perhaps* written to Gaston de Beaucourt; that he was tired of me. I was *afraid* of seeing him! I was *afraid* to go with my husband. My husband would report to me what his impressions were!

Gounod could not leave that day. He was still too weak. . . . What a morning of agony I spent! At last my husband came back to lunch, and raised my spirits. He *almost* restored all my peace of mind. He told me that Dr. Blanche had been sent by his family in consequence of Mrs. Brown's telegram; that the old man had never left off asking for me, had not ceased asking after me, how I was, and was so disappointed at not seeing me. "Ah!" said my husband, "you would be sorry you had been so foolish as you have been could you have seen the anxious eyes of the old man (when I went in) looking for you behind me as if he was sure that he knew you must be there." . . . He told me they had spoken of getting him to start at once for Normandy, instead of making him wait till the 1st July. "The old man wished in any case to wait for us."

"He asked me if we could not start at once. I told him it was impossible; that it was my month of attendance at the college. He seemed so disappointed; but I told him that we were *both of us* of opinion that he could not do better than start at once with M. de Beaucourt. He made me repeat twenty times that you were of the same opinion. He made me promise him a thousand times that we would rejoin him as soon as possible.

"You see, then, that your old man will not be taken from you so easily; moreover, Dr. Blanche complimented me warmly on the way in which we had treated him, and the old man will be as comfortable as possible with the De Beaucourts. It will be just the same as though he were with us, you know!" . . .

I had certainly no reason to distrust either Edith or Gaston de Beaucourt. When we were in Paris for the first performance of "*Jeanne d'Arc*," she had taken sides entirely with my husband and DRACO against me, and prohibited absolutely that Gounod should come to Paris at that time. Franceschi, and several of his other friends—Barbier, etc.—wished him to come and *show himself*, but the advice of Edith de Beaucourt had carried the day, and we had completely made up our minds to persuade Gounod not to come; for I know that if *she* thought so, Gounod would be quite satisfied.

"The old man," continued my husband, "is to leave to-morrow, if he feels that he can bear the journey, for Dr. Blanche must start to-morrow. He will come and pay us a visit this afternoon; and if the old man is not yet able to undertake the journey to-morrow, M. de Beaucourt will wait, and they will leave together." . . .

"What a prolonged attack the old man has had this time, and how he has changed," I said to my husband. "Have you ever seen any one so thin, so *shrunk*, as this poor old man? What has been the matter with him? He has been in peace, in the open air; he has not seen anybody; he has been in a beautiful garden all day. It is most singular!"

"Oh!" said my husband, "he had not you there to see to his food for him—he may have eaten too much!"

"I don't think it's that; rather they have been putting all kinds of questions to him, and spoken to him on business, for never before in all his previous attacks has he ever uttered a single word about his papers or his accounts—never has he spoken of Smith, or any other publisher!"

Dr. Blanche, according to his promise to my husband, came to visit in the afternoon. He made a great show of consulting me as to Gounod's state—"If I thought it better that he should remain, he should do so; it was *we* who had taken care of him for so long." I told him the plain truth, that Gounod, from the first day I knew him, had always seemed to be ailing more or less—that his disposition was affected by it—that I had suffered hours of martyrdom by his side—that now this fresh difficulty concerning Jean, who was such a wretch, had arisen, that it was absolutely necessary to forbid him to put his foot in the house for the sake of the children, and that he and Gounod wrangled all the day long!

Dr. Blanche repeated that Gounod would start with him and Gaston de Beaucourt the next day, if he were able to bear the journey, and promised to write in the evening, and let me know the hour of their departure to-morrow, or would send me a telegram in the evening, or the next morning, at the earliest hour before eight o'clock. He asked me to give him a few of Gounod's clothes. I put them in a towel for him. There was enough, with what I had already brought or sent him, to fill the little portmanteau which I had sent him to Blackheath, and this I took it for granted he would take with him to Paris.

When Dr. Blanche had left, I said to my husband, "He will not write to me; and I shall have no telegram to-morrow morning."

To which my husband replied, "You annoy me with your nonsense, after all!"

"Well, you will see!"

I was dying of fatigue, but could not sleep. I got up at three o'clock on Monday morning, the 8th June, and I wrote my old man a heartrending letter, in which I confessed all my wretched, dark suspicions; but that Gaston de Beaucourt had broken my heart by telling me that he had come to fetch him by *his* order; and that he had prevented me from going to him. I wound up by telling him how tortured and grieved I was at the thought, that he had, perhaps,

written one thing to Edith, and *to me to come on Saturday*. I could not doubt that he was really ill, he was so terribly changed. I spoke to him about my vision concerning the seven words of Christ, but did not say a word about the vision of the hearse. As to the signs and extraordinary incidents which had taken place on the road the evening I returned from Blackheath, *on the 27th of May*, I did not at the time attach any special significance to them, and it was only on hearing Spiritualism, and similar phenomena, spoken of, that I understood that good or bad spirits had that evening done all in their power to make me return to fetch Gounod, and thus save me from the catastrophe which has ruined me.—He once turned against me by the infectious miasma of his surroundings.

Evening.—No telegram! whereupon I said to my husband, "*No telegram!*"

"You will have it to-morrow morning," was the reply. I shook my head, sadly.

The post arrived in the morning.

"*No letter from Dr. Blanche, you see, Harry!*" My husband could not then call me "silly creature!"

"There is not a moment to lose," said he, after a moment's reflection; "put on your bonnet, quick, we will jump into the first hansom we meet, and will take train immediately for Blackheath."

Off we started. At Charing Cross Station, Dr. Blanche was walking quietly up and down the platform. He gave a start when he saw us. They were going to start by the 1.25 P.M. train, but he had neither written or telegraphed to us. We took no notice of this, however. I did not remind him of his promise! We soon were at Blackheath, and at Mrs. Brown's. When I reached the drawing-room, the old man was lying on the sofa; he *literally* jumped for joy when he saw me, and I shall always remember the look of real happiness in his dear eyes which will leave me the hope, all through my life, that the whole thing was not an ignoble farce, premeditated and plotted between the Browns, the De Beaucourts, Dr. Blanche, and Gounod!

"Mimi!" said he, "my dearly beloved little mother, they told me that you were not coming!" (*Who could have said this?*)

"Oh, my old treasure! dead or alive, I should have come to kiss you—to wish you good-bye!—*Au revoir!*"*

"Mimi, I will not say good-bye to you; you let me go away without you; I would not go, but this good Poomps has sworn, and promised me faithfully that you will rejoin me as soon as you can—perhaps even before the 1st July. In fact, my good Harry, you promise me you will come sooner. I cannot bear the idea of being separated from you, my good little father, my good little mother, if you do not sweat to me that you will be after me in no time." My husband swore he would come, and Gounod continued—"You are sure you do really think I should start at once for Morainville; if you do not, I will not go."

* *Au revoir* means, in English, "*Till we meet again!*"

"Yes! yes!" I said.

"This good Gaston, who is so good, so devoted, he was quite frightened when I wrote and told Edith how much I suffered. He thought I was very ill, and knowing I was not with my little mother, who takes such care of me, he came to see me!"

I cast a look at M. de Beaucourt. He did not look at me—he had dropped his eyes! My glance implied, "You have lied to me!"

My heart overflowed with joy when Gounod had said these words. So, he had not caused himself to "*be fetched!*"—he had done nothing underhand! It was *myself*, indeed, that he was expecting on Saturday to fetch him, and not Gaston de Beaucourt. All my dark suspicions vanished, my gloomy forebodings disappeared, and I am sure that my face lit up with a peculiar joy. How I blest my old man for having answered the question full of anguish, which I asked him in the letter I had about me. I breathed! He did not want to *escape from me!* No, I was always his little mother, his darling child; and if I didn't wish it, he would not leave without me. I had only to speak the word! How happy I was!

"My darling, I was so afraid that you would not come," said he, "I had written a little note to you. I gave it to Louisa Brown, with the key of my cash-box."

I had brought him £15, which I then gave him.

"Thanks, Mimi, you think of everything; give them to Gaston."

My husband passed the £15 to M. de Beaucourt, who received them with rather a bad grace, saying he had had quite money enough for the journey. Gounod held my hand in his left hand, and my husband's in his right. He did not wish to lose sight of us for a second, neither of one nor the other.

"Louisa," said he, "bring me the letter that I gave you for Mimi, and the key."

Mrs. Brown brought it and gave it me; and this note, written in the terms of the most profound affection, was calculated to reassure me completely, even if Gounod's words had not already done so. I saw that Dr. Blanche and Gaston de Beaucourt were watching us, and I wished to give Gounod my letter without letting these two men (who no longer inspired me with much confidence) perceive what I was doing. I wished him to read it after he had left us, not before. I feared that the distracted tone of my letter might make him cry. In this letter I implored him most desperately to cling to one idea only, if he fell ill again, and that—to ask for Mimi; "*I wish to see Mimi; send for Mimi*"—and to keep on saying nothing else all the time. I told him that the thought that they were going to take him away, that he might die far from me, was more than I could endure. That I would rather die. . . . Yes! oh God! You who hear me, You know that I would! I would a thousand times rather have died than suffer as I have!

My husband engaged their attention about something. He got up from his chair and went to them. I then said quietly:

"My old man, find some excuse, I want to see you alone for two minutes. Can we not go into the garden?"

Without a moment's hesitation, he pressed my hand in token that he had understood, and said—

"Come, Mimi, I have written a new song for you; come and listen to it!—come and sing it for me."

He got up from the sofa, and I followed him. Immediately, as if pulled by a spring, the two Frenchmen rose from their seats. (Had Gounod put them up to this beforehand?)

"Ah!" I said, jokingly, to them, "I do not want any one to come. In five minutes I shall have read over the song, but I must be alone to do so; in five minutes I will call you;" and they were obliged to sit down again.

Once alone with my old man, I gave him my letter, bleared and stained with my tears, as it could not fail to be, and I told him in a few words my great grief—the grief that Gaston de Beaucourt had caused me. He exclaimed, he vowed, he protested; he wished to call Gaston de Beaucourt to be confronted with him, before me. "No, no," I said, "it is better to say nothing, he would be too ashamed to look me in the face again if he knew that you had told me, yourself that he had lied about it. I am reassured, my blessed old treasure, by what you said just now in the drawing-room, and by your dear, dear little note; only swear to me, *promise* me, that if you were to feel very, very ill you would ask for me, you would send for me; you will put Edith on her guard beforehand; if you die, you have promised to die in my arms, you must not die without having seen me again. Promise me; promise me!" He took his oath, he swore, he promised me, he embraced me, he reassured me. "Let us try your song, my old man, if not, they will know that we are not at work." He played the accompaniment while I sang (reading at sight) the new composition. You can easily appreciate what self-control I exercised, and what a superhuman effort it required to enable me to maintain the calm and happy face I had brought, my old man, when I perceived that the words of the song were a description, almost word for word, of the Vision I had seen the preceding morning, becoming thus a certain presage, in my mind, of his death.

This is the first verse:

"Watchman, what of the night?
Do the dews of the morning fall?
Have the Orient skies a border of light
Like the fringe of a funeral pall?"

The presage I had had become in my heart an accomplished fact. I saw my old man already dead and buried. I do not know how I managed to restrain my tears. He had so repeatedly promised to send for me that I thought I could therefore rely on holding him—my friend, my coadjutor, my robust help, my old child—in my arms at least once again, on his death-bed. Death, after all, is not the worst thing we have to bear—I know that well enough now!

After having read it twice through, I knew my song. The old

man wished to recommence talking with me. "No," I said to him, embracing him in a solemn manner which he cannot have forgotten, "those men in the other room and the others are waiting for you; I shall see you again in three weeks, I can then tell you all that is in my heart." I felt I had no longer strength left to speak with him alone. I felt that *I should not be able to control myself* from sobbing, from imploring him, and saying, "Oh! my old man, remain, I beg of you, until I can leave with you; my heart mourns too deeply. It is not true that I was ever of opinion that you should go away!" Heaven knows that I had no longer a shadow of doubt about him, but for him I feared. And yet he was going to the De Beaucourts, with whom, before *the 6th June, 1874*, I should have been as pleased to know he was staying as if he had been with us, although in an attack which he had had at Morainville, they had sent for, and had had him taken away by Dr. Blanche. It was therefore on this account that I implored him to *send for me* instead of Dr. Blanche, since with me he was safe, and I knew how to get him to stay in bed. The words *lunatic asylum* had a fearful sound for me! He, at Morainville, I had that to dread, but if I were by his side I knew how to take care of him, I knew how to keep him better than all the strait waistcoats in the world!

I then called the Browns, the two Frenchmen, and my husband with a smiling countenance, Gounod happy as ever to produce his *muse*. I sang "*Watchman, what of the night?*" My husband looked at me with an air of surprise when the words *funeral pall* and *border of light* struck his ear, and he confessed to me afterwards, that "*it certainly was queer.*" . . . They pronounced it very beautiful, and they asked Gounod to get me to sing something else. I then sang the "*Better Land*," by Mrs. Felicia Hemans, French words paraphrased by Gounod and myself, and of which I will proceed to give you here an exact translation,

"You speak to me constantly of a radiant land,
Where little children are serene and peaceful.
Where then is this land full of charms,
Which knows neither suffering nor tears?
Is it where the orange tree perfumes the breeze,
Where the insect gleams in the green myrtles?
Farther! my child, farther!

"Is it there one sees those wonderful birds
Covered with azure and gold, with silky plumage,
Where the starry rubies scintillate,
Where the corals and pearls shine bright,
And those diamonds whose rays are so great
That they light up, so they say, Giants' Palaces.
Farther! my child, farther!

"Eye hath not seen this radiant land,
Ear hath not heard its joyous chants,
No one has dreamt of this adorable sojourn,
Where in everlasting peace,
Little children, with eyes full of happiness,
Gaze on the Father who reigns in Heaven.
Up there! my child, up there!"

Gounod and the rest of my audience were transported as usual. They said I sang it admirably, and I was obliged to sing it over again a second time. I sang as in a dream. *Up there! Up there!* Was I then never to see him again till *Up there?* Never no more?

This was the last time Gounod accompanied me. He never would say the words, *Good-bye*—always *Au revoir*.

Was it a rendezvous I gave him as I sang, "*Up there?*"

I had said, "*Up there!*" dans la langue où je parlais notre langue à tous deux.* (See *Biondina*—*The Dedication*, page 188, *Les Lettres*.)

We had arrived that morning at the Browns at about 10 o'clock. At midday Gounod began to wish the Browns good-bye most tenderly. He cried and kissed them all over and over again. He had written in my book of autographs his "*A revoir!*" (see page 162 of *The Letters*). I thought it rather strange my husband's portmanteau was not taken. I understood that Gaston de Beaucourt had put Gounod's things with his. Gounod had on my husband's fine Panama hat, so he had something of ours; the key of Tavistock House he had on his bunch. He has never sent it back. Thank God! Once in the train (I was seated between him and my husband, Dr. Blanche and Gaston de Beaucourt) on the way to London, was it Dr. Blanche who made him feel queer, or who excited him? I do not know, but he began asking and repeating over and over again the same questions, especially concerning his friend Q——, who was sentenced a few days after that to four years' imprisonment at Mazas. He certainly always had been somewhat in the habit of repeating constantly the same thing, especially when he was going to be or when he was ill, but never so much so as during this short journey. Dr. Blanche asked me, while waiting for the train for Paris at Charing Cross, if Gounod was often like that. I replied, "Sometimes, but not so bad. This attack has been much longer and more severe than any he has had, I should say, and I do not understand it at all. Never has he changed suddenly as he has this time, and his handwriting is still quite feeble and shaky, as I observed when he wrote those few lines in my book. . . ." The mystery may perhaps be cleared up some day, because there is behind all this something uncommonly queer and mysterious. . . . Gounod seemed, up to the last moment, determined not to leave us, but my husband and I encouraged him. My husband, besieged by Gounod's ceaseless entreaties, had at last ended by promising to try and rejoin him before the 1st July. "We would do our best." The old man cried as if his heart would break, but, as for me, I kept up my courage to the last, I did not shed one tear, nor even had I tears in my eyes. Gaston de Beaucourt must have seen that I was able to "*control myself*." The railway clock marked 1.20. Gounod was in the carriage; my husband and I both stood near the door. He sobbed, he yet held our hands tight in his, without being able to utter a word. "Come, my dear old man," said my husband to him, tenderly; "don't

* "*The language in which I speak our own tongue.*"

cry so much. I promise you that Mimi shall rejoin you in ten days!" The guard came up—"Take care, sir—the train's off!" As far as he could, Gounod, my dear, my poor dear old man, gazed after us through the tears which flowed down his cheeks. He was gone!

Well, who can tell? When shall I know if the whole was not a clever farce acted to perfection by all the personages of the drama, or can it be that it was not until after his return to France that they were able to persuade him? Heaven knows what! for up to the present time I do not understand what it all means. It was thus a beautiful drama transformed itself into a frightful nightmare.

I copy here extracts from my journal, which will prove that three days after he had left us I had become very anxious. On the fourth I was indeed anxious, and seriously so.

8th June (Monday).—Got up at 3. Wrote, etc., and sent off letters to the papers for the Polish Committee. Thinking of nothing but my poor dear old baby. Harry and I went off by the 9.25 train. Met Dr. Blanche at the Charing Cross station, so we all went together. Found the old man thinking of nothing but when and how he should see Mimi. He was so glad to get me. He is much better, and we kept him up as much as possible. He was sorry to part with the Browns, and did nothing but make us promise to come soon. He never asked Gaston to come and fetch him—I knew it!!! We lunched at Charing Cross station, and saw our dear old child off at 1.25. I hope he won't cry long. I took care not to cry! I came home and went to bed for four hours.

9th (Tuesday).—About 12, arrived a delightful telegram from the old treasure. He got safe to Paris last night, all in one journey.

10th (Wednesday).—I got a very nice letter from our dear old man.

11th (Thursday).—Nice letter from the dear old man, but he is still in Paris, which makes me very uneasy. I am making out a long account of the old man's health for Blanche.

12th (Friday).—Letter from the old man, which greatly increased my unhappiness, made me very miserable, in fact. What shall I do if, after having sacrificed everything in the world to him, he should fail me. Wrote twice to the old man. Sent Blanche a long account of his tempers and *crises cérébrales*.

13th (Saturday).—I sick all night. I was obliged to stay in bed all day. Dr. Chapman came. He put me on an ice bag. I got up, but was too weak to sit up. Tried to eat some dinner. Lay back in a chair and slept there with Whid, Dan, and Jarby till half-past 10. I have been able to eat so little since the old man has been gone.

14th (Sunday).—Wrote all I could to the old man.

15th (Monday).—I am half dead with anxiety and disappointment. No letter from the dear old man to-day, nor yesterday, nor Saturday. I do hope he is not too ill to write. It makes me feel quite ill and unable to do anything. . . . I went out, *pour me distraire*.

16th (Tuesday).—My heart cheered by a sweet old letter from the dear old man. He sent his article translated from mine. Smith had written to him, and he had written to Smith. De la Pole prophesied the publishers would be after him. Who would have dreamt that Smith would be the first? Wrote to the old man. Harry wrote to the old man.

17th (Wednesday).—Our dear old man's 56th birthday. I wonder I have no letter from him this morning. He was born in 1818. I have not slept a wink all night. I am so very tired.

18th (Thursday).—Very disappointed—very. No letter again to-day from the old man. It is very odd indeed, and makes me so uneasy.

19th (Friday).—That sly thief Smith has been over to Paris, seen Gounod,

who says he has signed nothing ! I went off to the Taylor lawyer. We'll do all we can to save the old idiot. After the *Faust* affair how can he be such a fool ? I'm nearly mad with it all. I sobbed and howled myself to sleep. I am so miserable ! If all that has been told me about the old man should come true ! Death !

20th (Saturday).—Mr. Taylor came at half-past 9. I cried nearly the whole morning, though I did my best to get things ready for the Liverpool Festival, Scores, etc. De la Pole went off at 8.15 for Paris. If only he could bring back the old man. What a comfort that would be ! P. and I had had a tremendous conversation about Jean. He would be willing to take him for three years at £300 a year.

21st (Sunday).—Telegram from Pole in the afternoon unintelligible.

22nd (Monday).—Dreadful letters from the old man. I wrote a long answer to him through Pole. Cried my heart out. Harry will take me to the Rigi, where I shall see new things, new people. 'If only I had not this fearful anxiety about his health. I know well enough my dear little old man will come to his dear good Mimi. How wonderful it seems to me that the Seven Words of Christ should have been revealed to me. "*Woman, behold thy son.*" That is how all women should look upon men ; and this feeling helps me to feel no vexation or bitterness against the old man. If he were my son I could not love him more, nor forgive him better, yet he has dragged Harry and me in the mud, fretted us to death with his ungovernable tempers, his wretched avarice, his constant grumbings, his suspicions and his inconsistencies. He will come to us—if he lives ! That is the horrible, torturing doubt ! When all else has failed him, he will return to his haven of rest and love.

23rd (Tuesday).—Letters from dear old man. Harry will take me to the Rigi Kaltbad, where I went when poor Flo* died. This is worse than death. The old man breaks my heart.

24th (Wednesday).—No letters again ; but one very consolatory one from Delacourtie. By that I do hope and trust that it is pretty clear the precious old man has not signed anything to that fool-pig Smith, and that I shall still be able to make his fortune, and have plenty to do for him. I went off straight to Mr. Taylor, after taking Harry to the Euston Square Station for Liverpool, and I do hope he will write a good letter to Delacourtie. I wrote him a regular yarn ! If I can get only one man in France to understand the monetary part of the business I am saved. I was so *thankful* for Delacourtie's letter. How it is I keep going, I know not, for I can't sleep more than three or four hours. I awake at 3 A.M., and feel quite mad. How wonderful it is I have had no headache. I got through the Hess Concert most beautifully. Sang "*Oh that we two,*" "*Ilala,*" and everything better than ever. "*Et que son nom divin soit redit d'âge en âge !*" He will always be Gounod, and nobody like him. He may not love me any more, but I will bear anything sooner than being supposed to have been his mistress for the sake of thieving him.

26th (Friday).—No letter from Paris. What can Pole be thinking of ? It makes me frantic getting no news ! Wrote eight pages more to Delacourtie, Taylor, etc. . . . I am getting more calm at last. Thank God I am not ill.

27th (Saturday).—Unsatisfactory letter from De la Pole. Note from Mme. de Beaucourt. She says his health is not in a bad state. Thank God !

28th (Sunday).—P. came and brought me a photograph of poor Aimée Desclée. I commissioned him to go and see the old man.

29th (Monday).—Letters from the poor dear old man. Wrote to him and Delacourtie. Felt very bad all day. . . . I broke down in the evening. Harry had to carry me up-stairs and send for the doctor. I hope I shall not go mad.

* My sister Florence, who died in 1868. It was on this day my husband, who writes very little, wrote him the remarkable letter (see page 184, *Les Lettres*). The English original is printed at the end of my pamphlet, *History of my Orphanage*.

It was on that day, at the idea that people were to come to my house to search, to turn over, to pull about, to look for, to take—I did not understand what, that the blood flew to my head, and that I was seized for a long time with the idea of burning everything, the house itself—EVERYTHING, sooner than let any one take away from me all that remained to me of what I loved so much. I saw that I was ruined, the scandal Gounod had brought to the affair was moral and pecuniary ruin to me! At home I knew my husband would give way under the pressure of annoyances and insults—he was naturally of a hypochondriacal disposition, and I, who had cheered him, I, who had kept up his spirits, I felt I was lost, I feared I should go mad, that I was irresponsible through grief. I could not stop crying; I thought, half maddened, of my children whom I felt no longer capable of looking at or teaching; that I felt drifting away without compass; I knew I had lost all the friends who might have helped them and me. I had sacrificed them all to HIS jealousy and HIS susceptibility, all my old helpers, all my old friends, not one remained, not a single one; that, as for HIM, he would die . . . and, to make matters worse, I was firmly convinced that he would die, away from me. . . .

One idea possessed me, the worst of all! a fatal and incurable misfortune. . . .

During these three years I had neglected all my economical habits; I had not looked after my husband who had got into the habit of spending £5 and £10 a day for his private expenditure, without giving me any account of it, he who up to that time had never spent a *single penny* without reporting to me, so that I might enter it in our account book; it was I who had kept the accounts straight—everything! And for the last three years wrapt up in an undertaking which I foresaw would bring me in thousands, where I was economising tens, I had slacked the reins as regards my husband, and had not had the time to keep either accounts, or books, nor to look after him or the housekeeping in any way.

I reflected then that our old way of living was dead and buried; that my husband had now resumed his spendthrift habits; that I had no longer the taste for economy which I had had (and which had not been natural to me); that my husband had thrown off "*my yoke*"; that my influence was at an end, and all that I had boasted of to him, to everybody, to my family especially, as that which ensured the successful establishment of my School had gone to the dogs; that I had cast bread on the waters which would never return; that it was worse, a hundred times worse, a thousand times worse than if *nothing* had ever existed. I was done for! cheated! sacrificed! . . . I saw neither compensation nor consolation! No dawn of hope! No love! No friendship! NOTHING LEFT! To struggle on! The thought had left my brain! Only—I felt determined, somehow, no one should ever believe I had kept Gounod for the sake of robbing him! No! to prevent this being believed for a single moment, I shall fight till death! And this more for my husband's sake than for my own; it was still more disgraceful for

my husband than for me; and the poor man had been so good, so patient, he had done for Gounod what he never never would have done for me; he had really *worked* for the Choir, for the Concerts, for Gounod. He was proud of it, he was proud of me, of the pupils. I had at last proved to him that success was possible; that I was capable of everything, and, now, Gounod had not been absent three weeks; ALL had not only been annihilated, but added to all the scandal which had secretly tortured, saddened, and humiliated me for more than three years, I saw the *Amen* pronounced by Gounod himself.

Horror! Horror! Horror!

As long as I live the horror of those days will never become less in my remembrance. A dark, threatening cloud overshadowed me, and since then has ever pursued me.

I lived in dread, too, of his death. I had not a single source of consolation. We both felt so nervous about his health—had it not been for that, I can assure you that, for two or three months, my husband was quite ready to go and thrash him within an inch of his life at a word from me, and he would have thoroughly revenged us both—but we really were utterly crushed, utterly demoralised by this fear, which possessed us both, of causing him any excitement. But, bear in mind, this poor old creature had hardly left us for a moment, day or night, for three years; how could we turn against him? Even now—four years have passed—I cannot accustom myself to the thought. “He is in good health! He is strong! he composes! he really can live without us.” I shut myself up to avoid his being tempted to go to concerts, etc.; I kept him as quiet as possible, and now, instead of hating going out and of having aught to do with the “hateful crew” of musical agents, musical directors, etc., all he thinks of is showing himself off in public on every possible occasion; he writes operas; he is paid what he asks. The obstacles which beset him in my day are removed; all difficulties have been smoothed down; in kicking down the ladder which helped him up (and, with such violence, that he has broken it to pieces,) he has acquired everybody’s sympathy. He has been rewarded for having behaved towards his benefactors with what was *the cruellest ingratitude*. All that I said to him in my letter of 29th June, 1874, is fulfilled to the letter.”

What was it I said to him?

“Be sure, my old man, of one thing: You will be paid for your treacherous cowardice as Soria and Nita Gaetano have been paid. You will be beset by every kind of flattery, by all species of rewards for having humiliated and deserted the woman who was devoted to you.”

I told him also that he would feel an unceasing remorse for the moral death which he had inflicted on me, and that if I did not die from the consequences of his conduct, as Bénédicte had, he would come and crave for his pardon. . . . This was four years ago! Not a word of repentance. . . . On the contrary, in another narrative, perhaps, I may relate how he pursues me ever with a black

and venomous hatred. . . . To the French edition of this book I have added as an "Appendix," the translation of a little English pamphlet which I wrote and published in English in 1876, which will prove the despairing struggle which I had carried on by his side, and in which I found myself deserted by him. This pamphlet I supply in a separate form with this present edition, and is called an Appeal for Mrs. Weldon's Orphanage. One would have thought, perhaps, that even the Press on seeing me float to the top again with my poor little ones, after the trouble which had engulfed me, would have felt some pity for me, and would have done homage to the courage of the woman who, standing quite alone, had come forward again and proved what she could do, and had done, for Art. Not a bit of it! The two Orchestral Concerts in question (at which I lost at least £250) did not earn for me the notice of a single daily paper. Neither the *Times*, nor the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily News*, *Morning Post*, *Standard*, etc.; in fact, not a single paper of importance made any mention whatever of it. And, without publicity, success cannot exist; and without success, I had *everybody* against me. I had, however, advertised the Concert everywhere in the newspapers; and had studied the Press in every way. No, I am not to be forgiven for having opened Gounod's eyes and for having enabled him to understand now, at last, how to get his compositions and services properly required. . . . My Concerts had, however, touched many hearts, (but pockets remained closed!) I received many charming letters, one of which, as it is short, I will here transcribe, received from some unknown person, dictated by a kindly French heart. It afforded me a momentary consolation for the deceptions and disappointments which I had otherwise experienced.

I thank him for it.

"Madame,—On leaving London, I carry away of its splendours and of its miseries a sorrowful impression which disabuses me on the score of the great British Nation; all consists of form here, but of heart there is none, except from a feeling of great ostentation, but what I carry away from here is the remembrance of a beautiful, noble, and sympathetic figure, which stands out in bright contrast on the gloomy background of old England; that of an angel of devotion and self-sacrifice for those poor cherubs whom she picks out from the black and lugubrious depths of the proud clay-footed city wherewith to create the voices of the future. If you should know her, madam, whisper to her that I admire her also in her soft, soothing strains, thrilling and sweet as the dew of heaven, which she pours forth in pearly notes.

"On returning to Paris my feeble voice will sing her praises and I shall ever be one of her most faithful admirers.

"LONDON, 23rd June, 1876."

"DE LA VIEUVILLE.

It may perhaps be a very poor man who may have written this, but I felt as if he must have known the miseries of this life, and that he blest me for what *I endeavour to do*. He spoke, too, of the *voices of the future*, my weak point. Now tell me truly which of us two—M. Gounod or I—was most excusable when it entered our brains to burn the manuscript of *Polyeucte*? You will say, perhaps, that *Polyeucte* belonged to M. Gounod, and that he had the right to do as he pleased with what belonged to him—but he could re-write it, which is in fact what he has done.

This is where I did wrong, this is where I was to blame; I felt too much sorrow about it. I ought never to have sent him back a single thing, not a rag! I ought to have published everything—all the music I had in my possession—and defy him to touch us, defy him to prosecute us! but when I am reproached for not having acted so, I can only reply: "The very last thought I had was to injure him or to cause him annoyance. I felt only grief, coupled with the determination to make the truth well known that I had kept nothing." I was foolish. . . . I very well see that no one forgives you for having been hoodwinked! (*Le dindon de la farce.*)

Extracts from Journal.

30th, Thursday.—Taylor came. He is so shocked at their having sent to Gavard. I had a nasty headache. *Oh! le voir! Entendre le bruit de ses pas!*

1st July, 1874, Wednesday.—Letter from the old man, with one to Gavard, to tell him not to take any notice of message. So weak I am, and so good for nothing. Looked over and found many important papers *Smith*, to my great delight.

2nd, Thursday.—Got a letter of nineteen pages from the old man, one about poor Q—, who is condemned to four years' imprisonment. Wrote a few words about Q— to the old man. Could not write. Saw Mr. Taylor to-day. I do hope it will be settled as we want, and Delacourtie agree to our keeping the copyrights. Getting rid of *Smith*, etc., etc.

3rd, Friday.—Did not cry hardly once to-day.

4th, Saturday.—Letter from old man. He seems to think no one is to be pitied but him! so wrote him and Delacourtie a few lines.

5th, Sunday.—Did as much as I could. Dan is getting so infirm, and panted so, we gave him a hot bath. I feel anxious at leaving him and Whid here.

6th, Monday.—Mr. Taylor came with documents from Delacourtie through Moreau. Now the old man has found out he wants his MSS., etc., before he makes any agreement. So he will not have them, that's all I can say! How awful this is, and oh! how will it all end? And shall I keep my poor head? So many children depending on me!

7th, Tuesday.—How I am dreading the crossing, though if I could die of it I should not be sorry. Give up *Drawing-Room Gazette* and papers. Have no more "go" in me. I am wrecked. H. C. brought pianoforte setting of "*Star in the East.*" I did nothing but cry.

8th, Wednesday.—Toiled all day packing, so was too tired to go in the evening. Luckily so, for I got a very darling letter from my dear old man.* Harry had written to him; so now we shall behold him on Friday about 5 p.m., I hope, I pray. It cannot have been true. It's like a dreadful dream.

9th, Thursday.—Saw Mr. Taylor. He wants us to go without him, and he will follow to-morrow evening. Wrote to dear old man.

10th, Friday.—Arrived in Paris. Victoire came at 3. Expecting Gounod and Delacourtie. Note from Delacourtie saying Gounod was ill, which of course I do not believe. Sent off Victoire to find out how the land lay. Wrote to old man and Delacourtie.

11th, Saturday.—Mr. Taylor arrived last night at half-past twelve. He went to Delacourtie in the morning, who had hardly time to speak to him. They want the MS., which they shall not have before they sign any agreement. Of course they want to cheat us! Just like Frenchmen, but I am up to them at last. I expected Victoire all the morning, but it's now half-past two, and she is not here. What a dreadful life of anxiety and heart-crushing. *Tutto menzogna tradimento, inganno!* . . . Victoire came. Had not seen the old man. I had a faint hope to the last that I might see him, that he would come and see poor Mimi. But no! silence of death! and yet Victoire found out from the servants he was all right. Delacourtie refuses to do anything without the MSS. in hand,

* It was the last one. Page 229, *The Letters*.

so nothing was done, and *Polyeucte* shall be thrown into the sea before it is given up. How lucky I was to get it out of the house. Left Paris feeling broken, broken-hearted! It is too, too hard to believe.

12th, Sunday.—I was so achy and tired. Heart-sick! If only I could lose my brains altogether!

13th, Monday.—At Rigi Kaltbad got a letter from the poor old man.

14th, Tuesday.—I sobbed myself to sleep. (And in French)—I hold my little crucifix between my hands so tight, praying to God to give me back my poor old man, and to save *Polyeucte*. It is too hard. It is like an eternal nightmare.

It is true; I was haunted by a perpetual nightmare. For nearly four months, the new faith by which my courage had been somewhat restored, thanks to the exhortations of my new friend, the old Spiritualist (see *Epilogue of 2nd volume*), M. de Veh, were not sufficient for me! I felt utterly crushed; I dreaded being forced to give up the children. I felt as the poor mother-kangaroo, pursued by the hunters, must feel, obliged to save herself by throwing her little ones out of her pouch, one by one. I made insane plans for suffocating myself with them all—in fact, it is impossible to relate all the vagaries which my brain in its despair conceived, which it repeated to itself, and about which, however, I had the cunning to be silent. . . .

What brought me most to my senses again was the feeling I could no longer control the muscles of my face, and that I felt them drawn up to the left. I feared paralysis. My face contracted itself on the left side. I made hideous grimaces; I was frightful when this happened. "Good heavens!" I said to myself, "if I were to become ugly, they would say that Mme. Gounod was right—that I was horribly ugly; but that he thought me beautiful because I had bewitched him." . . . I am really rather comforted to find that, at my age (40 years old), I am still extraordinarily young-looking, and that I am taken for not more than twenty-five. People say too, "But what can Gounod be thinking of?" "And then your way of singing!—your voice! Admirable!—sublime!" . . .

Ambroise Thomas had said to me in Paris in 1871, "Madame, you have come to purify our French style!"

Liszt, on hearing me sing, had walked across the room to look at my book of *Biondina*, and had said to me, "I beg your pardon, madame, I thought you were improvising!"

The fact is, I sing so naturally, it is more like singing than speaking, and appears to be quite spontaneous! But, in reality, what work!—what hard work!—what art! "AND ALL THIS IN VAIN!" I would say to myself. "*Gounod has ruined me! Ruined! He has ruined everything!—ruined beyond redemption!*" . . .

And my poor husband, as sorrowful as sods; I, I had not a smile left for him! . . . We were both wretched! . . .

To continue the details of this season of terrible trial is useless. Gounod (page 262, *The Letters*) said that he left it to time to award to each of us our share of *Justice, Faith, and Disinterestedness*. I do not know how he purposes to set about this for himself, but up to the present time (March, 1878), he has explained nothing, and has pub-

lished nothing. He continues to give out that I have plundered him—that he has to begin life over again, and to work hard to repair the unheard-of injury I have inflicted on him.

He has thoroughly succeeded in destroying all *my* three years' work in England. The royalties barely bring in £200 a-year.

I have *absolutely everything* against me. I gave, in 1876-77, forty-four concerts in London, with the help of excellent artists, and with you, my poor little children, who were all, one more astonishing than the other. Not a single newspaper noticed them.

A friend of M. Gounod's has robbed me of £1000, another of £160, and so on.

I am persecuted, hounded down,—ridicule and lies pursue me everywhere. I feel I am contending with, or struggling against some queer, sinister, mysterious combination, which is plotting against me. I wish to keep you, my children, in spite of all. So much fuss and enthusiasm is usually displayed towards one single forsaken child, the person who takes pity on it and adopts it is lauded to the skies. . . . Now, I have many poor children, and since many years I have done a great deal for children. . . .

Oh, mystery! this is almost looked upon as a crime on my part, and, excepting those who actually live with me in my house, I believe I am regarded for doing so almost as a kind of criminal.

Gounod has shown himself off, and gone about everywhere, instead of shutting himself up as a "*Benedictine monk*," and becoming "*the old nurse of his child*." He has been constantly before the public; he has been everywhere; he has been applauded everywhere. *Mireille* and *Jeanne Darc* have been performed since his return; *Polyeucte* will soon come out at the "*Grand Opéra*" (*the opera which an eccentric English-woman had robbed him of*. Poor, dear, illustrious Gounod!) while I have remained at home teaching you, my poor children, from morning till night.

When I gave concerts on our behalf, the whole press arrayed itself against me. The money with which I might, perhaps, have defended myself, has been swindled from me by friends of M. Gounod, under false promises of help for my Orphanage. I have, as I have already told you, *had* all, and I *have* ALL against me! . . .

Gounod never attacks me *in writing* openly. He never writes my actual *name*. He has not the courage of his infamous libels! They are dressed up in legendary and mysterious sentences. The following is an example in Gounod's own English—

26th October, 1874.—My dear Ex-Sheep. There are who had said "Let us swallow him *alive*, like the Hell, and *whole* as a falling down into a lake!"

Whether this is the right English *saying* of the Bible, I don't know: but such is the *sense* of the 12th verse in the first chapter of Proverbs.

And there is ONE, who said

"I shall take you away from the affliction!" (Exodus iii. 17.)

"I am the Lord thy God, who hath taken thee away from the land of Egypt and from the house of servitude!" (Exodus xx. 2.)

The same to be found all through Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. "I have taken you away from the Land of Egypt." (Judges ii. 1.)

"Thou shalt take me away from this snare." Psalms (xxx. 5.)*

I stop here, for I ought to quote the whole Scripture as full as it is of such promises and oaths.

I did not know, but I do now, what God is powerful and Almighty to do for her and in her.

I do not suppose you shall see me again on your side of the sea.

But as there is no sea between true friends, nor distance whatever in the real Love, I hope you shall still think of and pray for me, as I promise you I shall do for you.—Ever yours in the eternal truth, CH. GOUNOD.

P.S.—I am very much surprised you have not heard about Mrs. W. or her plans, which I don't know what they are :—and I do not understand that you have met with nobody at T. H. when you went there, as I was told Mr. W. was there. . . .

His correspondent was a lady member of the Choir.

Here is another in the same style (also his own English)—

6th September, 1874.—My dear . . . I just find in my set of papers a letter of yours which I received in Paris about two months ago, and which I was, at that time, entirely unable to answer. It is not that I am much better now than then : nevertheless, I will not let you believe that I am indifferent to your remembrance.

I wish to your works the *Divine Light*, and to yourself more happiness than I had in Life : work for the *Eternal Truth and Beauty* ! There is no Love from the *World*. The world is blindness and deafness and deceit and sorrow and death. Oh ! says David, "when shall I appear before Thy face? . . . I shall be satisfied when Thy glory will appear !" —Look at "*His face*" my dear friend—I don't know how longer I must walk with my poor health and sorrows of every kind. Remember sometimes your old friend ; Art is a *chain* of which everyone of us must be a *ring* : let us keep the *Light* lit in the artistic darkness.—Yours always, CH. GOUNOD.

This letter was written to a young musician whom he scarcely knew. So it is very clear that since, besides the indecent, infamous, disgusting newspaper articles, Gounod amuses himself by writing such letters since he has left us whenever he has the least opportunity of so doing, it is no wonder that I should be treated as I am.—Everybody is not loyal enough to bring me his letters, and what can I do with them when I have them. I am a married woman, practically an outlaw, I cannot proceed against him for defamation of character, and, besides, he takes good care not to set foot in England. I do not despair of seeing him back again in England when seven years have passed. He would be so well paid for the way he has behaved to me !

Now do you not think I have been tormented enough? Do you not think I have suffered sufficiently, that my life has been sufficiently crushed, my heart broken, my reputation tarnished—that it enrages me to hear people say : "If you had kept quiet you would have gone back into your society, you would have dropped your children and forgotten Gounod ; you have still before you at least fifteen years of beauty, of charms, of grace, and everybody would be enchanted to see you again, and would receive you with open arms"?

* I find no line in Psalm xxx. which means this. I fancy Gounod meant Psalm xci. 3.

Why was *my* School to be considered an Utopia, *my* Orphanage as the only one which could not hope to succeed? I had worked for five years with a fixed idea; because HE whom I thought a messenger from Heaven to help me in this undertaking had deserted me, was I to abandon it?

"Yes (my old friend Benedict wrote me) I would—in your place—return to old England, forget *Utopias*, which, though very promising and enticing on *paper*, are not *practicable* in this material and matter of fact world. You have now an independent position, and coming back to your comfortable home, you could make Tavistock House a real Temple of Art, for poets, painters, and musicians, of which you would be the presiding Genius. Life is too short to be frittered away in hopeless battles against prejudices and conventional laws; you are too sensible to sacrifice your present and future happiness to an abstract idea of duty—*self-imposed*—and therefore *not binding*."

Because HE had deserted the flag, and had left it with me, surrounded by foes; I was to desert also!—Well, it is true, at first, I no longer saw clear ahead. My strength felt gone, my life felt spent, I was utterly prostrated with hopeless despair. I gazed on the beautiful still waters of the lake of Lucerne, and thought how peacefully one would sleep beneath them, I looked out of my window and calculated that once fallen from thence on the earth under my feet, I should soon find calm, rest, silence, forgetfulness!

It was then I met the Spiritualist gentleman at the Righi, M. de Veh (*see 139, Business*), and I got the better of the regrets which had filled me when I wrote to M. Delacourtie *on the 28th July, 1879*.

That, by renouncing my own career, by enduring ignominious treatment and the fatigues of hard work, by sacrificing myself to Gounod I did so under the foolish and arrogant belief that God had chosen him and had sent him to me for the purpose of helping me in my educational plans, which, long before I knew him, owed their origin to my feeling that a new generation must be taught to understand and sing this new music.

I no longer thought this belief an arrogant or foolish one. The wonderful signs which had haunted me *on the evening of the 27th May*, when I left Gounod at Blackheath, returned to my mind. I remembered the vision of Light and all the comforting words which had astonished and dazzled my Being—the vision of the funeral pall, of the border of light, and I understood then that God had verily permitted me to receive the outward, visible sign of an inward spiritual Grace, that my guardian angels had given me outward and visible signs that they were near me to guard me and protect me, for some unknown purpose of which I could in no way foretell the end. I felt, indeed, that a mission had been marked out for me by them—let it be what it might—I was to keep up my faith and courage, I was to persevere in the path which they had traced for me.

Here am I in the Pensionnat, with the Hospitable Sisters of St. Thomas de Villeneuve at Gisors; where I still hope to translate *Musical Reform* in French, and, after that, to translate all my books and the Gounod letters in English.

Gounod's letters speak for themselves. Mine to Mr. Delacourtie

and Madame de Beaucourt accurately describe my feelings towards that dear and unhappy nature which, had I consulted *my own personal* interest also, instead of only looking to that of my *school* and of my *children*, would have saved me and my husband from a misfortune which seems, for the moment, to have caused irreparable mischief—a complete separation; and converted the splendid scaffolding so painfully erected with love, tears, hope, discouragement and energy, grief and confidence, into ruins which are nothing but—dust—perhaps!

At all events, if I am to be born again with you, my poor children, it must be, like the Phoenix, from our ashes.

This is the faithful history of the FRIENDSHIP, such as it existed between me, my husband, and Gounod; and yet one day, three months after he had left us, Gounod sent his lawyer to ask me for

MY BILL!

GEORGINA WELDON.

April, 1878. Gisora.

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NOTE ON DESBAROLLES.

(Page 52, FRIENDSHIP.)

PALMISTRY is rather fashionable at present, so I think it will interest my readers to know how extraordinary well DESBAROLLES, who has written large works on the subject, explained the lines in my hands. Gounod had always wished me very much to have my hand told by Desbarolles and I had been intending for years to go. When staying for a few days in Paris with a friend (last year, 1881) I made up my mind to go and ask Desbarolles what he had to say about the lines of my hands. I got my friend to write; Desbarolles made an appointment for the following day and we both went together.

The Baronne de M—— (my friend) sent in her card, and *Desbarolles*, when he received us, seemed to take it for granted I was the Baroness. He looked keenly at me and bade me sit down in a chair opposite his. He took my left hand and began by informing me I was very fond of flowers. This is true, for I am very fond of plants—not of bouquets or cut flowers. He then said I was fond of colour, painting, drawing, and it is true, as he said, I have more love for drawing than music (and, I feel sure, more innate talent), but I have not cultivated drawing as I have music. Had I read *Ruskin's Elementary Drawing* before I was married I am sure I should have become a great painter. After that, Desbarolles said I was “made to love and must be much loved.” Well! I suppose that is true, but, as I dislike the subject, I did not feel pleased at love being brought on to the *tapis* for an old thing like me. He then made matters worse by informing me I was not “greedy” for love, but “dainty” in love, meaning (according to French ideas) that I was not a gay woman, but that I was choice in my tastes. This was more than I could stand and I said, “How old do you think I am?” upon which Desbarolles had another good stare at me and said, “Twenty-six;” upon which I burst out laughing and said, “Try again!” So he gravely told me to push my hair off my forehead; gave another good stare and said, “Twenty-eight,” adding, “You are strong—very strong in Causality and Comparison.” Mme. de M—— would not let me tell him my age, so he continued, happy in the belief I was twenty-eight, with all my life *before* me instead of *behind* me! He said I should be long-lived, and asked if my family were long-lived. He said I was a person who either made up her mind at once or was very vacillating. That I was strong in logic and weak in will. (All most true, alas!) He said I was vivacious and impatient, but had immense resignation. Great disposition for medicine, for nursing others, a good sick nurse, fond of being coddled and coddling myself, critical mind, love of home, and management of house. Most splendid lines of intellect (upon which Mme. M—— interrupted him,

and asked him if he could detect any signs of madness). He evidently thought something must be the matter, searched in both palms for a long time, and then said he could discover no sign of anything of the kind, and that I must be a woman with a tremendously strong brain. That I had had, or should have difficult confinements, and should be sterile ; whereupon I told him, "Well, I must tell you how old I am—I am nearly forty-five," whereat he seemed much taken aback, took more good stares, and tried all he could to discover any signs of age ; declared it was marvellous, and that he could detect none. He continued that there was something queer about my husband—was he ill ? *Something* was the matter with him ; that I should lose him ; that I have a strong imagination ; that I am economical, not wasteful ; that I like to travel, or had travelled a good deal ; that I had had a good many adventures ; that I had memory of faces, facility for languages, very clever needlewoman ; that I work like a fairy (a favourite expression of Gounod for me) ; love of music, of what is comfortable—a born artist—fatally frank (and he shook his head regretfully), though no one could be cleverer than me for finding a pretext for a story (I think this is true) ; not shy (but I *am* very shy) ; proud, impressionable, nervous in the extreme—a sensitive plant ; that I might develop into a somnambulist (but this I do not believe) ; that I had lost near relations, from a sudden accident, in my infancy (now I had not had any that I knew of), neither at 13 nor 16 years old (as he said I had), but I recollected, after I had left him, that an uncle and aunt of mine had been lost in a small boat in the Lake of Grave, in the Pyrenees, before I was born, and that their deaths had made a deep impression upon me from my tenderest infancy, all through my life, so much so that I have always refused to go boating.

That I was estranged from my family when I was 23 (quite true, through my marriage) ; a great struggle at 33 or 34, then a separation ; deadly loss of a friend at 36 or 37 (that is when I lost Gounod) ; lawsuits, difficulties about affairs at 38 (quite true) ; illness (breaking my foot), grave troubles (plenty of them). He said I should have illnesses at 50, 55, and 60. Lumbago, great pain in my loins (which I have had already), but, after that, long and healthy life.

I made a love match (true). From 17 to 19 a great fatality, in my life (quite true). Great deal of luck till 24 (quite true, but I did not know how to profit by it). A great change at 34—strong affection for some one ; it may yet become a marriage. He is an artist ; a very distinguished person ; marriage certain, to endure through ages. (This I construe as my worship for Gounod and our artistic union, which must endure through ages.)

Fortune has followed in my wake since 23 years old. I had been preserved from harm and wrong by the beloved one (I do not quite understand what that may mean). He said I had grand opportunities (this quite true, but I let everything slip through my want of

self-love). My star is a bright one. My celebrity began at 34. Talent for music ; more for painting. My personal merit contributes to my fortune. He told me many things about my health—some right, some wrong, I fancy. When he appears to repeat himself, it is because he finds the corresponding signs in both hands as he examines each separately.

After he had told me a deal more about a person I was much interested in, and of whom I had brought the photographs of the palms of the hands to ask him for his opinion of, I said to him, "Now Mr. Desbarolles, if you will look at your chimney-piece, you will see the portrait of the distinguished person you have so accurately described, and the cause of all the troubles you have read, in my hand—of my ruin, in fact ! I am Mrs. Georgina Weldon !" (For there, in a smart frame, was Gounod's photograph flaring away with the inscription, "*To my friend, Ad. Desbarolles—CH. GOUNOD.*") Desbarolles bit his lip, coloured, looked very much vexed (as no doubt he was) and both I and my friend, Mme. de M——, felt certain that he would not have told me anything at all if he could have imagined who I was, and who the author of all my troubles was. He persisted, however, I must inevitably marry that person, and that I must have known him many years. This appears a very ridiculous idea, seeing we are both married ; but Gounod always said he felt "*Dieu nous tient inséparablement par la main !*" (*God hath linked our hands inseparably together*) ; and I think there must be something spiritual which unites us in spite of all. I feel certain there is *something* between us ; too many mediums have seen his mother near me. She has communicated with me through several. My mother-in-law, I am convinced, is my other guardian spirit. Desbarolles said a great deal more, especially about the friend I wished to know about, and most marvelously and accurately he described that person, morally and physically, in almost *every* detail. I should like persons who are so wonderfully clever and incredulous to account in any way they may suggest, for the few curious psychological facts I have simply and truly recorded in these volumes.

I may add that several other "palmists" have "told" my hands, and they have told me very much the same as what Desbarolles told me ; besides other things, one of them which struck me most being the statement that I had been most miraculously preserved from great dangers (this being perfectly true). I have five large squares in my right hand, each square representing a preservation from danger, and I do not understand how it was Desbarolles said nothing about this. You pay him 20 francs a visit, and the time soon passes away.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

TO THE

VOLUME OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS, LETTERS, ETC.

By M. CH. GOUNOD, MR. and MRS. WELDON, *etc., etc.*

1. *Eucharistie* (Bossuet).

2. A kind of power-of-attorney given by M. Gounod to Mr. Weldon, which has never been changed or revoked in any way.

3. This is what he always said about London; he said he did not like Paris life; that it was impossible for him to work there; and that in London we preserved him from all interruption.

4. This was a gold pen I had given him.

5. "*On*" (*Somebody*) means Madame Gounod. My mother had told me that Madame Gounod had said she had left England because of me. She denied having said so to her husband; but I believe she did so.

6. Why did he not then go to the French Embassy to ask them to claim from us his cloth waistcoats? He did not know so well then, and he might have had some excuse for suspecting that we might retain his things, especially if it is a French custom.

7. Twenty guineas which had been paid me for singing at the Royal Albert Hall.

8. The "*blind man*" is Father Rawlings, of whom I speak in the volume "*BUSINESS*," pp. 46, 79, and 143; and "*MUSICAL REFORM*," pp. 15, 23, 52, and 189. He was a street beggar who played an accordion. He had two boys who sang in the street with him. They played and sang in true "street" beggar style. The voice of one of them struck me. It was Alfred's. I kept them myself in spite of all my misfortunes, and the narrow state to which my finances were reduced, from the month of July, 1875, till the month of September, 1877. Since the month of June, 1871, till 1872, they were partially helped by Mr. Weldon and myself. Since then we kept the whole family—eight in number. I have taught them all I could. After I had been obliged to turn Alfred out of the house for his insolence, by the police—Alfred, who I had nursed as my own child through a very serious illness, I bought them a peal of hand bells, and continued, as far as my means enabled me, to keep them in all they wanted (out of the house). A fresh agreement was "settled" by a barrister, which embodied the one made by me (see page 5 of my

"*Hints on Pronunciation*"), and which stipulated that a certain part of their earnings should be paid to me for the benefit of the Orphanage, during ten years. The one signed by Mr. Weldon had, owing to Gounod's conduct, fallen through. No sooner had they begun to earn money, than an agent of the Gounod *clique* (Mr. Jules Rey) got hold of them, and turned them against me. He found them the money and a solicitor, which enabled them to elude our contract;—and so again behold me "done brown," cheated, and disappointed in my hopes of being helped to earn the wherewithal to keep a greater number of orphans. Speaking of these Rawlings, it gives me the opportunity of saying how right one would often be if one listened to the warnings of *clairvoyants*. I had a purse stolen from me in 1876 in my house. I wished very much to know who had taken it. I therefore went to a person who was acquainted with many mediums, and asked her if she could recommend a *clairvoyante* to me. I carefully abstained from telling her why I wanted one. She told me she did not know of any *clairvoyante*, but knew a person who, in his normal state, told everybody everything they wanted to know. I said that would suit me very well, and I bargained with her that she was neither to let him know my name or my address. She very good-naturedly sent her daughter to fetch him, and when he came we engaged for some time in ordinary conversation. This was Mr. Towns, well known to Spiritualists, and whose address can always be obtained at the office of the *Medium* (James Burns), 15 Southampton Row, London. As soon as he had made himself at home, he said he did not see things in connection with me so clearly or so distinctly as he did with a friend of mine, who was in the room. To her he said several extraordinary things—all perfectly true. He then said he saw especially about me a lady who appeared to be very familiar with me and the house. He said she seemed to be very fond of me, and to have a great amount of esteem for me. He described a tall person, about sixty years old, with grey hair, her hair dressed in a peculiar way, her faced covered up in a great deal of cotton-wool, as she suffered from toothache; pale complexion, squinting eyes, a large hook-nose, and a kind of silk-handkerchief bound round her head. I felt much astonished; for, from the description he was giving, and which he gave with much more detail than I am doing, I could not help recognising my mother-in-law, who had died in 1875. I had never cared about her at all. She was very Puritanical and narrow-minded, and I am just the very reverse. Although I used to work hard all the week, she would not allow me to cut out monograms on a Sunday. She did not belong to my "society," and she bored me. With my then lamb-like disposition, I used to bear the infliction without kicking—but, oh! how great was my satisfaction when in 1862 she picked a quarrel with me (incited by her sister, who was desperately jealous of me, because her children adored me), and that she afforded me the excuse for not going near her! That my mother-in-law, on whom I had never be-

stowed a thought, should, now that she was in the spirit, come back to earth and haunt me, astonished me immensely—she was the very last person I would have thought of. . . . What could she want to say to me? “I seem to understand,” says Mr. Towns, “that she wishes you to know she regrets very much the quarrel she picked with you; that although, in this body, she would sooner have died than confess it, she wishes you now to know that she acknowledges she was to blame, and that she has for a long time been watching for an opportunity to let you know this.” Although a very good Spiritualist, I am rather hard of belief, and I did not feel quite convinced. So I asked if she would let me know what the quarrel was about. “She signifies to me,” said Mr. Towns, “that you must know her well enough to feel that she does not like to give any particulars, but she has just pulled some letters and envelopes out of her pocket; she holds them in her left hand, and points to them, signifying that you must know what she means, since it was about letters that the only dispute which ever took place between you arose.”

This was conclusive. My mother-in-law's character was depicted in each word. I assured her, through Mr. Towns, I owed her no grudge whatever, and that I had never thought about it. He told me she seemed pleased, and remained close to me, watching anxiously over me. He told me many other curious things, but I will only now revert to what he said about the Rawlings.

“You have sent for me, I see, on a matter of comparatively little importance. I will speak of that later. I see about you numberless people who seek to do you harm. You are surrounded by them. They are close to you. How extraordinary! Everybody seeks to injure you. You must beware!”—“Of whom?” inquired I, rather laughingly. Of course, I knew Gounod, the publishers, the newspapers, were all trying to ruin me; but I feared nothing in my own country, in my own house! What could harm me?—“The people are very numerous, I see them everywhere,” said Mr. Towns; “but see especially a whole family near you, in the house, out of the house, for whom you have been too good; they have never done their duty towards you; they have done you more harm than you can possibly imagine. They will do you much more! They will always for ever injure you. Get rid of them altogether; never let them get near you again—never have anything to do with them. Oh! how wicked they are! Oh! how ungrateful they are! How they have robbed you!” Mr. Towns seemed actually to suffer at what he saw of this family.—“But who?” I cried, “who can it be?” Said I, “I know no such family—nothing like them: everybody about me is very good and faithful.”—“But I see them as plain as I see you!” he insisted. I then described Gounod. “No, no,” he said, “it is not that man; he is not here. I see water between him and you; he does you a great deal of harm; do not let him darken your doors again; but it is not he—it is the others. They are close to you, they touch you,

they are in the house!"—"But no," I tell you, said I, "I know no one in the house who would hurt me—try to tell me who they are—describe them to me?"—"There are others beside them in the house who will harm you if you do not get rid of them; but this family you will easily recognise; the eldest is a young man, with one heavy, thick black eyebrow right across the forehead. I see a younger brother—an uglier one; there's another younger again—uglier still—there are more besides. You know them, don't you? You must know them? I see them too well!"—I could not prevent myself from recognising the Rawlings; and, although I did not believe what he said, thinking he was seized with a general mania for seeing that every one about me wished to do me harm, it was owing to this singular warning I took the precaution of getting a legal agreement drawn up by a legal friend, which I thought would protect me. The most extraordinary part of this history is, that Charles Rawlings, the eldest son, had eyebrows which completely met, and which were thicker on the middle of his nose than elsewhere. He had, moreover, small, stupid, cunning eyes, which gave him a very unprepossessing appearance. . . . One of my friends had said to me one day, "I won't come to see you any more, if you do not make that horrible boy pull out his eyebrows!"—"But how am I to do so?" said I, taken aback at the notion. . . . "He must pull them out himself," she replied; "I once had a ladies' maid who had one eyebrow. I could not bear the sight of it, so I told her I really should not be able to keep her unless she pulled out the hair on the middle of her nose and forehead, and she did as I bid her. Your boy is not really safe to look at!" So, then, I told Charles Rawlings to pull out this "*bush*" he had over his nose, he did so; and when Mr. Towns saw me then, and spoke to me for the first time, nearly two years had passed since Charles Rawlings' eyebrows had become two eyebrows, for he had regularly pulled the hair out. Mr. Towns lived very far from Tavistock House; he neither knew me or the boys, or the house, and he was not a professional medium. Here, then, is a real authentic story, and one of the most remarkable I have ever heard tell of lucid *clairvoyance*; correct in every little detail, and which has been fully realised. Very shortly after this occurred, I found out that, with the object of glorifying themselves, they had been in the habit of running me down, and gave every one they spoke to the impression that I had taken them away from a position of affluence and of comfort for the purpose of making them my miserable slaves and tools.* The correspondence which ensued between

* I was told by an old and valued servant in 1882, that having come up from Holyhead in 1874, just at the time I was prostrated, and frenzied with grief and despair at Gounod's cruel conduct towards us, she had left Tavistock House the next day, so indignant and disgusted was she at the abominable way these young gentlemen had spoken of me, she knowing what was their origin, my kindness to them and to everybody. Yet knowing they were poor boys, with a blind

us, fortunately for me (while Mr. Jules Rey, an agent of M. Gounod, was absent) would abundantly prove (if required) their abominable disposition. This Mr. Jules Rey—under the assumed name of Gardiner, attacking me and my orphans *anonymously*, according to the custom of the Gounod “crew”—would have advised them to act more artfully towards me, and had he not been absent from London at that time, they would have been prevented from writing anything. Mr. Rey immediately put the affair for them into his solicitors’ hands. These Rawlings were extremely jealous of all the other children (orphans); they did not scruple to say before my servants and my eldest orphan girl Rosie, that “the best thing to do with me and my dirty brats would be to put some lighted matches in the firewood-cupboard, and burn Mrs. Weldon and all the children.” People may, perhaps think that such conduct, coming from a family I had done so much good to for nearly seven years, would have caused me much grief. No; after Gounod and his behaviour—Gounod, for whom I had risked my name, my reputation—to whom I had sacrificed *everything*, and who on deserting me did everything he could to ruin me, to drag me in the mud, I feel no more grief for anything! Nothing can touch me! No, *nothing* can ever equal Gounod’s infamy. . . .

9. Morainville was his “*refuge*” before knowing us, when his wife became too insupportable.

10. “*Odious*” was one of the names he gave his wife when speaking of her.

11. See No. 2 *Note*, page 7.

12. Remark in almost each letter repetitions of calculations as to the hour at which a letter was posted and that of its arrival. In that of the 14th August nearly a page of handwriting; at the end, again, four lines on the subject. Thirteen lines in the next; four in the one of the 21st August; seven in the one of the 22nd; eight lines, page 30. Three or five lines, page 33; ten lines, page 37; three lines, page 38; three lines, page 39; eighteen, page 40; thirteen, 41; four, 42; three, 43; seven, 44; eight, 46; eleven, 48; five, 49; five, 52; twelve, 53; ten, 54; four, 58; two, 60; eight, 62; three, 64; eight, 65. This mania was repeated each time he received letters, and was often the subject of an hour’s “arguefication.”

13. It appears to me M. Gounod did not at all require me to give him any advice or hints to enable to understand how he was situated with Choudens. Many other passages denote his ardour to make the highest terms possible, to keep accounts, etc.

14. “*Spirits*.”—The explanation is printed and begins page 132, BUSINESS.

15. “*Cerberus*” was a name we had given ourselves. We were his faithful guardians; we did not care how much we were hated so

father and mother, she had not liked to say a word which might injure them! Had she done so, what trouble and anxiety should I have been spared. But . . . , IT WAS TO BE.—G. W.

long as Gounod was saved from the importunity of visitors, and that he remained quiet, and able to compose in peace.

16. This was a "feeler" to see whether we would buy it. At that time he asked 100,000 francs for POLYEUCTE, because I had told him my friend Mr. Frederic Clay said he ought to get £4000 for his operas.

17. "*Everybody*" here means his wife. Madame Gounod, so he said, from the moment he admired anything or anybody, was always of a contrary opinion, and would say *Everybody* was of her opinion.

18. Attention to business.

19. *Parsons* is the name of the artist who has taken a great many photographs of me. Gounod said his wife had stolen the photographs of Bénédictte Savoye and of several women he was very fond of, and that he had never been able to find them again.

20. He was always complaining of his bad luck. This was the principal reason of our helping him so much. We pitied him so.

21. He seemed possessed with the desire of making me as fidgetty and fussy as himself. He would torment me to death about nothing at all.

22. See *Note 8* of this series.

23. "Mittie," one of my little pugs of whom I speak, page 15, and in many other places in "*FRIENDSHIP*."

24. Gounod, therefore, was aware on all sides of the scandal to which I exposed myself, and yet encouraged me to defy public opinion—till death! Certainly I did not much mind it as long as he supported and helped me. Not only we did no harm, but I considered I was sacrificing myself to the grandeur of our cause. Was not it ignoble of him—he, understanding so much better than we did the irreparable injury he was inflicting on me—not to have advised me to act more prudently, less openly, and to mind my P's and Q's?—and then to cruelly desert me!

25. An idea of my husband's to get Gounod to compose a full Protestant service.

26. He told me Choudens had nearly all his manuscripts, and that he could not get them away from him. He only got them back four or five years later.

27. He was quite inclined to let any one else pay for the engraving of his works, but never wished to put his hand in his pocket to pay for anything himself.

28. Gounod knew the trial could not take place without him, and yet he so dreaded his wife, he could not even feel himself sincere, he wished so to return to England and leave her. He hinted to me to make excuses which would oblige him to come. So it was not ME, as he now pretends, who persuaded him to leave "*his dear wife and darling children*." He wanted to manoeuvre so as to make it appear it came from me, and not from him, but I was not caught, although I did not see through his little game.

29. It is quite evident that although quite right, he understood very well how to get me to work for the good of his compositions, and I succeeded perfectly.

30. *Old Cat* or *Keat*, a name I gave my husband. Gradually Gounod called himself by all the pet names I gave my husband, and even my dogs! *Châton* is an almost literal translation of "*old cat*." He had surnamed me *Raton* (rat) because of the energy with which I worked; I had compared him to the lion in the fable, and me to the rat who delivered him.

31. This was Tinsley the publisher, who had paid me £3 for an article I had written on *Pronunciation*.

32. One of my pupils, who was supposed to have neither voice nor ear, a very nice boy, Andrew Vacani, established now with his father, 95 Holborn. Curiosity Shop.

33. Another excuse! he was planning to be able to remain at Tavistock House. Was it I who was putting it into his head?

34. "The throne of *Perk*" is an expression invented by our friend Mr. Frederick Warre—signifying the innocent feelings of triumph of him or her who sits thereon. The Daddy is Benedict, who had returned from Berlin, where one of his operas had been played with great success.

35. *Brooks* is a name given to David Copperfield. Dickens lived at Tavistock for twelve years, and we found *Brooks*, May 28, 1839, cut with a knife on one of the trees in the garden. We suppose Dickens himself may have cut it!

36. He was itching to accept these concerts at Albert Hall, and to be able to look forward every year to a month or two without his wife. Of course, I took great care to prevent his writing, or appearing anxious about it. Dear me! How inconsistent he was!

37. The *usual agreement* refers to the one printed, page 58, BUSINESS.

38. Had we guaranteed him a certain sum he would have jumped at it (as he did later) to accept all we risked for him.

39. And later, in his letter to me of 10th June, 1874, he expresses himself as if he were accusing me of having turned him into a tradesman. See also pages 182, 183, 220 of THE LETTERS.

40. I am very particular as to what words I use in singing. In all the verses Gounod made (and he composed many while he was with us), I would correct and re-correct till I was satisfied with them: this used to infuriate Gounod, who could not bear to see anyone do better than him. It was I who almost entirely found every sentiment in the translation of "*The Better Land*." "*The Worker*" (the translation) Gounod had made haste to write the French words under the notes while I was absent (he mentions this in his letter, 29th Oct., '72, page 97). I do not sing it as it is written. Instead of

Et dominant l'orage

La voix disait encor,

Je viens du beau rivage,

Brillant d'azur et d'or.

I sing—

Et dominant l'orage,

La voix disait tout bas.

Je viens du beau rivage,

D'où l'on ne revient pas.

At the movement in the *Finale*, at the words

Et traversant l'espace,

I sing—

Et traversant les sphères, muets et lumineux,

Deux anges dans l'espace, s'envolaient vers les cieux.

Thus bringing "*Deux anges*" on the notes which in the English bring the words "*Two angels*" on to the most effective notes in the whole phrase, and preserves the meaning as he had felt it. When he was in his tantrums he would make use of very rude expressions to me, which translated literally mean "that I looked for lice in the hair," or "searched for nasty insects."

41. I had sealed my letter with the ring composed of his monogram, and which he had given me 21st July, 1871, in commemoration of my *début* at Royal Albert Hall, when I sang "*Gallia*." I speak of this, page 60, BUSINESS. It is singular I should have omitted to mention this among his London expenses (see page 18, BUSINESS). It cost two guineas.

42. So he understood the laws!

43. Hartmann (the publisher) had told Benedict that Gounod had behaved very harshly towards Choudens, who was made very unhappy by the ingratitude of his dear Gounod.

44. I had been told Gounod was inconstant, unfaithful, and treacherous. He so well denies it. I could not believe it, especially as he spoke of so many of his friends with such unbounded affection.

45. "*Too tender*." This was an expression I had made use of, he having often spoken to me of so many people of whom he spoke with the same ecstasy, and I could not understand how he could feel so much anguish about so many different persons. Of course, as I found out later, this was all "put on" to take me in!

46. He was wanting in habits of cleanliness before he knew us, so we gave him a pretty bath in gutta percha to encourage him to bathe himself. This appeared to do him much good. His health was most miserable when we first knew him.

47. "*Emue*." *Touched* must be the literal translation of this word. It is Madame Gounod's favourite word. If the music Gounod composes is good, she is "*touched*." In FAUST the only

part which "touched" her was the cavatine for the tenor (so Gounod said !)

48. Nobody would guarantee him anything.

49. He asked most ridiculous sums.

50. I am sure if only this individual would offer him enough money he would make it up with him, and lick the blacking off his shoes to-morrow !*

51. Mr. Frederick Warre was, and is, a great friend of ours, who my husband brought home very ill one day, and who we kept and nursed for a long time. He was most dangerously ill.

52. My husband ! The best sick nurse in the world.

53. *The sea hath its pearls.* The first song he dedicated to me. Choudens omitted the dedication to me in French edition. Since then Gounod takes away all the dedications from me, from my husband, from my mother, and dedicates them to other "*dear and holy friends* !"

54. The moment he missed anything he was fond of, he immediately suspected his wife had got hold of it and thrown it away.

55. *O, Happy Home ! La Fleur du Foyer* dedicated to my husband. It was about this song he wanted to modify the agreement with Duff and Stewart (see page 58 of BUSINESS).

56. He translated a good deal of it.

57. This passage alludes to the money I begged for the poor of St. Cloud. His wife was always telling him I pocketed the money for myself. The Hon. Mrs. Herbert of Llanarth (a Roman Catholic) still owes about £4 for the photographs she had bought of them, through me. In vain have I asked for the money in all kinds of ways ; she always promised to send the money, but never did so—a negligence which has caused me much worry. I got about £20 for them, I think. (See letter of Abbé Boudier, page 44, FRIENDSHIP).

28. One of the pet names he had given me on account of my infantine and *madonna-esque* face.

59. I was very sorry to see him abused in the newspapers, but he quite rejoiced over it. He seemed to thirst for battle, and then he ends by reproaching me with it (see page 173, Nos. 270, 292, 293, 310, 315). My warlike tendencies, as if I had not, as this sentence (59), in common with many others, proves that I deplored to attack, and that I advised prudence. (See his change of style, No. 261 to 262, page 171, LES LETTRES.)

60. Arthur Sullivan, an English composer of mediocre talent, but fashionable, and Sir Michael Costa.

61. This alludes to a Mr. Deffell, an "*original*" who passes his days and nights copying music. Gounod was jealous of him, I believe ; he called him "*Il Diavolo*" because of the similitude of his name to that of the Infernal Prince ! He recommended me to be on my guard against him. He was the most suspicious of mortals !

* A prophecy, come true in 1882.—G. W.

62. He always talked as though he were Peace personified. He appeared so to me for a long time. I shall never be able to understand how it was my calm influence, with the help of the spirits, kept him so long serene and tranquil.

63. He thought, perhaps, I should hasten, as he did, to leave my country in the hour of her peril.

64. "*On*" is his wife, and it was not me who made him say, "*I don't care a hang for it*"—for it made me very unhappy her being so wicked.

65-66 are phrases which completely contradict each other.

67. Explained by Note 30.

68. A circumstance which has some analogy to the demand for £200 made by Mr. Henry Lemoine for *Polyeucte* at the Paris Grand Opéra, a difficulty which Gounod, *Gallia* having only 300 francs in prospect, did not hesitate for a second to get out of by offering to pay for himself. *£200 was another matter!* Rest assured he thought of it twice before offering to pay for that!

69. The least little hitch in his affairs he attributed to his wife being at the bottom of it.

70. He speaks clearly of "*our mutual interests.*" The Concerts were to be given for our mutual interest, and how can any one consider either I or my children have received the least benefit?

71. He let himself be persuaded.

72. I did not know one of these persons; and as I had, till then, never had the slightest disagreement with any artist, one will not be able to continue to accuse me of "*having set him against his old friends.*" It strikes me he knew how to abuse them all round, without any help from me!

73. I stuck to my text. I only sang *Gallia*, because the Committee objected to the tune and air from *Sappho*, "*Héro sur la tour solitaire.*"

74. My husband hardly knew French at all. He would write in French to Gounod to make him laugh, and his letters are certainly most ludicrous. He began—"Mong share ammy" (mon cher ami) called me "*mar share pteet fam*" (ma chère petite femme) épelait enchanté "*ongshontay*," and so on.

75. Grüneisen was on the Gounod side, because he was a great friend of Chorley's (see page 104, BUSINESS). Madame Viardot, very jealous of me, manœuvred to get all the English critics to abuse me. She had, at Benedict's house, several times, heard me sing; she knew well I had a very powerful voice; incomparable, to those one generally hears, on account of the extreme frankness and purity of the emission, of which a musician can judge, even when I sing in public, on which occasions it is by no means strange if I do not strike the public as remarkable; for, being extremely nervous, my voice becomes thin, shrill, and only possesses the tenth part of its power. Since then Grüneisen came to see us, and was the best friend we had in the Press.

76. Will any one say this was not reasonable? I did not know then of the *Faust* Odyssey, else I should certainly have advised him to have nothing whatever to do with Mr. Gye.

77. The poor man knew he was of a "*strange, healthy, and diseased* ORGANISATION." We had perceived this. But we did not then realise it—alas! we know it too well now. I should, however, never have imagined him capable of keeping up such wickedness so gratuitously, so ignoble, so unjust, for so many years. I always live in the hopes he will repent of his evil ways, and come round some day. I cannot believe the good spirits have lost all power over him.

78. Gounod was in such a wretched state of health, that every person I had spoken to in Paris assured me his wife and the Zimmerman family were the *death of Gounod*. Mr. Barbier himself, who, at a later date, said every thing he could think of against them ought not to have felt at all astonished that a man who falls ill in his friends' house, should be glad to stay there to be nursed, especially when his hosts knew how to do so.

79. I saw Madame Gounod as often as I did Gounod during the first two months of our acquaintanceship, and, without exception, I found her—I can most conscientiously say so—the most ill-natured, cross-grained woman I had ever met. Not that she appeared more disagreeable to me than to other people; on the contrary, she appeared to think a good deal of my opinion, and frequently consulted me upon English financial matters of which I was really very ignorant. She seemed also to admire my singing very much. What Gounod suffered from the most (so he said) was the inexhaustible ill-nature of his wife towards everybody.

80. Jean said so himself.

81. If Gounod had not wantonly destroyed all I had constructed Mr. Barbier would certainly have seen what "*that unjustifiable influence*" would have accomplished.

82. He had told me that the whole of his family were such liars that he never believed a word they said. That they were all against him as JESUS CHRIST's family was against HIM.

83. From the moment that Mme. Gounod knew any person had made our acquaintance, she never stopped abusing them.

84. Yes, it is a *shame*, and he who bears it is *despicable*.

85. We used to tell him that we did not mind the calumnies to which we were subjected on his account, as long as he did not leave us to return to his wife till she had done as he had stipulated—namely, that he should take a house for her for two months in London, where she should rejoin him. This he appeared to expect she would do; this we looked forward to happening any day.

86. It was Mr. Gambart started the FAUST discussion, and who put Gounod on the wrong scent. Mr. Gambart's letter proves that neither I nor my "*unjustifiable influence*" had any thing to do with that squabble.

87. Does the *great name* of Gounod preserve me from ruin and misfortune? I opposed myself strongly to his making use of this sentence when he wrote it, for I found it, what it is, false and illogical. He did not mean what he said, and it was moreover ridiculous, because it was devoid of common sense. The true history of his generosity for Mrs. Black is this. He was to have a Benefit Concert at the Albert Hall, in June, 1872. He was dying to sing at it. I must say I believed that if Gounod was advertised to sing, it would bring people to his Concert; but I did not know what song to choose for him. He could not pretend to come out as a *vocalist*. I did not want him to sing one of his old compositions; I had still more objection to his singing one of his recent compositions, because the newspapers would have been down on him for singing a Royalty song. When Mrs. Black, through her friends, appealed to the public for aid in her old age, it immediately came into my head to get Gounod to dedicate to her Byron's *Maid of Athens*, to which he had just happened to have composed some beautiful music for me, and to give the proceeds of its sale to the old lady. This, therefore, was practical help he afforded Mrs. Black by singing the song at his Concert. The song has brought in over £100, but I do not think Gounod ever sent her more than £17. Goddard, the publisher, paid the £1200 he owed Gounod to him, through his solicitor, Mr. Richard Taylor, but I had then nothing more to do with the accounts. I do not however suppose that Gounod thought any more of keeping his promise to Mrs. Black than he did of keeping his to us, nor that he thinks now of paying the widow (still living in 1878) of the poor copyist who copied for him, on trust, the copies of the cantata which gained for him the Grand Prix de Rome in 1839!

88. Mistakes were invariably made about me and my name in the advertisements. See page 146, BUSINESS.

89. Read this memorandum attentively. I was nearly beside myself with despair when I wrote it.

90. With the song of the contralto in *Mireille* alone, Boosey must have cleared £500.

91. See the LETTERS, pages 130 and 142; also BUSINESS, page 65; and *Autobiographie de Gounod*, pages 42 and 57.

92. Yes, it is too much! An amateur poet gave him this sum to set his verses to music—no one else. This was a real misfortune. Not 30 copies of this song, "*Passed Away*," were sold.

93. Does not he clearly say he wanted to help my school? And has he not shamefully deceived me by writing as he did to me, and to the newspapers?

94. Where is his perseverance? Where his conviction?

95. Mr. Jules Clairetie had never heard me sing.

96. If he were ashamed of it he would be quite right; no one but a Frenchman would have dared to behave as he has, and no one but a Frenchman would have been applauded for behaving towards a

woman as he has by any men of any other nation than his own countrymen !

97. Gounod had never thought of being naturalised as an Englishman, or of establishing himself permanently in England. French people say themselves that it was Frenchmen who betrayed them to the Prussians. They were Frenchmen who betrayed Joan of Arc to the English—they were too cowardly to burn her themselves. The French people appreciate each other !!! And why should Gounod be proud of being a *Parisian of Paris* ? Paris, is she not the Aspasia of Europe ? and is he not her worthy citizen and representative ? A "*fille*" as the French call him ! He has composed far more beautiful and worthy music in England than his *glous-glous*. Can it be possible that any man who arrogates to himself any pretension of wit could put his name to the bottom of such rubbish as is contained in this article, signed *Fules Claretie* ?

98. Eight lines on the arrival and departure of the letters !

99. A proof that I in no way kept guard over him, and that he was in the greatest possible anxiety to rejoin us.

100 and 101. Read what I say concerning this. Note 40 of this series.

101 (A). The table of which I speak. Page 10, BUSINESS.

101 (B). He knew well, and here says it, that a part of his health and his life were part of mine. They were, in truth, my greatest care.

102. Emma, is Mme. Franceschi. The affair of the Bust. See pages 62 and 105, FRIENDSHIP.

103. It was I who replied to all the business letters.

104. One of my busts, by Charles Fuller.

105. *Schmidtchen*, the German lady, a great friend and my chaperone.

106. The Roche are persons who kept a school in London. She was a Miss Moschelles.

107. Six lines devoted to postal intrigues.

108. The name of our coachman.

109. Interesting correspondence. See page 107, BUSINESS.

110. Letters which I possess.

111. See page 108, BUSINESS.

112. *Me* means, in reality, Mrs. Weldon.

113. This number is missing in the book but should have been printed at the words "*domaine public*" on page 101, five lines from the bottom of the page. The publishers were already accusing *me* of "*rapacity*" and *exploitation* !

114. His Mass, *SS. Angeli Custodes*, was thus called after his guardian angels (as he used to call us), Mr. and Mrs. Weldon.

115. The press hardly mentioned him or his Concerts.

116. *Dan*, my darling pug, was very fond of Gounod. *Mittie* was always very fidgety when I was not there.

117. He seemed always very anxious about my health. It was

very bad, for he left me no peace—poor dear! but he seemed very fond of me.

118. This proves how beneficial my presence was to him, how carefully I preserved him from all trouble and agitation, and how well I kept my promise to my husband to keep Gounod quiet and free to compose.

119. See pages 46, BUSINESS, and 136, FRIENDSHIP. He seemed very fond of this young man.

120. His complainings of my absence were ETERNAL.

121. He would sing all the time himself. It was therefore impossible for him to listen to the choir. The Concert therefore never went well when he alone had conducted the rehearsals. The delight he has in listening to himself is extraordinary.

122. See page 46, BUSINESS.

123. He hated going to pay visits.

124. Bella, Hetty, and Alfred my pupils.

125. See page 38, *Quarrel of the Royal Albert Hall Co.*

126. The business men looked upon me as Gounod's *business man* in his interests as well as my own. It was an understood thing I brought my singing into any proposed enterprise.

127. Because Mme. Gounod wished to make as much scandal as she could about her husband and me as possible, and had, no doubt, persuaded M. Girardin, Mr. Manby, and Mr. Beslay, that he had fallen into the claws of an adventuress, who *deprived him of his money and his health*. It was a piece of brag on her part, useless except for the purpose of creating more scandal.

128. See page 105, FRIENDSHIP.

129. May Gounod say this to himself when he remembers his harshness and cruelty towards me.

129A. See pages 80 and 139, FRIENDSHIP. A way to pronounce *Mimi*.

130. I always begged him to send me only post-cards. See pages 131 and 139, BUSINESS.

131. *Our* Concerts.

132. See page 46, BUSINESS.

133. I am sure that he sickened people with his exaggerated praises of me. He called this "*driving the broad-awl*" into people.

134. One sees how he hated invitations. He used to say, "*Politeness is a massacre of time.*"

135. He gave us the orchestral manuscript of *Jeanne D'Arc*, because he considered my character like hers. In the printed score he gave me, he wrote "*To my dear, brave, and courageous little soldier.*" It is *he* himself who now burns us.

136. A seal a friend had had engraved for me as an emblem of my credulity, *G b*.

137. DRACO. See page 139, LES LETTRES, and page 138, FRIENDSHIP.

137A. I do not copy the whole of these letters ; I only copy what relates to the affair.

138. A book of signatures kept at Tavistock House.

139. This is quite true.

140. And it is well proved. See pages 63 and 171, FRIENDSHIP.

141. Gounod always called his family "*his infernal family*."

142. See page 105, FRIENDSHIP; page 274, LES LETTRES; and Note 558A.

143. Page 41, FRIENDSHIP.

144. Page 121, FRIENDSHIP.

145. Page 157, FRIENDSHIP.

146. Pages 60 and 169, FRIENDSHIP.

147. *Whiddles*, the pug puppy, son of *Tity*.

148. See page 46, BUSINESS.

149. How anxious he seemed to be about my health.

150. Whenever I left him, he used to fade away.

151. The news I sent him from Paris.

151A. Aimée Désclée.

152. This is how he always felt away from "*his sun*."

153. See page 57, MUSICAL REFORM.

154. An extra proof that he employed me as his *man of business* on every possible occasion.

155. Gounod's letter, dated 4th November, 1873.

156. See page 142 and Note 183 of this series.

157. Are not my readers of my opinion ?

158. If I had chosen to dispute his right to publish this, I might certainly have done so, for all the *idea*—the *scenario*—the arrangement of the symphony were altogether mine.

159. See page 138, FRIENDSHIP, Note 160 of this series, and the following letter, 13th February, 1874.

160. See Note 159.

161. *Mink*, another name for Dan.

162. My husband put him up a gas one in the bath-room.

163. Mr. Edmund de la Pole.

164. One of his articles on *La Routine en Matière d'Art*, which I had to translate.

165. See AUTOBIOGRAPHIE, page 45.

166. Because Gounod did not know how to make them work.

167. Gounod knew perfectly what our printed paper of *Questions and Answers* was. This is it :—

In answer to overwhelmingly numerous inquiries of all kinds received by Mr. Gounod and Mrs. Weldon, they have been advised to draw up the following circular :—

1. To those wishing to know if Mr. Gounod gives lessons in singing, or harmony—No ; never, upon any consideration.
2. To those wishing to know of Mrs. Weldon's terms for teaching grown-up pupils or amateurs—£600 lodged in the London & Westminster Bank to Mrs. Weldon's credit. In the case of a professional, the conditions are that he (or she) must

remain for two years regularly training his (or her) voice under Mrs. Weldon's superintendence. The £600 being sufficient to keep any young man or woman respectably for two years in London; the balance of that sum to be forfeited by the pupil should the engagement be broken by him (or her). For ultimate arrangements, see Mrs. Weldon's pamphlet, which can be obtained from Goddard & Co., 4 Argyll Place (Regent Street). An amateur would not be accepted on any terms except £600 down, and Mrs Weldon hopes that she may never have those terms accepted. The lessons in class last three hours at least every morning—but no *private* lessons are given.

3. To those wishing to ask Mr. Gounod's opinion as to their own, or any other person's musical capacity, voice, etc.—Mr. Gounod can see no one on this subject.
4. To those wishing to know what Mrs. Weldon thinks on the same subject—Mrs. Weldon knows, if any one chooses to practise conscientiously for two years under her supervision, any one can make a good deal of his (or her) voice and style. But Mrs Weldon, from experience, is of opinion that it is impossible for a grown-up person to practise patiently for the time specified, and recommends everybody not to try.
5. To those who wish to know if it would do them any good belonging to Mr. Gounod's Choir—Very little, unless they attend practices and rehearsals regularly.
6. To those wishing to have Mr. Gounod's opinion on a poem, a libretto, or lines for a song—He would rather not give *any*, and would rather not be sent anything that requires an answer.
7. Mrs. Weldon answers similarly to such an inquiry.
8. To those wishing for Mr. Gounod's autograph—A stamped and directed envelope must accompany the request for an autograph.
9. To all those calling at Tavistock House to see Mr. Gounod or Mrs. Weldon—They must state first in writing clearly what is their business, and not to call again except by appointment.
10. To those wishing to subscribe to the Gounod Concerts (£1 is. the series) or to the *Cosmopolitan* (Weekly) Newspaper (£1 a-year)—They should apply to the Hon. Secretary, Gounod's Choir, Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, W.C.
11. To those wishing to know the best shop in London for getting all Mr. Gounod's new and genuine compositions—Messrs. Goddard and Co., 4 Argyll Place, Regent Street, W.
12. To those who send Mr. Gounod lines or librettos to set to music—Mr. Gounod has more work in hand or in prospect than he can ever finish, and therefore begs to return all such papers with best thanks.

168. See pages 94 and 140, FRIENDSHIP. On this page there is a mistake in FRIENDSHIP. The *note* should be (See page 136, LES LETTRES, not BUSINESS,) note 168.

169. When he could catch me out making the smallest mistake he would compare me to his wife, which provoked me very much.

170. This letter was twice returned to me by Mme. de Beaucourt.

171. See page 127, FRIENDSHIP.

171A. See page 117, FRIENDSHIP.

172. See page 140, FRIENDSHIP.

173. See page 135, FRIENDSHIP.

174. De la Pole.

176. See note 77.

177. See page 120, FRIENDSHIP.

178. See page 145, BUSINESS, and page 75, FRIENDSHIP.

179. He hated leaving the house.
180. Peyton, Secretary to the Birmingham Festival.
181. Marion Westmacott, one of my pupils, who won the second or third scholarship for singing at the New Training School for Music at South Kensington. (I think it was the seventh scholarship.)
182. The wonder is he had spoilt nothing!
183. See note 156 of the same series.
184. Camille St. Saens got the credit of having written this lying article.
185. French people always appear incapable of reproducing a single correct English word, however well known it may be. He writes—*"Times is money."* *Times* means *"Fois c'est l'argent!"* *"Time is money,"* is what he ought to have written.
186. And the School of Song to which I was devoting myself. Was not that an honourable object?
187. S.S. takes good care not to mention *Gallia*, *Jeanne d'Arc*, the *Requiem*, the Mass *SS. Angeli Custodes*, and a hundred other incomparable works he wrote in England.
188. In Paris you have nothing to equal the Royal Albert Hall, the Philharmonic, Exeter Hall, St. James' Hall, or the great Choral Masses of men and women's voices, or the Crystal Palace, or the Alexandra Palace. In short, Paris has not the Thames, and London has not the Seine!
189. Mr. Dulocle, a theatrical director! See page 67, *LES LETTRES*. What a crew! (Note 72 of this series.) What trouble it was to keep Gounod quiet.
190. If I am not telling the truth, neither was Gounod telling the truth, and why did Mr. de Choudens allow such things to be printed without protesting? Gounod's *Autobiographie* was published 1873.
191. Barbier owes me a deadly grudge because I did not consider him Gounod's equal as a genius. His letters to me in 1874 are masterpieces of vanity. He takes his revenge on me knowing me to be without legal means of defence (my husband indifferent), by writing lies about me in the newspapers. I have treasured up something which delighted me highly in *La France* about him:—
- "AN ECHO OF M. CHARLES MONSELET.
- "You are aware that M. P. J. Barbier, the clever librettist of *Paul and Virginia*, is one of the greatest known dramatic authors."
- "A giant! What?"
- "Mme. Lia Felix said of him—'When it begins to rain he is wet through before everybody else.'"
- I was too strong for him in open combat, so he adopts the *"franc tireurs"* method in his way of dealing with me.
192. And this is true.
193. Gounod, who quietly betrayed his best friends, would have jumped out of his skin at the idea of anyone being treacherous towards him!—and oh! how I dreaded his rages and *Jeremiads*.

194. See Gounod's letter on the following page. He had completely changed his mind.

195. This was Choudens.

196. See page 139, FRIENDSHIP.

197. See page 122, BUSINESS.

198. My ordinary name.

199. All depended on me on these occasions.

200. *Smith*. His real name is Goddard. His business being nearly ruined then, I bought the copyright of most of Gounod's works, published by him, for my children. (This is all they have to depend on in case of my death.) I mention his name now as I no longer run the risk of it being said, I do so by way of advertisement for him. Gounod, it appears, has succeeded in making people believe that Goddard was my partner, or that Goddard was another name for my husband. There never was any question of such a thing. This, like a hundred other falsehoods, are perfidious insinuations of Mr. Gounod & Co.

201. The *Cosmopolitan*, a newspaper which published Gounod's articles.

202. An observation made by Mr. De la Pole to Gounod himself.

203. The first agreement stipulated that the Royalties were to be paid every six months, in January and July; this Goddard has never been able to do.

204. I should have liked him to pay for the engraving and printing of his works, instead of ceding the copyright to a publisher who could not pay him. He would then have kept the entire property of his own works, and could have sold them to any publisher he liked at 8d. a copy, an arrangement which could have been easily carried on at Tavistock House by us, with the assistance of all the people we had in the house.

205. This system I clearly explain and was very much to Goddard's advantage.

206. I used to pay, and secretly advance, sums of money over and over again, and of this I possess a thousand proofs.

207. He could not do so. He only did this to gain time.

208. Solicitors recommended by M. Moreau, Counsel to the French Embassy. Will they be accused, as I have been, of fleecing Mr. Gounod? Where will anyone find a single line—a single act—which can be construed into my being supposed to be in league with Goddard for the purpose of robbing Gounod? and if Goddard has really paid Gounod all he owed him, how can Goddard be said to have robbed him? If Gounod is a loser by this arrangement, who has he to thank but himself?

209. Sir Henry Thompson, the eminent surgeon, who had operated with success Leopold I., King of the Belgians, and who operated Napoleon III., who died from the result (pages xv-xvii of *Preface*).

210. Dr. Chepmell, an excellent English physician I had known a great many years.

211. A letter begun by Gounod in a very bad temper because my husband would not consent to go with him to the Pyrenees. My husband said he could very well go alone. Gounod would not go without us. Seeing him so put out I begged and prayed of my husband to do as he wished. My husband consented, and this letter was never sent to Jean. I found it in Gounod's blotting book after his departure, and this letter is an unanswerable *proof* that, a fortnight before he left us for ever, Gounod seemed incapable of moving without us.

212. Dr. Blanche recommended the Pyrenees. Dr. Mackern and Dr. Wilberforce Smith, who had attended him for three years, said they were not necessary for him, and the proof that what they said was true, is that Gounod remained in Paris all the winter of 1874-5, which was bitterly cold, and that he did not go *to the waters* which Dr. Foville had likewise pronounced necessary to his existence.

213. Jean was so cowardly on board ship, he was quite afraid of crossing the Channel, in spite of his game of pretending he wanted to become a sailor. He could not pass the necessary examination.

214. Very bad for his condition, said Drs. Mackern and Wilberforce Smith, would Arcachon have been for his health on account of the fine dust which blew from the fir-cones, and which would have irritated his trachea.

215. We were to have left London with Gounod on 3rd or 4th July.

216. *Bromure of Potassium* was what he had to take when his head felt queer. *Whiddie's* fit had upset him.

217. This was because I had made Goddard so well-known. People thought I must be a member of the Co., which, in truth, consisted of Goddard only and *Giuseppe* his pseudonym!

218. The last word and the last post-card he himself posted the 4th of June (Thursday). It was on returning from the post Mrs. Brown thought him queer and incoherent. It was very hot weather.

219. The *Cosmopolitan*, as if by enchantment and as if everything was to fail at that moment, dropped through and died a natural death shortly afterwards.

220. He had been told I should not come probably.

221. He therefore left me the management of his affairs. He confirmed the "note" of the 31st July, 1871, without my asking him for it. I should never have thought of doing so.

222. Gounod had never hinted to me my husband had said so, but my husband lets it out in his letters—pages 132 and 134, *LES LETTRES*.

223. This is what I still believe, what I have believed, and why I have endured so much.

224. My presentiment was only too true!

225. They did not succeed! Poor people! . . .

226. The "*faithful friends*" were Mr. and Mrs. Weldon.

227. Each time his brain was attacked he thought he should die.

228. It was therefore arranged with Dr. Blanche we were to go together to Amélie les Bains.

229. Spoilt, or rather *rotten* children, as almost all French children are.

230. Everybody who said they were fond of him were "*good, pious, and devoted.*" *The seven words of Christ* was the vision I had seen by his side on the 5th June, and which I describe at page 147 of FRIENDSHIP.

231. If, as the newspapers pretend, "*I ravished him of his money and of his health,*" and were it true, as he has the falseness and cowardice to pretend, that I tried to seduce him, and that I was his "*frantic mistress,*" it is pretty clear by the phrase, "he promised me *not to let me perceive his torment,*" which naturally caused me much grief, and which was a cause for legitimate separation, that I did not encourage him; at the same time "*he feels in himself the reproach of what he may have made me suffer.*" Had I been "*the shameless woman*" who "*gave him a sensation which resembled love*"—"the woman who led him by fever"—"*the loved woman unworthy of his passion*"—"the adored woman who had procured him a few months of intoxicating passion"—"*the dealer in love*"—"the angel who was a lodging-house-keeper"—"*the blonde Englishwoman on whose forehead the horns of Lucifer sprouted*"; had I been all that his infamous crew pretended I was, would he have confessed to me (by this phrase) "*that he reproached himself with having tormented me*"? Had it been in my nature to have any *penchant* for his old carcase, and had I pandered to it, would he have made use of this sentence? I nursed him with all the devotion of my nature, with all my soul. How cruel for a woman like me, to whom it is impossible to speak of certain things (unless forced to do so in an open Court of Justice) to explain categorically and clearly what seems to interest the whole world infinitely more than the most beautiful works, the beautiful school, and the interesting writings our friendship gave birth to. All the French newspapers have amused themselves by dirtying their already filthy pens with speculations upon what might have passed between M. Gounod and myself during a three years' intimacy.

232. First sign of the plot.

233. He consulted me, however.

234. After having, on the 9th, written to say he would wait to see Jean till he got to Morainville, on the 10th he writes that Dr. Blanche wishes to bring him Jean incognito, on the 11th that Jeanne as well as Jean is to be fetched incognito, etc. All this to keep him in Paris quietly—to avoid emotion!

235. A letter in which I implored of him to keep his promise of at once going to Morainville. I had only advised and consented to his departure under the understanding he was to go to rest in the country at once.

236. Always uncertainties! This was the De Beaucourts' game.

237. This is just what the De Beaucourts wanted to manoeuvre.

238. This is certain! Alas!

239. Why weep thinking of his "*poor dear Mimi*"? Was it because he wished for me near him, or because he began to feel the pressure of the conspiracy against us?

240. Oh well! he seems to have left us with pleasant reminiscences as that false M. Delacourtie says, page 237.

241. God grant that I may thus find him again!

242. There! As ill-luck would have it I sent it to Goddard.

243. Observe, on the 13th June he was in despair at the idea of my not writing to him. On the 20th June he complains of the fever of my letters to M. De la Pole. On the 22nd he writes to us, "*They (our letters) have crushed my heart, and put the height of trouble to my existence.*" See note 338.

244. Impossible for him to move alone. M. De Beaucourt had made me the false promise of taking him to Morainville immediately.

245. He still seemed sincere.

246. As the correspondence describes.

247. 'This has never been done, and Gounod has NEVER paid us what he owes us. My husband was too lazy and too proud to make any claim; I, I can do nothing—a married woman can do nothing.

248. This is not astonishing!

249. Nothing will fill his existence. He is like his father, an abyss, without his application or genius.

250. It certainly was not his father who was capable of guiding him.

251. He did nothing but weep, thinking of me. Why?

252. I knew well enough he would never become the "*old nurse of his child*;" and except the life of maliciousness and falseness (of which Jean can thoroughly understand and appreciate the shame) he has led since he left us, in what way has he lived another life?

253. Well indeed! It will not be Gounod who will prevent the hydra with a thousand heads and a thousand throats from devouring his children. They have been corrupted by the Jesuits long ago.

254. He should not have declared himself in 1871 so *robust*, and so eager to defy the fire of the Press.

255. And *Cinq Mars*? and the new Mass *Sacré Cœur de Jésus*? and *Jésus on the Sea of Tiberias*? the *Salut Angélique*? and *Polyeucte*? and *Jeanne D'Arc*? *Mireille*? And *Héloïse* and *Abélard*, etc., etc., etc., *des pages posthumes*!*

256. This is what he had often said to me. I suspect it was then that for the first time, ONE WEEK AFTER HE HAD PARTED FROM ME, that the idea had been put in his head of getting *Polyeucte* performed

* 1882. And the *Tribut de Zamora*? and all his new melodies, and *Redemption*? and he accepts Littleton's money—and he conducts in Paris! in Monte Carlo! in Anvers! in Birmingham! This Benedictine Monk!!! G. W.

at the Grand Opera and to prevent me singing the part he had promised me and which he had written for me; so he told me "*he would not listen to anything else*" to avoid the probable consequences of my ill will (natural no doubt) if I thought any one but me would sing this part of *Pauline*. He feared I might refuse to give up the Opera unless it was stipulated I should sing the part. It would have been only natural for me to have said—"If I send you the Opera you must take care I appear in the rôle of *Pauline*!" This idea, nevertheless, would never have come into my head. I was full of only one thing, and that was being left to manage Gounod's affairs, as in the past, for England. They might have spared themselves all these calculations, all these stratagems, and all these lies made with the object of leading me to believe Gounod would nevermore have any thing performed in public. I knew he could not exist without publicity.

257. The term was stipulated. The agreement exacted payment every six months. Goddard not paying, Gounod had the right to make him a bankrupt. Therefore in the new agreement Gounod got Goddard to sign, prolonged (providentially for me and the children) the time of payment to two years more.

258. The newspapers said that "*Gounod had fallen seriously ill in England, and that his family had come to fetch him and had taken him back to France.*"

259. The work of the Jesuits finished what the others had begun.

260. Jean Gounod's *Conscience*! The conscience of a Gounod-Zimmerman!!!

261. All this has been amply proved, in the year 1878 when I compile these notes, as impossible as ridiculous.

262. The *Mimi of Business* was dead and buried; but he comes to life again *one line further on* to write to Goddard a "*letter in his own ink!*" Magnificent!

263. First symptom of his having done with us. He knew he had COMMITTED HIMSELF with Goddard.

264. I had been telling stories to everybody that he was gone to Morainville, Normandy, as he had told me to do, and all the newspapers were braying forth he was in Paris. He who had kept all dark around him, guarded by the De Beaucourts. See page 164, LES LETTRES. Note 225.

265. Written the same day as the one to me of the 18th June. Before he had finished my letter he must have written his of the 18th June to Goddard.

266. Re-opening of the "*accounts, of the cyphers, of the figures, of the complications which strangled him!*"

267. The name of Weldon was most carefully excluded from the agreement Gounod exacted of Goddard. I cannot believe he was not helped to draw it up. It was so clever! so artful!

268. Dear me! I prophesied everything to him exactly as it happened.

269. Poor man! He did not, I suppose, realise to himself the fever of his own letters, of the feverish anxiety with which he poked his nose into everything, that he kept the account of the Music *himself*, that he would have liked to have stamped each copy of the Music *with his own hand*. I am not dreaming! I have all the the proofs under my hand!

270. Then why did he persuade me to fly in the face of it all in 1871 when I was afraid of it, and then leave me alone in the lurch to fight or sink in 1874?

271. As for that. . . Impossible!

272. So, when the *Gaulois*, two months later, *went too far*, why did not he then find ink in that inexhaustible inkstand of his?

273. Now then! It was not I again who "made him say" or imagine that! Twenty years! I had known him but three years and a half.

274. Here is the verdict he deserves penned by himself.

275. Not a word of probability or possibility. This is proved.

276. Dr. Blanche told us the very reverse in London. He was lying most impudently!

277. MY BUSINESS ALSO; and with an honest, charitable object; without a grain of selfishness.

278. No! There is neither worship or devotion for a woman who has saved your life, and who spent her life in teaching *gratis* to the poor the gifts God had endowed her with.

279. Especially Mr. Charles Francois Gounod and his *clique*!

280. Yes, this one—dated 14th June—was good. Why neutralise it by the one of the 18th June?

281. These are what I tore up. I knew it was all false and false pretences.

282. Why then not pay what he owes?

283. Since two years and a half this discussion had continued. Why not have said then, when I used to say to him, "Give Goddard time, he is beginning business"—why not then have said, "I will give Goddard four years to pay me"? But on the contrary for two years he had constantly threatened me to sell him up.

284. He had always plenty of strength for squabbling!

285. My letters were those of a despairing, ruined, deserted, betrayed, calumniated, unarmed, defenceless woman. A woman in that state certainly writes in a style the reverse of calm or contentment. I was beside myself with grief, and justly so.

286. If Goddard owed nothing, why did Gounod make such a fuss about being paid?

287. Is not this a madman's way of reasoning?

288. What means?

289. Yes! We know that! But how about YOUR Justice. Where is SHE, Mr. Gounod?

290. Then why did he make and why does he make so many "*infernal shrieks*"?

291. At first he had asked Mr. Deffell, who he nicknamed "*Il Diavolo*," to stamp his music for him. I never considered myself honoured by accepting to do for him what another had refused—he must know that.

292. Who was the "*great warrior*" in 1871? Gounod or me?

293. Who, in 1871, was disposed "*to take everything by storm*"?

294. What did I tell him about Jean on the 7th November, 1873? See pages 121, 122, and 123, *LES LETTRES*, and note 143.

295. And what did Jean hear his father and mother do? and what did Jean say? *AND WHAT DID JEAN DO?*

296. And this is all the crime he could conjure up against me to accuse me of it, and it was indeed the only one in which there existed a scrap of truth.

297. What was the use of my reading them, as he had made and signed his agreement with Goddard?

298. Where had the interests of my children and myself gone?

299. Who had drawn me into "*the fatal intoxication of battles*"?

300. Why did he not avoid them?

301. He has proved it—!

302. It was he who wanted to make Mr. Goddard a bankrupt. It was Mr. De la Pole who had, with him, found the other way out of the difficulty in April, 1874.

303. Just what I had been struggling for for two years.

304. No one had ever proposed Gounod should become a tradesman, or to make Goddard anything but a tradesman.

305. He now clearly says he will not have us. It was thirteen days since he had left us.

306. This was an innocent observation made by Mr. Grüneisen in reply to what the other newspapers said about Gounod being out of his mind. But as Mme. de Beaucourt, who understands English very well, wanted to pass him off as mad and make him do mad things, she could not have been pleased to have seen her little plan circumvented, and had set him against those who took up the cudgels in his defence.

307. Mme. de Beaucourt must have guessed I had had something to do with it.

308. All the fault of his family and Choudens.

309. I had often told him so, as well as that when he busied himself about worldly things he stooped too low.

310. This was true. True indeed. His family's doing. His own. Now, whose fault is it if he is persecuted, hunted down, ridiculed?

311. I had told him this, hoping not to lose him altogether. I was in such despair.

312. My husband almost unconsciously says so hoping no doubt to inspire him with better feelings.

313. The one of the 18th June. Mr. Taylor had not seen the one of the 20th June.

314. Mr. Taylor could not understand that this was in the interest of my Orphanage. He understood nothing about the music trade.

315. See page 32, *Quarrel of the Albert Hall Company*.

318. He must have felt certain of this long before now.

317. This is what we ought to have done immediately.

318. My husband was quite right.

319. How can he say this THREE days after having written another letter which destroyed the effect of the first of which he speaks !

320. Certainly, he has deceived us.

321. But he had already made Goddard sign another agreement without consulting us !

322. He was always trying to make believe it was I who "IMPOSED" !

323. He never forgets to curse our Sunday !

324. So then, he HAD made an agreement which rendered null and void his letter of the 14th of June, of which he boasts.

325. What agreement?

326. It was principally Gounod and me. Not Goddard.

327. Yes. As it was money *we* had advanced to *him*. WE had not paid the engravers and printers.

328. As the terms for payments had been stipulated in the agreement of the 26th April, 1872, it is impossible to know what he meant, for he had not sent us, nor had he kept copy* of the document he had got Goddard to sign on the 18th June.

329. Why did he not keep it?

330. Why does he not publicly dispute it?

331. And what was HE doing to me?

332. See page 86, BUSINESS.

333. This sentence is *tragi-comical*.

334. Who then had put this into his head?

335. Who has begun it, and who keeps it up still? like a *franc-tireur* behind a hedge, it is true, but it has not come to an end in 1878.

336. His letter of the 21st June had pacified me.

337. My husband received this letter, dated 22nd June, at the same time as I received the one 27th June. Gounod must have made a mistake in the date.

338. Complaining of, fault-findings with "our dear letters" !

339. By ruining it, he it was who rendered it chimerical.

340. Gounod used to complain that people combined to interrupt him whenever he began to talk ; that he did not dare open his mouth, and that I listened to Father Rawlings with more pleasure than I did "my *Gounod*" ! This was madness. He could not stop talking. It was only fair that my husband, who did not understand

* I obtained a copy of it through Mr. Taylor two or three months later.—G. W.

French, should wish that, at meals, the conversation should take place in English, which Gounod spoke wonderfully well, although he could not speak it so quickly as French.

341. What can he be dreaming of to go and announce such ideas so contrary to all he had previously written?

342. Now he says he is *exhausted*, but he was very well, in very good health with the exception of the cough which he had caught, thanks to his own imprudence, by uncovering his arms and shoulders at night. On the contrary, he would read in bed late at night, he got up early, he worked, he played a great deal, he had never been more charming since five months as he was then, and was surprisingly active. Who got him to write this letter of the 22nd June? Was it dictated?

343. See his own memoranda—*fac-simile*—page 76. His cough seemed a chronic one (see his letters to me in 1871). The eczema, the cramps in his stomach, the itchings, the heartburn. He was a martyr to all this in Paris, and when we made his acquaintance in London in 1871 he was constantly ill.

344. *Heartburn*. These memoranda (and I have several others of the same nature) are a striking proof *in his own handwriting* that my husband from memory wrote an exact account of his ailments, and refutes everything Gounod says, since he has left, to the effect that *we made him believe* he was ill!

345. He seemed to do it on purpose.

346. The list is printed before the preface in No. 2, LES LETTRES.

347. See page 166, Note 240; page 58, Note 55; page 74.

348. See page 183—Gounod's letter.

349. See page 179.

350. This is what Mr. De la Pole had written us, now confirmed by Gounod himself. Note 333.

351. I believed Mme. Beaucourt had as much at heart as I had to make Gounod behave reasonably and honourably. I also thought she had more empire over him than I had; Gounod spoke so much of her in one of his brain attacks, that of the 19th January, 1874, which I describe, page 127, FRIENDSHIP, and in my letter to Jean, page 169, LES LETTRES.

352. The false Archduchess of Austria. See page 73, BUSINESS.

353. Word for word what happened.

354. I ought to have said *solicitor*. I did not, in those days, understand the difference between *solicitor* and *barrister*.

355. I felt then positive Gounod had made no agreement. I consider this note of Delacourtie a *ruse de guerre* to contrive to disarm our suspicions, to make us believe affairs were to go on as usual, and to get us to give up without precautions *Polyeucte* immediately for the opening night of the Grand Opera. This is what made them feel hurried and anxious.

356. Mr. Taylor furnished him with everything except the manuscripts.

357. See page 158.
 358. See page 184.
 359. The one of the 22nd June.
 360. I was therefore working for the future.
 361. This is what I hoped. Mr. Taylor, *at first*, used to think we could *force* Gounod to reason.
 362. It was M. Delacourtie and M. Gounod who were lying.
 363. Goddard had signed this, 18th June, 1874.
 364. This is what he did.
 365. Had Goddard been my partner, should I have acted as I did?
 366. It was the 19th December, 1873. I made a mistake in the date. My husband speaks of it in his letter, page 186, translated into English in my pamphlet, "*The History of My Orphanage.*"
 367. That which he has lost is inestimable.
 368. How could I suppose he was lying?
 369. Was he not deceiving me?
 370. See the history of *Ilala*, page 133, FRIENDSHIP. He would not have made me a present of it had he not calculated it was a song which would not sell easily.
 371. How can I know or be a judge of this?
 372. He had, therefore, the intention of taking it away from me.
 373. The one of the 9th and 22nd June.
 373A. See page 160; Note 218.
 374. And I was to be sure to do so.
 375. It did not last two days.
 376. This was magnificent! No one believed it!
 377. And it did not happen.
 378. This letter of Mr. De la Pole exists.
 379. This is what opened my eyes the most.
 380. They did not keep him three months.
 381. Very certain, he never managed to do so.
 382. The white book, in which HE HIMSELF kept the Royalty account, and which I shall keep for ever as an unanswerable proof of the truth of all I state.
 383. Of all that is marked 383, I was the *co-worker*.
 384. He did not even forget a little music paper we had probably paid for.
 385. He wanted to gain time.
 386. It was monstrous!
 387. What delicacy!
 388. Why did he bother his head about it? That is what I should like to find some one to explain to me.
 389. Of which, I suppose, I have not kept a copy, for I can no longer recollect what it means.
 390. I kept copy of this letter, because I mention the proposal of the agreement to be made between my husband and Gounod. I am very sorry now I did not keep copy of all my letters to him.
 391. He did what I asked apparently. See page 218.

391A. M. Jules Diaz de Soria. See page 9, *Quarrel of the Albert Hall Company*, and page 115, BUSINESS; and Nita Gaetano,* p. 7 of the *Quarrel of the Albert Hall Company*, and pages 6 and 41 of BUSINESS, of *Musical Reform*, page 82, and FRIENDSHIP, pages 88 and 102.

392. *Polyeucte* is finished; and if *Georges Dandin* is not finished, it is because he is obliged to study it too much, and that he is not quiet enough.

393. All has proved I was right—*too* right!

394. I should have told him that before knowing me he did not care to keep his original manuscripts at all, and that he would not have given me "*Ilala*," if he had thought it had been a good "*pot-boiler*."

395. Fortunately. The law occasionally seems to be accompanied by providential caprices.

396. See page 208.

397. This is what he did. Uselessly.

398. Then why bother his head about the interests left by him in England? See Note 388.

399. Again. How could Mr. Gavard meddle in the matter?

400. As he told me "*the plan of Honfleur had collapsed*," p. 171. I had replied, "*It is better not to think about Honfleur any more*." It will be plainly seen in this letter that I could not obtain a single frank answer—yes or no—to my frank interrogatories. Was that journey of M. de Beaucourt made for the purpose of *coming to fetch him*? Ah! how I long to know the truth of this!

401. The Jesuit! He had written a *letter*; HE had signed, and had made GODDARD sign the 18th of June agreement.

402. *He had to deny it!* Proof that the De Beaucourts attacked me. I feel sure, poor old man, he defended me well;—and then, God knows how, he fell into their infamous plot.

403. Certainly, he knew all about it. He saw, and knew, and asked to know and see everything.

404. In answer to this, see page 93, BUSINESS.

405. See page 93, BUSINESS.

406. And where has he put them?

407. He was quite disposed to swindle us out of £300 a-year.

408. Have they paid him—yes or no?—100,000 francs (£4,000) for *Cinq Mars*, £4,000 for *Polyeucte*, Commander of the Legion of Honour.† They will be soon calling streets after his name in Paris. I hope one may be called *Rue de la Clique Gounod*!

409. What has he *explained* to me? Where, at what page shall I find the Gounod *explanations*?

* Mrs. Lynedoch Moncrieff.

† 1882. Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, £4,000 for the *Tribut de Zamora*, £4,000 from Littleton (Novello & Co.) for *Redemption*! The Queen of England commands him to write a *Nuptial March* for the Duke of Albany, etc., etc., etc.

410. See page 94, BUSINESS, and pages 150 and 158, LES LETTRES, my letters to Smith (Goddard).

411. *Before all*, they wanted to grab *Polyeucte*.

412. He is right. I have everything to gain by a public inquiry. It is for this that they chose the dagger of the masked, anonymous assassin.

413. Ah, Gounod! read your own sentence over again.

414. Does he believe in it?

415. It has not hurt him much!

416. This is what Goddard had obtained on the 18th of June.

417. That has nothing to do with the letter dated 14th June.

418. Certainly, it was a farce!

419. I had never read it, but it turned out to be of more use to me and the children than I dreamt, for I had only thought of Gounod's interests, which were indirectly mine, and I never thought his and mine could ever be distinct from, or clash with each other.

420. Certainly, it was put into his head, and he kept it there.

421. Mr. Taylor found the proposition too good, and hesitated (on behalf of his own client Gounod) to allow my husband to propose an agreement which appeared to him most imprudently generous.

422. Nothing would have troubled us but this outrageous conduct of Gounod's.

423. Does not the harm he has done us suffice him?

424. A dodge to get me to give up the manuscripts. Old Benedictine,—old Jesuit!

425. We therefore put our journey off till this day.

426. Exactly! Opening night of the Grand Opera.

427. Not in a fit state!!! What hypocrisy!

428. Did I exaggerate my "*cruel and imaginary anxieties*"?

429. As Mr. Gounod helped them so well, it was not difficult to "make believe" anything. The difficulty is to *prove* anything against me.

430. The husband of the false Archduchess of Austria.

431. He is not dead yet. At all events, he has now been *living* not at all "*in the respect of those he loves, and who love him*," for four years!

432. Monstrous!

432A. Cunning!

433. This is what I believed, not having yet seen his memoranda of the 3rd July to the French Embassy.

434. Mr. Gounod had complained of him very much, and we ourselves thought he must be very dull of comprehension—anything but an able man.

435. The letter I received, on the 11th July, at Righi Kaltbad.

436. His answer of ten pages must have seemed to him very unsatisfactory.

437. I had told him (Mr. Taylor having threatened us with an

action) that I would sooner burn *Polyeucte* than give it up by foul means. He did not dare tell me I had not the right to do so. He took refuge by blaspheming the words of our Saviour to answer me.

438. I had not hinted a word about *Mr. Gavard's indelicacies*.

439. I saw well enough through their dodge of getting *Polyeucte* at once.

440. I was not wanting elements! Mr. Delacourtie had quite enough.

441. He wanted to gain time, and get Gounod out of Paris.

442. The 9th was the day fixed since the 1st July between Mr. Taylor and Mr. Moreau.

443. The last letter Gounod sent me.

444. See Note 435, higher up.

445. I read this letter over and over again. I could not make it out.

446. To swindle us.

447. Certainly, there is not a suffering on earth, or a curse of hell, he does not amply deserve.

448. All these expenses were caused by himself.

449. Gounod knew well enough that it was he and De la Pole at St. Leonards, while I was at Tavistock House, who agreed together upon the new combination Goddard; so he must have known that De la Pole replied to him as he would to a *raving maniac*. Those are the very words Mr. De la Pole makes use of.

450. Burn *Polyeucte*.

451. Again blasphemy!

452. Never trustful except through caprice with new friends; but never for any length of time with any one.

453. And where did he throw me?—and my husband?

454. Putting on *my* shoulders, as usual, his faults, my grief!—his grief!—our grief!

454. See Note 365.

456. See page 98, BUSINESS.

457. The same game: to try and prevent us coming to Paris while Gounod was there.

458. Why?

459. So he wanted to be paid for his *apparent good feeling* towards us. That is simply called *chantage* (bribery).

460. We really offered more than £300 a-year. Our proposals were made, believing Gounod had made no agreement with Goddard, and that affairs would go on as usual under my management.

461. Mr. Taylor had, as I had, answered him with perfect frankness, giving him every possible detail.

462. Why did it not thus come to pass?

463. I never should have dared to believe or repeat such a thing had I not possessed it in writing. Mr. Taylor had already told me so, and I had replied to Gounod: "*If it is war you desire, you shall*

have it !" etc. So, then, will my readers pay attention to the fact, that Gounod had not left England twenty-seven days before he threatened us with a lawsuit ! for the simple pleasure of a getting up a row, and getting the papers to talk about him.

464. Mr. Taylor would not believe I could possibly get any benefit out of this arrangement for myself or my children.

465. I told him in vain, "No, all they are trying to do is to ruin the business in England first from jealousy of me, then to disgust Gounod with England and me, and in the third place they wish to prevent my succeeding with my school by which they know I can make Gounod rich and powerful." Mr. Taylor thought me horrible to be able to suspect them of such duplicity. He has told me since then (all having been amply proved) that I was right ; that it was a disgraceful affair into which his firm had been drawn, and which it never would have accepted had they believed me at the time. He had thought me mad ; and so I was very nearly, I believe. Still I was right in all that I prophesied him capable of.

466. Oh, no ! this was nothing to do with it.

467. How stupid we were to send him back anything !

468. It was just what the French lot, the De Beaucourts, at the time, did not wish.

469. And I was very near it.

470. I cried all day and all night. My husband also was in despair.

471. The letter of the 7th July. THE LAST !

472. Gounod affectionate and submissive. Delacourtie threatening.

473. All quite waste of time, because of the Goddard agreement.

474. The agreement Gounod had accepted, hoping to swindle us out of £300 a-year.

475. Gounod, did he know that we were in Paris ?

476. All these were cunning tricks to make us believe that Gounod had not compromised himself with Goddard.

477. Poor Mr. Taylor ! He was acting in good faith. He did not suspect the scoundrels he had to deal with.

478. Mr. Taylor did not yet believe Gounod and Goddard had made an agreement.

479. See pages 86 and 166, FRIENDSHIP.

480. This was an invention on my part. I had it with me ready to give up to him in Paris.

481. I do not think he had it.

482. For Goddard. There are four other publishers.

483. He made Mr. Taylor believe white was black—I knew better !

484. I had threatened nothing before I had been threatened.

485. It was the time he wanted to save—that's all. He knew *Polyculte* by heart, as he knew all his other works, from beginning to end.

486. A sincere and frank scoundrel !

487. At all events, I was brave, and I made war without any mask, and I did not hide myself behind a wall to fight.

488. See page 186, *LES LETTRES*.

489. He has re-written *Polyeucte* as high up as he could get in No. 17 Rue de la Rochefoucauld, out of the way of his dear wife and his darling son and daughter ; whereas with me he composed and wrote *by my side*, better inspired *by me*, helped by my contact, soothed by my influence ; he never wanted to be alone to compose in Tavistock House.

490. See his letter 8th June, 1874.

491. I repeat again, "*Why has it changed ?*"

492. I find M. Delacourtie clear in only one thing. Clear in his desire to help Gounod cheat us, and to get him away from all English ties.

493. Solicitors ought to be punished by law for being so stupid.

494. Gounod's dignity ! Ha ! ha !

495. Corruption and bribery, M. Delacourtie. Why did you not appeal to the law ?

496. Jean Gounod had let out (to me) in September, 1873, that his mother had told him that his sisters' dower had been saved. The Gounod children will be very rich.

497. I still have that faith. It was neither "*arrogant or foolish*." See page 173, *FRIENDSHIP*.

498. That is exactly what happened.

499. Always the same cunning with Mr. Taylor.

500. Delacourtie was much of a weathercock as Gounod.

501. Ridiculous and false !

502. The agreement of the 18th June ! Dear me ! See page 172.

503. I then became convinced that Mme. Gounod had something to do with these newspaper articles. The very week Gounod returned to his wife, these articles appeared, articles worthy of a French *mère de famille* ! Not knowing this at that time, I attributed them to Choudens, M. Paul Jules Barbier, M. Delacourtie, and others of the Gounod crew.

504. I do not find any complication.

505. Oh, dear, yes ! I should have lost a great deal more if these unheard-of, infamous articles had not been written. They are weapons against me which I have turned against them.

506. I and my husband obstinately refuse to admit the responsibility of Gounod, or his culpability in this affair.

507. See page 146, *BUSINESS*—Liverpool Festival.

508. Mr. Taylor did not appear to be able to take in that Goddard was the *exclusive publisher* of these works of Gounod ; we therefore *could* not be free to sell these works and earn the £300 a-year for Gounod. I left the management of the business entirely to Mr. Taylor, but I would not on any account listen to the

words "Restitution of the MSS." before signing an agreement with Gounod, as he had been pleased to place himself in Goddard's hands, who had no means of pushing his music.

509. Who will believe that Messrs. Delacourtie, Gounod, & Co. had not read the *Gaulois* article? His denial is worse than a confession.

510. It is impudent at least!

511. We should have had the legal right to prevent M. Gounod receiving any money from M. Goddard.

512. Preparations for the lawsuit Gounod *v.* Goddard.

513. Was it cruel enough?

514. By "*inspired*" I meant inspired by Mme. Gounod. I could not yet suspect HIM."

515. This was exact.

516. This was also exact.

517. Now then, Mr. Gavard? Did he also try to help to cheat us?

518. Have I not proved it? One hundred thousand witnesses can they not prove it?

519. For my part, I never consider solicitors understand anything. They only understood we had no stamped agreement, and took no count of the rest.

520. Page 139, FRIENDSHIP.

521. He did not obey me at all when he found out Gounod was my bitter enemy. How cowardly men are when they see a woman alone and deserted!

522. An insinuation of Gounod himself, that *I had robbed him of his health and his money.* (*Gaulois'* article, translated into English in the pamphlet by P. D. WHAT NEXT?)

523. See my accounts—BUSINESS, page 3.

524. Which he knew had been used at the Liverpool Festival.

525. He had fallen into my trap! the old man!—I perceived, at once an opportunity which gave me the chance of possessing, in his own handwriting, a proof of the discussions which took place for the smallest sum of money! Pay at last, Mr. Gounod, the poor old widow of the copyist who, in your days of poverty, gave you credit for the copies of the orchestral parts of your cantata in 1839!

526. Miss Westmacott—Marion—See note 181.

527. I had told Mr. C. to frankly ask Mr. Gounod if he had any complaint to make of my honesty: that he had heard very malignant rumours: that he wished to do business with me: and that from his recommendation would depend his action in the matter. I wished so much to SEE something positive.

528. And of the most libellous description.

529. Not one word of truth.

530. It did not belong to his cowardly and Jesuitical character to put upon paper any opinion of Mrs. Weldon. He inspired them to others.

531. He trusts to the *Future* to give us each our portion of what is just, and for the *Present* he does all he can to make the world believe he is a blighted being, a robbed martyr—martyr to the seductions of an adventuress and an *intriguante*.

532. How honourable !

533. Let us consider these words, "*very grave*."

534. I did not believe this at all : but it has struck me since then that Gounod had given him money to tell me the opera was finished in the hope that I, thinking the same finished, would think it useless and give it up. I suspect this, because, later on, a report was spread that I had only returned my score which had not the *ballet*, because I thought it useless. I never thought of that, to tell the truth, till it was put into my head. I never should have thought of making any use of it, and very much regret I have not kept a copy of it, at all events—for, for England, I had a right to it, which M. Gounod would have found it very difficult to dispute. It might have been useful for the children.

535. As for the "*three other symphonies*" I do not know what he is talking about. I know of none.

536. To struggle behind a wall in the dark like a skunk, but he dare not measure himself with me in the light of day, sword in hand.

537. We had too much against us.

537A. I hope to be able to bring an action against Gounod for libel.

538. What generosity in him to keep them back ! To keep them for himself and for those who go to see him.

539. Why has he not prosecuted me ? Does he think I did not know how the law protected great people by enabling them to prosecute the *printer*, not the *writer* of a libel. I am my own printer and publisher in my own defence and for the good of the public. Attack me, if you dare !

540. This is the way Gounod frightens everybody.

541. On page 259 he was entirely at my disposal for anything and everything I might require.

542. See page 112, BUSINESS, and page 20, *La Destruction du Polyeucte de Charles Gounod*. He was the only person who knew where my manuscript was.

543. Especially as Mr. Gounod was doing all he could to circulate it. He generously pardoned himself.

544. Mr. W. He would not even write the detested name of W.E.L.D.O.N., which means in French, *Bienfait*. (*Well done*.)

545. He would not even write the name of his "*so angelic guardian*."

546. He did not dare write it was *me*. He knew I did not fear publicity. He had no objection to libel me, but feared the consequences.

547. He describes the system very well (page 46 of his *Autobiography*) and it brought him in a good bit of money.

548. *La Destruction du Polyeucte de Charles Gounod.*

549. I could not persuade my husband to move. The Judges and the newspapers would have been bribed. I should not have gained anything—not even publicity.

550. I have been told since then that my solicitor must have been very dishonest not to have furnished me, in writing, with a copy of the proposals made by Mr. Delacourtie. Yet he received from me £24 for reading my Manuscript.

551. The Royalties on his works in England.

552. And then I was not to publish any of my books.

553. This is mentioned in all the printed papers concerning our "Gounod Society" (pages 47 and 48 *Musical Reform*). The tone of all my articles as well as Gounod's.

554. The Littleton law-suit. See page 76, BUSINESS; pages 1-6, *the Quarrel*; and page 106, FRIENDSHIP.

555. Mrs. Weldon.

556. Mrs. Treherne—my mother.

557. That Mrs. Weldon slept with men for £4 a night.

558. GALLIA.

558A. He had always said Franceschi was his wife's lover. He told every one so. It was for this Franceschi intended to fight a duel with him. See page 122, note 142.

559. Bénédicte Savoye, her sisters and mother.

559A. I always have a sort of feeling Madame. Gounod must have given Gounod forged documents against me.

560. Mr. Barbier, like a great cowardly baby, now writes against me in the newspapers, making me pass for a female pick-pocket and an adventurer.

561. What beautiful words!

562. He had written to his wife to say that if she would come and take a house in London, and live quietly with him, that he would pay the sum demanded and not go to prison (to please her) and return with her to France at the end of the two months.

563. I tell the history of this—page 114, FRIENDSHIP.

564. The 8th of April is my husband's birthday. He is born in 1837. He is just six weeks older than me.

565. Gounod made people in Paris believe my husband was tired of me and wanted to get rid of me.*

566. When newspapers begin persons' histories and invent scandalous lies about them, they ought to be made to print the history of the aggrieved party as lengthily as possible till she or he were satisfied. A woman then would have some chance of defending herself against the gross attacks of journalists, who then would not dare indulge in ignoble "witticisms" against persons who have no means of defending themselves.

* 1882. Perhaps it was true! but this letter and Mr. Weldon's conduct to me then certainly did not give me that idea. But he is very artful! G. W.

567. This is proved—proved a hundred times.
 568. This is sentimentality. I have worked since ten years to save children from wretchedness and poverty; I strive to turn them in to something beautiful and useful. Who has pity on me or on them?
 569. No!
 570. *Grannie* (Grandmother.)
 571. See page 244.
 572. After having written this the *Gaulois* got the first volume of this work stolen. The existing volume, entitled FRIENDSHIP, was written in 1878 and published in 1882.

NOTES TO THE SECOND PART.

BUSINESS.

MY ORPHANAGE AND GOUNOD IN ENGLAND.

1. I wrote that then. I would not do so now.
2. His *Autobiography*.
3. The one of the 18th June, 1874, page 172, LES LETTRES.
4. See pages 25 and 137, BUSINESS.
5. See pages 88 and 129, BUSINESS.
6. See agreement 18th June, and Notes of LES LETTRES.
7. See my Memorandum of the 1st May, 1872, page 79, LES LETTRES.
8. This man died since this volume was printed, in great distress, eaten into by a horrible malady. He tried to wheedle himself into any house where he fancied there was a skeleton in the cupboard, hoping to worm it out, and then be in a position to obtain hush money for keeping the secret quiet. He had hoped to have found one in our home!
9. The work is compiled and printed.
10. I have told about this, page 60, FRIENDSHIP.
11. Gounod is not sure. He even thinks he was paid nothing for "*Tobie*."
12. Page 15, LES LETTRES.
13. In 1878, I finished paying Goddard for the copyright of all Gounod's Choral Music. It is something to leave to my school. It does not bring in anything at present.
14. See page 21, *The Quarrel*.
15. See my note, page 79, LES LETTRES.
16. See page 70, LETTRES.

17. See page 57. *Autobiographie*.

18. See page 11. *Musical Review*. and page 33. *Quarrel*.

19. He was in no pressing want of money, for Jeanne was then about 12 years old, and we were working to save her dowry.

20. Mr. Jules Faure brought us back this cheque, for I had made a mistake in it. He is therefore witness that I *never* paid that money to Mr G. yet, for after I had corrected the mistake in the cheque, he took it back to Mr. G. It was not therefore I who put the £300 into my pocket.

21. Everything was always my fault. For my defence, read Mr. Gounod's letters to me in 1871, and the Notes of *L'AS LUTRIN*.

22. See pages 74, 36, 37, 104, 111, 113, 146. *FRIENDSHIP*.

23. See Appendix of the *The Quarrel*.

24. And who now try to take me by surprise.

25. These letters, as well as Mme. Gérard's, of course, are in my possession.

26. The number of disagreeable or harmful acquaintances which Gounod brought us in contact with are innumerable. There is not anything odious, money loss, great or little, which I have not incurred from some satellite, sycophant, or parasite of Gounod's. Poor man! What ill luck he brought me! This is what has been my inheritance.

27. See the letters of that date.

28. A very frank letter, full of Explanations.

29. See pages 150 and 153 my letters to Goddard-Smith.

30. See page 208, *L'AS LUTRIN*.

31. See the letter in question.

32. This is clear.

33. But, alas! now in 1878, we have no longer the means to push anything. It hardly gets sold at all.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS NET.

Music by
JOHN URICH.

VENETIAN BARCAROLA in D \sharp (original key).
Do. (Simplified Accompaniment).
English and Italian words in B \sharp .

PITY THE WIVES AND BABES AT HOME.
Words by F. E. WEATHERLY.

THE ANGEL AND THE SUNSHINE.
Words by F. E. WEATHERLY (Full Score).

BAGATELLE. Words by T. HOOD.

NOURMAHAL. Words by T. SARSFIELD CARTER,
for Solo and Chorus (Full Score).

AMARILLA. For Chorus and as Pianoforte Duet (Full Score).

CHARLES GOUNOD.

{ **BELLO È IL CIEL.** Melody. Written to Chopin's Etude
{ **RHAPSODY.** English words by HENRY KNIGHT. [in La \flat .

Words from L'ART D'ÊTRE GRAND PÈRE.

Poetry by VICTOR HUGO.

1. **CHANSON DE GRAND PÈRE.** CH. GOUNOD.
(Grandfather's Ditty).
2. **CHANSON D'ANCÊTRE.** GEORGINA WELDON.
(*Song of our Ancestors*) Full Score. Solo and Chorus.
3. **CHANT SUR LE BERCEAU.** (*By a Cradle*). " " "
4. **TAMBOURIN.** (Grand bal sous le tamarin). " " "
(*Grandmother's ditty*).
5. **CHOSSES DU SOIR.** " " " " "
- (*Night Thoughts*).

F. CLAY.

SANDS OF DEE. Words by CH. KINGSLEY.

MARY. Words by E. PEMBER.

ELAINE'S SONG. Words by TENNYSON.

THERE IS NO FLOCK. Words by LONGFELLOW.

17. See page 57, *Autobiographie*.
18. See page 41, *Musical Reform*, and page 33, *Quarrel*.
19. He was in no pressing want of money, for Jeanne was then about 12 years old, and we were working to save her dowry.
20. Mr. Jules Faure brought us back this cheque, for I had made a mistake in it. He is therefore witness that I *myself* paid that money to Mr. Gye, for after I had corrected the mistake in the cheque, he took it back to Mr. Gye. It was not therefore I who put the £300 into my pocket.
21. Everything was always my fault! For my defence, read Mr. Gounod's letters to me in 1871, and the Notes of LES LETTRES.
22. See pages 74, 86, 93, 104, 111, 119, 146, FRIENDSHIP.
23. See Appendix of the *The Quarrel*.
24. And who now try to take me by famine.
25. These letters, as well as Mme. Gérard's, of course, are in my possession.
26. The number of disagreeable or baneful acquaintances which Gounod brought us in contact with are innumerable. There is not anything odious, money loss, great or little, which I have not incurred from some satellite, sycophant, or parasite of Gounod's. Poor man! What ill luck he brought me! This is what has been my inheritance.
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(*Night Thoughts*).

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ELAINE'S SONG. Words by TENNYSON.

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CHARLES GOUNOD.

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 Entreat Me not to Leave Thee (Ruth's Song). Scored. E to G.
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 F to G.
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cœur). Scored. E flat to G. | Go, Lovely Rose. C to F. |
| Bolero. B below to B above the
stave. | Passed Away. |
| Loin du Pays (Far from my Native
Mountains). C to G. | When in the Early Morn. No. 1:
F to A; No. 2: D to F. |
| Ma belle amie est morte (Lamento).
D to F sharp. Scored. | Perchè Piangi. C to F. |
| Oh! dille Tu. E flat to G. | Quanti Mai. B below stave to G. |
| Mignonne voici l'Avril (April Song).
D to F sharp. | La Fauvette (composed 1830). F
to F. Scored. |
| The Fountain mingles. D to E. | Si vous n'ouvrez. C to E. |
| Woe's Me. E to sharp. | Queen of Love. E to E. |
| There is Dew. E to G. | The Sea hath its Pearls (Violon
cello obbligato). B to F. |
| If Thou art Sleeping. F to F. | Heureux sera le jour. B to E. |
| Peacefully Slumber. E to F. | For Thee to Live or Die. B to E. |
| Peacefully Slumber (arranged for
Violin solo). Full score. | Chidioc Tichbourne. C below
stave to E. |
| | Fragen. |

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 Blessed is the Man. (Psalm i.)

arp.

obligata

E, and

cne and

Heart.

No. 1:

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ow

<i>Musical Reform (Complete),</i> - - - - -	£0	2	6
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<i>*Gounod and my Orphanage in England (in French),</i>	0	10	6
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<i>The Destruction of Ch. Gounod's "Polyeucte," by Mrs. Weldon,</i> - - - - -	0	1	0

* The English translation will be ready by August, 1882. To be obtained of me at 23 Oxford Street, London, W.

PRICE OF VOL. I., 5/3;
OF VOL. II., 5/3,

Post Free, each
Volume,
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MY ORPHANAGE

PART I.—FRIENDSHIP.

PART II.—BUSINESS.

AND COUNSEL IN ENGLAND.

II.



Narrative
by

**GEORGINA
WELDON**

*On her Method of Training the
Voice, Education, etc.*

For her Personal Justification.

Translated from the French by N. N.



LONDON:
THE MUSIC & ART ASSOCIATION, 23a OXFORD STREET, W.
WILLIAM REEVES, 185 FLEET STREET.
1882.

"ILALA,"* MAY, 1873.

WRITTEN IN COMMEMORATION OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE BY LORD HOUGHTON.

UNDER the name of "ILALA, MAY, 1873," Lord Houghton has published a Poem commemorative of David Livingstone's death, and of the glorious funeral which Great Britain gave the mortal remains of this heroic traveller.

The death of a great man is not only a national mourning, but also a universal mourning. All men who devote their lives to humanity are the co-citizens of humanity. The black men who accompanied Livingstone in his painful travels, and who shared with him his fatigues and his perils loved him as a father, and followed him as sons to his last resting-place in his own country.

Lord Houghton's recital deeply touched me. I forgot in reading it that I was not of the same country as the celebrated traveller, or, rather, I imagined I was his countryman. On this poem I have composed music which the author of the words kindly allowed me to publish; and which is, at all events, a mark of sympathetic admiration for a great memory.

Every one has a means of serving his fellow-creatures. Livingstone found his vocation in the scientific and civilizing exploration of far-off countries, of which the manners and climate, the geological and human history, had till then remained impenetrable.

Others find means of doing good without leaving their own country, and almost without leaving their home.

It is to one of these, more humble but not less courageous, representatives of patient and indefatigable devotion that I desire to consecrate the profits (however modest or abundant they may be) of the sale of this piece of music. Mrs. Weldon, whose daily inexhaustible charity I grow to revere more and more, has consecrated her life to the material guardianship and to the musical instruction of poor children, whom her maternal care seeks to protect by education, trade, and the resources of talent, against the trials and the dangers of an artist's life. Her little *Nursery* of to-day wants culture and help to enable it to become an *Orchard*. Providence, who ever blesses the courage of Faith and the tears of compassion, will not refuse her aid, and the woman who piously strives to establish this noble institution will, I trust, ere the hour of her funeral, reap the joyful and consoling fruits, the blessing and reward of her generous undertaking.

27 April, 1874.

CH. GOUNOD.

* When Livingstone could go no further he desired his boys to build him a hut of long grass, and, when he had laid down in it, he bade them leave him alone, but each day to look in, and say "Good morning."

MY ORPHANAGE

AND

GOUNOD IN ENGLAND.

PART I.—FRIENDSHIP.

PART II.—BUSINESS.

NARRATIVE BY

GEORGINA WELDON,

On her method of Teaching Singing, General Training, and Education of
Children, Published for her

PERSONAL JUSTIFICATION

At the Request of her Friends.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY N. N.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.



LONDON:

THE MUSIC AND ART ASSOCIATION, 23a OXFORD STREET, W
1882.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Qui ! voilà le miracle, inégal à tout autre,
C'est qu'une bergerette, avec sa foi d'apôtre,
Ait eu meilleur secours de ce peuple aux abois
Qu'avec tous leurs trésors les favoris des rois.

Mais quoi ! . . . cette candeur, à bon droit méprisée
Chez les sages de cour est matière de risée ! . . .
Prodiguez votre sang, votre âme, votre cœur,
D'un peuple agonisant refaites un vainqueur
C'est par la calomnie, et l'injure, et la haine
Que s'acquitte envers vous l'ingratitude humaine,
Et le premier effort du serpent irrité
C'est de mordre la main qui l'a ressuscité !

Jeanne D'Arc (p. 122), J. P. BARBIEE.

Literal Translation.

Yes ! 'tis this the miracle unequalled by all other ; a shepherdess with her apostle's faith has done more towards saving her beaten countrymen than all the treasures of the king's favourites . . . How now ! 'Tis this which is held up to derision by the wise statesmen of the Court ! *Pour forth your blood, your heart, your soul.* Give Victory to a people in its death-throes. 'Tis by *calumny and abuse and hatred that human ingratitude acquits itself towards you, and the first effort the warmed adder makes, is to sting the hand which has saved it !*

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

IF this book finds much difficulty in obtaining publicity, it will be because all the immense influence of Gounod's name will be brought to bear against the efforts I am making to prove that we, in no way, deserve the abominable aspersions and calumnies, of which we are victims.

A little over a fortnight ago, with the object of propagating my defence and my Orphanage, I wrote to Mr. Blanchot, the Director of the celebrated *Bibliographie de la France* with the advertisements of this book, desiring him to insert them, for which I should have paid the usual price.

From this personage I received no answer ; but in the August 7th (1875) Number, the following notice may be read :

The Council of Administration of the Library Club reserves expressly to itself the right of refusing all advertisements which might affect a public or a private interest.

Mr. Blanchot is a friend of Mr. de Choudens.

Mr. Pillet, the printer, is a school friend of Mr. Gounod.

Although this intrigue is naturally most baneful to me, I ought only congratulate myself; for it is an extra proof, if any were needed, of what I intend favouring the public with as incontestable evidence of the way a private persecution can be organised in the present century, inflicting upon the person who is the object thereof, and the benevolent work she had undertaken, grave and irreparable injury during her lifetime.

I aim at Reform and not at Popularity ; my pupils know this well and will honour me in consequence. It is for this I submit, with patience and even contentment, to an act of injustice which would appear impossible to believe, if I did not, through the exceptional position created by my vocation, find myself able to denounce it— not with impunity, it is true, but at least without risk of starving to death.

GEORGINA WELDON.

11th August, 1875.

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MY ORPHANAGE
AND
GOUNOD IN ENGLAND.

BUSINESS.

SECOND PART.—CHAPTER I.

THE most expeditious way of explaining the *business* relations which existed between M. Gounod and ourselves will be, I think, to give my readers an exact copy of the "*Bill*," which, at the end of October, 1874, was asked for by Mr. Taylor, Mr. Gounod's English solicitor, on behalf of Mr. Gounod.

A *Bill*, which I resigned myself to draw up, after several threats of legal proceedings, etc., and which I gave to a French friend of Mr. Gounod's, in November, 1874, with a letter, proposing a peaceable way out of the difficulty. To this no reply has been returned. I, therefore, on the 5th January, 1875, sent a Paris *avoué* to Mr. Delacourtie, to tell him that I had been patient long enough; and that if the proposals I had made were not accepted, I should have no course left open to me but to write and publish to the world the history of the conduct of Mr. Gounod and his friends; that I should take this step with great regret, and that, as I believed, the Gounod and De Beaucourt families could not but deplore the consequences thereof, I begged they would reflect seriously, and pause before refusing what I claimed; as, my book, once printed and submitted to them, I could not consent to suppress its publication for less than seventy-five francs a page (printed), besides the conditions already imposed by me, and which can be read in my letters to Messrs. Gounod and Delacourtie, as well as in my *Bill*, which I annex to the present chapter.

If this book sees the light, it will be, as will be shown in the following narrative, simply because M. Gounod is advised to break his word, *both written and verbal*, towards us; and that till the last moment his French friends wish him to do all he can to make people believe he left England because he had been "*shamefully robbed by Mr. and Mrs. W.*," which, in truth, would have been the only legitimate reason, had it been the true one, for covering us as well as himself with ridicule and infamy.

Poor Gounod, being a Genius, one forgives him easily for having lost his senses for three years, and for having allowed himself to be pillaged by English pickpockets.

One forgives him for having said and sung in every key, that he dwelt in "Paradise"—that he was nursed by "*guardian angels*"—that "*this young wife, and this young husband were emblems of healthy peace*"—that "*his dear hostess possessed a motherly heart*"—a voice which was the "*echo of heaven*," and that his "*beloved host was a Christian brother*."

One forgives this Genius for having been taken in; for having, in the end, discovered that he had been the object of false caresses—the victim of a prostituted love, of a treacherous friendship; one forgives him for having lived three years under the roof of a man who exchanged his wife for the "*hard cash*" the feeble compositions of his "*worn-out brain*" brought in to the till.

One forgives him for saying this woman was violent, passionate, and mercenary.

One forgives him for complaining—"She used to beat me!"

One forgives him for telling every one who will listen to him that he has been the victim of this infamous couple.

However, occasionally, people find that he is ill-advised to make himself ridiculous!

"Ridiculous!"

"Yes, it is ridiculous," they say, "after having for so long sung the praises of the people with whom he lived so long to run them down. He would have done better to pay all that the rapacity of these people exacted, and avoided thereby all this gossip and scandal."

"It is a pity to see Gounod (so great a Genius) make himself ridiculous, and give himself out as a victim. If a man chooses to entangle himself thus, he must expect to pay dearly for such '*liaisons*' sooner or later."

* * * * *

I should like to know what people will say of Gounod and of his *clique*, when they get to understand by proofs which can be examined as much as any one may wish (and of which I will eagerly supply any address, any name I might be asked for—the original letters shall be sworn to by affidavit if required), that Gounod, instead of having lived with people who *took* everything from him, lived with friends who *gave* him everything; that he accepted *everything*, well knowing that all they did for him could not cost *nothing*.

And that Gounod, by first allowing, and then by encouraging the *indecent* stories circulated against them, has rendered himself simply *ignoble*, which, according to my ideas, is far worse than ridiculous.

This therefore is my bill such as I presented it:—

M. Gounod and his friends wish to know the amount of his debt to us.

In the first place, Mr. Weldon only wishes he would refund to me the sums I have spent on the engraving of several of his works, £282 0 0

M. Gounod's *Pension* for seven months, washing, carriage—wine, &c., included,... .. 140 0 0

£422 0 0

Brought forward—	£422	0	0
Mr. Bowen May's (solicitor) account—Metzler, Novello, &c.,	110	0	0
Subscription and Entrance Fee Royal Thames Yacht Club,	8	0	0
English translation (Joan of Arc) Miss Horace Smith,	16	0	0
Doctor's bills, medicines for two years,	45	0	0
	£601	0	0

Mr. Weldon has promised me all this money for my Orphanage, in case I can obtain it from Mr. Gounod, or his friends, except the sum of £140, which is due to him.

The first thing which I consider undoubtedly due to me by M. Gounod, is £3000, as compensation for having prevented me from carrying on a profession by which I was earning money for my Orphanage,* ... 3000 0 0

Mr. Gounod represented himself as capable and desirous of facilitating my career as a professional singer. I, on my side, agreed to do all in my power to push his music, and to see that the compositions, on which he was to receive a royalty, should be propagated as much as possible by myself and my pupils. To this end he remained in England during the summer of 1871. I sang and he accompanied me in several songs which he had composed at different concerts. He seemed very eager and anxious for my success. He accepted and refused engagements for me as he pleased; and I entrusted the entire management of my business to him, believing him to have much experience, and knowing that I had none at all. I learned to spin, in order to represent the better his *Marguerite* in "*Faust*." He arranged the rôle of *Pauline* in his new opera "*Polyeucte*." He reduced the score of the whole of my part himself for pianoforte. This is a work which he frequently assured me he had never undertaken for any artist except myself, but that on account of the high veneration he entertained for my great talent, he had taken the trouble of doing so, and that he had never done so for any other artist, male or female—not even for Mme. Viardot, whom he had always considered as the god-mother of his career.

Many letters to me from M. Gounod will prove the truth of this statement, and my views of the affair from a purely commercial point of view. He, as composer,

£3601 0 0

* His letters of 1871 are there to prove the interest he took in my school.

Brought forward—£3601 o o

rejoiced to find a singer who could interpret his compositions in a way that pleased him ; I, as singer, was infinitely gratified and grateful to find a great composer like him take me by the hand, and, by his consideration for me, place me at once as an artist in the first rank among professional singers.

He got me engaged for the first two concerts at the Conservatoire in Paris, in 1871, after the War, as well as for the Opera Comique ; and chose me to sing the solos in his "*Mass*" and "*Gallia*" at the Church of St. Eustache. He refused £40 for me at Trouville, £100 at Marseilles, amongst other offers of engagements which were made to me, and of which I have not kept an exact account.

But I possess enough documents to prove that M. Gounod acted in my interest as my agent, and that I repaid his kindness to me as much as I could by singing his compositions, to the exclusion of all others.

When we left Paris at the end of November, 1871, M. Gounod accompanied us for the purpose of giving evidence in an action he had brought against an English Music publisher from whom he recovered later on £100. He arrived at our house very ill, and the doctor we sent for (Dr. MacKern) pronounced him dangerously ill (much worse than we thought him). After having attended him 11 days, he refused to continue his visits, or to take the responsibility of being his medical adviser, unless we promised to keep him very quiet for two months, and prevent him returning to his Paris life of excitement and worry.

For two months Mr. Weldon and I nursed him day and night. I never put on a dress. I myself cooked all his food, and the greater part of the time fed him myself through the spout of a little porcelain jug. In the middle of February, 1872, we went to Brighton to keep a professional engagement, and there he was very ill with a cerebral attack, which frightened me exceedingly ; notwithstanding which I had to sing at the concerts in order to keep my paid engagements.

When we returned to London, M. Gounod's health had improved, and he was able to carry out an engagement *which he had made with the Royal Albert Hall Commissioners before I knew him well*, and which he had accepted before speaking to me about it.

I specially mention all these things because I have lately been told that I manœuvred very cleverly for my own ends to keep M. Gounod in England, the fact

£3601 o o

Brought forward—£3601 0 0

being that I knew nothing whatever about it, as those who had to do with the Albert Hall Company at the time can testify.

I, on the contrary, was thinking of nothing but making my *début* in *Polyeucte* at the Grand Opera in Paris in 1872. I had obtained designs for the costumes of the rôle of Pauline from an artist, and I had sent the patterns to India to have Indian stuffs embroidered for the purpose.

M. Gounod's health as well as his temper (for which Mr. Weldon and I hold him irresponsible) made it, as we ourselves soon perceived, impossible for me to continue my career as a public singer. He required still more vigilant and incessant care, and often made me quite ill with the scenes he would get up. He was beside himself on account of the scandalous tales spread concerning himself and me all over Paris by his wife. She refused to come and nurse him; she made all the trouble and anxiety of looking after him weigh upon our shoulders, at the same time spreading broadcast the report that her husband was living with a woman whose wages were sin, and even carried her malice so far as to say that my price was 100 frs. a night. Thus passed the winter and spring. Summer came, and the physicians recommended him to go to Spa for his health.

During this time I had taught singing to a young and pretty girl. I took her into our house, and hoped that she would one day take my place as the favourite singer of M. Gounod. But she, discouraged by the extraordinary tempers of M. Gounod, sold herself to an agent, although at the time she owed me no less than £20. As this money is due to me from a person introduced into my house by a friend of M. Gounod's, and I helped her with all my power, contrary to my own personal interest, it seems to me that it is but just that M. Gounod should be held responsible for this £20. 20 0 0

Madame Franchi came to ask assistance of him. She is the wife of a theatrical agent of Strakosch's, and on his account I lent her £5 10s. This sum I paid her myself in order to spare M. Gounod the misery of spending it. 5 10 0

M. Strakosch brought a young man to M. Gounod to beg him to give him singing lessons. M. Gounod advised him to address himself to me, and asked me to undertake him as a pupil to oblige M. Strakosch, who he said might be very useful to us. Thereupon I

£3626 10 0

Brought forward—£3626 10 0
 consented. The result was that M. Strakosch did not keep the agreement which I had made with him, and it ended by the young man costing me out of my own pocket (besides £18 given me for him by friends) at least £250. 250 0 0

He sang at all M. Gounod's concerts, to the number of twelve, and for his services M. Gounod never paid him a single penny. M. Gounod ought certainly to return me this £250, which I spent in his interest and at his recommendation.

He wished me to receive and assist Madame Franchi because he thought that her husband might be of service to him. He pressed me to do all that I could in his interests, but forgot entirely everything that was likely to advance my own.

The young girl, my pupil (mentioned before, and who remained only five months with us) on leaving us received at least £600 a-year from her agent, so I do not think that I set too high a price on myself in asking £1000 a-year. I have consulted others upon this subject, and their opinion is that I should not certainly have made less than £2000 a-year.

I am now going to try to recommence my career in the hope of being able to succeed in establishing my orphanage on a solid foundation; but my health is nearly ruined, and at my age (37) I cannot hope to reconstruct it and make use of it as a younger woman might. One single example of the harm the incessant and nervous watching M. Gounod's state has caused me is that now, instead of being able to hold my breath on a note for 45 seconds as I was able to do when he made my acquaintance, I cannot now hold on my breath for more than 25 seconds. I have also become much more nervous. I therefore feel that in claiming from M. Gounod £3000 for the 3 years I devoted to him, I am demanding an insignificant compensation.

M. Gounod owes me £9, a portion of the sum paid by me for a writing table presented to my husband at Christmas, 1873, by M. Gounod and me. 9 0 0

For copies of scores and separate orchestral parts of *Foan of Arc*, and of his Mass, "*SS. Angeli Custodes*," M. Gounod owes me £39. 39 0 0

At least £7 I have paid out of my pocket for registrations, translations, etc. 7 0 0

I am perfectly certain that I have spent for such purposes much more than the above mentioned sums, but I never thought of keeping accounts. I know

£3931 10 0

Brought forward—£393¹ 10 0

that I spent nothing but what was either for M. Gounod or my orphans, and I could never have dreamt that the day would come when M. Gounod would treat us as he has.

Some people say that all that I did for M. Gounod was *in my own interests*. Not only did I prevent my name being inserted as a singer in the programmes of his concerts, but I did not sing anywhere, feeling sure that he would always endeavour, by his conduct, to make me fail in my engagement, and I consider that all I did or wrote was in *his* interests, to make people speak about *him*, to make *his* music sell, and evidently *against my own interest and popularity*. Neither directly or indirectly have I ever gained a halfpenny for my orphans since M. Gounod fell ill at our house. My husband and I perfectly understood that the intimacy in which we were living with him was anything but advantageous to us. The doctors thought so seriously of the state of his health, that we sacrificed ourselves from affection and pity for him, from admiration for his marvellous genius, believing in his eternal gratitude and affection, and in the belief that we were the best nurses he could have; my husband especially being a wonderful nurse, as he had already proved incontestably to the doctors. The unpardonable way in which M. Gounod has behaved since he left us is a sufficient proof of how necessary for him was a close and firm incessant *surveillance*. He is plainly no more responsible for his actions than if he were a lunatic. This state of his mind is not sufficiently understood by his friends in general, and they blame and ridicule him for actions for which people about him alone are responsible. It was nearly a year and a half before we were able to convince ourselves that he was *feebly unreasonable*, and unworthy of confidence; not that he appeared to be *intentionally false*. One day he ardently wished for one thing, another day he wanted something else. He forgot that he had insisted on the first, and was capable of making a great scene and accusing me of having suggested it to him.

As, at first, we did not know him at all, we naturally supposed that he busied himself with his own affairs. The consequence was regular muddles in every direction. People profited by his follies and my inexperience, and the musical world leagued itself against him so as to prevent the sale of a single composition of his, which was published upon the system of Royalty.

£393¹ 10 0

Brought forward—£393¹ 10 0

Hence my anxiety to work energetically against this formidable league, and thereby force the sale of his works. I well knew that had not the Royalty system succeeded, he would never have left off reproaching me, and would have driven me wild with endless squabbles and discussions on subjects easily understood by any ordinary mind. One letter which my husband wrote him on the 23rd June, 1874, gives some idea of what we had to endure.

I have heard some people reproach M. Gounod and myself with having written certain imprudent articles. They were imprudent in a worldly sense, I do not deny it; but they are strictly true, and if I had shirked their responsibility, and been less courageous, I should not have retained that healthy influence over Gounod's mind which had so calmed and pacified him that, with the exception of some storms caused by his son's visit in August and September, and other worries, he scarcely got in a rage, and had hardly tormented me at all for one year, when he left England in June, 1874.

It was upon our recommendation that he then went to pass the holidays with his son in France, for we thought that his mind had got so much stronger that we could feel some security in him; and we had refused, for the sake of the poor children who lived in our house, to allow a young man so badly brought up and naturally vicious as his son, to return to us. M. Gounod paid us his son's board for his last visit, but he had never paid us for his previous visit, which lasted with his servant for several days. I do not see why M. Gounod should not pay for this also. A visit from the young scamp was the signal for violence, tears, and despair, and most pernicious to his father's health.

I now come to the question of all the money we spent upon the visits to the seaside, recommended to M. Gounod by the doctors. When we had wanted change we had always been used to visit our friends, who were too pleased to have us, and if we found change of air necessary, we had always the hospitality of several friends at our disposal. This pleasure we were obliged to deny ourselves owing to the health and temper of M. Gounod. We used, therefore, to take him, for his health, wherever the doctors advised us, and it was my husband who paid all expenses. This he did because M. Gounod grumbled at the least expense. Though he had plenty of money, and was much richer than us, he would rather have died than pay the expenses.

£393¹ 10 0

Brought forward—£393 10 0

And yet, he could not move anywhere without the two of us; we could not persuade him to engage a *valet-de-chambre*, although he ought to have had one, not only for his own convenience, but also to spare us the fatigue of incessant watching. I myself, I may say, was completely exhausted by the constant mental strain, as well as by the continued attention I had to bestow with the object of nursing, amusing him, and diverting his mind. It seems to me that, with the exception of the £5 a week that he paid us, or that he regularly owed us, he should be made to feel the obligation of paying the journeys to and from the seaside.

In October, 1873, the hotel bill amounted to £62 6s. 9d. Deducting the amount M. Gounod paid us for his keep, there remains £42 6s. 9d. M. Gounod clearly owes us this money. We had to keep up the same expenses at home.

42 6 9

The cost to and from Margate, with cabs, etc., was £5.

5 0 0

In March, 1874, Mr. Weldon took M. Gounod to St. Leonards for eleven days. The account amounted to £29 2s. 6d. I deduct, as usual, the regular payment for board and lodging for M. Gounod, which amounted to £8, leaving £21 2s. 6d. which M. Gounod ought to refund.

21 2 6

In February, 1874, again Mr. Weldon took M. Gounod to St. Leonards for change of air, as well as a gentleman who was in delicate health, and whose acquaintance we had made through M. Gounod. This week's visit cost him £21 14s. 6d. Here, again, I deduct M. Gounod's board, £5, and £5 for the friend. The account against M. Gounod thus stands at £11 14s. 6d.

11 14 6

The travelling for the two visits cost my husband £3 15s. 0d.

3 15 0

In April, 1874, we again took M. Gounod to St. Leonards, taking an apartment there. The expenses, inclusive, were £13 a week. We remained there just three weeks. The journey cost £5 12s. 0d.

5 12 0

The cost of our visit was, therefore, £49, and deducting £15 for M. Gounod's board, he owes my husband £34.

34 0 0

On the 25th of April Mr. Weldon accompanied M. Gounod (returning with him the following day) to the Crystal Palace. It was for M. Mann's benefit, *La marche funèbre d'une Marionette* was played, M. Gounod having promised to conduct. This cost him for

£4055 0 0

Brought forward—£4055 0 9
 travelling expenses, lunch, etc., at least £5. All this was, as usual, purely for M. Gounod's benefit. ... 5 0 0

I have paid many small sums for M. Gounod, but the following are the only ones I could swear to or produce proofs of:—

A. Vacani, framing two small pictures	1	13	6
Copies of orchestral parts, <i>Bolero</i>	1	8	8
One extra bed bought on account of Jean Gounod	6	12	6
Mending shirts	0	14	0
Warwick—cartes de visite	0	13	0
Miles—printer	5	18	6
Shoes	0	16	6
For an extra spring-mattress	4	5	0

Mr. Weldon brought him a writing table (to be used for the choir), we will sell it him if he wishes it (1) ... 25 0 0

A protégé of his, a certain young Frenchman, H. N., cost us at least £80. 80 0 0

This young man ended by stealing my collection of gold coins and jewellery and pawning them. It cost me £20 to get the jewellery out again. 20 0 0

I must now speak of the more serious expenses incurred by my husband in M. Gounod's interest. This was the pulling down of a wall between two large rooms which we did not use (in Tavistock House), and the construction of a large music room for M. Gounod. This room is positively prejudicial to our property, being a great hindrance to the letting of the house.

When M. Gounod became convinced that his wife would not rejoin him in England for the term of his engagement at the Albert Hall, and all on account of the horrible scandal which she spread abroad about both him and me, M. Gounod vowed that until she consented to come and take a house in London, and live in it with him in peace and tranquility for two or three months, he would never again put foot on French soil. Finding that she remained obstinate, and turned a deaf ear to all his prayers, M. Gounod entreated us to keep him, swearing that never—NEVER would he return home until his wife gave way, made every reparation, and came to seek him.

She carried her calumnies so far that if she had not been M. Gounod's wife we should have felt compelled to have called the law to our aid in punishing her.

It was not at all to *my* interest to keep him in England. All his letters prove that he had no intention of making England his fixed place of abode. SHE, in the first instance, LEFT HIM.

Brought forward—£4207 2 5

I was perfectly innocent of the cat and dog life they had led for nearly 20 years. Why, then, should I be held responsible for it?

Mme. Gounod, his brother-in-law, etc., were always at him for his want of knowledge of how to make money, and if M. Gounod is cursed with that unquenchable thirst, that terrible, I may say horrible, craving for money, I consider that it was utterly due to their jeers and naggings, and the way in which they sneered at him.

The erection of this music room, and the expenses indirectly connected with it, cannot be estimated at less than £400.

400 0 0

M. Gounod wished to have his own choir, and to give concerts, at which his new music should be performed. We did the utmost in our power to help him carry out his plans, which we knew would divert his mind and make him happy. If his wife came, it had been settled between us that we should have, in any case, two or three months' warning, and that we should in the meanwhile work as energetically as possible, so that, in case he should return to France, the choir should have time to know me, what I was capable of, and to feel as much confidence in me as *chef d'orchestre* as in M. Gounod himself. The Gounod concerts, it was arranged, should take place regularly, with or without him, every year, and I could easily get as many witnesses as I wished to render homage to my capability as choir *trainer* and leader.

We had rehearsals twice a week from the beginning of November, 1872, till the end of May, 1873. I was strongly of opinion, and insisted that the use of the room, wear of the carpets and stairs, etc., should be charged as choir expenses. £1 each rehearsal would certainly not have been too much—that would have come to £8 a month, and for six months £48.

48 0 0

Besides the evening rehearsals, I held the class open for the choir *every morning* from 11 to 1.

From November, 1873, to April, 1874, we had three rehearsals every week—at £1 an evening this would amount to £36 for the four months.

36 0 0

These two sums of £48 and £36 might be repaid to Mr. Weldon out of the funds placed at this very moment in the bank, the financial results of these concerts. Mr. Weldon himself, alone took upon himself, all the risks and expenses of the two series of Gounod concerts, and my husband said that had I

£4691 2 5

Brought forward—£469 2 5
 not done the writing of ten clerks, and had we not,
 between us, done all the necessary writing, etc., we
 should, undoubtedly, have lost a great deal of money.

We bought a kind of advertising cart for £25. ... 25 0 0
 Harness, ... 5 0 0

And for a square wooden affair on wheels, covered
 with bills with the name of M. Gounod and of his
 compositions and the date of his concerts, £6 18s. 6d. 6 18 6

The cart was painted on each side with "*Gounod's
 Concerts*" in large letters, and I drove out as little as
 possible in order that this cart might be driven through
 all the streets, and that public attention might be
 drawn to the name of GOUNOD.

I contributed articles to the *Cosmopolitan*, besides
 assisting M. Gounod to compose his own articles and
 translating them into English. (2) I corrected the
 proofs of his articles, often those of his melodies; I
 wrote and adapted English words for his various works;
 I was his secretary, I copied his letters, I played the
 rôle of the cat who pulled the chestnuts out of the fire
 for the ape, and had but one thought, that of keeping
him quiet and happy. I kept his music in order for
 him, I sold a lot of music for him, I took care of his
 scores, I kept account of the number of copies, and
 did all as carefully as I could. I contented myself with
 keeping the bills and receipts, and I might advan-
 tageously have been more careful in this respect. But
 I as little contemplated an estrangement between my
 husband and myself as between M. Gounod and us.
 I attached no importance to those things which would
 have been very useful to us at the present time. I had
 but two ideas—the one that God had sent M. Gounod
 to assist me by means of his great name in establishing
 my orphanage, thus saving me the torture of singing in
 public, and the other to preserve M. Gounod in health
 and happiness and capable of composing. We asked
 for nothing more. He seemed to adore us, never tired
 of praising us up to the skies, and of continually
 thanking us, often publicly, for all that we had done
 for him. All that I here state is proved in his own
 letters to us as well as the copies which he kept of his
 letters to his wife, his family, or his friends. He always
 said that he was determined that we should have
 justice done us, that the truth should be made known
 by him during his lifetime, and that he wished to give
 us arms, as far as he was able, for our defence against
 our vile calumniators.

Brought forward—£4728 0 11

Mme. Gounod made everyone in Paris believe that our *commerce* was an immoral one, that Mr. Weldon shut his eyes and encouraged his wife to be M. Gounod's mistress, so that he might be able to plunder him the more easily.

It is generally believed in Paris that the publisher I write of under the name of "Smith" is a straw man, and that his business in reality belongs to Mr. Weldon.

M. Gounod, in fact, knows, and has always known very well, all that his presence in our house exposed us to, and he also knows very well all that has been brought upon us by his outrageous conduct since he has "*planted us there*."

M. Gounod promised us that if we would oblige him by going to Paris to see "*Foan of Arc*" he would pay our expenses. They were about £20.* 20 0 0

For two years, Mr. Weldon paid £50 a-year, as interest for a sum of money he owed, so as to have that sum of money ready as capital in M. Gounod's interest, and at his disposal. This is £200 which Mr. Weldon disbursed for M. Gounod.

I went to the expense (£38) of having a pamphlet printed in M. Gounod's interest. I advertised his publisher and his compositions, on the outside cover: the results have proved how much music my energy has enabled Smith to sell. Of the £38 expended, I have received back £17, but I shall take good care never to sell another copy, for the pamphlet, as far as I am concerned, only served to create enemies for me, and to cut the ground from under my feet in every direction. This pamphlet, which he helped me to write, and which he loudly commended, it would at least be no more than just if he paid me the balance of £22. The pamphlets are now only good to light the fire with. Surely he cannot expect that I would continue to propagate a publication so deadly to my own interests 21 0 0

Another great expense to which we were subjected by the presence or the conduct of M. Gounod, was the obligation we felt under of feeding—often day after day and week after week—those poor people for whom M. Gounod professed the greatest sympathy and pity.

Mr. Weldon paid for dinners for Signor —, at a certain restaurant, for a considerable time, to please M. Gounod. This cost £18.4s. 10d. I also paid for 18 4 10

£4787 5 9

* A great deal more, in reality.

Brought forward—£4787 5 9

the tailor's bill for this friend of M. Gounod more than £8.

We invited M. Gounod's friends without any restriction, as also those who might be useful to him, to the exclusion of our own old friends. We sacrificed ourselves in every possible manner, and behaved to M. Gounod as an only child, whose life must be saved *at any price*.

In spite of all what many call our *exaggerated kindness*, it will be hardly believed possible that, only one week after he had left us, it became evident that he intended to give us the slip altogether; that his friends in France had conspired to estrange him from us for ever; and that the reason published as an excuse for his strange and disloyal conduct was, that he had at last found out that we were taking disloyal advantage of him, and that he had escaped from us as best he could.

Two weeks later, notwithstanding that I had promised to bring him his manuscripts myself to France, he sent to the French Embassy in London, begging them to send strangers to our house, commissioned to carry off everything belonging to him. He had taken the advice of his friends, and hoped thereby to offend us—play the game as they had plotted it—get us to pack up, and turn everything of his out of the house in a rage, and so leave us without defence, or chance of remedy (by legal or other means), powerless to avenge ourselves, if the law could not protect us.

Mr. Weldon wished to turn everything out of the house the very day that this insulting message had been communicated to us; but I told Mr. Taylor (his solicitor) that I myself would take all his manuscripts to Paris, that I would see him, and that he would very soon repent his gratuitously cruel and insulting conduct.

On the *3rd of July*, he put the finishing stroke to all that he had perpetrated during the preceding days, by threatening, through his solicitor, to take proceedings against us for the recovery of his manuscripts, writing to the Embassy to say, that he refused to enter into any business transaction which Mr. Weldon proposed (thanks to my entreaties) until the manuscripts had been restored and placed in the hands of his FRENCH solicitor. I then clearly saw that it was a case of real treachery; for, during all this time, his daily letters to us were full of affection, gratitude, and expressions of unlimited confidence.

I almost went out of my mind at this sudden reve-

£4787 5 9

Brought forward—£4787 5 9

lation of his falseness, his meanness, and his evasions and hypocrisies towards friends such as we, who had lived but to keep him alive, and to render him as happy as his unfortunate temper would allow. I could not bear to blame him, and yet his double-facedness was only too apparent to me. At the same time it was folly on his part to behave thus. It was impossible that he really doubted us, and I saw, with horror, that he had fallen a victim to the shameful conspiracy that had been preparing for him for months. He did not return to his wife (he pretended that he respected us too much to do *that* *), but he went to and remained with French friends, from the 9th of June to the 16th of November (the day I write this). We found out a couple of months later (*i.e.*, the 20th of August) that the real reason for not accepting the advantageous terms Mr. Weldon offered before the manuscripts were placed in the hands of his *French solicitor* was, that, in spite of his letters to me and Mr. Smith, of the 13th and 14th of June, 1874, he really had written a letter to, and signed an agreement with Mr. Smith, which got rid of us altogether. †

I suppose that he feared our anger when we should discover the trick he had played. He knew that he owed us a great deal of money, without taking into consideration the days and nights that we had spent in incessantly watching and nursing him, and thought that we might retain the manuscripts until we had been paid by him. He *never* could have acted *thus* out of his own head ; and I should never be able to account for his conduct, except by supposing that his French friends did all they could to work upon his (then) enfeebled brain to incite him to insult us, hoping to destroy the long labour of affection which, in spite of every difficulty and opposition at every turn, we had surmounted, and had *always* succeeded more or less.

He might have parted from us on friendly terms—in fact, we never thought of reminding him of, or of reproaching him for, his broken contract, as far as we were concerned ; but is it not unnecessarily insulting and defamatory to us, causing the most awful gossip, to send to the French Embassy (the Chargé d’Affaires, a gentleman he hardly knew), requiring them to come and demand of us what we never thought of refusing—of us, who had never refused him anything—of us,

£4787 5 9

* *Vide* his own letters. † And he had left us on the 8th!

Brought forward—£4787 5 9

who anticipated his least desire? What did we want of anyone to come to our house to pack up his things, to carry them, or to send them to him. Since then the papers have been full of libellous articles. I know that M. Gounod has himself assisted in spreading these reports, and in telling everywhere, verbally and in writing, that we have despoiled him, and taken unfair advantage of him.

In speaking of us, he tells every one who will listen to him, that we had fleeced him of everything he possessed; that he had not even enough to buy a hat—the fact being that he had left England wearing a Panama hat of my husband's, which cost £2 10s., and which my husband had never worn. He knew that the newspapers stated I had made him sign a stamped agreement; constituting me proprietor of all the works he had written in England. He knew perfectly well that there was not a word of truth in this, and yet whenever he writes a letter, he never loses an opportunity of saying, that he is impoverished by the duplicity of persons from whom he had a right to expect better treatment, thus branding and pointing at us as his spoilers.

I refuse to give up the manuscripts until he comes to fetch them himself. He owes us *some* reparation of honour before the whole world! This is a point which will be conceded! If the law can protect me, and aid me to proceed against him for defamation and libel, I shall do so, *not to punish him*, but to punish his vile, foul French friends, who, simply for the sake of having "*Gounod in France*," have taken him away from an asylum where he was happy and beloved, where people had pity and patience with him—where he found the peace and tranquility, of which he stood so much in need, and which in time would have completely calmed and cured his over-excited and overstrung "*machine*."

That these people have most deeply wronged us, that they have stained our reputation, and that they have given us cause for permanent sorrow, there is no doubt; but that which I resent more strongly yet is the wretchedness they have inflicted on a poor, feeble, old man, blinded by passion or flattery, and who requires, as ballast, temperaments such as ours to lean on. I, on my side, demand a public enquiry. I desire that M. Gounod shall be put into the *witness-box*, and that *there* he should be examined upon all the points of

£4784 5 9

Brought forward—£4787 5 9

which I am here giving a faithful narrative. The correspondence is open for all the world to see. He left everything in my hands *in writing*, "*as to a dear little mother*," and if he wishes to take away from us the management of his affairs in a way which renders this proceeding public and scandalous, I desire that the whole affair should be made known far and wide, from beginning to end, and as publicly as possible, so that our conduct may be cleared, and that of others be appreciated at its just value.

It seems to me miserably unjust that there should be no reward or compensation to us for all the time that I have wasted, for my shattered health, my broken heart, the kindness of my husband; his trouble, his care, his patience, and his money have all been spent so fruitlessly. It may be said, "You have been foolish, you ought to have had a properly drawn up agreement, and had it stamped properly at Somerset House, stipulating damages in case of violation of the treaty by one party or the other."

Is it not as plain as broad daylight that I, on my side, have kept to my part of the agreement by pushing the name and works of M. Gounod as much as I could? Have I not indeed done much more than was stipulated in our contract? Have not my husband and I tended him day and night for three years? Did not we save his life as the doctors and his own written declarations testify? Have I ever murmured at the incessant watching, or at having been obliged to abandon my own career, my singing, my music? I believed that Providence had thus arranged things for me and my Orphanage, that it had opened a new path for me, and had brought me other means by which to attain my great aim, which is the education of children. If I could get this money paid from M. Gounod it would go a good way towards the establishment of my school, such as I wish it to be. And yet the law tells me that I can claim nothing—for want of a *stamped paper*!

I claim £5000 damages as, to some extent, compensation for the injury done me by the infamous calumnies, lies, and libels, spread about concerning me and M. Gounod by him and his French friends, and which are FROM BEGINNING TO END unmerited. ...

5000 0 0

I, as well as my husband, have cared for M. Gounod, and worked for him without the least desire of enriching or glorifying ourselves. On the contrary, I thanked

£9787 5 9

Brought forward—£9787 5 9

Providence for having found me other means, and I rejoiced at not having to think of, or to sing in public myself, truly happy to think that I was able to assist M. Gounod in composing in peace, and rewarded by every great or small work which he finished, and which he would bring me with a happy smile on his face—and “thanks to me,” as he always said. The children who are in my house get on well, and continue charming, which satisfies me completely. My only complaint is that there are not enough of them, and all the children are of my opinion.

I pray and hope from the bottom of my heart that another three years of work and struggling will bring me in the sum I require to commence the education of my FIFTY ORPHANS, for I cannot render my *Institution self-supporting with a lesser number.*

I have found another little account of M. Gounod (J. Thompson, engraver, 50,000 M. Gounod's stamp),
£4 8s.*... .. 4 8 0

This is the “Bill” owing to me by M. Gounod ... £9891 13 9

November 16, 1873.

GEORGINA WELDON.

Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, London.

CHAPTER II.

I MAY as well at once give the account as precisely as I can of the money M. Gounod earned in England, during his stay with us.

In 1871 he won an action against Novello's (Littleton), and recovered	... ..	£240	0	0
And for royalties	... ..	23	0	0
Duff and Stewart, royalties	... ..	51	0	0
		£314	0	0
Of this sum he sent Madame Gounod	... ..	200	0	0
His solicitor's account	... ..	23	0	0
		£223	0	0

There then remained about £91 for him to commence the year 1872 with. Besides this he had to pay for some copies of music and

* On my return from Italy I found many other little accounts.

some registrations, and I believe that he did not commence the year with more than £80.

The Albert Hall paid him for four concerts £400, for the rehearsals £100, for one song £20 (and 6d. royalty). He received from Baron Alfred de Rothschild, where he and I played and sung all one evening, £50; from his Benefit Concert about £40 net; from Duff and Stewart about £80 net; from Novello (Littleton) about £4 12s.; from Wood & Co. something like £20; from music that I sold at Spa and elsewhere about £20.

The various sums added together are—

£400
100
20
50
40
80
4 12
2
20
80

£796 12

In 1872 he received from his home £300, with which he bought back the author's rights of "*Faust*," and the power of making, in England, whatever terms he pleased for his future works. It was, therefore, £1096 12s. that he received in 1872.

In 1873 he received for *Chidiok Tichborne* (a song), on giving leave to publish it in an album, £10.

For the orchestral score (let to Rivière) of the *Funeral March of a Marionette*, £10.

For the sale of the same piece to the Wandering Minstrels, £5, and 10s. each time it is played in public.

Letting out of same for another concert	£1	1	0
Letting out of " <i>The Worker</i> " (orchestral)	2	2	0
Net benefit from his concert (1873)	70	0	0
Money for music sold by us and subscriptions to the Choir	52	0	0
Other music sold by me	40	0	0
" <i>Biondina</i> " for Italy (with royalty as also)	120	0	0
" <i>Le Lierre</i> ," a pianoforte piece for Germany	40	0	0
What was made with <i>Chidiok Tichborne</i>	10	0	0
Orchestral scores let out or sold (in parts) of the " <i>Funeral March of a Marionette</i> "	15	0	0

With the previous year (1872)	£350	3	0
the sum amounted to	1096	12	0
	£1446	15	0

He exchanged the sale of the music of *Foan of Arc* (reserving the exclusive right of the orchestral score, and arrangements and sale of the music on the royalty system for Great Britain and the Colonies) for the libretto of *Polyeucte*. Now as it is very probable that M. Gounod will sell *Polyeucte* for at least 100,000 frs., the third of that sum would naturally have gone to his librettist. He therefore gained by this arrangement 34,000 frs., or thereabouts. £1400 0 0

Author's rights for *Foan of Arc*, 18,000 frs. 720 0 0

£2120 0 0

He therefore has turned over in two years money to this amount.

In 1874 he received from Baron de Rothschild £100 to assist in defraying the cost of the *Gounod Concerts*, but which we preferred to see him keep for himself. Another £5 for letting out several small orchestral parts. For the Festival of Liverpool, £40. And his publisher Smith owed him at the end of the year 1874 somewhat about £1400 net for royalties, books of words and music, and for sums paid or advanced for engraving, printing, etc. Also from Duff & Stewart, Novello, Wood & Co., Katto of Brussels, M. Camille Lemonnier, Muraille of Liège, and others small sums due or received, such as that which Ricordi sent direct and Beethoven's house at Brussels soon amounting to about £120:

Thus in 1871	...	...	...	...	£314	0	0
" " 1872	...	...	...	...	1096	12	0
" " 1873	...	...	...	...	2470	0	0
" " 1874	...	...	...	...	1665	0	0

In four years and a half, therefore, M. Gounod has received, or is entitled to receive in the future, sums amounting to £5545 (in French money nearly 140,000 frs.) I make these calculations almost entirely from memory. I should have liked to have produced the exact accounts, and I asked M. Gounod's English solicitor for them, but have not been able to obtain them. I regret this, for I do not see why I should be deprived of the means of making out everything as clearly as possible. It is not just, and I do not believe that the fact of their refusing me *copies* of these accounts can tell against me; on the contrary, if the Gounod faction thought they were detrimental to my statements, they would have been only too glad to produce them.

Now here is what has become of this money:

First of all Mme. Gounod received in 1871	...	...	...	...	£200	0	0
Small accounts to settle	...	...	...	...	11	0	0
Solicitor's account	...	...	...	...	23	0	0

In 1872 printing music for the Albert Hall, etc.,	...	£234	0	0
		330	0	0

£564. 0 0

				Brought forward—	£564	0	0
In 1873 for the Choir books	...	...	...	...	54	0	0
Printer's account	...	...	...	...	186	0	0
"	"	...	...	...	106	18	0
					£910	18	0
*Paid back to Mrs. Weldon	...	...	...	...	196	0	0
For <i>Faust</i> to Gye	...	...	...	...	300	0	0
Engraving <i>Messe Solennelle</i>	...	...	...	...	82	13	9
A fur cloak (for himself)	...	...	...	...	18	0	0
Dr. MacKern	...	...	...	...	22	0	0
To the poet Zaffira	£250 or £275 (3A)	...	...	...	275	0	0
To H. N.	...	...	...	...	36	0	0
To Mr. Cookfoye (lent)	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
To Mrs. Weldon	...	...	...	...	20	0	0
Do. at Christmas	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
To his nieces (Gounod)	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
Do. children (Gounod)	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
To Mr. Weldon, a small table	...	...	...	...	0	16	0
To Mrs. Weldon, a fur hood	...	...	...	...	3	10	0
Do. a little knife	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
Do. a pen	...	...	...	...	0	18	0
Do. little Spa box (a cat)	...	...	...	...	0	0	10
Do. an umbrella, 8 frs.	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
To Madame Gounod	...	...	...	...	720	0	0
					£2626	8	3
Libretto of <i>Polyeucte</i>	...	...	...	...	1440	0	0
Amounts owing from Smith	...	...	...	...	1400	0	0
Small sums received by Gounod or owing	...	...	...	...	120	0	0
About what I have of his (in hand)	...	...	...	...	90	0	0
					£5676	8	3

I see that I have calculated very well, for I have forgotten to put down among the receipts of Gounod £280 for music sold to the Albert Hall Choir, and then I have forgotten to mention his board and lodging. He paid us for 31 months £620, and for Jean for 6 weeks £30. It will be seen that he has received still more than I can recollect. In any case, all that he has received from France is the £300 for buying back "*Faust*," and all the rest has been made in England.

This with the £650 for his board and Jean's, ... £650 0 0

£6326 8 3

To the £5545 12s. to his credit add the £280 forgotten by me, and it will make £5825 12s. It seems as though I were better able

* This is an error, it has to be repaid. (He still owes it to me.)

to remember what M. Gounod paid than what he received; at all events I need not bother my head or strive to discover where his money has gone to. I am at least £500 "to the good."^{*}

People must be, I think, of my opinion, that M. Gounod has not, after all, been despoiled, nor has he forfeited "*his children's bread*," and has no cause to lament the manner in which his affairs have been managed in England.

There remain still to be considered the royalties of Lemoine in Paris, which are regularly paid to Madame Gounod, and which, like the royalties in England, cannot help increasing steadily if but a little good will is shown in the matter.

Really now, in all conscience, is it fair for M. Gounod and M. Delacourtie to say THAT I HAVE DONE NOTHING? but harm!!!

The rough account of Smith has reached upwards of £2000. The money expended (and refunded) for the "*Gounod Concerts*" was about £1800. For the two concerts for the benefit of M. Gounod more than £400 were spent in advertisements, etc. All this is business; money placed out at interest, which, though not coming in immediately, is sure indirectly to do so sooner or later.

Ah! if it were only known how nicely things were going on when M. Gounod wrecked everything. There is not one of my most bitter enemies amongst all the publishers, large or small, who would not sympathise with me if they saw how I had fought them, single-handed, with all my inexperience and my "old load" by my side, who spoiled everything and made me go over the same ground over and over again!

And it is not they, after all, who have beaten me! It is the "old load" who, by his cunning, his feebleness, his imbecility, and *his jealousy*, has been stronger than all my combinations, all my batteries, all my devotion, all my honesty, and who has upset the whole apple-cart!

And why?

Because it was *in his interests* that I was working; and: that I did not take any precautions against one who I believed to be *my friend*! and: that I did not insist on having a stamped agreement.

To think that between us three, a stamped agreement should have been necessary!

Ah! Gounod! Gounod!

^{*} This surplus must have been made by me without taking notice of it, through his Benefit Concerts, his music sold by me in my own house, and then I often advanced him small sums without keeping any account thereof. Gounod therefore spent in England £500 more than he had received. Our income is over £2000 a-year; added to the £6325 to my £1000, to the £1600 (minimum) spent upon the two series of Gounod Concerts, to the £400 spent on sheer advertisement for his Benefit Concerts, the total sum of money in three years laid out during the three years he remained with us is nearly £16,000—a sum, therefore, of which the positive and indirect use has profited Gounod alone.—G. W.

CHAPTER III.

MY BILL.

WHEN M. Gounod through his solicitor demanded *my bill* in the month of October, 1874, I could hardly realise what Mr. Taylor, who was obliged to be the bearer of this insulting message, meant.

"My Bill!"

I said to myself; If I had been a sick nurse I should have been paid £2 2s. a-week. As sick nurse, M. Gounod would therefore owe me something like £350; perhaps, as I had been very devoted and useful to him, he would have given me a little extra tip. And besides, he had my husband as sick nurse also, and *valet-de-chambre* as well. When one engages husband and wife together, one can always get them at a little cheaper rate, it is true; so owing to this circumstance my husband would perhaps not be considered worth more than £60 a-year. For three years' service this would make £180. But when one has got good servants one is obliged to give them good characters, or to speak well of them to those people who apply for their characters; if anything were said to cause them to lose their place, they can institute proceedings for libel, and would be sure to win them. No one has the right to say a word, even if it is the truth, which might injure his neighbour, supposing it were *his business* to be an honest man or a tradesman.

"Your servant has robbed you, sir? You should not have said so. It is quite right that you should have lost your case. The law allows no one the right of doing or saying anything to prevent a person from gaining his living, or which might injure him in his business. You should have gone to work in another way: you should have brought an action against your servant, and if you could have proved that he had robbed you (which in a court of law is almost an impossibility) he would be punished and sent to prison. It is quite probable that you will lose, for lawyers play into each other's hands as much as possible, and generally manage so that the servant should win the case, for as the law ordains that the loser should pay the costs, and these gentlemen know that they will not be paid by the servant, who has no money, and that they would have had all their trouble for nothing, it stands to reason that the master should lose the day. . . . People will talk, people will grumble, the lawyers will be called rascals, vagabonds. . . . Yes, sir, you can appeal, sir, if you are not satisfied, sir! Yes! yes! It will cost you another hundred pounds, and it is exceedingly probable that you will lose again. I am your friend; believe me when I tell you it is wisest to consider yourself beaten, and to resign yourself. Principle? Bosh! Do we come into this world to fight for principle! Don Quixote! my friend, Don Quixote! Let yourself be robbed, let yourself be robbed, it will cost you less, and will spare you a deal of worry!"

There! I knew what was said to people who were robbed by their servants. The master has, in no wise, the right to say that a servant has robbed him. He would undoubtedly lose his case.

We had been sick nurses and servants to M. Gounod for three years. He vilified us; then surely we should be certain that if we took proceedings against him we should win our suit.

"Undeceive yourselves! Are you sick nurses by profession? Did he pay you? Are you seeking another place? Can you prove that you were making any profit? That you lose anything by what he says of you? . . . You say that you can prove that many people who were your friends have turned their backs on you, that they have not replied to your letters, that you have letters of Gounod to other people making these horrible insinuations without mentioning your name—but have you lost a penny by his libels? Have you suffered *in business*? If you cannot prove that you have lost pecuniarily you can do nothing against M. Gounod. Show me, and prove to me that you have suffered a loss to the value of as little as £5, and your chance is good, for with all the proofs of all that you—you and your husband—have done for him, you would be certain of the sympathy of the court. . . . I agree with you that it is horrible to think that an individual can come into your house, make use of your money, your time, your care, your affection, and above all your reputation, but you ought not to have allowed him to do it; there was nothing to compel you to behave thus; this man had his family, you ought to have insisted on his making his family come and look after him (which as master of the house he had a perfect right to do), and if he was not able to force his wife to come and rejoin him, you ought to have sent your friend to an hospital, or back to his own home. You and your husband allowed yourselves to be placed in a false position; your friend in whom you believed was a black-guard; at your age you ought to know pretty well what a Frenchman is. You did not even take the precaution of having the smallest agreement drawn up between you. You have been duped, caught, made fools of; he knows perfectly well that his fortune is pretty well established in England; he came to you to *push* him in England, and it is done. And now he returns to his own country, where they will receive him with open arms, where he will become more popular than ever, and where he will be told that he has at last found out what *honest English* really are! *Perfidious Albion!*"

Yes, all this and more has been said, and I have had to listen to it. . . .

"Yes," has been said to me, "perhaps the whole thing was got up between him and his wife from the beginning. She left him, seeing that he had found intelligent friends in this country, where the popular foreign belief is millions drop from the clouds! Do not think you know everything. They had laid their heads together. Gounod and his wife are equally interested in money matters. If he keeps to his wife, it is because she is still more avaricious than he. He sucked in avarice with his mother's milk; she was the most

miserly old woman in the world, a regular old Frenchwoman, who saved and hoarded in a most painful way. . . ."

I was much struck when I heard this, for this reason, that I could in no way account for Gounod's avarice. He never went out without wanting to buy all sorts of things; I never allowed him to buy anything, because all my financial energies were concentrated upon the plan of making Gounod himself pay for the engraving of his plates, and remaining master of his copyrights. I knew very well that it was the best investment in the world, and that in a few years it would return 500 per cent. Jeanne's dowry once put on one side, I was free to make use of the money for my Orphanage. How often has he not tried to *force* me to take money to help me with my children. I used to answer him, "Not yet! Not yet! Little old man! When Jeanne's dower is safe!" I thus witnessed *constant* proofs of his generosity, a constant *desire* of spending money. *I take my oath* that he loved to spend money. It is not possible that he was always acting this farce with me. Gounod cannot be a *real miser*. He was constantly complaining of the avarice and meanness of his wife, and said that there was only one thing that she liked to spend money upon, and that was her STOMACH, for *her God was her belly!* Apart therefore from what appeared to me to be an itching to spend money, there were these incessant complaints of his poverty (all imaginary), reiterations in the most miserable voice on the chances of what the royalties would bring in, calculations innumerable upon the value and sale of *Polyeude*; in fact, the craving for money seemed to be a disease with him. He was continually harping on the same wearisome subject. . . . Never in his life would Gounod have made a good gardener. He would never have consented to manure his land, and when he had sowed a seed he would have killed it by going and digging at it every day with a bit of wood, to see if it were not growing. This contradiction of character, avariciousness and generosity, seemed inexplicable to me before I heard this account of the parsimony of his mother, and I could before then in no way explain it except by saying that his avarice was due to the influence of his wife, and his generosity to his own good nature. Gounod had told me that I was like his mother, who, he said, was an excellent woman, with plenty of energy and determination, and the *Priest of the poor*. He drew such an eloquent picture (one day in June, 1871) of the poverty of this mother, who was left a widow when he, little Charles, was only five years old, of her labours, of her watchings, of her struggles, of the impossibility of his earning anything from the publishers to whom he took *Le Soir*, *Le Vallon*, etc., who refused his jewels, one after the other, without even consenting to engrave them. This poor mother, who had not wherewithal to make a fire, who burnt his manuscripts, his precious manuscripts, to make a fire, so as not to perish of cold and misery, his manuscripts, which it seemed to me one should rather die of hunger than burn! and this good, this excellent, this pious young man, working by his mother's side, not able to refuse the creations of his own brain to warm her benumbed limbs, without a murmur he let her do it—I cried so much, so dreadfully. I had an engagement

that afternoon to go and sing for an artist, a poor lady who I should have been very glad to have obliged, but I found it impossible to stir. I was so much moved, my feelings were so harrowed by this touching story, that I was quite ill all the afternoon. Two years later, or rather, the following year, Gounod received a letter from his wife concerning the disposal of some money left by the mother.

"What," said I, "your mother left money?"

"Oh, yes," he replied.

"How much?"

"Eighty thousand francs!!—forty thousand for me, and forty thousand for my brother Urbain."

"Ah," I said, "your mother burnt your manuscripts, and left eighty thousand francs. If she had made use of three or four hundred francs in engraving *Le Soir*, *Le Vallon*, *La Berceuse*, *l'Ave Maria* for you, it would not be a wretched sum of two thousand francs a-year that your forty thousand francs would bring in, but ten thousand francs a-year! Ah, those old women's blessed old stockings in which the savings are stored, and encourage their love of avarice while saying it is for '*their dear children*.' What need had two big boys, each having a good profession, of two thousand francs a-year? What right had Mme. Gounod (mother) to burn those precious manuscripts? My disillusion in knowing that Mme. Gounod left money, was very great, and I much regretted the tears I had shed at the idea of her poverty. The fact is, M. Gounod has made me shed a good many tears uselessly. This is a positive fact.

When I related these various phases of Gounodian character to my Spiritual friend at the Rigi Kaltbad, and that I was trying to account for his avarice, he replied, "The influence of his wife doubtless influenced his avaricious propensities; your influence, without doubt, tended to expand the generous side of his nature; but, as you say, Gounod had no reason to believe himself poor, or to complain of his income, it may be that he is influenced by some spirit from the world beyond. Did you know any of his relations?"

I replied that I knew no one who had known him when young, nor any member of his family; that I had heard him constantly speak of his mother, and that he spoke of her as *the minister of the poor*; it is true that she burnt his manuscripts, but she no doubt did not appreciate them, and burnt them to get them out of her way; that is all I knew about it. . . .

When, in the month of October, I was told all that I was told of Gounod when a little boy, then as a young lad, and of his mother, by the people at whose houses his mother, his brother, and he stayed every year for several months, I called to mind what my "friend" had told me. His avarice sits so unnaturally on him, and was so stupidly displayed, that I understood then some supernatural influence had been at work to make him so unhappy. Does not the Bible say that the "sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation"?

* * * * *

So I was to send in my *bill*:

I had been his sick-nurse.

I had been his secretary.

I had sold his music.

I had been the round of the publishers for him.

I had written all sorts of puffs and advertisements for him.

I had become his poet.

I had spent my money.

I had been agent-general for all M. Gounod's affairs.

I had acted for him in America, in Italy, in Germany, and in France.

I had sung at all his concerts.

I had always sung his compositions.

I had played the devil so that he might appear an angel.

I had been the rat of the lion.

I had been the ichneumon among the crocodiles.

I had been the cat of the monkey.

I had picked the chestnuts out of the fire ; he eat them, and threw back the shells into the fire to prevent me profiting by a single crumb that he might accidentally have left.

I was not paid for all this ; I need not have done it ; it was not my *business*, . . . and I could claim nothing for my services ! which, consequently, in the eye of the *law*, were worth nothing. . . .

So I had to try and recall the sums of money directly or indirectly expended upon or for him. The law will perhaps say, "You say yourself he would sooner have paid than have paid the expenses of his visits to the seaside for the sake of the change of air. You should have let him die ; it was not your duty to keep him alive."

The law will, perhaps, say that nothing is due to us but the £350 set down in the famous *schedule* (5) ; for, as far as a stamped agreement goes, there has never been any stipulation even that M. Gounod should pay us for his board and lodging. Mr. Weldon has never given him a receipt ; but if M. Gounod's letters do not prove that a contract existed between us, which served *my interests*, then I say that *nothing* in the world can be proved. And I say, moreover, that as I was earning money to give to the poor, and that M. Gounod promised to help me to establish my School, M. Gounod has neither the legal or moral right to have done or to do all that he can to frustrate all my hopes of success. Without sufficient money, it is clear I cannot keep fifty children and myself, etc. I have not money enough to carry on this work unaided ; and one need not be either flighty, pretentious, or mad, to wish to carry it out. In any case, I shall not burn M. Gounod's manuscripts (no matter how cold I and my children might be) to light our fires. I maintain that I have the right of earning bread for others, and that the law ought to make it as much its business to protect any one who earns money for others, as one who wishes to earn her own living, and that of her own children.

I WILL not have wasted three years in vain, and, putting aside all question of affection or gratitude, M. Gounod owes me what I demand.

CHAPTER IV.

MY BILL.

As will be seen by the Gounod correspondence, his French solicitor, M. Delacourtie, as well as he himself, entered heartily into the propositions made *officiously* by me, and which Mr. Taylor *officially* advised them to accept, on the *29th of June, 1874*.

The position of affairs was this :

Mr. Smith had owed a certain sum to M. Gounod for some time.

M. Gounod wished to be paid.

Mr. Smith had no capital, and could not pay.

M. Gounod, Mr. and Mrs. Weldon, had, upon several occasions, advanced large sums of money to Mr. Smith to enable him to carry on business.

Mr. Smith, instead of endeavouring to pay M. Gounod the sums he owed him, spent the little capital he had in engraving worthless compositions of his own and his brother's, upon which he had no royalty to pay, and did not trouble himself to push M. Gounod's music.

The attention of Mrs. Weldon having been seriously called to Mr. Smith's manœuvres, she took counsel with several people, and especially with Mr. De la Pole, for whom M. Gounod had much sympathy, and who had a great deal of experience. It was decided that it should be proposed to Smith that he should at once pay the sums due to M. Gounod ; or that, if he were in such a position as not to be able to pay, that the original agreement should be cancelled, and that M. Gounod should allow him to liquidate his debt to him, by resigning the proprietorship of the copyrights and plates of his (Gounod's) own compositions.

M. Gounod would thus become absolutely master of the situation. He could either sell Smith's business up in case of his refusal, or come into *absolute possession* of all his own works.

The London publishers would not have been eager to buy M. Gounod's copyrights, for they are subject to a royalty of 6d., and in the year 1877 it will increase to 8d. a copy. Besides, Smith would not wish to be made a bankrupt. The affair would have passed off quietly. Smith would not have been dragged down under the weight of a heavy debt ; I should have taken a clerk, who would have kept the books ; M. Gounod would have had the right to sell to whatever publisher he pleased at 8d. a copy, instead of 16d., or as Smith did to other publishers *at seven for six*, Smith sold them, therefore, at 13d. per copy, I had already made several satisfactory arrangements. Smith, who would have continued nominally the principal publisher for M. Gounod, would have gained much by this arrangement (for he is unknown in the trade, and has only a miserable little shop) ; and Gounod would have gained a hundredfold thereby.

Gounod was more than satisfied with the arrangement, and (oh, joy !) would no longer have any excuse to pick quarrels with us for not making Smith pay him what he owed him.

* * * * *

In accordance with existing treaties and accounts Gounod and we were of one mind on the subject ; nothing easier, therefore, from the moment that Gounod said, "*that the idea of being turned into a tradesman by becoming proprietor of his works strangled him,*" than to substitute Mr. Weldon in Mr. Smith's place, Mr. Weldon undertaking to pay Smith's debt, and (in order to keep his mind quiet, and to give him the satisfaction of assuring him of Jeanne's dower) guarantee him a *minimum* royalty of £300 per annum.

This arrangement would have left us, what we had been for three years, the business-managers of M. Gounod ; nothing would have been altered, everything remained as before in my hands, (as M. Gounod had desired when he went away *as if he were there* ;) the Gounod Concerts would have gone on exactly the same, and though I should not have got any personal profit by selling at 8d. a copy, I should have been perfectly satisfied with the arrangement. I should have had to pay 6d. a copy to Gounod. The expenses of each song was, on an average, three-halfpence a copy, and by selling 15,000 copies a-year, I should have had money enough, besides to pay a clerk.

* * * * *

This arrangement could not be accepted by M. Gounod ; later on I will explain why.

Not being able, therefore, to obtain in any way either satisfaction or justice, I proposed the following to M. Gounod :

"Although I do not at all care to continue on business terms with such a cunning fellow as Smith, let us settle the thing peaceably. You owe us, directly and indirectly, heaps of money, and compensation in money, as well as reparation of honour. . . .

"Give me half of your royalties in England, constitute me legally the co-proprietor of the income you derive from your works, since Smith is the proprietor of your plates and your *copyrights*; promise me the half of your profits on all orchestral scores, of which, up to the present time, you have pocketed the whole amount; promise me (upon *stamped paper* this time) that you will allow me to publish, at my expense, all your new works, and I will pay you the 6d. royalty on every new publication.

"You have desired that the manuscripts of "*Polyeucte*" and of "*George Dandin*," etc., should be placed in the hands of a third person until our accounts are settled. I have submitted to this insult, and the manuscripts are in the hands of a mutual friend. Gérard, the publisher, makes you a very handsome offer ; accept it, and let all be peacefully settled.

"You say, and M. Delacourtie says, that I have done *nothing* for you ; in asking the half of what you call *nothing*, I cannot be accused of robbing you.

"I do not ask this arrangement by my right as vocalist, I ask it by my right of *pious foundress of that noble institution, that NURSERY which*

needs only aid from without to become an ORCHARD"—assistance which you had sworn to give—protection, which you had vowed to render, and which in a fit of mad and wicked rage (is it spite?) you have not only taken away, but which incites you to do all you can to ruin me in the eyes of all who know me, by false, shameful, and scandalous misrepresentations.

"I have been patient for eight months; I have wept, I have implored, I have threatened.

"I shall weep no more:

"I shall implore no more:

"And

"I shall threaten no more:

"But as you refuse to do that which is just—as you refuse that which is an aid and assistance to my Orphanage—as you refuse to repent of what you have done—as you will not hasten to accept an arrangement which would settle all difficulties—as now, as in November, you know you could have your manuscripts in two days, and that knowing this you would be obliged to keep your word and subscribe to those arrangements which were made in the last letter you had desired your man-of-business to write to me, on the *3rd of October, 1874, that you and he 'had not ceased for a moment to fall in with the arrangement which should concede to Mr. Weldon the right of stepping into your shoes in England,'*—you throw off the mask that you had worn so long,—you said and wrote that which I knew well was what you had been induced to do, and had intended to do all along, '*I will no longer have any connection with this lady at any price.*' Very well; since you have rewarded my devotion, my care, and my affection with lies—infamous, absolutely false libels—I will publish a work, explaining to the whole world what you have done, and what we have done! It shall no longer be believed that my husband sold me in order to enable him to rob you the more easily; it shall no longer be believed that I was your false and interested mistress—it shall no longer be believed that I have been prejudicial to your business and interests; it shall be known that my husband was indeed *a good Samaritan* to you, his wife *a Sister of charity*; and that I have displayed and wasted energy, patience, pride, and an infinite *genius*, in the management of your monetary interests during three years.

"I have *never* profited *one farthing* by all I have done for you—I will have that known also, . . . and I will have people know not only what you are, but what the GOUNOD FAMILY is.

* * * * *

"Before beginning this book, I warned you of my intention.

"If, then, in spite of all the excuses my heart finds for you, and all the good that it thinks of you, you find yourself covered with shame and ridicule, do not blame me.

"You could easily have prevented it by keeping a simple promise, and by rejecting the advice of those people who, you have often said, '*do not know what either honour or conscience is.*'"

CHAPTER V.

OUR CONTRACT.

HERE is the exact nature of the contract originally made between Gounod and ourselves.

The people at Albert Hall had given him a deal of trouble. My time had been entirely taken up nursing him, and looking after his printers, engravers, etc. I had taken into the house a charming young girl (soprano), recommended by M. Soulanges Bodin, a friend of M. Gounod. I had also a tenor on my hands. My children sang as well; and it was M. Gounod's desire to form a choir in London himself. He had sworn to his wife that he would never return to France if she did not come to fetch him, and it was necessary for him to make up his mind seriously one way or the other. This brings us to the end of 1872.

There were so many things to be considered, Gounod's health above all.

If he were ill, and could not conduct a rehearsal at the Albert Hall, there was always a sub-director there who could take his place.

"If it were certain that Mme. Gounod would not come and carry off M. Gounod in the middle, the best thing we could do would be to employ the money destined to pay off the rest of the sum owing for Tavistock House in making one large hall instead of the two drawing-rooms on the first floor. If M. Gounod had a cold, he would not be obliged to leave the house for rehearsals; and if *he* were too ill to lead them; in my own house, I should be quite in my right place in wielding the baton for him. The expense of building the hall could be defrayed by the proceeds of the concerts. We could not have a hall lit by gas for less than £2 2s. a rehearsal, and as we could not be satisfied with a single rehearsal a week, you see that it would be really economising the concert funds, to possess a hall which would pay for itself in a few years." This is what I said to my husband one fine morning, after having well discussed and well weighed all sorts of considerations with Gounod.

"In the first place," replied my husband, "all expenses incurred in my own house by me I should be responsible for. Gounod cannot continue to live with us, and when he leaves us the hall will be worse than useless to us."

"This is what Gounod says, my dear boy; he is certain that his 'shrew' will hold out for one or two years longer, and that when she is tired of doing without him she will come and fetch him; then he will return to Paris, and he can, in any case, come for a month or two every year to direct the last rehearsals and a few concerts. For me, it is an excellent plan; I have N. G. my girl, G. W. my man, Alfred and the children getting on very well, people shall see what my pupils are like, I will give concerts for them, and I shall get as

much money as I want; and then Gounod, as soon as Jeanne's dower is put by, will give me as much money as ever I require, and help me with the children! Gounod powerful, Gounod rich, I shall be so too, and I shall have a splendid establishment! You see, I have so much to do, he is so often ill, and what with the children, their parents, this, that, the printers here, the publishers there, there is no end to it all! It is impossible for me to practise and sing in public, besides they will not give us what Gounod requires. I hate singing in public and dressing myself up—I shall be delighted if you can manage this. . . .”

“But,” said my husband, “Gounod has a name among the choir, you have none, and they will not care about obeying you.”

“If Gounod remains two or three seasons I am sure I shall find the chance of proving to them that I understand it just as well as he does, and I am certain that Providence settled it should be so.”

“Dear me! you are so superstitious!”

“It is very fine to say that I am superstitious! But, just think, you bought this house the very month, the very week, almost the very day that Gounod set foot in England—a house made expressly for him; quiet, retired, with fine trees everywhere, front and back, where the hurdy-gurdies noise cannot penetrate. And then, think; the first time he heard me, did he not hear me sing the prayer in which I pray to God that ‘*I might have the wings of a dove to fly away and be at rest!*’ What a turmoil this life of a singer—nasty powder, nasty rouge, tiresome toilettes! The vulgar people one is obliged to put up with! What joy to have done with this life of intrigues! I have neither pleasure nor taste to work for myself, but for others it is a true satisfaction.”

My husband, I, and Gounod seriously talked over this idea of building a hall, and Gounod swore to us positively that nothing should prevent him, even when he settled in Paris again, from coming to us for one or two months in the year.

My husband said, “If a Gounod choir is formed, it must be for good and all, for it is not worth the trouble of altering the house and incurring heavy expenses, which would be worse than useless, for nothing. We know that a choir, even if Gounod has to do nothing but conduct, is a serious undertaking; if we have the entire management of it, it will be another thing altogether, and as for letting you lose your time, old man, it is not to be thought of. You must compose; as for Georgina, if she really thinks that she can undertake it and save you all the trouble, except the conducting at a rehearsal once a week when you are well, and at the concerts, then I think that it might be managed!”

Gounod was most eager for it, and ardent in his desire to begin operations—I felt exactly as he did. We had been duped by the Royal Albert Hall gentlemen, and I ardently wished to establish Gounod worship in England; then my pupils would sing at the Gounod concerts, Gounod would be rich, and would give me the money I needed; my pupils themselves would earn money. It seemed to me a most Providential combination.

Gounod set to work to compose choruses.

I looked out for a newspaper, for I had already found out that, without a paper which would take notice of our concerts and write up Gounod's interests, we should not be able to keep together at all! The music publishers, who, almost all of them, arrange the concerts in town and the provinces, have all of them their own newspapers. It was indispensable we should have one too.

And while Gounod composed, and I worked like a dragon, my husband sent for an architect and a decorator; the walls were pulled down; the new hall was promised us by the end of October.

Gounod then, in spite of all we could say, said that he was determined to pay us for his board and lodging, and it was on the 2nd of July, 1872, that he made his first payment. He agreed to pay my husband £20 a month. This sum was very insignificant, for it hardly covered the expenses of all the dinners and cigars my husband gave every Sunday to *his* friends and *his* acquaintances. All this, as a matter of fact, has been worse than useless expense for us. . . .

I have been told, as I well know:

"In thus renouncing your career, in persuading your husband to spend his money, in making these alterations in your house, with this idea of amassing Jeanne's dower, with this prospect of at some indefinite time, accepting whatever it pleased Gounod to give you for your School, did you not perceive that you were trusting yourself entirely to the caprice of this man, that he might leave you in the lurch any day, and that you would be let in for all the expenses as well as ridicule for having listened to him? Why did you not make him sign some formal agreement?"

"Never! never! it never entered my head. Gounod cannot break his word; he understands the matter perfectly, it is done for him alone. He only wishes the dower of his daughter assured, all else is indifferent to him. I am sure that in a little while we shall have 200,000 francs. That is the sum which is to be put on one side for Jeanne!" . . .

That is what I believed, what I have believed, and what I still believe. Although Gounod has left us, as he has, contrary to all his promises, and in spite of all the arrangements we had made for him, as far as concerns the financial part of the matter *he* has actually got his daughter's dower in England, besides enough to materially assist me in the establishment of my Orphanage.

Why, then, should he fail *me* in *everything*—my husband? who, believing me and believing him, undertook a work for Gounod's pleasure and advantage? It was certainly also done for *my* pleasure, *my* satisfaction, and the interest of my institution, but from the moment M. Gounod changes my pleasure and satisfaction into bitterness and humiliation by his fantastic whims, is it not just that I should do all in my power to obtain the money which I know would be well spent, and which would do so much good to many poor little children without either mothers or fathers? . . .

CHAPTER VI.

OUR CONTRACT BROKEN.

"BUT," I am told, "if Gounod thus breaks his contract, has he not some ground of complaint against you? *Qui n'écoute qu'une cloche n'entend qu'un son !*" (He who only hears one side of a question cannot judge the rights of a case.)

If Gounod has a complaint to make against us, why does he not state it honestly and clearly? But I'll take my oath that in not one single instance, except one, can I be blamed, and not even in that one when the circumstances are explained. It will be clear to the eyes of the blindest Gounodian that Gounod, if he had not done so, on parting with us on the *8th June, 1874*, had resolved, before a week had passed over his head, to get rid of us altogether. If such were his intention, why did he not write to us openly and honestly in something like the following terms?—

"My dear friends, they tell me that Jean ought to have a guide and guardian at his side, and that it is my duty to remain with him ; I therefore leave my business affairs in your hands. I hope that you will be able to continue the Gounod Concerts, in which you have taken so much affectionate interest, without me, and as Mimi will perhaps be very much disappointed at not having her *old man* by her side, and as my absence may make a material difference in her plans, I wish that, according as she thinks right, she shall appropriate as much of my royalties in England as may aid her in the accomplishment of her wishes as had been arranged." . . .

Even had he thought of giving me the smallest compensation for that which he well knew humiliated me, grieved me, and occasioned to me the deepest sorrow ; but no ! there is not a single word in his letters expressing regret for the grief which he knew his absence must cause me, not a word to prevent his absence giving any possible ground for slander or scandal—on the contrary, after having driven me mad by his hypocrisy, his lies, and his reproaches, he winds up by insulting us as publicly as he could contrive, by pretending that he had escaped from our house, from whence "he had not even had time to carry away a shirt."

I can understand that if he had written asking us to send him such and such things, and that we had refused, that he might have put himself into an unnecessary temper, and sent a complaint to the French Embassy, praying of them to make use of what legal power they possessed to compel us to surrender the effects which he demanded.

But no !

He had asked for nothing.

So nothing had been refused him.

My husband, in his letter of *23rd of June* gave him plainly to understand that I was overwhelmed with despair, that I was unable

to write, and that he was taking me to Switzerland for change of air and scene, in the hopes of calming me.

Gounod knew very well that we should be obliged to pass through Paris to get to Switzerland, and that I had promised to bring him *George Dandin*. Why could he not have written and said, "When you pass through Paris, do not forget to bring me *Polyeucte* and *George Dandin*"? Why write to the Embassy demanding things for which he had absolutely no need, things which I absolutely required if I were to continue the "*Gounod Concerts*"?

And what could the French Embassy do? They had no right to interfere, and if M. Gounod, the *Chargé d'Affaires*, and M. Moreau, the Counsel of the Embassy, had had the feeling of decency and delicacy that any Englishman would have possessed under similar circumstances, (and which his English solicitor, Mr. Taylor, had,) they would have immediately told M. Gounod that they were accustomed to busy themselves with respectable matters, and not with such blackguardism. What excuse could M. Gounod invent for employing the Embassy?

Mr. Taylor begged M. Gounod and M. Moreau not to employ him on such a disagreeable mission, which could only stir up strife and make us either turn M. Gounod's things out of the house with indignation, or to refuse to do so altogether. But M. Gavard and M. Moreau WANTED to insult us; it was no doubt Dr. Blanche who had advised them to be as insolent as possible; they wished to make us angry, they wished to make us break our contract!

But we had far too much affection for M. Gounod to wish to anger him. Besides we thought that this dishonest and disloyal conduct could not continue; that after a few days he would repent it more than any one else.

But now the time has gone by.

The time is lost.

The Gounod Concerts have been interrupted.

The air bristles with scandal.

And I demand compensation for the contract, broken by M. Gounod *alone*, and which *he alone* would have dared to break in such an indelicate way.

* * * * *

It is he who broke it; it is he who must pay the damage!

CHAPTER VII.

OUR DISBURSEMENTS.

PEOPLE will be surprised, perhaps, at the large sums we spent for M. Gounod. In his letters of 1871, he continually speaks of paying for this and paying for that; I had, at that time, never heard him make any kind of mean difficulty as to the money he had to spend. It was not until towards the beginning of *March, 1872*, that I began

to perceive that all this was false that this pretence of prodigality was put on !

I will quote but one example for the purpose of giving an idea of the innate horror he had of spending money which would have insured to him and him only the *sole and absolute proprietorship* of his works.

It will be seen, by his letters, that he intended paying the expenses of engraving, etc., for the Albert Hall Concerts himself. I myself was so ignorant of all concerning music-printing business, I cannot even remember what my impressions were when he entertained me on the subject ; I had no idea of these kind of things, so it never entered my head, when M. Gounod spoke of engraving, etc., and of exacting certain sums of money from concert agents, that he was not thoroughly experienced in all these matters, that he had not been accustomed to it all his life, and to receive enormous sums every time he appeared in public. He said that he was worth much more than Patti or Nilsson. I found this statement unquestionably true, and the greatest imbecile in the whole world could not have swallowed all that M. Gounod told and wrote me more easily than I did. I believed it with *all my soul*. He had certainly done two, or perhaps even *three* things I had thought very foolish ; but he had done them, he said, either from a Christian feeling, or from a feeling of honour which I considered an exaggerated one, or from a feeling of "*doing what he ought*." As I could not find fault with the first two reasons, and as I imagined I could not estimate him sufficiently highly, I swallowed *everything*, and only wished to be as Christian-like, and to have as honourable feelings as he ! He had therefore made up his mind to take upon himself the expense of printing the choruses for the Albert Hall ; the cost amounted to £293 for 5,000 copies of the 1st volume, 2,000 copies of the 2nd, and 2,000 copies of the 3rd volume. The 4th volume cost him hardly anything, as it was composed of choruses selected from the three other volumes.

He sold some to the Albert Hall Committee for £220, and also books in the hall during the days of the concerts (I cannot say the exact amount), but I have down in my diary, that, at the first concert alone, about £83 worth sold in the Hall. The expenses, therefore, were completely covered. This, therefore, was a property which belonged to him *absolutely* ; later on, he had to reprint copies of the 2nd and 3rd volumes, and there still remain (on hand), about 2000 copies of the first volume. He was the first, as may be seen by his letters, to wish to pay the cost of his works, but before paying for the Albert Hall edition, he grumbled so dreadfully, he made so many lamentations, so many complaints and so many difficulties, that the printer, refusing to deliver them until paid, my husband or I settled the matter by paying the bill ourselves, and I waited for a favourable opportunity to tell him we had done so. It was Smith who had engaged himself to buy back this property ; but he could not do it, for he owed to us that he had no capital, and he would not undertake so great an expense so soon after having started in business. We then advanced Smith the £293, hoping

that he would soon be able to repay us, but this never came to pass; Smith did not keep his promise, and Gounod smarted under the weight of the debt he owed us! It was in vain to assure Gounod that he could return us the money when the Albert Hall should pay him the £500 stipulated; that we were in no want of the money; and that, as security for the debt, he could constitute us proprietors of the copyrights of this work, and let us guarantee him the royalties. No! nothing could calm or satisfy him. Why, I cannot imagine. . . . It was unreasonable. There was no apparent motive. God only knows what possessed him when he was in this state of mind. In my letter to M. Delacourtie and Mme. de Beaucourt, I speak of the 15 or 16 months continual torments I endured through his threats to sell up Smith's house, and from his never ceasing lamentations at the ridiculous position in which I had placed him, by giving him a publisher on the royalty system who did not pay them.

It was therefore for the sake of averting the panic and sorrow this extraordinary state of mind caused him, to spare him the misery of having to put his hand into his pocket, that we spent all that we did. What rendered it more painful and difficult for us was, that for several days he would seem more than satisfied with an arrangement, . . . would pay this, would pay that—we were delighted to let him do as he pleased, believing that everything was settled; and then—No! . . . After a few days, the squabbles, the discussions, and threats would break out afresh. It was awful!

I have even tried to borrow money in secret (for I had not money enough myself, and was ashamed, for Gounod's sake, to have it lent him by my husband) for the purpose of placing it to his credit at the Bank, so as to be able to spend money for him without his finding out he was indebted in any way to any one for it. I even kept the secret from my husband, not that he would have refused the money, but I had so much delicacy and self-respect for Gounod, that I should have liked to have concealed even from myself the means I employed to *buy* for him, as well as for myself, the absence of scenes which caused me far more pain and misery than they did him. In this way I spent out of my pocket, and from the savings I had put by for my orphanage, more than £400. It was Sir Henry James to whom I applied for a considerable loan, and he refused me. I give all the proofs—in my power—that there is nothing I have not attempted to *buy* peace for M. Gounod with, as well as for ourselves, and I awaited with certainty the day when Gounod would have had the 200,000 francs for his Jeanne, that he would have become rich through my exertions, and in my country, to confess to him all the little mysteries I had invented for the sole purpose of keeping him happy and peaceful, and to remove all anxiety on money matters. If he had not succeeded, I should never have confessed the money I had spent; but, deprived as I am of all chance of success by *his extraordinary conduct*, I do not see why I should remain silent, and why M. Gounod should not reimburse and compensate me for all that I have sacrificed for him. . . .

CHAPTER VIII.

N. G.

N. G. are the initials of the young girl who brought a letter of recommendation to Gounod in the month of April, 1872.

He said to me, "My friend Soulanges Bodin is a friend of Du-buffe, my brother-in-law! You must see her, Mimi, and if it is possible, you will do all that you can for her, that she may speak well of us in that quarter." I thereupon went down to receive her. She was a beautiful and charming young girl, very pleasing, and very elegant. I took a great fancy to her.

The poor girl told me that she had been in London for a fortnight or three weeks, that she had brought letters to all the musical world, but no one had got her to sing anywhere, that she had earned nothing, and had had nothing promised her. Every one told her that she had come very late in the season, and that there would be nothing for her to do. I easily guessed why she had put off coming to Gounod so late.

It was a last resource! "There was a woman who monopolised him!—who was jealous, wicked, etc., etc.; no way of approaching Gounod. This woman, whose name was Mrs. Weldon, kept him under own eyes, and never let him out of her sight!"

I asked her to sing; I soon understood why she had no engagements. Although she was beautiful, she did not know what singing meant. Her voice trembled like jelly, and her pronunciation was absurd! "What a pity," I said to myself, "such a pretty girl, so modest, so pleasing; what a fine future might she not have, had she a voice and did she know how to sing!"

I went and said to Gounod, "Your young girl is as beautiful as a summer's night, but alas! her singing—impossible!"

He, like me, was charmed with her at first sight.

He told her what was the truth, that he found much opposition in London—that he could do nothing for any one; and I, if I could not get an artist listened to at my own house, I was useless.

I would not take any more pupils over the age of seven, so that I could not take her as a pupil.

My thoughts kept running upon her after she had gone; she was so beautiful, so sad, so lonely. "If I were to try and teach her to sing! She is an orphan! She would be dependent on me! Her parents could not play me any tricks. She would be grateful to me. If she has ever thought of becoming a professional singer, she must have had a good voice once. Her voice might be out of order. I lost my voice once; it gave me a good deal of trouble to get it back. There must be something to be done with her! . . . and I made up my mind to write to her saying, that I thought I had found a way of assisting her, and asked her to come to me on the 16th April, at six o'clock.

She came gladly enough ! I was the only star in her horizon—and this is what I said to her : “ My dear young lady, I never assist people by halves, if I tell you things that do not please you, it is because I believe that I can remedy them, and in remedying them, assist you to a brilliant career. You are very pretty, very ladylike, but—you do not know how to sing ! All I can do for you, I will do. I have already written for a place for you amongst the altos in the grand Albert Hall choir under the direction of Gounod ; we shall see this evening if you can be accepted (I know there is no vacancy for a soprano). Will you dine with us and attend the rehearsal. You will come to my children’s class, which lasts four hours every morning. We will see if we can strengthen and steady your voice, you will, at all events, learn how to pronounce well. In two years you might become a great artist. I put but two conditions on what I am about to do for you, the one is that you come to work in my class for two years, and that, when you earn £500 a year, you will give me the third of the amount over £500, which would be, if you earned £600 a year, £33 and a few shillings yearly to assist me in keeping up my academy. Here is my printed pamphlet, “ *Hints on Pronunciation* ;” it will explain everything to you, and show you my intentions. If you agree to this, come to-morrow morning and you shall have your first lesson.”

She came, and she attended very regularly. She seemed in earnest. Her voice trembled at first so much—it was so *shaky*—that it will seem incredible when I say that at the end of three months or still less it no longer trembled at all ; she, who, when she arrived, had said to me, “ Oh, Madame, if I could only reach *A* flat I should be quite contented !” got up, in seven weeks, to top *D*. I was enchanted with her, I liked her very much, and, at the end of three weeks, I proposed that she should come and live with us, and that she should owe the German lady, who had the management of our house, the same sum she paid for lodgings where she boarded at that time (£2 a week). She accepted joyfully, said how happy she was, she promised to assist me by taking the classes in the mornings, and lavished marks of affection and thankfulness upon me. I got her to make her *début* at Gounod’s Benefit Concert : she was charming. She accompanied us to Spa. She had great success everywhere. I trusted her, I did not watch her, I did not control her engagements, (I had nothing to do with them until she was in a position to earn over £500 a year) . . . and one fine day, while she was on a visit to some friends, I found out that she had sold herself, *sub rosa*, to an agent, and had left me in the lurch, owing me no less than £20 in ready money. She had been with me nearly five months. She had but one excuse . . . the everlasting grumbles of M. Gounod about his poverty. His incessant money calculations nearly drove her mad. When she returned to us after having stayed with Mr. Gounod at Alsa, where she had remained on a visit to Mr. Gambart for a few days, she told us that she would rather die of starvation than be obliged to live with him, and have to listen to the incessant recital of his imaginary poverty.

I told her that it was very disgraceful of her to have so little patience with this poor old man, and asked her, "*What would you do if you were me?*" upon which she replied that "*She should commit suicide!*"

CHAPTER IX.

MADAME FRANCHI.

MADAME FRANCHI is the wife of Franchi the theatrical agent. He is one of Monsieur Strakosch's men, and a very important gentleman.

One day Madame Franchi wrote to Gounod to say that she wished very much to speak to him.

Gounod said to me, "Mimi! perhaps it is Strakosch who has returned to the charge about the 100,000 frs. for *Polyeude!* You will see her, my little man, and if so, you will take care to stick out for a good bargain!" . . .

I wrote to her telling her at what time she would find us at home. We received her; Gounod left me alone with her to do his business. She appeared shy and awkward. . . . She told me that she expected money from her husband who was at St. Petersburg, and that, if I would ask Gounod to lend her £5, she would give him a receipt in form, as she was in the habit of doing when, through her husband's absence, she ran short, and that, as soon as M. Franchi came to London, he would be eager and thankful to pay his wife's debt. Gounod having told me that Franchi might be extremely useful to him, I was glad to have the opportunity of obliging him. I told Madame Franchi that Gounod was not rich at present, and that he had a strong clique against him which prevented his getting on, but that I would willingly accede to her request, feeling sure, as she said, that M. Franchi would be eager to repay me. I gave her £5, and she gave me a receipt.

Gounod said to me, "You have done well, my child, these people are useful!"

A short time afterwards she came again: this time I lent her ten shillings.

This money has never been repaid. It was on Gounod's account I spent it.

Why should I bear this loss? All this money in each case I thought would return to me a hundredfold when the 200,000 francs for Jeanne Gounod were saved.

CHAPTER X.

G. W.

IN *April, 1872*, M. Strakosch paid us great attention.

He came to offer M. Gounod 100,000 francs for *Polyeucte* for America alone. M. Gounod heard him with much pleasure, and without distrust. He also wished to come to terms about the representation of Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* in London; but as Mr. Gye would not consent to pay M. Gounod his author's rights on FAUST, and £20 a-night (the rate of the Grand Opéra at Paris) Gounod would, on no account, allow his work to be played, for a very good reason, as will be seen when I begin to relate the history of his BUSINESS.

. The difficulty with *Polyeucte*, Gounod said, was the tenor. He must have a *famous tenor*. His *Pauline* (myself) he had; "but the tenor, he must be something superior as a man to what his *Pauline* was as a woman; he must be something more than a hairdresser, he must be an apostle—a martyr with lungs!"

"I have the very thing you require!" said Strakosch to him. So, one day when I was ill in bed, owing to a scene which Gounod had made with me, Strakosch brought his tenor to sing to Gounod.

He bellowed fearfully out of tune. it was horrible. . . . Gounod ran to me, "Mimi, it is horrid! Strakosch must be making a fool of us!"

"So it appears to me," said I.

The following day Strakosch returned: "Well, my dear Maestro, what do you think of my tenor?"

Gounod, much too civil to say what he honestly thought: "He has plenty of voice, plenty of material, but he ought to work!"

"That's it! that's it!" said Strakosch. "If you, my dear master, would take him in hand for a little while, and lick him into shape, you would have a superb tenor!"

"I," said Gounod, "I never give lessons, but here is my little friend, who has a rage for teaching, an extraordinary method, and if anyone can make anything of your young man, it is this little woman."

"But," said I, laughing, "your young man is too old for me; I only take children between four and seven years old! nothing can be done with grown-up people."

"Ah, madame!" said M. Strakosch, "I should be so, so grateful to you if you would give him a few lessons."

"First of all," I replied, "a few lessons would not do for me; when I teach, I do it in downright earnest!"

"But I will give him to you in downright earnest, madame," said Strakosch, "with pleasure!"

"Downright earnest means with me, at least two years!" I said, "and you would not give him to me for two years."

"Certainly, I will give him to you for two years."

In short it was arranged that M. Strakosch should bring the young man the following day to join my class. If at the end of a month I found that there was some hope of being able to make something of him, M. Strakosch would keep his promise, and let him have the opportunity of taking lessons of me every morning for two years.

M. Strakosch told me that the young man was 26 years old, and a *tenor robusto* was not wholly developed before 25, so that there had not been much time lost.

G. W. was engaged with him for six years, therefore he could guarantee him to me. He paid him £20 a-month, so that he should not cost me anything.

M. Strakosch, without his tenor, came every morning, and appeared enthusiastic about my children and my method. He said G. W. had caught cold, and could not come. The fact was, he was watching my method before bringing his *protégé*, and he wanted to see whether I was insane or not. (So G. W. told me later).

The future *Polyeucte* came to join my class fifteen days after this conversation.

The young man, as he told me himself later on, was at that time thirty years old! Gounod believed that he should earn Strakosch's eternal gratitude for all I was going to do for his tenor, and 100,000 francs for *Polyeucte*!!! When we were about to start for Spa, I wrote to M. Strakosch, asking him to give G. W. a little something extra, on account of the journey, etc. M. Strakosch was eager to give him everything I wished for, and complied with my request.

At the end of five months he wrote to G. W. to say, that the state of his health obliged him to give up business, and that he threw up the engagement.

"What!" I said, "Is it possible? Strakosch told me that he had made an engagement with you for six years!"

"Yes," said poor W., "but how can a poor devil like me enter an action against Strakosch?"

"Give me your agreement," I said to him, "I will see to that! Go!"

G. W. brought me the agreement. I examined it. G. W. was indeed legally engaged with Strakosch for six years: but Strakosch had only bound himself for one month! He had therefore the right of giving him a month's notice, like a servant, giving W. *the sack*, paying him one month's salary, and so it turned out.

W. was in despair (I do not wish to enter into all the reasons why). I took pity on him. I said to him, "Courage, W., I will not forsake you!"

This is how it came to pass that I spent £250, uselessly, out of my pocket for him.

He, poor fellow, discouraged by perfidious advice, and by people who warned him (as they did N. G.), that all my scaffolding with M. Gounod would topple over before long, at the end of fifteen months, worried by M. Gounod's disagreeable ways, wretched to see me cry

so much and so often, and, believing that I could not stand it much longer, left us.

He was thoroughly thankful, friendly, and loyal, and I cannot blame him for the way he behaved—although this, too, was to me a great deception and a great disappointment.

All this belongs to M. Gounod's account. It was he who (for the bait of 100,000 francs for *Polyeucte*) put this heavy charge on my shoulders, and let me be taken in by M. Strakosch.

I was far too loyal to desert the poor young man (*who would be useful to us*) when I became certain that he would be useless; and if I have often done things, having the ulterior success of my Orphanage or M. Gounod's interests in view, I have never forsaken a person thrown on my hands, chance having, in one way or other, thrown them in my way.

CHAPTER XI.

MY HUSBAND'S WRITING-TABLE.

GOUNOD and I who, thanks to the liberality of my husband, had each our own writing-table, decided to buy him one.

That is to say, I said that I wished to buy him one; and Gounod said, "I should like to pay half, and we will give it to our good Harry together as a Christmas-box."

I need scarcely say that I paid for it all myself; and that Gounod, after having very much lamented that he had not a farthing in the world, but that he would refund the money as soon as he was able, never did so.

The table cost £18. We went and bought it together. I have no proof, except my word and my husband's, that Gounod proposed this arrangement himself, but I do not think he would deny it.

CHAPTER XII.

COPIES OF ORCHESTRAL PARTS, SCORES, REGISTRATIONS.

I AM sure that I have paid much more than I am able to prove for all these sorts of things; I did it simply to avoid squabbles, arguments, and lamentations, because Smith did not pay, and he was always in debt.

During the three years that M. Gounod lived with us, I bought *nothing* for myself, but my dress, which was like that worn by all the ladies

in the choir, and a dozen pairs of gloves. Before M. Gounod established himself with us, I had bought a black alpaca dress, a bonnet trimmed with daisies, and a grand mourning dress (very simple), to sing "*Gallia*." Since then I have bought myself absolutely *nothing*—*nothing*!

Ah, yes!—a black umbrella, 10 francs.

I kept no accounts, everything was spent for my children, or for M. Gounod.

What did I want with accounts?

CHAPTER XIII.

H. N.

H. N. COST us a good deal of money—in this way: One fine day, at the end of 1872, M. Gounod received a letter, very well written, and in a very good style.

The person who wrote it was evidently a man of education. The contents were most touching. He had not eaten anything for three days, and had slept on the ground!

M. Gounod went into a frenzied fit of charity, generosity, and eagerness. The young man said he would come and knock at the door at four o'clock to see if there was any reply. At half-past three, M. Gounod was on the watch for him. He did not come. M. Gounod went out into the square to see him the quicker—to wait for him, to welcome him, to warm him. He had a mother; Gounod also had had a mother!

The young man did not come on that day. We both of us wept with anxiety. The unfortunate man had probably not had the courage to come. He might have thrown himself into the Thames! . . . And his mother!

When my husband came in, he found us both very much upset. Nothing would satisfy us but to persuade him to go to Scotland Yard (our préfecture of police) with the unfortunate man's letter, so that if a corpse was found in the Thames they should let us know.

My husband went.

Heavens, how good my husband is!

At about twelve o'clock on the following day, H. N. sent up his name. Gounod lent him £4 that day. H. N. was going to do wonderful things in London, and was sure he should soon be able to return the money.

Some time afterwards Gounod lent him £7 more.

One day the young man came; he was more than usually miserable. His poor mother! she could not pay her rent; the brokers were going to sell her up, the little she possessed. . . . It was most distressing!—700 francs would save her, and keep the wolf

from the door for another year. H. N. was so certain of doing a splendid business. He certainly was a young artist of decided talent.

Gounod, who did not see his money return, had begun to wrangle with me, because I had *allowed* him to lend these sums to H. N. He therefore listened coldly enough; but I was much touched by what appeared to me a providential coincidence. I had the day before taken £50 from the Bank. There they lay idle in my drawer, and, if N.'s mother had not sufficient to pay the rent, she would have to sleep in the street. I told the old man that I had the money there, as if Providence had made me put it there expressly.

"Shall I give these £28 to N.?"

Gounod was touched; he pressed my hand. "It will be one more good action to your account, my dear Mimi!" and I counted out my £28 joyfully to H. N., telling him I could not *give* them to him—that my money belonged to my poor children, and that he must pay me back by degrees as soon as he could. He cost us money in many other ways. He almost lived with us, so that he might have something to eat; and I had great confidence in him.

One day, in commemoration of the success of the first series of Gounod Concerts, Gounod gave my husband and I a beautiful double *Louis Dor* (Louis XVIII.). I ran to add it to my little collection of gold coins, and which I had shown H. N. two or three days previously. I discovered that the whole collection had disappeared entirely. I went and looked in the case in which I kept my trinkets; the best had gone from there too. What did I do? Do you want to know how far I carried my stupidity? I gave him £25, because I felt sure that he would go of his own accord and buy them back. I knew it could only be he who had taken them.

Every day I watched my case and coins.

In vain!—nothing was ever returned.

When I had given up all hope, I wrote to H. N. asking him to send me the pawn-tickets. He sent them to me, poor fellow! My husband bought back my trinkets, but it was too late to save the collection of gold coins.

M. Gounod had given him besides £36.

This again is money I should not have lost, had it not been for M. Gounod's sudden caprice in patronising a man of whom we knew nothing.

People will say I am still worse and more stupid than M. Gounod, but if one only knew what a tender and devoted heart I *always* have had, and how happy I was to admire, love, and encourage M. Gounod in anything like an amiable fit, one would know that it was not caprice on my part.

I am sure that M. Gounod of his own nature is the same.

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE FREQUENTERS OF TAVISTOCK HOUSE PAST AND PRESENT.

GOUNOD, in his letters, speaks a good deal about several people, concerning whom I would like to give some explanation.

1st. "*Father Raulings*" is the blind father of four of my pupils.

2nd. "*Free*" is Mr. Richard Freemantle, a young man who was my pupil for more than a year. He got his head turned with a passion for the stage. He then fell ill, returned to London, and as he was a very honest young fellow, brought up in a place of business, if the affairs can be arranged between M. Gounod and myself, it has been settled that I should engage him as clerk.

3rd. "*Marion*" is my oldest pupil, a good young girl, who I like very much.

4th. "*Werrenrath*" is also one of my pupils.

5th. "*Nelly Craven*," the same.

6th. "*Andrew Vacani*" was a boy musically endowed in a marvellous degree; I should have much liked to have kept him as my pupil, but his father was not poor, and I did not consider it my duty to keep him. He is a lad who was considered as "*born without an ear*." In a very few days, after having "*tamed*" his ears, I found his voice a superb organ. Gounod, in one of his letters, alludes to his four C's. . . .

7th. *Zaffira* or *chosseses* is his Italian poet.

8th. *Bertrand* is his fencing master.

9th. *Fred Clay* is my friend, the English composer whom I think so much of. *Padrino* was his dear and much-lamented father.

10th. *Le Daddy* is Sir Julius Benedict, who has been a good and faithful friend to us for nearly twenty years.

11th. *Freddie Warre* is our friend who was so ill.

12th. *Camille Barrère* is a young Frenchman who introduced to us a certain gentleman whose real name is *Rafael Tugenhold*, and who is known as :

13th. *Stefan Polès*. He is a person who caused us a good deal of trouble, and Gounod put an advertisement in the *Times* and elsewhere to the effect that he did no business through the agency of *M. Stefan Polès*.

M. Stefan Polès tried to make Gounod pay the sum of £480 for the advantage of having made his acquaintance, but he did not succeed in getting it; he, however, obtained a verdict against the *Times*, who had accused him of stealing M. Thiers' papers, and he also won an action against the Poles, who had accused him of having promulgated the rumour of a false amnesty to the Poles by the Czar of Russia, which gave him a position (so he boasted, and I believe he was just the sort of creature commercial gentlemen appreciate) in the *first literary houses* in the whole world. . . . (8)

14th. *Dan*, *Mittie*, *Jarby* and *Whiddies* (or *Whiddie*) are my pugs.

15th. *Sim Egerton* is the Honourable Captain Egerton, the Earl of Wilton's son, a very good amateur musician, and who, at the beginning, had a great deal to do with the Albert Hall.

- 16th. *Littleton* is the head of the publishing firm of Novello & Co.
 17th. *Mapleson* is the Director of Her Majesty's Theatre, London.
 18th. *Davison* is the musical critic of the *Times*.
 19th. *Gye* is the Director of Covent Garden Theatre, London.
 20th. *Chappell* is a music publisher.
 21st. *Boosey* is a music publisher.
 22nd. *Metzler* is a music publisher.
 23rd. *M. Delacourtie* is M. Gounod's French solicitor.
 24th. *M. Taylor* is M. Gounod's English solicitor, who was recommended to him by M. Moreau, Counsel of the French Embassy.
 25th. *Choudens* is his French ex-publisher.
 26th. *Lemoine* is his actual French publisher.
 27th. *Gérard* is a publisher (formerly House Meissonnier) with whom he wished to enter into business.
 As for my husband, it will be seen that he had a heap of nicknames. For me as well.
 His wife is *Anna*—"Odious," "on," *chien de faïence*, crockery dog, etc.
 28th. *Jean* is his son.
 29th. *Jeanne* is his daughter.
 30th. *Martha*, his sister-in-law, Gounod. }
 31st. *Lolotte* and *Thérèse*, her daughters. }
 32nd. *Edith*, Mme. de Beaucourt.
 33rd. *Gaston*, M. de Beaucourt.
 34th. *Cécile*, Mme. de Ségur.
 35th. *M. Viguier*, Secretary of the Conservatoire.
 36th. *Mme. Viguier*, his wife, a celebrated pianist.
 37th. *M. Jules Barbier*, Gounod's usual librettist.
 38th. *Duff & Stewart*, }
 39th. *Wood or Bickerton*, } English publishers.
 40th. *Lamborn, Cock & Co.*, }
 41st. *Monchablon* is a French painter.
 42nd. *Durand*, the same.
 43rd. *Naudin*, an architect.
 44th. *Zéa*, Mme. Pigache, Mme. Gounod's sister.
 45th. *M. DuLocle*, Director of the Opéra Comique, Paris.
 46th. *M. Halanzier*, Director of the Grand Opéra, Paris.
 47th. *Benedicte, Batos, Marguerite Savoye*, three sisters.

CHAPTER XV.

I HAVE now, to a certain extent, explained everything, and shall commence the *Business Chapter*. It will be very long, very long indeed, very complicated and very curious.

I find myself quite in a state of puzzle, not knowing at which end to begin. There is so much to be said—to disentangle it at all is no easy matter, I well know.

It should in the first place be well understood that before coming to England in the month of September, 1870, Gounod had been

entirely under the control of a certain French tradesman called Choudens. As Gounod himself tells us in his *Autobiography*, he played the part of "bear" in M. de Choudens' service for thirteen years.

The *Autobiography* of which I speak has already been published in a newspaper, and as what Gounod says therein will be very useful to prove his troubles before he made *my* acquaintance, and the manner of them, I shall take upon myself to have them printed some day in a separate form. (9) I am perfectly justified in taking this upon myself, for although M. Gounod attached his name alone to these articles, it was I who had arranged the serious parts thereof carefully in English; he translated them and then altered them to his liking in his own beautiful style. Gounod writes admirably.

I have very good ideas, but I have neither style nor grammar, and I write very badly.

I am astonished that Gounod could have remained connected with one publisher so long, and I have asked repeatedly of people who are up in all these things how it happened that Gounod, who never had had the least real confidence in us (who devoted ourselves to him, and who not only gained nothing, but spent a great deal for him) had for so long had unlimited confidence (as it appeared) in Choudens, who, as he himself said, got very rich by *his* compositions, while he remained comparatively poor.

"You did not flatter him! You did not arrange serenades for him! . . . In every town where Choudens took him to have one of his Operas performed, he was careful to arrange beforehand with the Director of the Theatre an *impromptu* reception at the station—or on returning from the performance; when the performance was finished *the composer, modestly concealed in a private box, was sure to be recognised by the crowd* (not one of whom had ever seen him before), he was received with shouts of welcome, he was recalled, he was applauded, he was crowned with flowers; the orchestra of the theatre (*after this perfectly spontaneous success*) hastened to give him *impromptu* serenades (*prepared a week beforehand*), according to Choudens' orders. The papers were full of flattering articles, Gounod was satisfied—all this was done at the expense of the Director . . . and . . . Choudens sold his music."

But I had never flattered him, I had never, since the famous *Gallia* garland (10) cared to pull the strings, either for him or for myself. As for making use of all the means which vulgar, honest, unflattering advertisement required, I must certainly own to having made use of it in all its hideous brutality. I used to say to Gounod: "It is not because you are Gounod that people will come to your concerts, your name is hardly known; a striking colour must be found for the placards; we must have some curiously devised bills with your name carried about the streets; it is not because you have heavenly genius that people will take tickets for the concerts; they buy them of me because I torment them. I do this to that person, and that to this person; I get this man to write an article, because I said something against A. whom he hates, and he rewards me for my ill-nature by writing an article in your favour!"

Could I suppose my honest philosophy would ruin me? I was honestly so much more indignant than he was, because all the world did not come and prostrate itself at his feet as I did, and feel privileged to come and gaze on the back of his grand, noble old head!—listen to his harmonies, so simple and so strange! No; I have learned, at his expense, that it was in vain that Gounod was Gounod; the public do not trouble themselves about anything, if it is not cried up enough in the papers. From the moment the papers said nothing, the public thought nothing. If an artist has not served his apprenticeship under the yoke of a dramatic agent or impresario, the papers do not notice him because it would be against the interests of the agents and contractors, who line the pockets of the newspaper proprietors or critics. Gounod being neither the prey of a publisher, an agent, or a contractor, had as much difficulty in pushing his way as an absolutely unknown artist; and, had it not been for me, my position, my energy, my courage, and my husband's money, he positively never would have made a penny!

M. de Choudens has a *brother publisher* in London. This *brother publisher* is Mr Littleton, chief of the house of Novello. It was Mr Littleton who had published Gounod's early songs—it was Mr Littleton who had made an edition of his *Messe Solennelle*, of course without paying a farthing for them, and it is Mr Littleton who is the greatest publisher in England.

The house of Novello bought many of Mendelssohn's works, and notably "*Elijah*," for £80! It managed to establish a sort of monopoly of Handel's oratorios. Over the very chastely and richly decorated façade of their shop in Berners Street shone out conspicuous, in beautifully ornamental Gothic letters:

Sacred Music Warehouse.

The religious public and the *clergy* (a numerous class) have for many years patronised the religious and SACRED MUSICAL WAREHOUSE; and Mr Littleton is looked on as a highly religious man.

It is no doubt religion which has enabled him to make his way so well in business, for it is said that as a boy he swept out Novello's shop; for this reason M. Gounod sometimes jokingly called him in his letters "the old sweep."

Patronised by the religious world for so long and so effectually, the house of Novello flourished to the envy of its fellows, and got on so well (like a centipede) on its hundred legs, that at the end of last year the façade of the establishment was re-decorated, and an artistic arabesque took the place of the talismanic words:

Sacred Music Warehouse.

It had been there so long that, perhaps, no one but me will have perceived that time had effaced that portion of the *fresco*!

As for me, I was possessed with the certainty that (thanks to the *Sacred Harmonic*, the *Crystal Palace*, *Henry Leslie's* concerts, and

the *Royal Albert Hall*, where hardly anything but music published by Novello and Co. is sung and executed) the religious title had become an unnecessary article, and I was malicious enough to daily watch the new decorations whenever I drove through Berners Street to see if it had been replaced. I left London in November, 1874, and it had not re-appeared !

The provinces in England are, so to speak, governed by the house of Novello. Only a very short time ago, a very important publication amongst the clergy, "*Hymns Ancient and Modern*," was withdrawn from them, because the compilers discovered that by paying the expenses themselves, the same publication, instead of bringing them in £2,000 a year, brought in £8,000 !

The house of Novello thereupon printed in opposition to this "*The Hymnary*," and it is very probable, I should say, that the poor clergymen, who are now rejoicing at having made a change for the better, will presently find out that their "*Hymns Ancient and Modern*" are gone out of fashion, and that Novello's "*Hymnary*" has superseded that publication everywhere, so that what brought them in £2,000 a-year will hardly bring them in £400. They no more suspect the power of the great publishing firm any more than I did when M. Gounod came complaining to us of "*the old sweep*," for whom we, alas ! most ignorantly felt a most profound contempt. . . .

I looked at it in the light which every lady in society would look at this kind of thing. To me it was a case of a tradesman, to whom one says, "I had agreed to give you £20 for this cloak, now you demand £22 ; I will not have it !" Or let us look at it from another point of view : a tradesman arranges with a lady to sell her a cloak for £20 ; when she is about to pay, the lady says to him, "I have considered the matter, and I can only give you £16." The tradesman then says, "Well, then, madame, I cannot give you the goods ; a bargain !"

The provinces of England, I say, are governed by the house of Novello.* Hence the worship for Handel—I ought rather to say—of the *Messiah*, and *Israel in Egypt* ; for I do not know how many years in England, people have been brought up to believe and to find *The Messiah* very beautiful ; generation after generation religiously bear it, although it really bores them to death ; but their ancestors, George II. and III. found it beautiful, all the newspapers repeat it, and the house of Novello prospers. But in spite of all its power, all its grandeur, and all its intrigues—in spite of all the journalists have done to try and get up enthusiastic admiration for them—one will never get the children of the next generation who honestly and infinitely prefer bad ballads, Offenbach and Lecocq, to swallow the pompous and bewigged strains or any fresh oratorio of old Handel, which have not been dinned into them, as the everlasting *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt* have been, a faith which they have sucked in with their mothers' milk.

* Proprietors and publishers of *The Musical Times*.

One thing which amuses me much is to watch the attempt at Handel reaction in France! (II.) Handel's music, without doubt, is imbued with profound and majestic science, but we do not admire the sky when it is full of stars more because we know how to measure the distance of one from the other. The ignorant admire and feel the beauty of the constellated vault of heaven as much as the most profound astronomer. It is not because ordinary mortals do not know counterpoint that they admire Handel. Unless one has learnt counterpoint, one cannot admire the Science of Harmony. What really pleases is a music which describes the words well; this the bad ballads of the present day have taught the crowd; and although *The Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*, which were admired by our ancestors, will still have a long life, not all the publishers and all the journalists in the world will ever get the public to take to another oratorio of Handel's.

All this which I now relate, and which I now have at my fingers' ends, through having sorrowfully learned it to my own cost, I then knew no more about than one in a thousand of my readers.

When Mr. Littleton did M. Gounod the *honour* of going to him and offering to publish his manuscripts, and pay him for them, he was one of the greatest potentates in England, who was condescending to visit a vassal.

"Yes," said M. Gounod, moved by gratitude, "he was the only publisher who took the trouble to come and ask me for something when I came to England—that good old Littleton!"

Of course, he never suspected that his guardian angel followed him with its watchful protection across the seas in that perfidious Albion, enemy of the Gallic race!

Littleton, the king of publishers, like a well-bred retriever, had scented his game, and eagerly pounced down upon it. Now, in England, as I have since then found out, very long prices are given by publishers to composers (if they have some name), and that £200, £100, and £50 for a song is not so much out of the way.

Gounod did not know this. He knew nothing. He had believed that, on arriving in England, all the publishers would eagerly crowd round him and run up his compositions to a tremendous price. Chappell, who had had *Faust* for almost nothing, why did not he present himself?

"From him at least," said Gounod, "I might have expected something! But no, only this Littleton came forward!"

"That is easily understood!" I told him later on, "there is honour among thieves, and publishers would not compromise one another. Above all, they must not spoil the market, and if they had all pressed eagerly round you, you might have asked fabulous prices; they would besides have had to give concerts and the singers a large royalty expressly to push them; it is probable that your songs would not have suited those ladies, and they might have lost a good deal by them, these poor publishers!"

The most that Choudens had ever paid Gounod for a song was £20 for all countries. In the three collections of *mélodies* published

by Choudens there are *perhaps* 45 which are original, the rest are cuttings or extracts from operas, etc.

Choudens, who was very just, paid £40 for a duet, I never could understand why, but I believe I can guess. I do not know how many separate duets Gounod has written. I only know of the "*Two Sisters*," and "*La Siesta*," which Choudens bought. There are two others, "*Chanson de la Brise*" and "*Fleur des Bois*," published by Lemoine. There may be others, but I do not know them. Choudens bought *Faust*, *Philemon et Baucis*, *Reine de Saba*, *Mireille*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Deux Reines*, *Nonne Sanglante*, *Sapho*, *La Colombe*, *Tobie* (a small oratorio).

Gounod's share, according to the treaties and Gounod's memory, amounted as follows:—

	Franks.
<i>Faust</i> (5 acts)	6,666
<i>Philemon et Baucis</i> (2 and 3 acts) ...	6,666
<i>Reine de Saba</i> (5 acts) ...	6,666
<i>Mireille</i> (5 acts) ...	13,332
<i>Roméo et Juliette</i> (5 acts) ...	33,324
<i>Deux Reines</i> (drama in 4 acts) ...	5,000
<i>Nonne Sanglante</i> (5 acts) ...	1,000
<i>Sapho</i> (3 acts) ...	0,000
<i>La Colombe</i> ...	3,000
<i>Tobie</i> (12) ...	1,000
<i>Faust</i> (ballet) ...	2,000
45 <i>Melodies</i> —500 frs. each ...	22,500
2 <i>Duos</i> —1,000 frs. each ...	2,000

(£4,160) 102,654

The prices for *La Colombe* and *Tobie* are quoted from memory. Those of the others are copied from the agreements or treaties. The songs are valued too highly, I believe, in the above memorandum, but admitting that it might be as much as that, and that perhaps M. Gounod was mistaken in his figures (although Choudens had published many other things of his), let us add another 10,000 francs to the account that I have made out, and we shall have the whole estimate at 112,654 francs, which Gounod had been paid by Choudens from the 8th of April, 1859, to the end of the year, 1871.

I only bring forward M. Choudens' account to compare it with mine, to set it off and to give to those whom M. Gounod and his friends make believe that I have done nothing for him, the opportunity of judging whether they are right or not.

112,654 francs capital would bring in about 7,000 francs income (£300).

It is very difficult in so short a space of time as three years to calculate with accuracy how much a year the works, on an average, which M. Gounod composed while with us, would have brought in a year.

My husband was quite ready to guarantee him £300 a year on his compositions for England *alone*; (13) valuing his capital at £7000 in this country, therefore my husband would have guaranteed him

an income, fruit of three years' works, greater than that brought him by all the sums received from M. Choudens during *thirteen* years.

This is a point which no one in the world can refute.

Mr. Weldon guaranteed M. Gounod for *three* years' work an income for *England alone* greater than that which he had earned with M. Choudens in *thirteen* years. During these three years in England nearly 60,000 copies of songs had been stamped with M. Gounod's signature. Every 1000 copies representing for Gounod alone a sum of £25.

Fifty times (we will say, so as to keep below the mark) twenty-five pounds sterling make £1,250. If his publisher did not pay him, it is his fault, not mine, as will be seen.

Over and above the 50,000 copies of songs, etc., sold or stamped, there is all the choral music which brings in so much on the royalty system. . . . (14)

Besides this he has made various other arrangements, of which I will speak later on, and which ensured him considerable sums elsewhere, and his compositions belong to him alone, and not to his English publishers, as in past times they did to Choudens, to whom they belonged *once for all, for all countries*. If Choudens had bought the sixty songs (which represent this sum of £1,250) at £20 each, that would have brought Gounod £1,200, a sum less than that which an unknown publisher with the whole musical world against him, with *quite new compositions* (the songs in England), have brought in in three years.

Gounod has been in the habit of receiving £20 for all countries, and no more, from Choudens, when he came to England in 1870. When Littleton offered him £40 for all countries he was enchanted. He composed several other works for the House of Novello.

The first sum due, £200, Littleton paid without a murmur.

The second sum due, £200, Littleton then modified the terms when the time of payment arrived. He could only afford to pay him £160.

The third sum due, £200, Littleton much regretted that he could not pay the £200, and gave him £160.

The fourth sum due was £240. Littleton again expressed his regrets, and had again modified matters. This time he did not hesitate to give Gounod £100 less. Gounod railed against the "*old sweep!*"

"If you are not satisfied," said my husband, "you have your remedy, bring an action against him and you will get your money!"

Gounod brought the action and won it.

END OF FIRST ACT.

I must now retrace my steps and explain how it was Gounod put himself in the wrong, and how I attribute all the misfortunes which have happened to him, and which have caused me so much sorrow and trouble to this first—what shall I call it?—stupidity on his part.

When, towards the 16th (or 17th) May (he did not speak of his publishing arrangements with me before then), he expressed to me

his disgust at having been done out of £40 of the £200 which he expected from Littleton, I told him I considered he was being paid very little for his compositions, and again spoke to him of the royalty system, as I had already done during the winter to him as well as to Madame Gounod and Madame Zimmerman, and the society at large. . . .

Gounod then, one fine day, decided to change his publisher, and gave me two songs to take to Duff & Stewart (Sir Julius Benedict's protégés) on the royalty system. These two succeeded immensely (by way of parenthesis) and brought £50 to Gounod in five months.

After he had sent these songs to Duff & Stewart, he began to say that his old Littleton would be very much disappointed at not having anything more to print for him. "My dear child, what do you think, had I better take him this new composition?" (it was a duet, *La Siesta*). "My dear sir," I said, "you can do as you like; but I would never again set foot in the house of a person who had given me cause of complaint!"

"But what do you advise me to do?"

"I advise nothing, I only tell you what I should do!"

"But if Littleton were to offer me more than Duff & Stewart gives me, what would you say?"

"I have told you what I should do; I would have nothing more to do with a man of whom I had reason to complain. Either I would not complain, or else I would not go and do business with him again! After all it is your business, my dear sir, not mine. Do what you think best."

"You see, my dear friend, I made only a verbal arrangement with him, it is true; but my word is more sacred to me than a stamped agreement. Agreements can be torn up, an honest man's word remains. I promised him that I would do business with him exclusively, and I should like to keep my word if possible."

"I thought that you had let Chappell have six songs?" . . .

"Yes, he came and made me an offer; I thought that it would not be civil to refuse him. I did not wish to seem vexed at not having had anything for *Faust* in England!"

"What a Christian," I said to myself, "what a superior man! What amiability!"

He saw the impression he had made on his greenhorn, and he became still more eloquent.

"I am the last man in the world to wish to wrong anyone. *Forgive, and it will be forgiven you!* Littleton perhaps regrets his conduct towards me, feels that he has had his lesson, and that I am not to be trifled with again!"

"Perhaps!" I replied mechanically enough; it was all the same to me, I understood nothing about it. I regretted Duff & Stewart, but that was Gounod's business, not mine.

"You would be doing me a great kindness, my dear friend, if you would come with me to Littleton's; you can explain it to him better than I, perhaps!"

"No, certainly not!" I replied, "you can go if you like, but I tell you what I think about it, and I cannot accompany you."

I do not know if he felt mortified, I did not pay much attention to his humours at that time. Besides, as long as anyone keeps on *p's* and *q's* with him, I suspect he takes care not to show his little tempers. . . . And, in those days, he was on very polite terms with Mrs. Weldon. . . .

Two or three days afterwards he called on me looking radiant; he had been to this "good old Littleton," who had been "so delighted to see him again," and who had promised to give him £20 for every song he would write, and 4d. royalty besides, for the sake of remaining as before his principal publisher.

I, distrustful and suspicious enough, begged him to wait only till I asked Duff & Stewart's advice. They told me that they regretted not to remain M. Gounod's publishers, but that they advised him to accept Mr. Littleton's very good offer.

Gounod therefore carried the duet *La Siesta* to Littleton. It had been arranged that he should receive for every song or duet £20 down, and 4d. royalty on each copy for *England only*.

A little while after this, having composed two other songs, *Queen of Love* and *Sweet Baby, Sleep*, Gounod persuaded me to go with him to Littleton's—to give these to him on the same terms. I took care to make Mr. Littleton say what he had offered M. Gounod, in order to be sure that Gounod had understood him, and Mr. Littleton repeated to me the arrangement which had been agreed to between him and Gounod, and wrote in pencil on the two pieces the following memorandum—£20, 4d. *R.*

An edition of *La Siesta* with English words had been printed, and the first proofs had been sent to Gounod. I told Gounod that the words they had put to his music were *absurd*, and that he could not possibly allow his music to be so degraded (15). We went to tell Littleton so, and he took the matter very quietly, and only said that he was surprised to hear that they were bad verses, as they were Dr. Dulcken's. Gounod told him that he would ask a gentleman to make other words, and the end of the story was, as will be seen in the Gounod letters, that Littleton, acting on the advice of his head clerk Barnby (who is now choir master at the Albert Hall), wrote to Gounod to say that he would not consent to print other words than those already there. Gounod, furious, went to see him; he told Littleton, who was just leaving the shop, that if he did not alter the words he had better give him back his music. Littleton made some impertinent reply and took himself off, and I drove Gounod home, raging, raving, *flaming*, furious! I had the greatest trouble to calm him. This was the 15th of June, 1871, the first time I had seen Gounod really angry, and for so trifling a cause. Littleton was a person entirely below him, a vulgar tradesman, ignorant of anything like good manners. But that does not prevent any one from being received at court, and his chief clerk, Mr. Barnby, was presented last year.

Gounod followed my husband's advice, brought an action, and won it.

Now I shall be told, "Would it not have been much more advantageous if he had rather given way again about this £100, and if your husband had not advised him to take proceedings?" I reply without hesitation, "Yes!" but when I say "yes," I feel that I am not speaking the truth.

I answer "yes" so readily because I translate it thus: "If Gounod had allowed himself to be continually "done" by Littleton, he would at the present moment have had an enormous position. I should have been the most run after, the most fashionable, the most esteemed of singers, my old man would have triumphed by my side, I should have my pockets full, my orphanage would be well founded, and Gounod would have had much more money than he has at present; my husband would have been delighted, I should be at home, I should not have ruined my health, everyone would have said that I was a *wonder*, and I should not have been put to the trouble of writing this horrible book (which I write very badly) to prove that we are not thieves, and that our poor Gounod treats us as galley slaves would not be treated; I should not have gone through this terrible sorrow. *Terrible*, more because my idol has broken itself, than because in its fall it has narrowly missed breaking my head!

* * * * *

"But no, I am wrong to say all this; I am not born to be coaxed or run after, Gounod is not my husband, and he was not destined to live with me. I am not even destined to be treated humanely. One by one all the villainies, all the miseries, all the cowardice, all the ingratitude, and all the folly of this world roll one after the other before my eyes. God has willed it thus, and I am so built as to be able to bear what would have driven ninety-nine persons out of a hundred mad. Although I have a very tender heart, I have the strength and the will to sustain the struggle when I am attacked, and (if one may believe in phrenology) my forehead shows a remarkable genius for the combinations and reasons of things. I was to know, I was to understand, I was to go through all that has happened, so as to know how to preserve and guide my poor children in the difficult path which each one of us has to travel. If it had pleased God to have guarded me from this last horror; if God had spared me the misery of feeling that nothing of all I have devoted during these last precious years, that twilight in the life of a woman of my my age, to a purpose which I have the right to believe disinterested, useful, and meritorious, has brought me in nothing but the most horrible abuse and the basest insinuations, from the very person for whom I sacrificed everything, I shall, I have no doubt, see clearly one day all the mercies and blessings thereof! No, my children, I know that all that has happened is for the best, that you will be my happiness, and that you will return me through your happiness a hundred-fold all I should otherwise have enjoyed had I not been possessed of such a strong love of justice and scorn for a dishonourable peace. Had

I commenced my orphanage tied down by mundane and mercantile protection and considerations, you would never have been what you will be, and I should never have been *what I am*."

No ! it would not have been more advantageous for Gounod not to have brought this action. He composed all his beautiful religious works by my side, he required someone at that moment to keep up his spirits, to save his life, and put him into a state fit for working, and the day will come, when the present bad influence will have left him, in which he will remember a woman who did not flatter him, who did not lie to him, who was good to him and everybody around her, and who is still fervent enough to believe that her old man was not *altogether bad*. No ! all is for the best, only we must wait with faith and hope.

We must work too—and, above all, not be discouraged by misfortunes.

Could we, however, have guessed, from the beginning, that Gounod was the last man in the world capable of sustaining a fight, and that there would be this frightful struggle to sustain, that he was merely a *skirmisher* not a *warrior*, that he could not forbear from complaining of everything, in order to be able, afterwards, to play the part (for the edification of greenhorns like myself) of a good Christian who forgives his neighbour seventy times, so as to begin brutalising him the next day, that he always needed an actual success to believe in what he did or what was being done around him, we should no doubt have acted differently.

The Littleton action won, he was very much pleased. It was an *actual success* which brought him in an immediate sum of money. So we had been right. The *principle* did not convince him. He required the *success of principle* to prove to him that the principle was just.

Littleton defeated—a master publisher beaten by a composer who wished to be paid ! Ah ! if I had had more money !

Littleton defeated—Littleton who was to have published the music for the Albert Hall, of which Gounod now was to reap the fruits !!!

Littleton defeated—Littleton who had given GOUNOD CONCERTS ; who had managed that enormous *success* of GALLIA at the Albert Hall, on the 1st of May, 1871.

We were present at the first performance of GALLIA at the Albert Hall. There were ten thousand spectators. Gounod had hardly appeared in the hall when applause resounded on all sides—from the galleries, the balconies. It was a sort of frenzy ! All the immense choir applauded. It was splendid. I was greatly astonished. I looked upon Gounod as scarcely known in England !—and I was right ; perfectly right.

A plot had already then been laid to keep Gounod in England for the purpose of giving prestige to the building which had just been inaugurated. Even the *Times* had a splendid article (and the *Times* did not love Gounod). Littleton had arranged his reception, and after the conclusion of the piece the applause was still more frantic.

On the 31st of the same month, at Benedict's Concert in the Floral Hall (which held at least three thousand persons), I felt quite nervous beforehand, thinking of the reception he would meet with. . .

Nothing of the kind !—not a hand moved !—not a sign ! This at that time was a mystery to me ; but to all these enigmas my eyes were opened in less than two years.

The reception at the Albert Hall was like Choudens' *impromptu* receptions. . . .

The reception at the Floral Hall was natural.

No one is known or applauded in England (on account of the tremendous competition) except artists connected with publishers, through money interest, relationship, or in other ways not difficult to understand when one holds the thread. It is only necessary to know when we do hold it, and not to get entangled in it oneself. . . .

Gounod, therefore, owes the animosity of the house of Novello to the circumstance I have related.

Gounod ought not to have left Duff & Stewart for Littleton. Had he let Littleton go his own way, and had he continued his with Duff & Stewart (147 Oxford Street), he might have done very well ; for although Duff & Stewart is not a firm of first magnitude, it is a very respectable one, an old established one, and its existence is tolerated by the leviathans of musical commerce.

I had obtained of Duff & Stewart the following treaty with Gounod :—

"Messrs. Duff & Stewart undertake to pay M. Gounod 6d. per copy on each work published for him by them and marked 4s. The payments to be effected in the months of January and July on each copy sold by them."

You see, therefore, there is no question of "copyright" or of "exclusive right," or any other complication. Duff & Stewart pay 6d. per copy on each copy stamped with Gounod's signature, and still do so. It is as clear as *daylight*. If Gounod was not satisfied with these publishers, he would be free to allow other publishers to print the same works !

Gounod wrote another romance—"Heureux sera le jour" ("For thee to live or die") after the Littleton quarrel, and sent it to me from France to take to Duff & Stewart. He promised me likewise, "Oh, happy home" (all this is found in his letters), but he took it into his head that as he had scored it for orchestra, the publisher should, in duty bound, give him £20 besides for the score. Duff & Stewart refused to alter their treaty ; Gounod was furious and bent upon being paid an extra sum for his score.

There were other difficulties. Capt. Egerton, who used to come to see me on Gounod's account before I went to Paris to sing "GALLIA" in 1871, had proposed Littleton as publisher of the collection of choruses Gounod had been commissioned to write and collect for Albert Hall. I told him this was out of the question, on account of the proceedings Gounod had taken against him. He then proposed Chappell as publisher, whose name I then submitted to Gounod. He asked to know on what conditions Chappell would publish them.

During this time Gounod was trying to sell his music to Choudens in France, on the royalty system, and Choudens refused; because, he said, that although the system was perhaps good enough for the "*English pickpocket publishers*," it would be an insult to an honourable house like his! It appeared that Choudens knew the English publishers very well!!! Not better than I do though, I am certain!

Choudens had even added—"You will let me know how it answers!" Was this a threat? Was it a remark of evil omen? I confess I understood it later on as a threat.

Choudens knew that against his ill-will, and with the English London publishers leagued against Gounod, there was no possibility for Gounod to sell a single copy of music. The publishers had the newspapers on their side, as well as the agents. The agents would prevent vocalists from singing Gounod's music; the masters would not teach it to their pupils; the royalty system would therefore fail in Gounod's eyes, who, Choudens knew very well, only believed in immediate success; Gounod would calculate that Choudens paid him better, and Choudens would have been restored to his good graces. Unfortunately for Choudens' calculations, "*O that we Two*" and "*The Sea hath its Pearls*" proved to Gounod the success of the royalty system, so Gounod was content. But, with this contentment, the curious side of the rapacious beast in him broke out and made him want more; and when he insisted on having £20 extra for the score, I supposed he was only in his right, and what he was accustomed to in France.

Duff & Stewart having refused (as they had good reason), it was necessary, however, to do something with the song. Gounod spoke at that time of engraving his own music without delay, but he did not know any printer, he did not know what it would cost, and I knew *nothing*, absolutely *nothing*. Time pressed.

Gounod said first one thing and then another. I could not give any advice. I regretted the peaceful Duff & Stewart whom Gounod abused incessantly. Then as for the Albert Hall music, Captain Egerton did not write; Chappell proposed nothing; one day Gounod said that he would send in his resignation, another day he seemed to hold to it more vigorously than ever. At that time I only thought of studying my own voice, of spinning as *Marguerite*, of practising walking slowly in my room—of studying, in fact, for the stage. My head was full of *my* affairs, and although sympathising with and doing for Gounod all that he told me to do, I did not busy *my thoughts* with *his* publisher's business. All these complications are owing entirely to his own caprices, and I naturally believed a man of his age knew what he was about, and had reasons for acting as he did.

So, when he came to England to prosecute Littleton, I was quite wrapped up in *my* own career, and convinced that I was going to make a splendid thing of it.

When I was in Paris in 1871, Gounod was frequently in a great state of mind about the sale of *Polyeucte*. Anyone can see how pre-occupied he was on the subject by his letters. At that time, if anyone had given him 100,000 for *Polyeucte*, for all countries, he would

have sold it at this price. MM. Barbier and Carré's share on this 100,000 would have been 33,300 francs.

It was useless my saying *Polyeucte* was not finished, and that it was as well to wait to consider the sale of the opera when it should be finished. This kind of remark ruffled Gounod—and, if you believed him, he made out that the sale of *Polyeucte* was a subject of incessant conversation between his wife and himself. She had told him that I had the intention of getting it into my possession to pay for my house, and that in taking the fruits of *Polyeucte*, I was taking the bread out of *their dear children's mouths*. Gounod's anger appeared to know no bounds at this assertion; but I now believe that what I have been told is perhaps the truth: *he* believed us to be much richer than we were, that we were likely to buy *Polyeucte* ourselves for 100,000 francs, and that he would have been able to bring the money in triumph to his wife. I cannot imagine why he bothered me so about it.

One day she had said to him, with tears in her eyes, speaking of the manner in which I squandered his money: "It is not of myself I beg of you to think, but of our poor children! Give her your body, give her your soul, give her your heart, your intelligence, but do not give her our children's bread."

At that time, all Gounod had given me was a gold ring, with his monogram, which cost £2, in remembrance of the first day I had sang "*Galla*," at the Albert Hall, *the 21st of July, 1871*. This is what he has given me since. When we returned from Spa in 1872, he had (with the money he had earned by the concerts, in which I as well as my two pupils, N. G. and G. W. sang) paid almost all our travelling expenses and hotel bills as well as his own.*

Over and above this sum, he still had, it appears, £20, for he said one day, "Mimi, I did intend to give £10 to N. G. and £10 to you, for having been good girls and sung well; but now that N. G. has left us in the way she has, I will give you the £20 for your children."

And I accepted them joyfully, for I did not know that we had made so much.

At Christmas the same year, he went on his knees to me, and gave me another £10 for my poor children; he sent £10 to his nieces, £10 to his children. He had kept it a secret so as to give me a pleasant surprise, and show me how much we had earned at the Spa concerts.

At the beginning of the chapter I have written he had given me several little things; the pen he had given me was in exchange for the one I had given him; and he gave me the fur hood in January 1874. I really cannot suppose any one will consider I fleeced him. He often appeared very anxious to aid me with my children, but I was not at all impatient, and thought that when Jeanne's dower was put on one side, I could take as much money as we required.

* My husband however, who carries delicacy of feeling to exaggeration (according to my opinion) had paid his own. He said, "*he did not sing!*"

I looked upon my Orphanage as much his as mine ; I sincerely believed he counted upon it in the interest of the future of his works as I did myself ; and that when he would be free to keep his promises and his obligations towards us, he would be still more happy than I at being able to do so.

Madame Gounod, from what Gounod told me, used to tell him stories, making me out to be an adventuress, not knowing what to do for a halfpenny, and who had fastened on to him for the sake of getting money out of him. How such an invention ever entered her head I cannot tell. Was it because she saw me dressed very simply ? That was the only sign of poverty I gave, and my husband was always in spick and span new clothes.

And what is more curious still, is, that all these lies had a considerable effect on Gounod, for although he must have known that we were in no want of anything whatever, that our income was more than sufficient for us both who had no children, and who lived very quietly, he worried himself, and would have wished, I am sure, to tell his wife as a *proof of our respectability*, that we had given him 50,000 francs.

I had better state here, that there need be no mystery whatever about my husband's income. It is derived entirely from land in Yorkshire and houses in Sheffield. . He has coal mines under his property, and expects, since ages, fresh coal to be dug on his estate. He has about £2000 a-year. He has also his pay as Pursuivant at the College of Arms (about £13 a-year !) ; so were it not for my Orphanage, you may certainly believe, that we have more than enough for ourselves. I had no dower, because my father did not give his consent to my marriage for pecuniary reasons alone. He wished his daughters to marry husbands with incomes of at least £10,000 a-year, or that we should remain single.

I waited two years and a half for my husband, during which time he squandered away a capital of over £20,000. My sisters had each £7000 as dower ; and, if I have had none, it is because my father did not like his daughters to marry, except for money. I loved my husband, and have never wanted money. Now I want money for my orphans, but that is another story. Gounod knows well I take in as many children as I can manage ; and I have the right to try and prevent him, by every means in my power, from cheating me out of the money I expected to earn for them, thanks to my arrangements with him.*

To return to the printing and the sale of "*O Happy Home*," Gounod did not know what to be at ; and we were as much abroad as he was. If I had been told that each plate of engraving cost £10 a page, I should have believed it ; and, to tell the truth, this idea of engraving frightened me, only as Gounod spoke of it so often as the best thing to do, that I believed he understood all about it ; on the other hand, he was angry with Captain Egerton

* He knew, too, that my husband's estates are entailed, and that having no children, I should, in case of his death, only have £450 a year, and that it would be most unjustifiably imprudent to start an Orphanage of fifty children with nothing but that to count upon.

and Chappell, and threatened to throw the whole thing up. One day, fortunately, our friend, Fred Clay, came to pay us a visit. He also had his grievances against the publishers, and told us, "as far as he was concerned, he had made up his mind to sell nothing more to them, but that, in future, he was going to print the music at his own expense, and give it to an agent to sell."

I asked him if that was not enormously expensive, and he answered no—that 1000 copies of a song cost, according to the length of it, from £6 10s. to £8.

Hearing this, and calculating that 1000 copies of a song, sold at 2s. to the public, brought in £100, I found, like Gounod, that this appeared to be splendid business. We then asked Fred Clay for his advice about printing the choruses for the Albert Hall, and told him all our difficulties. He advised Gounod seriously to take the expenses upon himself, and recommended D'Oyley Carte, who had already made propositions to me as well as to M. Gounod, in his capacity as agent for town and provinces.

It was on the 17th January, 1872, Gounod resolved upon printing "*Oh Happy Home*," and "*April Song*," at his own expense, as well as the Choruses for Albert Hall.

Gounod had not brought a halfpenny from France, and I could not persuade him to send for any to pay the printers. He was afraid that his wife would say it was FOR ME! I told him to let her think whatever she liked. He would not send for it. He had not a halfpenny, and our real and incessant worries began from that moment.

No publisher would buy "*Oh Happy Home*" or "*April Song*" or the "*March of the Marionette*" or "*Ivy*." D'Oyley Carte (the agent whom Gounod had taken, as he could not go about himself to offer his compositions for sale—and an agent was necessary to him as well as to me for our Concert engagements) had been to all the publishers; but the league was already formed, and they answered that *Gounod's compositions were not suited to the English taste*." He had quarrelled with Novello, he had separated from Duff and Stewart, no publisher would have him, Chappell had offered next to nothing for the Albert Hall Choruses; and I suspect that instead of feeling that the *digue* against him was the consequence of his own inconsequence, caprices, as well as of French intrigues, felt himself, without owning to it, profoundly *humiliated*. He inveighed bitterly against everyone, and I was too new to the business to make head or tail of it. He said he had the right to ask £20 and 6d. royalty for a song with an orchestral score. What could we do about it? We could not say he had not the right.

We helped him to try to succeed in all his caprices.

So there he was tabooed by *all* the publishers. He, the "*great Gounod*," "with his name, etc., in this d—d country," "no one to publish his songs." . . . In vain he was told they would pay a reasonable sum down, but a sum down *and* royalty, no one would give it! Then he would say that Novello had done so—but I told him "he had tried to get out of doing so," but, as ill-luck would have it, an amateur poet had promised him 6d. royalty, and had given

him £20 for setting his verses to music, and he argued that if one had done it, others might do so. It was miserable!

Then, the choruses, once in hand, the printing went on very slowly; the proofs were not sent when promised. The first rehearsal was to take place on the *5th February*,—the music must be delivered at any cost. His manuscripts were cut up into little bits by the printers. This infuriated him! Then he had the mistakes to correct. He swore at the printers in my d——d country, and I was silly enough to believe that it was only in England that printers' errors were made. I helped him with all my might. He suspected in turn that Carte was paid by Novello to cause delays in the delivery of the volumes; that Choudens influenced Novello, and that his *crochery dog* influenced Choudens; his suspicions and discussions about the delay in the delivery of the choruses were enough to drive us mad.

Moreover, it never entered our heads, for one moment, but that he was in the right. I went twice a day to the printers; if I had the chance, I then looked through the proofs, and did the first corrections, so as to spare myself his recriminations against the d——d printers in my d——d country. . . . After all, the volumes were delivered just one hour before the first rehearsal began on the 5th of February at 8 o'clock in the evening; but imagine Gounod's fidgets and tantrums till that blessed moment arrived! Gounod had corrected the first proof of the first piece of No. I. volume on the 25th January.

It is very evident that the Albert Hall gentlemen intended the Gounod edition should fail, and we should have easily understood this, had we known, at the time, that it was Novello and they who had plotted to pay Gounod some insignificant sum for them, and to divide between themselves the profits of Gounod's edition. This plan was divulged to us later on, on very good authority.

Attention will be paid, I hope, to the fact, that in Novello & Co.'s accounts, Gounod had sold them twelve hymns for £40. A little over £3 each! They would, therefore, *perhaps*, have paid him £10 for each chorus? . . . and God knows what I might not have been able to pocket as "go between," if I had helped to steal the "golden eggs from the goose." . . . I have very often had the opportunity of making money in that way! People would frankly say to me: "But why do you occupy yourself so much with Gounod's business? If you gain nothing by it, how does it profit you?" I answered, "I do not look for personal profit. When Gounod has put aside his daughter's dower of £8,000 he will help me with my Orphanage. The richer he is, the more successful he is, the greater chance have I of getting money for my School (although I would do my very best for him without that), for when he has put by the money we shall then be able to pay the orchestra we wish, and give grand Gounod concerts."

While this season of worry was going on, I see, by my journal, that I made to myself all sorts of excuses for Gounod; I attributed all that he suffered, and made me suffer, to the desire of proving to his wife that he was making money in England. That he had come

for that, and not to let his money be taken away from him by an "adventuress."

I forgave him with all my heart, for I, as well as my husband, saw, in this feeling, his honest and honourable desire to put a stop to the scandal about me, and we attributed a great deal of, if not all, his irritability to the idea that his presence in our house condemned us to the calumnies his wife spread broadcast.

In the month of March, 1872, Gye wanted to play *Romeo and Juliet*; an agreement had been made without consulting Gounod; Barbier (and I believe Carré) had signed it (17). It was ridiculously bad, and Gounod refused to sign it. My husband was then very much troubled and annoyed by stories that Gye had told and circulated about Gounod at the Garrick Club. He said that as regards the author's rights on Gounod's *Faust*, Gounod had tricked him, and that if Gounod was not in prison he owed it to *his*, Gye's goodness and charity. My husband said to me, "I have not myself the least suspicion as to the part the dear old man has taken in the matter; but he is so stupid, it is impossible to know what people may not have been capable of persuading him to do!" As for me, I cried with rage, for Gounod had always maintained and sworn that they had juggled him out of his author's rights on *Faust*—*his daughter's dower*,—and that it was in great measure for the purpose of finding compensation for the losses he had sustained through this misadventure in England, that we had thought of repairing his fortune, and it was greatly, on this account, I had so much pride in helping him to put by this £8,000. My husband longed to speak to him about it, but he feared to hurt his feelings, and yet at his Club, to which Gye belonged, it was very humiliating and disagreeable for him to hear Gounod thus spoken of without being able to defend him. Gounod at last got to feel that there was *something* the matter, and began to ply me with his suspicions. . . . I thought it best to tell him the truth. Gounod was furious, and would have liked to have gone off there and then to kick Gye; but I remarked to him, that there must really be something beneath the surface which we did not understand. How was it possible that Gye could believe he owed nothing for the author's rights on *Faust*? To whom did he pay them? To whom had he paid them? . . . After all, Gounod knew nothing, nothing, *nothing* of International law—and as for me I had never heard of such a thing!

And, as I have found out since, Barbier knew nothing about it, Choudens knew nothing (or pretended that he knew nothing about it), M. Delacourtie knew *nothing* about it; all these persons who were supposed to attend to their own business, to do business one for the other, not one of them understood the matter any more than I did! Gounod relates the affair so clearly in his book that it is unnecessary for me to repeat it here (18). In short, Gye was in the right; *Faust* was public property as far as author's rights were concerned. *Everyone* concerned, except Gounod, was perfectly well protected (19). Gounod, to whom all the orchestral scores belonged, for all countries, France and Belgium, had left them to be sold by

Choudens, to *his* exclusive profit, and M. Delacourtie had let him do so!

So Gounod had received £300 for the author's rights of *Faust* to which he had no right. His opera did not belong to him, his agents had registered the work too late—the mistake first occurred with Choudens, who, instead of inserting the date of the *first representation* in the registering paper, had put the date of the *first publication*, and Gounod's man of business, M. Delacourtie, had let him do it!

No one was responsible for the immense sums of money M. Gounod lost by this transaction.

I begged Gounod to let me manage the affair. I explained to him clearly that Gye had paid him money which he would not have paid him had he known that Gounod's opera was public property, and that he was therefore bound in honour to return Gye the £300. As to what Barbier and Carré chose to do, that was no concern of *his*, but he should not lose a single day in returning Gye this money. "This money returned," said I to him, "you will be in such a strong position, no one can attack you, and you will have henceforth every right to impose whatever conditions you please for *Faust* and *Romeo*."

. . . You will say: This is all very well—an act of negligence for which no one but me, the author, is responsible, and which causes me to lose all my author's rights on *Faust* in England; now then for *Romeo* or any other new opera of mine I shall not only exact, before giving you permission to play it, that you pay *us* £20 a-night, but also that you should pay *me* £20 a-night for *Faust*, and that, from this date, I shall put against your account, as owing to me, £20 for every performance of *Faust*, and I shall further stipulate that you pay me the whole sum before allowing you to play any new opera of mine. Sooner or later, therefore," I continued, "they will be *obliged* to perform one of your new operas; a vocalist will appear who will oblige the English *entrepreneur* to put *Romeo and Juliet* in his *répertoire* (Patti could do so to-morrow if she liked), and then, at all events, your children will profit by your arrangement (20). Another way of looking at it is this: The music of *Romeo and Juliet* belongs to Choudens and not to you. Let this new music, on which you have no royalty, come into the market, it would considerably damage your profit on the new music on which you receive royalty."

Any tradesman will perfectly understand my calculation.

Gounod was persuaded; fearing he might change his mind, I drew out a cheque the same day for £300, and sent it myself with a letter to Mr. Ernest Gye (who had personally assured me that his father had been tricked by Gounod) to say that Gounod returned his £300 (21).

Later on Gounod got this £300 from France, and reimbursed me to that amount. That is the one and only sum of which Gounod "*mulcted his poor dear children*" during the whole of the three years he was with us.

This is the beginning and end of all "*my clever and artful turning to account of the poor composer for my own benefit!*"

In consequence of this *Faust* affair, Gounod had recourse to a

gentleman who, without intending it, has been for Gounod one of the most mischievous acquaintances possible. I allude to Mr. E. Gambart, the great picture-dealer who now lives at Nice.

Mr. Gambart in 1862 or '63 had given himself the *airs* of taking upon himself to guarantee Gounod his author's rights on *Faust* in England. He mixed himself up with the affair in amateur fashion, had told Gounod that he would put him in the way of making his fortune with *Faust*, and got him to give him a power of attorney which invested him with full powers to act in Gounod's interest in England. The first thing which ought to have struck Mr. Gambart was this :

"Who sold Mapleson (of Her Majesty's) the orchestral score of *Faust*?" For Mapleson was playing it. . . .

Had he got to the bottom of this, Mr. Gambart would have been able to understand the affair, and might have brought it to a successful issue.

Faust belonged to M. Choudens for France and Belgium *only*.

An opera, even if the right of performance has not been duly registered, is perfectly protected for the author, because without the orchestral score, Gounod's *Faust* cannot be played, and without the score the *impresario* of a theatre cannot play the work of any master.

Had Gounod been well advised, he alone having the right of sale of his opera in foreign countries, should not have delivered up his score without stipulating author's rights. But these three men, Gounod, Barbier, and Carré, had looked on and seen their own *sole and exclusive property* sold under their very eyes by one who had not, according to the terms of the treaty, any right whatsoever in the matter—and these *three* men (one can believe in the folly of *one* man, but in the *folly of three*, it is truly a little difficult!) considered themselves the victims of *English entrepreneurs*!

Choudens, in truth, alone was to blame, although Chappell, in not registering the work *immediately* as Choudens had written him to do, was very much in the wrong also. But there would have been no excuse of any kind for Chappell, if instead of the *13th of June*, Choudens had put the correct date (*19th of March*) as the date of the *first publication*. We will suppose that Choudens had sold and lost the opera of *Faust* to the author for *ten years*.—I am the first to acknowledge that it must take time and money to make music succeed, however good and beautiful it may be—but it is not for ten years that *Faust* is lost to the authors. It is for *always—for ever*, and although Gounod has only to keep firm (it is certain, sooner or later, another work of his *must* be played in London, and that he will then be able to insist on his rights), *Faust*, unfortunately for him, has a *libretto* which alone of all his operas (except the *Nonne Sanglante*, which has a horrible *libretto*) has the element so necessary to the success of an opera, that is to say, that of immorality; and until *Polyeucte* appears (which I believe *might* have as much success as *Faust*, although it is the very reverse of immoral) I suspect the English people will be able to wait with calm and resignation long enough for another new work of Gounod's.

If the English could only once understand the loss Gounod has unjustly sustained, there is no doubt that public opinion would force

Gye and Mapelson to compensate him, and award him equitable terms, but I am expecting every day to hear that Gounod, faithful to his plan of making ducks and drakes, and ruining everything, since he has left us, will have signed a contract with Gye, and that *Romeo and Juliet* will be played at Covent Garden this season, . . . in which case he will do much and still more harm than he has already done to the music on which he has royalty, and I should no longer be satisfied with the half of his royalties. I insist on the right he has given me to continue to manage *all his business* in England, and naturally if he injures himself, he naturally does harm to all my combinations.

M. Gambart obtained this power of attorney, and he tried to turn it to account by getting the author's rights paid to Gounod, Barbier, and Carré. Mapelson laughed at him, and played "*Faust*" in spite of all the Gounods and all the Gambarts. Mapelson knew that "*Faust*" was *public property*, which M. Gambart ought to have known before mixing himself up in the affair.

Choudens and M. Carvalho, who, no doubt, did not desire that Gounod should discover the mistake in the date of the act of registration, persuaded him that he was the fittest person to manage his own business, with as much reason as those who made him believe, when leaving us last year (1874), he was the right and proper person to train his own son in the way he should go! So he was brought to England between those two gentlemen, and without even the politeness of informing M. Gambart of what he was going to do, signed a contract with Mr. Gye, without even consulting the person to whom he had given full powers to act for him.

M. Gambart said to me later on, "If he had not been a Frenchman and an artist, I should have felt myself insulted by this proceeding of M. Gounod, but those sort of people are devoid of all sense of honour or delicacy!"

When, therefore, this "*Faust*" question was brought up, it added still more trouble to the other difficulties, and increased his interminable grumblings, Gounod said to me, "There is a man I used to know, Gambart, who could give me some explanation, and elucidate this business; I will write to him." Gambart replied to him (*see p. 78, No. 2*). The information he then gave was superficial; they helped to lead me, as well as Gounod, into the most profound error, and, to top it up, fastened a solicitor on to us. This solicitor lost no time in coming to see us, and told us Gambart would guarantee all expenses Gounod might be put to; Gambart, on his side, said Mr. Bowen May would undertake to put Gounod's affairs straight, looking to his costs from the other side, and undertaking Gounod's legal business at his own risk.

I thought to see, in this, a delicate attention on Gambart's part towards Gounod, quite natural for a rich man towards a great but poor artist. That is how I have been often taken in. I myself—only working, only dreaming, and only spending my time and my money for others—found it quite natural that others should be like me; and although my Orphanage is *my aim* in life, *personally*, the affairs of Gounod

interested me more than anything else. That others should show the same amount of zeal for Gounod by no means astonished me ; and here I must say, that I have always been mistaken in my beliefs, and have always been deceived.

There were three or four ladies in London who had been very nice and good to him, but I believed this was rather more out of friendship for me (because it gave me so much pleasure to see his pleasure at the smallest attention paid to him by *people who did not know him well*) than for him. Why be jealous of this ? Although I have not the opportunity of doing anything for him now, I sincerely hope people will always do as much as they can for him. He is always so good and so childish when he receives their attentions, and, truly, *so simple*. He wants change. It is not *his fault*. He is born like that. I never thought he would get tired of me, for I aspired to *nothing for myself*. I was too happy to see that he no more thought of being polite to me than if I had been his real mother.

Mr. Bowen May's services ran up to nearly £115, which I paid secretly ; I dreaded the effect this account would have had on M. Gounod, and even on my husband !

To give a precise idea of the mean, pitiful, sly, double-faced conduct of the Albert Hall Committee towards Gounod, I should require another volume. The correspondence which I possess is, besides, very voluminous. The publishers were at the bottom of it all !

From the other side of the water, the Committee had evidently got primed. They had been told it was "very easy to make a fool of, or to make Gounod angry !" I scented this, so I *never* let him go among these people alone, nor receive Captain Egerton alone. I had heard from people at Court, that her Majesty had been told that Gounod was an impossible creature to deal with, violent and passionate with the choir, and intractable with the gentlemen of the Committee. They had been taught, no doubt, how easy it was to make Gounod so (the way they have succeeded in getting him to conduct himself towards us is an example), but they reckoned without their host. I made Gounod fully understand the trap they were laying for him, and the danger he was in. He never moved without me *as witness* ; never did he show them the least temper, the least annoyance. They sent him hansoms, begging him to come along to the Albert Hall immediately ; they wrote to ask him to come *alone* ; they sought the opportunity of making him angry, of making him feel insulted. . . . No ! no ! no ! you have not been able to catch my little old man. His ill-temper and his anger fell upon me, and nobody but me knew it ! . . .

In telling the Queen he was bad and intractable, you lied ! He was *charming* to every one, and with all, and every one loved him ! . . . What did it matter to me that he made me ill with the fits of anger you designed he should have vented upon you, and which in consequence fell on my innocent head ? . . .

Those creatures, employed at the Albert Hall, reached the summit of their outrageous and insulting conduct, by refusing him the hire of the hall for his benefit concert.

Everything that could be thought of was done to enrage him, and I ask if all this was not *infamous*? And then they endeavour to put all those things on *my* back as if it were *my* fault! (22.)

He gave a concert for which I worked *two months* trying to sell tickets. More than £200 were spent in advertisements; and the *English public* brought Gounod, the composer of *Faust*, a sum under £10 !!!

It will be seen, then, how right I was when I said that I knew the name of Gounod was almost unknown in England. . . .

The tortures Gounod endured, and which, in consequence, he made me endure on account of the expense he was put to, put me in perfect despair. What should we do for a publisher? . . .

I called to mind that a certain Smith had written to him about two or three months before then, humbly proposing himself as desirous of starting a musical publishing business, and asking Gounod, as a favour, to allow him to publish one or two songs, on whatever conditions would please him best.

"As you want at any price to get rid of Carte, here is this Smith," said I, "will you try and get him to buy '*Oh! Happy Home*,' etc., and the choral music?" Gounod asked me to write and beg Smith to come and have a talk with us.

The end of this was, Smith engaged himself to pay the plates of the music already engraved, and accepted the same agreement as Duff & Stewart, only that he agreed, after five years, to increase Gounod's royalty from 6d. to 8d., and to pay not only on the music *sold*, but *stamped*. Duff & Stewart paid, as also did Novello, etc., on the *stamped* music, therefore I wished Smith to insert in his agreement the word *stamped* instead of *sold*. Smith asked me as model for Duff & Stewart's agreement. He made a much more complicated one than theirs, explaining to me that theirs did not guarantee Gounod sufficiently. The agreement, which was dated on a certain day in April (Mr. Taylor has got it), contained several clauses of which I did not approve (for I was beginning my business education), and the agreement was not signed at all. Smith brought another which was hurriedly signed by Gounod in July, just before setting out for Spa; I had explained so well to Smith what the terms of the agreement ought to be, that I allowed Gounod to read the agreement and to sign it without my having perceived that the word *stamped* was not there. But I believe that as all payments which have been made by Smith have been made on the *stamped* copies, and that I have it in writing that he consented to pay on the *stamped* music, the precedents would legally oblige him to pay on the *stamped* music. . . .

After all this had been arranged in April, Smith confided to me that he would not be able to pay the charges all at once due to Carte. It was my husband and I then gave him £290, and persuaded Gounod to pay out of his own pocket later on £40 for printing, etc., etc., "*Oh! Happy Home*," "*April Song*," "*March of a Marionette*," etc.

Smith constantly promised to pay regularly, and he did not pay.

. . . Gounod's lamentations began again, and to his lamentations were now added all kinds of recriminations for *me*, as if it were *my fault*!

I must indeed have been driven nearly crazy, and he must have pestered me with reproaches . . . for on the 18th of July, 1874, in putting a drawer in order before setting out for Switzerland, I found that paper (*see p. 79, No. 2*), and I know, by my journal, he had got up a fearful row that afternoon.

I read this document with indignation and determination to M. Gounod that same evening, for I *would* not stand by to hear myself blamed for that which *his* caprices and *his* chopping and changing had brought upon him. Duff & Stewart would gladly have continued publishing his songs, they would have printed the choral music on the same terms; they had capital, they would have paid regularly, and I should have been spared the massacre of my time, of my nerves, of my strength . . . but I do not wish to complain . . . and if I have left my nerves and strength "*in the brambles and thorns where I searched for experience*," I have not lost my time! Certainly not!

What I most deplore is that this man for whom I worked, and whose fortune I founded, *is villain enough to say I robbed him*.

I so enjoyed in prospect the time when Jeanne's 200,000 francs should be in the bank, and that her father would be able to *give* me what was required to establish my Orphanage, that I did not take the trouble, and did not even take the opportunity of making little indirect gains for my children. For example, I sold a great deal of music for him, and it was not until quite lately that I used to put down in a book what I sold, and so I believe that the money which he has been able to spend has been made to a great extent from the music sold by me. I was often given a little more than the value of the music—but, although people laughingly said to me, "The surplus is for your children!" I put it all into his money drawer, for the happiest moments I passed with him were those when he counted his gold which "*lived*" by itself in a little Japanese box; and my great delight was to see him change his silver and his copper, and to give him a piece of *gold* instead of these!

It would make me feel quite happy, and as I write I smile at the thought of it!

My mother, among other times, sent me a £5 note to pay for Gounod's music; she wrote, "I know I send you too much, you can keep what remains for yourself." . . . She paid 2s. for each copy, just as if she went to a shop; this time there remained £1 13s. balance for me. I put it all in his drawer so that he might keep the £5 for himself; and I said to myself that it was but fair I should do so, because my mother, who is very good to me, would not have dreamt of giving me this £1 13s. unless it had happened to be change for Gounod's music. This is how I *made use of* and *despoiled* this poor, suspicious, and mistrustful old man, who was continually saying he had unlimited (blind) confidence in his dear, good Mimi. I must say if I had not been really so honest and so devoted, I should often have been very much offended by his eternal complaints and recriminations.

He constantly swore to me he would sell up Smith. I really believe he sometimes suspected me of "an untoward love" for Smith; and that he accounted in this way for the "protection" I accorded him.

Where, good God! should we have gone to if he had not had Smith? . . . Where to turn?

Smith bankrupt! I saw no further than that! What would have become of everything? It was the height of absurdity to change publishers again, and which other could he take?

Almost all the publishers in London had been prosecuted by Gounod for the quantity of spurious compositions published by them.

Metzler, Hutchings & Romer, Cramer, Boosey, Ashdown & Parry—and then Novello, Chappell, etc. There was no doing business with any of them.

Accordingly one day, about the 1st of November, 1872, I went to Smith crying, I told him that I had done all in my power for him, but that Gounod was determined to be paid or to sell him up.

Smith was in a dreadful state of mind, as I was! What was to be done?

Smith could pay nothing. I had very little money; I dared not ask my husband, for I was ashamed of Gounod; at last I said to Smith, "I have very little money, and I absolutely must have £3 a week regularly for my poor children, but we must risk it! I can do no more. You must write a cheque for the £149 owing for *royalties*, and if I can cajole M. Gounod and tell him that he can *see* you have money, but that you want it for engraving so many new works, and persuade him not to cash the cheque, we are saved; but if he *absolutely* will have the money, there is no other way out of it, I will pay in my last penny to your banker."

Thank heaven, I succeeded, when Smith's cheque arrived, in playing my little comedy with Gounod, and successfully. Gounod was generous, and let me send the cheque back to Smith, who, as may well be supposed, was delivered from a horrible anxiety.

There were all sorts of other nuisances which flowed side by side with the *blister* Smith, which stuck as, and represented, a permanent plaster on my back.

The publisher of the *Choir* (a little musical newspaper) proposed to become Gounod's "organ." He had been an enemy, and we were delighted to see such an amiable proposition coming from an inimical quarter. We were then at Spa. Gounod was in the midst of his worst tempers, separated from us, staying with his friend Gambart. "*All my fault*" again, because (he said) "I wanted to *force* him to separate himself from me who did all his business"—"to be at a distance of twenty minutes walk was an excruciating drawback." He got up constant rows because the concert room (at Spa) was not full to overflowing on the day of his concerts, and one fine morning he talked of us all going off to spend the winter season at Capri, to compose another opera which had come into his head. Our wall had been thrown down, the music room at home was being built for him. The circulars were all printed and posted to the Choir, and he would

get quite angry because I had not the patience, after all had been cut and dried otherwise, to listen to him making fresh plans which would upset all the arrangements. Never was he so odiously disagreeable as while he was at Alsa (at M. Gambart's).

In the first place, M. Gambart is a man who knows everything, and everything better than anyone else—he will have everything done his own way or not at all; he lays down the law and holds forth, and Gounod nicknamed him *Alcibiades*! M. Gambart was very jealous of our influence over Gounod, who, after all, had been prevented by us from committing all sorts of follies for *more than a year*. He had *dropped* Gambart at the time of the *Faust* affair, and M. Gambart was determined he should play us the same trick if possible. So he did his best to poison Gounod's mind against me, never lost an opportunity of planting his dart in Gounod's flanks about me, and he would come to me saying Gounod was a *man of sand*, "that we should find it impossible to serve him, that he would slip through our fingers when we least expected it, and that my husband would lose at least a thousand pounds with the Gounod Concerts which we talked of giving in 1873." M. Gambart detested me on account of my pug dogs; he was afraid of their dirtying his carpets with their paws or their fur which might have come off, and did not like my dogs to accompany me to Alsa. I could do perfectly well without going there, much preferring the company of my puggies. In London I was able to pay but little attention to them on account of my pupils and general business. At Spa I amused myself and made myself happy in my own way with them.

When, therefore, he had a chance of giving Gounod a dig about me, he did not forget to do so, which enraged my old man! who would have liked me, above all things, to have left my dogs to howl by themselves at the hotel, and to have had my company at Alsa, where, he told me, he bored himself to death without me (because there was no one there he dared nag at). There was "*his darling Jean*" who irritated him; there was Gambart who kept him in order, and cut him short by dictating the law; there was a little savage boy in the house who refused to take any notice of him, and who screamed if any one tried to coax him to say "good morning to the great composer." Gambart took no interest in hearing him read his letters (which he always liked to read to everybody), and sometimes he was obliged, out of politeness, to wait half-an-hour before being able to scud away to bring me the news; twenty minutes on the road, and, when he arrived, he spent a quarter of an hour in repeating how inconvenient it was for him to be at Alsa and me at Spa. He ended by making himself quite ill (23). All this is really curious.

At Alsa, a musician who he hardly knew at all, brought the Marquise J. de B. to call on him. The musician himself had not the best of reputations, and when Gounod came in with the air of a man whose fortune was henceforth assured and related to me that the charming Marquise J. de B. had done him the honour of coming to Alsa to pay her respects to him, I answered him coldly enough, that if I were the Marquise I should have preferred introducing

myself to being presented by that individual. . . . He told me that she had made him the most splendid promises, that she only lived for his music, that she was herself an accomplished musician, and that, being in the same town as he was, she could not resist the temptation of coming to tell him all that she had in her heart! "You see," said the triumphant Gounod to me, "you knew I was in London five months, and you never came to see me! She is a Marquise, and has not been fifteen days in the place where I am without coming to see me. I assure you that you might have done so quite well, and that I should have known you five months sooner if you had not been so prudish!" I replied that, as for me, I did not believe that an English lady in good society would think of paying a similar visit, but that French society was, very likely, not so particular.

He was dying to present us to her and to her husband, the Marquis J. de B., and, a few days after having introduced the Marquis, they invited us to luncheon at the hotel where they were staying. The repast was exquisite and magnificent. Gounod and I found one of the wines very good. The next day the Marquise sent us two dozen bottles; when I thanked her, she told me that if we were in Paris she would send me a much larger quantity from her own cellar. She spoke like a royal personage who confers favours here and there without allowing one to take the liberty of thanking her. She was very handsome, and appeared to be a lady of high rank.

I found the Marquis quite common, and I told Gounod that I hardly understood him, he spoke French so badly, with an indistinct accent and so vulgarly. Gounod (who was taken up with the "founders of his fortune," did not like my criticising the French language) found his accent perfectly gentlemanlike. They were both very amiable, I must say; there was a son and a daughter of the Marquis J. de B. by his first wife. These children certainly had a well bred air.

The Marquise wore shawls which were presents to her from the Emperor of Austria, and she was on intimate terms with the Emperor of Russia. She could do *anything* for Gounod with the two Emperors. She got every information as to how she could assist him in various ways. She was very intelligent, I admired her greatly, and then I believed that she *adored* the old man as I did. She in France and in Austria, I in England, Gounod would become a millionaire, and—happy! No more lamentations; I looked forward to a new era! blessed woman! I tried to believe the Marquis had a distinguished air, an irreproachable accent! My husband and I left Spa with the little sick lady, leaving Gounod in the care of the Bérardi and the Marquis and Marquise de B.

When he came to rejoin us at Brussels the Marquis accompanied him. Gounod did not like to move about alone. The good Marquis had most good-naturedly placed himself at his disposal.

The Marquis had been very amiable, and I admired him profoundly. He was a doctor for humanity's sake, notwithstanding his great position and high rank, and of all classes those which I respect the most are doctors and surgeons. Had I been a man I should

certainly have been a doctor. A doctor has so many opportunities of being benevolent. The Marquis was so good, he used to come every day to see our little sick lady, and sometimes did her good. He evidently belonged to the medical profession. . . . The Marquise spoke of her husband as the first doctor of the day. I believe he was clever. When Gounod rejoined us in Brussels, he told me that the Marquis had confided to him that his wife was, in some mysterious manner, the Emperor of Austria's sister, moreover that he had been very foolish, he had played and lost much at roulette at Spa, that they found themselves, at that moment, considerably straitened in circumstances, besides which, there had been some grand industrial scheme started in Russia, and those who ought to pay did not pay, and the Marquise, who was a "woman to move the world," was *enceinte*, and did not dare *drag about* much; things were dragging along lamentably—so much so, that they were, for the moment, considerably embarrassed!

Gounod was in despair. "*Such brave and loyal hearts!*" etc. (all those who flattered him were, at first, "brave and loyal hearts," "thoroughly devoted persons," etc.). I felt very sorry for them too. . . .

A few days after he had left Spa, Madame de B. wrote to Gounod asking him for an introduction to the Bérardi (of the *Indépendance Belge*), in order to obtain from them the name of some usurer who would advance them money at no matter what interest.

I told Gounod that it was impossible for him to take upon himself to introduce persons whom he hardly knew to others in so influential a position as the Bérardis. The Marquise had given Gounod a letter of introduction to Colonel de Prisse, one of the officers attached to the court of the King of the Belgians, and he thought he would appear very unamiable if he refused to render Madame de B. the service she required. However, I held my ground. He made me a good scene; but he wrote the Marquise a very polite letter, making excuses for not doing so, and regretting his inability to comply with her request. On the other hand, I had told Gounod that I, for my part, was ready to do all in my power to obtain for her the sum she required, and I would write to my husband on the subject. This affair cost me innumerable letters, an infinite loss of time; naturally, my husband, who had suspected them from the first moment, asked for title-deeds, sureties, and securities, and they could not produce a single one. The affair which had only been an extra source of lamentations and recriminations on Gounod's part ended in nothing!

I did not suspect them at all, but I was obliged to reason with him thus:—"My old man, a French Marquis ought not to want to have recourse to an artist like you about borrowing money. Gentlemen in such positions have their family solicitors, their business men, and then the family of de B. is a very good one. This may be the Perigord, and the other a branch from another province; they ought to have friends and acquaintances in France much older and much more useful than you."

I had to discuss this with him just as often as the royalty system and Smith's payments. The de B.'s were fresh nails in my cross!

In 1873 the Marquise had a baby; we were immediately made acquainted with the fact. A short time afterwards Gounod received a letter from her, saying, that she was astonished at not having received any reply to a first letter she had sent him, begging him to be godfather to her little daughter. The baptism was to take place the following day, so that there was no time for her to receive his answer *by post*, and she asked him to telegraph *yes* or *no*. I now began to feel rather suspicious.

The Marquise gave Gounod to understand that the delay in his reply placed her little daughter in the position of being baptised without a godfather, and Gounod found himself in a very embarrassing position. "Why should he be godfather to the little daughter of a lady he hardly knew?" that is what I said to him. Gounod did not wish to be godfather, because he would have felt himself obliged to give a present to his goddaughter, so I had not much trouble in making him telegraph in the negative. He wrote a letter excusing himself on the ground that he never stood godfather to any one outside his own family, which was not true, because little *Charles de Beaucourt*, who is now about seven years old, is his godson.

In 1873 the Marquise wrote to us to say she was going with her little daughter and the nurse to Vienna, and that she would there arrange the *Polyeucte* business with the Emperor. Gounod was at once reassured, and our "*argufications*" re-commenced, tooth and nail, again. I took the trouble myself to write innumerable letters to the Marquise, so as to save Gounod from doing so. It was in vain I said we were up to our ears in business in England, and that to go and start *Polyeucte* in Vienna would interfere with all our combinations in England. Gounod was full of it! He promised himself apartments in the Emperor of Austria's palace. I should then make my *début* as *Pauline*, and the French and English, his persecutors, would have the remorse of seeing, by the performance of that work, how the Austrians acknowledged and hailed the French composer's genius. Mme. de B.'s letters were full of the most extravagant promises of success and triumph.

I would say sorrowfully—"She believes it, no doubt, poor woman. I used to think that you would only have to show yourself and to give concerts, and the crowd would rush after you. But she does not know, as I do now, that an artist's success is the work of publishers or agents. Calumny or silence would follow us to Vienna as here. We are beginning to see a gleam of light through the veil of darkness with which they try to envelope us. We have not lost money by the first series of concerts (which is a commercial success no one has believed in) . . . if enemies increase in number, friends increase as well; our next year's series will bring us in more than this year's. Do not let us interfere with the course of things here—do not let us quit the substance for the shadow. We know what we are surrounded with here—in Vienna, a town where I only know people in the highest ranks of society, who understand nothing

about musical business, what will become of us? Let us altogether refuse these proposals about *Polyeucte*, and spare ourselves the trouble, the correspondence, and the journey!"

He was furious. "If I would not occupy myself about it, *he* would take upon himself to arrange everything with the Marquise. Why not profit by such a glorious occasion to produce *Polyeucte*, at least in part? No, certainly not. *He* was not going to let such an opportunity slip. As for these miserable concerts, which did not bring him in a penny, they and the Choir, and the whole concern, and Smith, who did not pay him anything, might all go to Bath together!"

To let him do it himself meant everlasting lamentations as to what "my *obstinacy* caused him of useless work—work which I might so well take off his shoulders, and which I could do so much better than he, because I understood so well how to combine matters;" and it also meant endless dissertations on the capricious and verbose letters he would write, and which I should be condemned to listen to and not to let go.

I found it better, then, on these fatal occasions, to resign myself to the loss of my time in useless correspondence with which he was always enchanted, for I thoroughly entered into his views; said all that he wished, and even tried to get myself to imagine that some good might result from it.

My husband laughed at it all, but Gounod said that Harry did not think there was any good in anything except what was to be got out of "this d——d England."

To tell the truth, all the English tradesmen had waged such a bitter war against him it was not surprising he was disgusted with it all.

The newspaper, the *Choir*, had only offered to become his organ in order to the better draw him into a snare.

Littleton had only brought an action against him in the hopes of getting Serjeant Ballantine (his counsel) to make scandalous insinuations concerning myself and Gounod in open court. But he reckoned without his host, for in the short space of a couple of minutes I succeeded, before the judge, in putting down Serjeant Ballantine five times. Gounod's own counsel pleaded against him, and intimated, in open court, he owed an apology to this Littleton who had three times failed in the payments agreed upon, and who did his best to ruin him altogether—who sent people to hiss me when I sang, etc. (24).

The music on which Gounod received a *royalty* could not be obtained at any shop in London. Even when, by a rare chance, I sang in public, it was *certain* that my name would not be advertised (*see page 78, No. 2*); and, if it was advertised, *Mr.* would be printed instead of *Mrs.* In the accounts given in the papers, they would pass over in silence the pieces on which Gounod got royalty, and praised those of other publishers; and when criticisms were made on his works, the name of the publisher, Smith, was suppressed, and along with his works, which they ran down, they would puff inferior works

by mediocre composers. . . . They left no stone unturned to *run down* Gounod and all he did. I wrote long ago and have published the history of all that.

So has Gounod, too. I will not, therefore, here dwell on the machinations of that powerful clique which surrounded us as a besieged town reduced by famine.

All these gentlemen counted without my extraordinary energy. I never missed a single occasion of getting Gounod talked about. I put myself forward as target. What did anything matter to me so long as Gounod's music was sold? Not only had we not the means of bribing the newspapers, we had not the will to do so.

We won the battle nobly, because I had no fear of anybody.

The first year we had begun with £90 subscriptions.

The second with nearly £400.

This year I expected to have £1000.

But this interruption caused by the mad and inhuman conduct of Gounod has ruined everything.

Gounod willed it so! He knew very well that our growing success was due, not to *his name*, but to the coarse and brutal system of advertisement I had been obliged to adopt; so that, as will be seen presently, when the Devil took possession of him, all his care was to do his utmost to drown me with the vessel I had so steadily steered, undismayed, notwithstanding the incessant tempests and the beautiful skies, which were perhaps still more treacherous, through shoals on a sea covered with breakers.

Jean Gounod had told us his mother had told him "Madame de B. was an adventuress!" She had said the same of me. Much credit could not be given to what she said about Gounod's lady friends, and that is what Gounod immediately retorted. . . . I, however, strongly advised Gounod to write to his wife and ask her for further information; but when he replied that when he had wished her to give him proof of my being an adventuress, that the only thing she could find to say was that I slept with the first comer for £4 a night, that I was in debt, etc., etc. "Why," he asked me, "should she tell me the truth any more about Mme. de B. than about you?"

This is how the affair of the Marquise came to an end. In 1874 she tried to persuade me to arrange an affair with a publisher for Gounod, promising me a magnificent present if I used my influence in arranging the matter (26).

I found this a good opportunity to persuade Gounod that she could not be an honest woman if she made me such offers. I wrote her a very frank and very cool letter, to which she did not reply. As for me, I heard nothing more of her.*

The story is still more complicated than this; but were I to give details of all the persons who promised to make Gounod's fortune,

* After having written this I heard that she and her husband had been sentenced as swindlers to five years' imprisonment. The trial is known as *the affair of the false Archduchess of Austria*.—G. W.

whom Gounod received with open arms, and who proved so many extra causes of rows and scenes for me, this book would be more bulky than an encyclopedia.

What hours and hours that Rafael Tugenhold, otherwise known as Stefan Polès, made me lose! He, too, was going to make Gounod's fortune! He who had never been an agent in his life, got himself introduced as such by a young communist, Camille Barrère; telling us that he came from Mr. Wilkie Collins, who begged Gounod to write some music for "*The New Magdalen*," proposing Gounod should receive half the author's rights.

Gounod made haste to read and go and see the piece. If I had been with him I should have written to Mr. Wilkie Collins to know whether he was making a fool of me. But Gounod was flattered: *half the author's rights* tempted him as cheese tempts a rat, and without seeing the absurdity of the position, he regretted not being able to accede to the gracious request of Mr. Wilkie Collins. It was not until I saw the piece two months later that I understood all the ridicule of the thing!

Later on we heard at Wilkie Collins's that Rafael Tugenhold, otherwise Stefan Polès, had been to Mr. Wilkie Collins, and had told him that Gounod was so charmed with his piece that he was most anxious to write the music for "*The New Magdalen*!" (27.)

There is no end to these stories. There are plenty of all sorts and sizes.

If Gounod had been obliged to occupy himself with all these concerns, how do you suppose he would have been able in those three years to score *Polyeucte*—to finish "*Les Deux Reines*,"—to compose 63 melodies, pianoforte pieces and duets, of which 13 are for grand orchestra.

To compose 12 choruses, arrange 45 choruses; psalms and anthems to the number of ten at least.

Jeanne Darc, a drama in five acts.

A four-handed pianoforte arrangement of *Joan of Arc*.

A *Requiem* and a *Mass*, S.S. Angeli Custodes, for grand orchestra.

An oratorio—" *The Annunciation*."

A Biblical Scene—"On the *Sea of Galilee*," both for grand orchestra.

Pianoforte arrangement of the rôle of Pauline (*Polyeucte*) for myself.

Georges Dandin, nine or ten pieces (I believe), etc.; etc.

Now, is it just to say that I have prevented him composing, that I have turned him into a publisher, a tradesman, an agent?

It is as false as hell to pretend such things.

There are several other religious pieces besides, of which I have made no mention.

I *lived* to enable him to work; I cheered him up as much as I could, in spite of all my anxieties which I kept to myself; notwithstanding the time which failed me, the rest which I needed so much, I sometimes played at backgammon, double dummy, and *cribbage*, with him for four—eight—hours a day. There was not a single thing he did, in which he did not find in me a sympathetic friend, a tender, gentle, and wise adviser.

How, after having followed me about like a little dog for more than three years, fawning upon me, hiding behind me, clinging to me, crying at having to leave me, can he bear to overwhelm me with such miserable lies?

How can he sit in his study in Paris armed with my letters, written after he left us with my heart's blood, dated and arranged with notes, and read out to everybody with the intention of giving them a compromising interpretation?

A brigand would have more sense of honour than that.

How can he pretend that he had in his possession documents containing very grave facts concerning my reputation?

Let him produce these documents! and not go destroying my character behind my back like a *coward*.

Am I not right in believing that a man who can thus continue steeped in infamy must be bewitched?

Would he not like to know more? Is not he, like me, the victim of an odious plot? Does not one know that he has had good reason to love me, good reason to lean upon me, good reason to hide behind me, good reason to cling to me, and may people not give him these documents with the intention of strengthening his wavering doubts?

Would he like to know that on a certain day in November, 1874, blind Father Rawlings was returning home with his little boy Walter; that three men accosted him, asked him if he had not some children at my house, if he did not go to Tavistock House every day?

Would he like to know that it was suggested to this poor man that he should come the following day to a certain *rendezvous*, that it was proposed to pay him well for all the information he could give concerning us, Mrs. Weldon and M. Gounod?

Would he like to know that he was asked if he could not prove that Mrs. Weldon was M. Gounod's mistress, and that Mrs. Weldon frightened M. Gounod by her violence, etc., etc., etc.?

Would he like to know that Father Rawlings hastened to repeat this conversation to me—and to ask my advice?

Rawlings had asked these men's permission to bring his son Charles, who was 17, or his son Alfred, who was 14, with him (Walter was only seven). They told him that if he were accompanied by anyone except his little boy, they would not put in an appearance.

On the first blush of the moment, Rawlings had replied to them with indignation; but afterwards thinking that if he appeared to take the thing quietly, he might get information out of them which might be useful to me, he replied, that a person like me, who devoted my life to children, must necessarily be a quiet and patient lady, and purposely gave them incorrect information of Mr. Gounod's whereabouts.

I immediately went off to a solicitor with whom I was acquainted, to ask his advice. I suspected (although Rawlings had said without hesitation, "*I have been accosted by agents of Mr. Gounod to-day*") another person. He advised me not to make use of any ruse to try and discover for whom these three men were *undoubtedly agents*, because if one person employed another for that purpose, that con-

stituted conspiracy, which, even in self-defence, is *against the law*, and he recommended me to tell the blind man to take no further notice of, or have nothing more to say to them. That is how the *law* protects honest people!

This poor man and all his family have lived almost entirely on what I have given them for the past four years. If Mr. Gounod's agents have tried in vain to bribe this poor blind man to bear false witness against his benefactress to her destruction, they may not, perhaps, have had with others so much difficulty in obtaining what they wanted, and with these documents paid for by infamy, Gounod, "*my old man*," sits in his study, 17 Rue de la Rochefoucauld, Paris, and does all he can to ruin, *in all ways*, a woman who has been devoted and useful to him as I have been, and as I have described *without a word of exaggeration*.

People say to me, "How can you care for such a creature? Why do you not send your husband to horsewhip him on the staircase of the Grand Opera before all Paris?" I answer, "I have not seen it; I believe he must be bewitched; forged letters of mine have been published in the papers; why should he not have been given documents equally worthless?" A woman who proposed to show him the letters of an innocent young girl's lover (see page 274, No. 2), who has been able to make people believe for three years that I slept with the first comer for £4, is quite capable of buying false witnesses, avaricious as she is, for the sake of humiliating and breaking her husband's heart as well as mine! My husband does not know, thanks to his ignorance of any language except his own, all these sad stories! I hope to be able to keep them from him.

* * * * *

"Well! Our Gounod affairs were getting on slowly, but surely, in spite of all the spokes they continued to put in our wheels. As I have already elsewhere (*Musical Reform*) given a detailed account of most of these intrigues, I will not lengthen the present volume by repeating them here. Mr. Smith, notwithstanding all his verbal and written protestations, paid nothing. Mr. Weldon also began to feel uneasy, for Smith published villanous arrangements or compositions of his own or his brother's. He could therefore find capital for the purpose of engraving his own trifles, but not for paying Gounod what he owed him, or for printing Gounod's works.

Mr. De la Pole, also, had taken part with Mr. Weldon and Gounod against Smith, and all sorts of plans were made for increasing Gounod's royalties. I took Smith's part, in a measure, for I thought that, perhaps, if he succeeded in selling many of *his own* compositions he would be in a position to pay his debts. I did not look upon Smith as quite so black as my husband, Gounod, and Mr. De la Pole, painted him.

Smith had committed many little faults which had enraged Gounod. First, instead of printing on the back of Gounod's music a list of Gounod's compositions, he had printed a list of his own, etc. and, Gounod would happen to drive by Smith's shop, and

would find the window full of other people's compositions (*see page 296, No. 2*).

He said, "*Smith ought to be kicked!*"

It is useless for Gounod or Smith to pretend I prevented their seeing each other. Gounod's letters prove that Smith often came to Tavistock when I was not at home.

It is folly for Gounod to say he was kept in ignorance of the accounts, for I have proofs of figures and calculations in *Gounod's own hand* drawn up without as well as with me.

And there is Mr. De la Pole who made calculations with him at St. Leonards in the month of April, 1874, which cover six pages (also in my possession).

Gounod had everything, saw everything, arranged everything, calculated everything, and busied himself with everything. It is an infamous lie to pretend the contrary. If I did not tell him everything *at the time* it took place, it was in hopes of being able to give a pacifying, encouraging, or agreeable aspect to the matters in hand if I waited a little.

It is infamous to insinuate that I was guided by any other motive.

This is what was finally decided upon in the month of March. Smith had sent in accounts made up to the *19th of March*, and we were not satisfied with them. I was all for gaining time, but Gounod wished to have done with it all at any price. It was arranged that I should go and see Smith to explain to him how we wished to settle the business, but Gounod and I were ill, and we went with my husband and Mr. De la Pole to pass the month of *April* at St. Leonards. . . . I was obliged to put off the interview, and most fortunately, as it turned out, when I returned home, I was very busy, something or another had constantly prevented me from going to speak to Smith. I say *most fortunately*, for, thanks to that circumstance, I can produce the copy of every single letter I wrote to him on the subject (*see page 149, No. 2*).

Smith replied that I had but to name the day, and he would pay up immediately. I was delighted. I sent him the answer (*see page 149, No. 2*).

Friend Smith then made me wait a little while for a reply, and it was not until the *12th of May, 1874*, that I was able to send him the letter (*see page 150, No. 2*).

This time Smith made me wait still longer for his answer; I answered categorically, it is not necessary to produce his letters (*see page 152, No. 2*).

He sent me in reply a letter which mentioned no other agreement than the one of which I maintain the validity, and upon the faith of which M. Gounod could conduct all his operations (*see page 152, No. 2*).

Smith's reply to this letter was a panegyric of his own works, and he boasted to me with pride that he had spent £25 in advertisements. Please to reflect that *we* had *risked or spent* of our own, at least £4,000 without counting my husband's time and my own, besides that of the children, who nearly all helped in one way or another. And

he boasted of having in three years spent £25! (*See page 155, No. 2.*)

Gounod, who had been charming since this arrangement with Smith had been decided, had made up his mind to it with a very good grace, and during the months of *April and May*, had helped me to write the letters which are printed on pages 149, 150, 152, and 155 *Les Lettres*. He was of the same mind from beginning to end as we were as to Smith's fate. He laughed at his letters, was furious at his pretensions, at his ingratitude, and wanted to write to him himself to blow him up.

My happiness at having attained the height of my desires cannot be imagined. I said to myself: "Gounod will now give his music away right and left, and willingly, for instead of having to pay 6d. on each copy, he will have but three-ha'pence a copy to pay in future."

I should be able to sell to a hundred publishers direct at 8d. instead of 13d. if I wished it, Smith would pay regularly, the others would pay regularly, Gounod would be content, and I should have peace! How I looked forward to being able to work and increase his customers everywhere!

That is what I promised myself! I saw Jeanne's dower accumulating rapidly, and the chances of my Orphanage taking visible proportions.

The 27th of May was the day on which I left Gounod on a visit with the Browns at Blackheath, and from thence, alas! I was doomed never—never to bring him home! Since then, as regards Smith, on the Saturday when I went to fetch the old man, I told him that Smith had given in, and that all was going to be settled, as I believed it would be, according to the contents of the letter (*see page 157, No. 2.*)

I looked on the business as settled for good without further delay. Gounod liquidated Smith's debt, and henceforth there would be an end to all bickerings, to all recriminations, to all scenes! . . .

So I was a little put out on the 2nd of June, 1874, when I was told that Smith had called at Tavistock House asking to see me. I sent down word that I was engaged, and wrote him the letter dated 2nd of June, 1874 (*see page 159, No. 2.*) Bear in mind, therefore, I never saw Smith on the subject, consequently M. Gounod's accusation that *Smith and I laid our heads together to rob him* is an unfounded delusion.

To this letter, I received no reply. I augured from it that Smith was trying to borrow the sum of which he was in need; so I took it quietly. When Gounod fell ill at Blackheath, and that Mrs. Brown had telegraphed to his family, I became very anxious, fearing that Gounod would grow impatient again and begin his row with me again, because Smith did not pay. I therefore wrote Smith the letter (*see page 160, No. 2.*)

In answer to this letter Smith declined my propositions, upon which I wrote him the letter of the 7th of June, 1874 (*see page 160, No. 2.*)

The day Gounod left, I was obliged to tell him that I had placed Smith's affair in Mr. Taylor's hands, and that *all would go on swimmingly*.

So the affair was actually in the hand's of Gounod's solicitor. This solicitor had been recommended to him by M. Moreau, Counsel to the French Embassy ; so do not suppose he was one of *my protégés*. . . . M. Gounod had gone away leaving everything entirely in my hands ; I looked upon myself as his responsible agent, and I felt much surprised when I received a letter for Smith enclosed in the one M. Gounod sent me, *dated the 13th of June*. That letter of Gounod's, *dated the 13th*, I did not receive until *the 16th*. I committed, alas ! the blunder of forwarding it to Smith, and Mr. Taylor said to me later on, "you should have sent it to me, M. Gounod having once placed the business in my hands, he no longer had the right of communicating with Smith at all except through me." I felt fast enough that Gounod was wrong in writing to him, but . . . Fate willed it so.

So I sent it on to Smith with a letter from myself. There were two things in Gounod's letter to Smith which did not please me at all. First, the eternal mention of his debt to *me*, and which I had told him a hundred times could be so easily liquidated by his constituting me proprietress of the income of some of his songs at £20 a-piece for England alone (until he was richer) to pay myself. "Much better," I said to him, "if you never pay me, for that will insure me a good income for my children !"

But, besides this, it was not the truth : *he* was anxious to *pocket the money*, and had no need to thrust what he owed me under my nose nor under Smith's.

The second thing I did not like was, he had asked Smith to send him the accounts to examine. He had had Smith's accounts drummed into his ears since the *19th of March*, and they had not pleased him any more than they had pleased us.

Why then did he, who, later on, said, that "*commercial complications, figures and accounts, strangled him*," why did he ask Smith for this copy ? Mrs. Brown assured me that he had had transactions with Smith at Blackheath. I have it in writing from her ! I cannot but imagine to myself, since he concealed it from me, that he had got into some awkward mess with Smith, and all the others, before leaving, for the purpose of upsetting all his decisions, all my correspondence, and of rendering me ridiculous. But, as with his tears on leaving me, he acted *despair*, so, in the same manner, he acted *frankness* by sending me the letter for Smith enclosed in his to me.

God knows what he may not have sent him direct by the same post. Do not imagine for a moment that by behaving thus Gounod thought he was gaining anything by it at the time. He knew perfectly well he was doing himself harm and ruining the work of three years ; but as events have turned out, I cannot but suspect that it was all done on purpose for the sake of ruining *my* efforts and plans, to find himself impoverished, and to be able to complain to, and tell people it was all my fault ; that Smith was one of *my protégés*, and that I never would compel him to pay what he owed. He will have acted the part of a good Christian, and he will have taken them all in. He takes in almost everybody now with his pitiless falseness.

However, I believe that my letters will prove that I have done all that was humanly possible to be equitable towards both. The letters of which I produce copies are taken with copying ink in my book, so people cannot say that I invent them for the occasion. They have but to ask for the originals if they have any doubt! (*see my letters of the 16th of June to Smith, page 168, No. 2*).

My rage and stupefaction knew no bounds when I learnt that Smith, profiting by the knowledge that Gounod's brain was in a more feeble state than usual, had been to Paris to show him his accounts, and had got him to *write* something. I *knew* that Gounod had ruined everything, and dreaded the very idea of the recommencement of the growlings, the cursings, the lamentations, and the recriminations from which I had believed myself delivered for ever!

Could I have conceived that M. Gounod had done this with the intention of offending me, of spiting me, of lying to me, with the hope of getting me to do something which he might bring forward against me as proof of my "*violent temper*," that he had left me forever, this would have left me comparatively indifferent; but could it possibly have entered my head, then, that he not only had the intention of never returning to us, but no intention of ever *seeing us again*?

I *knew* that he would never for one moment remain with his son; I believed that he had the intention of remaining with the De Beaucourts, only I *knew* that that could not last. In the first place I knew from him that they were poor, that they could not lay out money for him, even if they had the will to do so. He would have been obliged to go *alone* to the "waters," and I knew he could not bear to be *alone* anywhere. He would have had to pay his own expenses, he would not have been able to reimburse himself by giving concerts without some one to sing gratuitously for him as I and my pupils did; in short, I *knew* that his letters were full of impossible, glaring follies, I *knew* that they were putting all this into his head, because they were jealous of all the good we had done him, of all the trouble we had given ourselves for him, and that he would end by seeing it himself. I believe that the mischief was sown at Blackheath by the Browns without their intending to do so. It is very difficult for anyone who has not been with Gounod three years, for anyone who is not in the musical trade and world, to get to the bottom of, even to get a *glimpse* of, the difficulties we had been obliged to surmount. Above all, I never had uttered a word of complaint against *him* to anyone.

Gounod had not asked us for *popularity*, he had asked us for *Jeanne's dower*. It was to get *money for his children*, and not for popularity that I was struggling so hard! Bear this in mind!

Now he is well rewarded and applauded. It will make Choudens' music sell. It will flatter him, *Gounod himself*; to give me the lie, and make people believe that it is *I* who wished to turn him into a "tradesman," into a "commercial traveller," he will act disinterestedness, pretend to want nothing in the shape of money;—and if it had not been for his letters of 1871, how should I have been able to prove that he never dreamt of anything but money? . . .

It is almost incredible to believe that Providence, *by the hand of Gounod himself*, has put into my hands *for my defence, everything* that is needed to prove that the third and the last series of Gounod's letters to me are a tissue of falsehoods, of hypocrisies, pious comedies, and caressing *stabs*—stabs which I forced myself to believe were proofs of tenderness, while their two-edged blades were piercing my heart—caresses, in which I divined the chloroform of the strangler—caresses, in which I tasted the hemlock of the poisoner—caresses, which tortured me with hope, scorn, faith, and deception by turns. I believe it is impossible to give an idea of the torture I then suffered, and from which I shall always suffer.

I heard him fighting against those who said to him: "You are mistaken, dear Charles; the Weldons have deceived you, have made use of you for their own profit—they have '*cooked their spinach with your butter*'; they are well paid. Let them go, they and their concerts and the Orphanage farce, to the devil! You owe them nothing; you have not signed any agreement with them. What has it got to do with them if you choose to transact business with Smith alone? Do it! Be sure that the Weldons have some sinister reasons for wishing to ruin this poor man!"

And this was my reward for having waited patiently—for having suffered, cajoled, lent money, and wept for more than two years, in order to prevent Gounod from making Smith a bankrupt. And yet it was more than three months since Gounod had taken the resolution of clearing up the situation between Smith and himself. *All was decided*, when Smith, knowing him alone, and surrounded by my enemies, who he guessed would help him to ruin Gounod for the sake of causing a quarrel between us two, writes to him, goes and sees him, and, aided by them, makes Gounod fall into his trap.

Why, *on the 8th of May*, when I first wrote to Smith, did he not ask to see Gounod? Was it *in* Gounod's interest that he crossed the Channel?

Is it Gounod's interest to have constituted himself the instrument for the sale of Smith's works? Since Gounod quarrelled with me, Smith boasts loudly everywhere, "I am saved! Mrs. Weldon and M. Gounod have fallen out," and on his invoices he deceives the public and the trade, by advertising his own compositions as works of M. Gounod! Smith will, perhaps, pay his debt in two years, but it will not be with the royalties on Gounod's music that he will get out of his mess? It will be by selling his own compositions, and, after the two years, if he *pays* Gounod nothing at all, what will Gounod do? On merely glancing at these absurd pencil notes (which I returned to him torn up), I saw through all the difficulties he had created for himself and for me by this new proposition of giving Smith two more years' *further time*. I never doubted for an instant Gounod's return to us, and, with his return, all the miseries and rows from which I had believed myself delivered. After all he had written and said, I had the right to believe that Gounod would never return to his wife, thus breaking his moral contract with us, and becoming, as he called it himself, in his letter of the 19th of June,

"the responsible accomplice of the injury and sorrow people had wrought us," and which we had bravely borne for his sake, so as to give him that peace of mind, which he never ceased saying was so necessary for him, but which every one will agree with me was absolutely fatal to him, insupportable, and *impossible*. It was on the 19th of June I received the letter which announced to me Smith's presence in Paris, and at the same time the news, "*that he had treated him in return to an agreement in his best handwriting.*"

In the first place, Gounod was completely in the wrong in not telling the De Beaucourts to forbid their door to Mr. Smith. Gounod knew the matter had been in my hands, and that it actually was in his solicitor's hands. What did he want to see Smith for at all? A few days later, when Mme. De Beaucourt knew that Mr. De la Pole, who had made all the calculations and everything with Gounod himself, who was thoroughly up in the business, and knew exactly how matters stood, went to see him from us, they soon found the way to shut the door in his face. By their orders the servants were even very rude to him. It is evident that the De Beaucourts and M. Delacourtie were determined to prevent matters being arranged peaceably and honourably between Gounod and ourselves. My letters to M. Delacourtie, as well as those to Madame De Beaucourt, prove that I begged them to settle matters with Mr. De la Pole, and that neither the one or the other took any kind of step with that object. Mr. De la Pole saw clearly that M. and Mme. De Beaucourt, had resolved to drive away any friend or messenger of the Weldons. When Mr. De la Pole went in to see him, Gounod was like a madman; he screamed when speaking of us—he said that my violence alarmed him, and Mr. De la Pole, seeing that he had been completely set against us, pretended, thinking to act for the best, he had come to Paris for his own pleasure. I, unhappily, who had no suspicion of the conspiracy, had written to Mme. De Beaucourt and M. Delacourtie, announcing him as a proper and competent person to explain the whole business to them, thus rendering worse than useless, a diplomatic letter De la Pole had sent Gounod.

When I received, through Smith, Gounod's propositions, I looked upon them not only as a reopening of the discussions, recriminations, and complaints from which I had suffered so long, but I looked upon it as mocking hypocrisy to submit to me *propositions for my consideration* after he had actually made *an agreement in writing* with Smith. I *knew* he had done so purposely, and his saying that he had not signed the one Smith wished for was one way of telling me that he was free to do just as he pleased. At the same time I feared that even to read such an absurd compilation (after everything had been placed in Mr. Taylor's hands) might compromise the affair. I looked upon myself most rightfully as M. Gounod's agent. I could not, would not any longer bear his eternal shufflings, so, without the least anger, I sent him back his *propositions* torn up. I wished to give him a lesson, and to prevent him from treating me in the same manner for the future. I had had enough of it, I was sick of it, and the idea of beginning my past life over again horrified me. I reckoned on

being able to save him "by the scruff of his neck," thanks to the *schedule*, and, later on, I hoped we might be able to prove that what Smith had obtained from Gounod had been drawn up by the old man when in a morally and physically enfeebled state, of which I had informed Smith in my letters. I was furious with the latter, and I wrote him a letter (*see p. 184, No. 2.*)

Have the kindness to read M. Gounod's letter to me commenced on the 13th and continued on the 18th. Please to remark that he says "he must absolutely be done with it"; that "*the Business Mimi was dead*," that he had been *indignant* with Smith, and that by the words, "*I treated him in return to another in my best writing*," he gave me to understand perfectly that he remained firmly decided upon all that had been settled since March.

I had the right to take no notice of Smith's note. He appeared very well satisfied with his journey! There is another point in M. Gounod's conduct that strikes everyone to whom I tell this story. "But M. Gounod owed you so much money and so many obligations in so many ways, it was quite natural he should not wish to do anything without you." Now then read Gounod's letter of the 18th of June side by side with the agreement "*in his writing*" (*see page 172, No. 2*), and the extraordinary artfulness with which it is written. The Jesuitism of the thing is really marvellous. More than two months passed before Mr. Taylor succeeded in obtaining a copy of the agreement which Gounod had made, or rather I should say, had *made Smith make*, expressly stipulating clauses which should be made *between him and Smith alone*, taking the greatest care to exclude the Weldons altogether. It is a *miracle of hypocrisy* (*see p. 172, No. 2*).

This then is the document which "*the affectionate Mimi*"—"exhausted by previous struggles, in the impossibility of again taking to public life, and held ready to live only for his dear child"—made Smith sign.

The "*Business Mimi*" was dead, but the "*Mimi of affection*" would live for ever,—it was then *this Mimi* who took up the pen for "*this Dummy*"!

It was not bad for a man who detested so much having anything to do with business!

You will perceive then, that, as for ME, I existed no longer; so, on the 19th of June, in his letter to me, he begins his recriminations, well knowing that he was in the wrong, and was preparing himself for the battle he had provoked! *He—cannot—live—without—wrangling!* and the prospect of a quarrel was too fine not to profit by it. How could I allow, after my long correspondence with Smith, Gounod to pass me over altogether and render me so ridiculous and so powerless? Besides he denied, and denies *up to this day*, that he made any agreement with Smith! He says in his letter of the 21st of June, "It is not a question of a new agreement at all, it is *entirely and absolutely a question of remaining in the same terms as hitherto*." He says also, "*What right have I to punish Smith for his delay in paying me?*"

Then, if he had not the right of insisting on payment, why had he

threatened me for two years to make Smith a bankrupt? And why did he make me continual scenes because he received nothing from Smith? *By what right*, I ask, did he make those scenes, those contemptible scenes? For the pleasure of torturing me, of making me ill, of ruining my nerves, of prostrating me with sick headaches for two days in my bed? To drive me to do my utmost to sell music for this new publisher, who had not, even when I saw him for the first time, the miserable little window he has now, who speaks of *his firm*! *His firm* indeed! To whom does he owe *his firm*? Ruin *his firm*? Gounod even feared that we might be able to protect him; thanks to the schedule:—it is monstrous! Gounod says to me, "*The way you torment yourself makes me wretched, and exhausts me; I cannot describe to what degree!*" . . . Not a word of regret, for a single moment, at making *me* so miserable, at making *me* so wretched, at giving *me* so much trouble, at having made *me* so ridiculous, at having given Smith all right and power to laugh at *me*. Ah, no! He reproaches *ME* for the way I torment myself, as though *HE* was not the cause thereof! But when a woman, like me, has worked for three years as I have worked (and my three years' work is worth ten years' work of any one else's), sees everything ruined, is it so very unreasonable to feel desperate?

As to the *schedule* which we looked upon as his salvation, Gounod was right; *it was worth nothing*, although Mr. Taylor and I, in the hope of making him retract, had made the most of it. Gounod therein is only responsible for £350, and it did not even give us the right, as I believed, to prosecute Smith for that amount in Mr. Weldon's name without Gounod's consent.

This *schedule*, absolutely useless, had been drawn up when I had found out *in April*, 1873, that they meant to make Gounod lose the Littleton suit, and Littleton could seize nothing if we were constituted Gounod's first creditors. I counted upon the good the advertisement of Gounod's being two days in prison would have done him; I should have moved heaven and earth to have got him out by a concert which would soon have repaid Littleton the £120, and which would have given me the opportunity of representing and properly explaining the way Gounod was treated in England. After two days, even if the money had not come in so quickly as I expected, we should have paid the £120 ourselves, and even if one only got very little by the concert, it was always the best advertisement I could make for the music with *royalties*. That would have stopped others from playing the game of entering actions against him as Metzler subsequently did, for they would have been too sharp to have twice risked giving Gounod the advantage of going to prison. I do not believe that Littleton would even have pressed for the payment of this £120, for he knew too well the disastrous effect it would have had upon him by having public attention drawn to Gounod as his victim. Mme. Zimmerman too, by paying them, ruined a very advantageous combination for Gounod, and has helped to render him more ridiculous than he appears to have been all his life, thanks, no doubt, to his eternal chicaneries, weaknesses, shufflings,

subterfuges, tomfooleries, Christian comedies, and texts extracted at every turn from the Holy Scriptures!

Gounod said in his letter of the 21st of June "*that he did not lie!*"

Bear in mind too that he writes TO ME, "that I wished to make a *tradesman of him! a publisher!* and it was only quite recently that the '*generous chimera*' had entered my brain (see his letters of 1871; he then speaks of paying the printing and publishing himself)." He tells me to "*cease this useless war.*" Who began the wars? We shall see how Gounod is quite determined not to cease this one! He "*wishes to follow a just and practicable course!*" "*Impossibility is the enemy of peace!*" He ought to have been canonised *Saint Impossible*, for, of all the enemies of Peace, he is indeed the chief, and the great high priest.

On the 22nd of June, the De Beaucourts feeling the immediate danger of friendly understanding between Mr. De la Pole and Gounod, get Gounod to write the letter (see p. 183, No. 2) which one can easily see was dictated to him, and it was to this letter my husband replied (see p. 184, No. 2). As for me, I was deadened, stupified with grief, and for a whole week I was unable to write to him at all. I even wished to keep silence altogether, for now "*those dear letters of which he earnestly begged me, on the 13th of June, not to deprive him of,*" now caused diseased exasperations and violent anguish. I kept no copy of my letters; the 29th of June is the only one of which I took a copy, for in that one I mentioned business to Gounod; but he complains of my husband's letters; of those, copies were taken, except the one he wrote him for his birthday. Will any one consider that these are calculated to cause Gounod "*profound and bitter sorrow*"? Mr. De la Pole acquainted me with the horrible manner in which he spoke of me before the De Beaucourts. He reproached me with everything of which he was culpable, and, as his letters prove, there is not a single word of regret for all the sorrow caused me (even if there had not had been the Smith complication) by this sudden determination of deserting us!

See his letters of the 24th of June—he says that he "*wished to do nothing without having submitted it first for my approval,*" and he had actually made the agreement with Smith on the 18th of June! Is it possible to believe he had forgotten it? He says again, "*You know to-day that nothing has been drawn up or signed. All you should have done was then simply to clear it up by your explanations, and not to accuse me of what I do not deserve.*"

AND, he had signed the agreement with Smith on the 18th of June!

AND he says to me in a letter, "*I do not lie!*"

You will see how I speak to M. Delacourtie of his "*imbecile avarice,*" he twists the expression of which I made use of, and says that I called him an "*avaricious imbecile.*" The two things have for me an entirely different meaning, but this is how he would worry me for hours because of the way a phrase might be twisted. There is not the least doubt but that he is possessed by the torments of an *imbecile avarice*, but I should never dream of calling him a *miser*—that would no longer be *imbecile*.

A miser *loves* his gold, but Gounod has a mania for spending, and if he felt that he was rich and his affairs prosperous, I am sure he would be generous. With all that, I am very sure that he would never have given me either *Ilala* or the manuscript of *Foan of Arc*, and that he would never have bequeathed to my institution anything in the shape of orchestral parts or any other kind of relic, had the thought ever entered his brain I should ever make a penny by them. He knew well I would sooner die of hunger than sell his manuscripts, that I loved the smallest piece of manuscript which he would tear up or throw into the waste-paper basket, and that I took care of, and preserved them carefully. If I have many other MSS. of songs, etc., which he has given me, he knows, that before knowing me, he did not keep them, but left them all with Choudens; I verily believe I well deserve all that he graciously and charitably bestowed upon me, and as to my selling them—NEVER.

Let us see! He reproaches me "*of accusing him unjustly of deceiving me!*" "*Deceive you! Me!!*"

Did he deceive me—Yes or No? Has he deceived me—Yes or No?

He asks me if "*Gye, Littleton, Egerton, Mapleson, Davison, Chapell are Frenchmen, and had they not wronged him?*"

There is a pretty way of reasoning!

He imagines that the duty and affection those men of business should bear him are to be compared to that which he owes us! But, these men may be blackguards in commercial matters. Everything connected with the music trade is more or less inevitably so. That does not at all prevent them from being excellent and loyal friends, exemplary fathers, devoted and honourable husbands, irreproachable men in all things except their *satanic trade*. It is the trade, M. Gounod, which is to blame, not they!

It was not *my trade* to receive men into my home, neither was it my husband's *trade*. All we did for you was out of pure devotion. I had the right, I have it still, as well as my husband, to expect you to have treated us honourably, respectably, and respectfully. Gratitude! Oh dear, No! Is there any in this world? Do you believe that I owe Smith any grudge for *his* ingratitude? Oh dear, No. It was his BUSINESS. He ruined YOUR'S. It is HIS trade, —but between us and you, M. Gounod, there is more than your *whole* life of devotion and gratitude could *repay* us. Do you ever ask yourself with what coin you have returned to the Weldons all they have lavished upon you?

* * * * *

I received his letter *of the 24th of June* on the same day my husband received his *of the 27th of June*.

He was supposed to be "*destroyed, crushed!*" He "*asked only to pass away in peace, and not to linger long.*"

"*The suffering caused him by the thought of the false impression of his deceitful tears in the soul of his poor, dear little mother made him cry so much that he thought to cry for the rest of his life. That terrible*

idea, that I, his Mimi, could suspect him of duplicity, made him shed all his heart's tears." In the meanwhile, to refresh himself, he drew up the minute and detailed list (see p. 208, No. 2) for the French Embassy: he did not even forget his music paper . . . what admirable presence of mind in the midst of so many tears! . . .

That day, the 27th, I had only seen a little bit of a list he had sent my husband. I read and re-read with stupor the P.S. of his letter. "*I have made a mistake in mentioning the white book where my royalties are entered; it may remain in your hands as long as necessary.*"

I knew what it meant, but I could not realise it!

He meant to say, "I revenge myself for your letters—I revenge myself for the wrongs which I have—I revenge myself, because you are in the right—I revenge myself on the grief I am causing you, and I will do much more besides, for I have the power to do it. You have worked with the tenacity of a demon, you are as firm as a rock. All your tenacity, and all your firmness are worth nothing. You have no stamped agreement. I will take away from your life all that which has filled it for so long, and to excuse myself I can easily make-believe (they have believed it so long) that you and your husband robbed me. You will be humiliated in the eyes of all those publishers whose gauntlet you took up in my defence. My affairs will go to the devil—that I am prepared for. I will make all the world believe it is your fault. Your health is bad; the sorrow I will cause you will perhaps kill you; you and your Orphanage are done for! It is I, Charles Gounod, who have no character, no reputation, no firmness, and no will, who is capricious enough to ruin you, and my caprice for evil has more power than all your character, your firmness, and your willingness for good."

All this and much more I *felt* in this horrible postscript. And then that letter to my husband! He had sent to Gavard (a man he had not seen ten times in his life) to mix him up with our affairs. He had a little shame—he hid himself behind Dr. Blanche.

Men were to come to me to carry off—what? Was he, then, never going to return? Oh, yes!—a list! My husband had a little list, that is what he meant; but why, why write to the Embassy? Why publish his visit to the De Beaucourts? He would never remain with his son! He would not remain with the De Beaucourts. I knew that. I had told him so. Something got into my head then, I really don't know what, but I was very ill, I did not feel well in my head all that day:

He meant to leave us, then?

And Jeanne's dowry?

And *Polyeucte*, which was to make his fortune?

They wished, then, to utterly destroy everything for me, even the possibility of the future! I should no longer have the right of working for him! "*The white book could remain in my hands as long as necessary!*" So, then, they were making other arrangements in England? And the choir? And the orchestral concerts? And the festival at Liverpool? And everything?—everything?—and—my Orphanage? . . .

Useless to reproach him with his broken contract. All I could hope to do was to try and keep up appearances. He wanted to cause public scandals, and confirm the report we had plundered him: instead of writing to us, to beg us to pack up his things, to bring them, or to send them to him, he was acting in such a manner as to make people believe that we had refused to give him what belonged to him. That same morning I received from Mr. Taylor a letter of M. Delacourtie, dated the *28th of June*. You can judge, in reading it, of the lies with which it is filled.

Messrs. Delacourtie and De Beaucourt knew perfectly well that Gounod had executed *in writing*, and had signed with Smith, the agreement of the *18th June*.

Delacourtie carries out Gounod's plot, and was deceiving us, with the appearance of truth, by saying (*first lie*), that *Gounod had signed nothing*; Delacourtie said that Gounod wished to sign one, "*owing to a profound disagreement between him and Mr. and Mrs. Weldon.*" I beg the reader to refer to Gounod's letters to me, written before the *19th June*, and to tell me where they find any sign of a *profound disagreement* or even the *least disagreement* between us?—(*second lie.*)

Gounod "*rendered us the most perfect homage*,"—and at the same time accused us to M. Delacourtie of "*wishing to profit by the difficult situation in which Smith found himself, to reconstitute Gounod possessor of his own copyrights, and the trouble of bringing out his works, and that idea frightened him*"—(*third lie.*)

Delacourtie was very anxious to keep Gounod's *word*, even though given inadvertently, to Smith (*see p. 211, No. 2*). Why has he not been equally anxious to make Gounod keep *his word* to us *not inadvertently given*? What does this mean?—"I wish everything to remain in your hands"? Are not these words?—words which are worth nothing, because they are addressed to *me*! But the public will think, I imagine, that the word and obligations of M. Gounod to us had more right to be kept than *his word, inadvertently given*, to Smith.

Delacourtie was determined not to save Gounod from Smith, for if Gounod agreed, we should have been able, thanks to the schedule, to get Gounod out of the mess.

Their game has been to make us believe that Gounod had not compromised himself with Smith. I longed, I *weari*ed to believe it so much, although the letter was so false from beginning to end it did not inspire me with the least confidence. You will see with what a good heart, and with how much hope, I welcomed M. Delacourtie's letter of the *24th of June*.

To mix Delacourtie up in the affair* was absurd and useless, because Mr. Taylor was a man of trust and honesty, on whom Gounod could depend, and he had been recommended to him by his own Embassy; but I was in such dreadful despair, I would have clung to

* *N.B.*—Gounod had not been out of our house a month before he had initiated the Browns, the De Beaucourts, Dr. Blanche, M. Gavard, M. Moreau, in our affairs—and—M. Delacourtie. What service had any of those people ever rendered him? Of what use have they been on the present occasion?

a straw! Mr. Taylor understood as much as lawyers usually understand these sort of cases, which is really *not at all*. M. Delacourtie understood still less, as is fully proved by the confusion in Gounod's business everywhere. I alone was posted, chapter and verse, in the affairs from beginning to end, and, with my papers and accounts, I could prove to Mr. Taylor that what I recommended, and what had been agreed upon for so long, was the best plan to pursue.

To the letter of the *24th June*, I sent the reply, dated the *25th June*, 1874 (28).

The *26th of June*, I wrote him again, for I wished to make him as well acquainted with the business as possible.

The *27th of June*, I received M. Delacourtie's letter of the *26th of June*.

This man, who thanked me for my letter, and assured me of the friendship, etc., of Gounod, had advised him to wound us to the heart, by sending to the French Embassy* to come to our house to pack up and carry off what belonged to him; but I was far from suspecting the existence of such black and hypocritical treason, and I wrote to him on the *27th of June* (29).

I received no more letters from him until the *4th of July*.

I had, however, sent him that of the *29th of June*.

My letters of that time sufficiently describe what I thought, and how I grieved and suffered; as I thought and as I grieved then, so shall I think and grieve for ever.

Let us now examine Gounod's letter of the *3rd of July*. . . . That of the *30th of June* is hardly worth the trouble of a remark:

He therein denies his intention of leaving us.

He had not asked to be fetched by M. de Beaucourt. *So M. De Beaucourt must have lied to me!*

Gounod denied having made any contract with Smith. *So Smith must have lied!*

He paid me all the compliments imaginable on my *integrity*, etc. He even *denied* that I "might have robbed him." So, if he found himself obliged to *deny* such a thing, it is self-evident some one had put it into his head!

He asks me if *at any moment of his life* he had ever incriminated me, etc., or asked to see the accounts.

Poor old man! he hardly did anything else—and, as proof of this, I have in my possession all sorts of accounts, calculations, etc., in his own handwriting!

He would have liked to have stamped with his own hand every single copy sent to our house for signature!

He had manifested (not at the moment, because other people were present) an extraordinary bitterness of feeling as to the means I had had recourse to to spare him money anxieties. As for his debt to us, he could have paid it easily in the way I had so often begged of him when he worried me about it. All he says about this is rubbish,

* M. Delacourtie *himself* told Mr. Taylor that it was by his advice Gounod took this dreadful step against us.—G. W.

as well as the rest concerning "*the respect that he owed me and what he was in duty bound towards me!*"

As will be seen by my letters to Smith, the construction he puts on the phrase, "*I consider that if you pay Gounod,*" etc., is not only false, but stupid (30).

And then the Jesuitism of the explanation of the phrase, "*profound disagreement between him and Mr. and Mrs. Weldon!!!*"

It is enough to make a cat laugh what Gounod says in his 7th and 8th paragraphs!

And the *loyalty farce* regarding the *schedule*. He was afraid of being forced to be saved! *by me again* and by my precautions! This time his coachman was not there! He had "*bolted,*" and nothing was there to stop him or prevent him from giving himself the intense satisfaction of upsetting the coach, although it was his own, into the ditch. . . . I know him so well! Delacourtie and he "*found the propositions I had made, of £300 a-year, excellent.*"

"*His public life had ended. He began henceforth his posthumous life.*"

"*Polyeucte should never see the day. No one should play either POLYEUCTE or GEORGE DANDIN.*"

I "*ought to believe like St. Thomas!*"

I should have been very silly to believe!

I maintain what I told him on the 29th of June, 1874—"I do not believe one single word of all you say." . . .

Here again was an impossibility which they made him believe, and which he swallowed quite naturally!

All this was a dirty trick to get me to give up *Polyeucte* at once, so that they might be able to set about printing what was ready of it for the inaugural night of the GRAND OPERA (Mr. De la Pole had heard it already spoken of in Paris), and hasten to finish scoring the little that had not been finished! However, I have prevented him receiving that price of his infamy! Why not write to me openly and tell me that they had *bought* his return to France? Why insult us for the sake of getting back his things?

This is exactly what my husband wished to do on the spot; but I said to him, "*It is not he!* it is the people he is with who wish to offend us!—who wish to make him lose the fruits of his work of *Polyeucte*, as they have made him lose *Faust* and all his other works. Don't let us satisfy them!" The evening of that dreadful day (29th of June), after having vainly attempted to write him a quiet, patient, and reasonable letter, I lost my senses, I had a kind of fit, and I am told that I repeated, "*They shall not take Polyeucte away from me! I will burn it! They shall not take anything from me! I will burn the house down!*" I said, too—"Ah! those French people. I have worked so hard!—I have worked so hard! They wish to ruin everything and then they will kill him!" . . . I did not then know what this "*list*" meant. In the afternoon, after I had finished my letter, Mr. Taylor's letter was brought to me, asking me not to write to M. Gounod. Everything was muddled in my brain for the next three or four days, but I have had the catalogue printed (31).

1st. Gounod in it asked for things which he had not paid for, and which belonged to me.

2nd. Things which he had given me.

3rd. Things (musical) which he did not require and which were indispensable to me for carrying on the orchestral concerts. Things which he had told me a hundred times should remain for ever in his London house for the use of his concerts and for the future good of my institution, and which (as he had told me I was to continue to work for him) were indispensable to me, and which, as a "*Benedictine Monk*," living no longer but for "*posthumous life*," "*renouncing for ever all future performances or representations, relations and arrangements with the filthy crew of publishers and directors*," became for him only waste paper.

He must have felt certain I knew where all his things were at our house; why, then, give himself so much trouble to describe where they were?—*even the colour of the covers of things!* Did he imagine the messengers from the Embassy had a right to enter our house and ferret about everywhere without our permission? In all this conduct of Gounod's, it is not only the indelicate part one deplores, but the silliness of it. It was equally stupid of M. Moreau and M. Gavard. Mr. Taylor, who is an Englishman, and consequently possessed of *some* sense of delicacy, begged of them not to take any notice of this strange request of Gounod. He said, "It can do no good, M. Gounod owes them *money*, and they have the legal right to withhold everything until they are paid" . . . but the furious haste they were in to get possession of *Polyeucte* made them lose their heads, and Mr. Taylor was forced the same day to bring us this stupid message. The only idea I became possessed of was to die rather than give up anything by force, and as I had promised M. Gounod when he left us to take him *George Dandin* when I rejoined him, I kept to my resolution as had been agreed between us. In vain Mr. Taylor told us that M. Gounod, etc., were furious because I did not send back the MSS., I answered—"They are furious because they have not succeeded in offending us, and they are trying to insult us in another way. As for Gounod, I am sure he knows nothing of all this, and all he is doing to us is done because they represent to him that acting in this manner will avoid giving us trouble. God knows what they are not capable of making him believe!"

But when I received his letter of the 3rd of July, apparently so affectionate, so desirous and *certain* that, notwithstanding all that others would do to prevent him, he would not fail to do anything and everything in the world to console me for a sorrow I could not but imagine he shared with me without liking to say so; that his *Will* would set everything straight, and that I was perhaps wrong to feel so desperate, I endeavoured to blame myself for all the horrible suspicions which crowded involuntarily into my poor brain; whilst refusing to confess to myself the despicable side of his unhappy character, and all that which, in consequence, I had a right to fear, I recalled to mind, with dread, all sorts of looks or smiles which had, at the time, given me a

feeling of terror and curiosity mixed with I don't know what kind of fascination; I felt as somebody who lived with a tamed *tiger-monkey*, which, as long as he saw his keeper's looks, would be gentle and caressing—once his look taken off, for an instant, the animal would think of nothing but destroying and tearing its master to pieces, ready to suck his blood, and to bewail, at the same time, his death! So many extraordinary ideas forced themselves into my brain, speculating on the reasons for his acting in this (let us hope) rare and *sad* example of refined wickedness and cruelty, it is astonishing it did not drive me quite mad.

So the letter of the 3rd of July was of a nature to reassure me: it promised me that everything should be arranged to our satisfaction; I could not understand why "the conferences or the debates on the business in question were of a nature to kill him with fatigue," and I believed that M. Delacourtie would, like Mr. Taylor, be more capable of thoroughly comprehending the good we had done for Gounod than Gounod himself, who was not reasonable and was always waiting for the time when the *great name* of GOUNOD would effect miracles of money *à la Nilsson, à la Patti!* "Why," said he, "if those hussies, who are not worthy to black my shoes, give benefit performances at which they gain hundreds of thousands of francs, why cannot I do so for myself? These are sums which could help you nicely for your children, my poor Mimi, and which would bring in much more than your miserable concerts, your dog of a Smith, and your *this* and your *that!*" thus passing all our allies in amiable review! The 3rd of July "he did all he could to put himself in a state to take from me all he could of my cruel and imaginary anxieties." "Nothing in the world should deprive me of his confidence." He "begged and prayed me not to feel any more torments."

He had seen his wife's brother-in-law, to whom he had said, "*that he had made up his mind to live with his son, but not to have anything in common with his wife.*" He finishes his letter: "*There, my dear girl, I assure you that, no matter where I live or die, I shall live and die respecting those who have loved and love me.*"

The same day, however, upon which he wrote me all this, he sent the memoranda by M. Delacourtie to M. Moreau (*see p. 226, No. 2.*)

The 5th of July Mr. Taylor came to see us. He brought these memoranda to us, and, at the same time, told us that Gounod threatened taking proceedings against us. It was then, that, insulted, outraged by his false insinuations, his duplicity, of which I *could* no longer doubt, I wrote him a letter which had the effect of frightening him pretty considerably, and which contained the following sentence: "*If it is war you wish, you shall have it!*" I believe I have kept my word, M. Gounod, and you will think (as the French thought after being beaten by the Prussians) that you would have done better in not declaring it! You will, no doubt, take refuge as your compatriots did in the cry, "treason!" You will some day wish to drag your De Beaucourts, your Dr. Blanche, your Delacourtie, your wife in the mud for me, as you have dragged me through the mud for them, *according to your custom*; but when that day arrives, I shall not allow you to

conduct yourself thus. I shall always cherish the remembrance of the sacred affection I have borne you, and it will protect you once more from yourself!

At that time I did not think so much of frightening Gounod himself as those surrounding him; for, knowing me to be a woman of the most resolute character, I thought everyone there must foresee I was not the sort of woman to allow myself to be crushed without retaliating! Prosecution! I asked for nothing better; and then I thought, at the worst, we could enter an action against him, and be sure of winning it. My husband felt interested in the affair at that time, and, without doubt, would have carried on the affair energetically and with decision; but my vision of the 7th of June left me no rest, and my fixed idea was that "*Gounod would die*"—that "*they would kill him for me!*" That is the sole and only motive for the patience we have shown in this lamentable affair. Two or three months later, my husband's temper, which is indolent, had changed, and he no longer took any interest in the matter; but I, I never change, I *continue*—all my life is a *continuation* of myself, and I hope that the life of the children whom I bring up will be a continuation of myself. I have, indeed, thoroughly devoted *my life* to them! . . .

This note of the 3rd of July gave the Embassy, in a kind of Jesuitical way, the idea—1st, that we had refused to deliver up the manuscripts; 2nd, that we had made of it a clause in the treaty between Gounod and ourselves; 3rd, that we had asked for a settlement of the money he owed us, and that we had suggested he was capable of protesting against it. MAY I BE HANGED OUTRIGHT, if they can bring forward one single word, one single phrase, which by any possible means might be twisted into that sense! My letter of the 29th June is happily there for all the world to read, and the ONLY REMARKS made on those subjects were made by me in that letter. After Gounod had sent that insulting note, my husband, very gently, in his letter of the 8th of July, mentioned it again.

Mr. Taylor, then, made out a rough draught of agreement such as I desired. In it my husband undertook to guarantee Gounod £300 a-year (at least). My husband engaged himself to pay him shortly what Smith owed him, we to become possessors of the *copyrights*, and therein undertook to sell Smith each copy of music marked 4s. at 8d. Everyone then would have had their due; it would have been a treaty advantageous to Gounod, to Smith, to ourselves, and to my Institution. At all events, we ourselves should, in the end, have profited indirectly by the expense of time and of money which we had lavished on Gounod's business in his interest and that of his publisher since three years; and later on, when we ourselves should have had new compositions of his to publish, we should have then been in a position to gain some real benefit from it. I absolutely insisted in the agreement on being constituted the *exclusive publisher* (on the royalty system), as when Gounod was with us, of all the future works of Gounod in England. Gounod had told me he was going to live like a *Benedictine*; then, so far as he was concerned, he was not in want of the MSS. He had "*George Dandin*,"

in hand to finish, and, in seven weeks, when we returned from the Rigi, there would be plenty of time to send him his manuscripts.

The 5th of July was the first day I felt obliged to make up my mind to believe in Gounod's falseness and enmity. This first document was dated the 3rd of July. Therefore, on the day he wrote to me, "*that he begged me not to torment myself, that all would be arranged; that he would live and die respecting those who had loved and love him,*"—that same day he sent that false and insulting memorandum to the Counsel of the Embassy. (See pp. 226-7, No. 2.)

The second document is not worth speaking of. It was a letter of M. Delacourtie to M. Moreau, which quite put off the affair, made difficulties, and said that Mr. Taylor's visit to Paris *would be premature*.

The truth is; he hoped to keep us in London until the time M. Gounod should have left Paris, and this is proved by his letter of the 7th of July.

You can understand that we placed but little faith in M. Delacourtie's judgment or diligence, for nearly eleven years had elapsed since M. Gounod had claimed from M. Choudens his manuscript score of "*Mireille*," and that M. Delacourtie *had been occupying himself about it*. M. Delacourtie excused himself for doing nothing, because he said he was not sure of the support of M. Gounod's *co-laborators*.

It will be seen in my letters to M. Delacourtie why it was so important, for us and the Gounod Concerts, that the business should be settled at once, and with as little delay as possible.

My husband and Mr. Taylor decided that it must *absolutely* be settled at once; and Mr. Taylor came to Paris on the 11th of July, in order to be able to discuss the matter all together.

They sent to say Gounod was ill, which I knew (the same day) not to be true, for he went out that very day. I had him watched by some one who saw him return. Gounod, therefore, *refused to see us*, or did not know that we were in Paris.

When Mr. Taylor went to M. Delacourtie's office, the latter refused so much as *to look* at the copy of the proposed agreement before having the manuscripts in his hands. Mr. Taylor asked him to allow him to be answerable for the manuscripts, as a sort of compromise, but M. Delacourtie obstinately refused everything. Mr. Taylor then returned to England, and we continued our route towards the Rigi without having settled anything, or without having seen M. Gounod !!!

The 25th of June, I had written to M. Delacourtie (32) that I would not consent to stamp anything for Smith, and that consequently he ought to try to get some other friend to do so. Gounod wrote to me, quite frantic, in his letter of the 7th July (his last) that "he had just received a letter from Smith, who informed him that I had not stamped the music sent to Tavistock House, that I had refused to stamp any music at Tavistock House, and that he had in consequence been obliged to sell some of it without Gounod's signature!" It is therefore, perhaps, the frenzy which took possession of him, in thinking his pocket might suffer by any loss whatever in

the sale of his works, which furnished him with the pretext for shouting, shrieking, groaning, and spreading broadcast the report that I had robbed him !

In Paris, M. Delacourtie spoke about this to Mr. Taylor, who, on his side, asked me to continue this service to Gounod and Smith ; I answered affirmatively, and wrote to my pupils to continue, as heretofore, to stamp all music sent to Tavistock House.

When, therefore, M. Delacourtie wrote to Mr. Taylor (*see letter of the 15th of July, 1874*) that he wished to withdraw Gounod's signature from me, he did it for the purpose of circulating scandalous calumnies, for I had *never* written that I would not sign Gounod's music. I had said, *not those published by Smith*. (33.) Gounod had no reason for becoming suddenly frantic, for I had at once, from the very first, declared my resolution of stamping nothing for Smith. I maintain that I had the right, as Gounod's agent, to act as it seemed best to me.

Smith had no right to sell the music without Gounod's signature. He ought first to have consulted a lawyer and to have taken proceedings against me were I in the wrong. I desired my position cleared up at any price, and hoped by refusing to stamp the music at Smith's to compel some kind of an *exposé*. Gounod, however, had written me in one of his letters, "*let us first settle the Smith question.*" Why is it not settled, and why, for nearly a year, or perhaps more, when this book is published, is Smith not forced to pay what he owes?

I then wrote to M. Delacourtie the letter of the 19th of July (*see p. 236*).

I beg, my readers, to remark that in it I made no allusion to my school or to my interests. I feared to insist on either, for I knew that Gounod in his evil moments was possessed of a jealous spite against my children, "*the sale aim of my life,*" as he called it sneeringly and reproachfully, and he was quite capable of doing anything in the world to crush all my hopes in that quarter.

I feel, keenly, that if he has been capable of conducting himself in a manner to do so much injury to his own interests, it is because he finds his consolation in knowing that he retards my school plans, and in all probability ruins them. It is a positive fact, that if my husband and I had not a position and fortune altogether independent of the musical world, we should have been completely ruined morally and materially. . . . Gounod knows, as well as I, that I am nearly 40 years old, that I am an incorrigible "*stay-at-home,*" and have only ten years before me to make a career. He knows the grief which I feel through his conduct makes me still less disposed than ever to appear in public. He knows all his advantages and all my disadvantages, and speculates on my affection to conceal from my husband his disloyal conduct. My husband would *very quickly* oblige him to put an end to his tales and his lies if he suspected what Gounod has done, written or said, since he left us.

It will be seen by M. Delacourtie's letters addressed to me of *the 22nd and 26th of July*, how much he seemed to wish to come to an understanding with me, though he insisted on the condition of *all* the manuscripts being sent to him.

Why?

When on the 23rd of August I had, at last, received, through Mr. Taylor, a copy of the agreement Gounod had made Smith sign, I then understood why they wished us to give back the manuscripts. It was not only for the reason (which from the first I had given for their conduct) that they wished to make sure of everything belonging to Gounod, to laugh at the agreement and leave *us in the lurch*, but there was also the plan of getting us to sign a useless and fraudulent agreement with Gounod, and they were afraid to let us sign before they got possession of the manuscripts, foreseeing that the law, to indemnify us for the swindle, might award us heavy damages and constitute us possessors of the manuscripts.

Gounod and M. Delacourtie *knew* that Gounod had done something which made it *impossible* for the latter to accept my husband's generous offer.

If Gounod brought an action against Smith, he must inevitably lose it. Mr. Taylor being an honest man and not being up to Gounod, thought me harsh and unmerciful to suspect Messrs. Gounod and Delacourtie of such an artful trick. M. Delacourtie, as he confesses himself in letters which Mr. Taylor has, *did not keep copies of his letters*, the consequence is, that he committed perjury to his heart's content, as will be seen in his letters of the 8th, of the 22nd, and of the 26th July. It is very unfortunate that I am unable to publish more of his letters to Mr. Taylor—and then, God knows what he may not have written to M. Moreau!

Another thing which prevented Gounod from prosecuting Smith was, that notwithstanding all the promises and protestations of M. Delacourtie, M. Gounod was continually writing to Smith. This fact, Mr. Taylor (when I returned to London in October, 1874) ignored. He even doubted it, for M. Delacourtie had written to him to say, that he would undertake to prevent Gounod communicating personally with Smith. He, however, was, in the end, obliged to be convinced of it, as I was, and then he thought it prudent to abstain from prosecuting Smith at all. I am certain Gounod did all this on purpose; as I said to him in my letter of the 12th October, 1874, "*The lawsuit was a farce, like everything else.*"

I received no more letters from M. Delacourtie (who had, I was forgetting to say, told Mr. Taylor, in Paris, "*that I had done nothing for Gounod!*") till the 3rd October. Since the 11th of July I had not received a line from Gounod. I constantly wrote to him, but I got no answer. At last I wrote him a letter, couched in such despairing terms, that he, perhaps, felt a little compassion for me, and he commissioned his *solicitor*, M. Delacourtie, to answer it. Not a single word in Gounod's last letter, dated July 7th, could have led me to suspect that not only he had deceived me, left me, insulted me, ruined me, but that he would never write to me again! *That he was dead to me!* He knew perfectly well why I did not return his manuscripts. I was acting with firmness in the name of the right he had invested me with for three years, and which he had left with me on parting. The bait of opening the Grand Opera with *Polyeucte*, with which the French people *bought* his return to France and *paid* for his disloyal

desertion of us, would only have been a hollow glory, and besides, I thought I saw in that promise one of those flattering deceptions like the 100,000 frs. of Mr. Strakosch for *Polyeucte* in America, the promises of the Marquise J. de B. for Vienna, the Palace of the Austrian Emperor, etc., etc., etc. Had I been certain of it only for England, and in a *clear* position to defend his interests in my country, the manuscripts would not have remained in my possession an hour.

I maintain that if he cannot find an irrefutable reason for depriving me of his confidence, *he still owes it to me*; he reproaches me, he even blames me, in his last letter because I had written to him: "*that he was acting as though he had lost his trust in me.*"

He solemnly swore to the contrary.

In M. Delacourtie's letter of the 3rd of October, 1874, he says to me, "Gounod thinks a reply useless, considering the position you appear to wish to take up as regards him, the conditions you seek to impose on his life, his affairs, and on the restitution of what belongs to him."

I should have to write another book to give further proofs of all I had been doing for a very long time for M. Gounod, but the few letters printed among the original documents will give some idea of it.

On the 4th of November, 1873, M. Gounod wrote to M. Delacourtie (see page 129, No. 2).

I sent him, as I could not go and see him (M. D.), the letter of the 17th of November (see page 129, No. 2). My letters to Messrs. Schott, Jules Barbier, Dulocle, etc., are there to give an idea of all M. Gounod had only been too glad to employ me for and put on my shoulders, and I had, and I shall always have, the *moral* if not the *legal* right of being treated with the greatest respect and gratitude by M. Gounod, his family, and his *friends* (!)

I helped M. Gounod in every imaginable way. I compiled the books of words and programmes of the concerts, etc. I am the author of the following trifle. Am I, *for this reason*, to divide M. Gounod's profits on the *Funeral March of a Marionette*?

This March is a fragment of an unfinished "*Suite Burlesque.*"

At the beginning of this movement,



it is supposed that two actors of the *troupe* have had a quarrel, during which one of them is killed.

The *troupe* is lamenting the unhappy fate of their companion.

Andante.



They organise a ceremony to carry the remains of their friend to the cemetery.

Moderato.



The procession starts, and on the way the mourners begin to lament the vicissitudes of human life. How sad to think that a single blow on the nose of so clever an artist should kill so noble a soul! such talents!



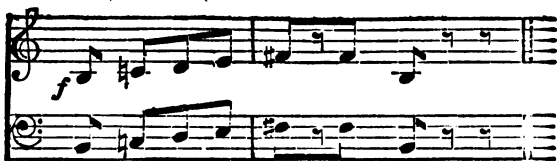
As it happens to be in the heat of summer, a few stragglers begin to think the journey long and wearisome, and to experience the desire of quenching their thirst in a neighbouring tavern of alluring aspect. They naturally observe to each other that it is not the place of the living to die for the dead, and this encourages them to revive their drooping spirits by a few drops of agreeable and stimulating beverage.



The tipplers then set to work to discuss the various qualities of the deceased. A few good fellows praise him up; others (as usual among artists), full of bitterness, begin to run down the qualities of their late companion. "He was a kind fellow," said one; "but without talent," said another. "How well he acted Royalty," said a third; "A more vulgar-looking devil I never knew!" then another, and so on.



Disdainfully.



In the middle of this argument they forget that the procession is approaching the cemetery. They immediately hasten to join the procession, avoiding however, with dignity, any appearance of undue haste.



They rejoin their comrades and enter the cemetery, the band repeating the theme at the beginning of the March.



The last two bars seem to remind one of the shortness of life!—so easily extinguished.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

I am the *co-laborator* of this composition, which, in England, has brought Gounod, at least, 3000 francs* (perhaps double that sum); and in France, only 250 francs (at the French publisher, Lemoine), because I had not thought of sending to the Théâtre de la Gaiété, or to the Paris papers this little joke. It had been played, however, every night for three months at the representations of "*Jeannie d'Arc*" in Paris; and in London we had had no such chance. It had been played, in all, twenty times in England.

The real and true origin of the *Funeral March of the Marionette* is rather curious, and will amuse a good many of my musical readers.

There was an old musical critic of the *Athenæum*, H. F. Chorley, against whom Gounod had a grudge. One morning he came to me radiant, and said—"Mimi, I have *seen* a piece the very image of Chorley!"

Chorley had a thin, sour, high-pitched, sopranish voice; his movements were like those of a stuffed red-haired monkey. He was very thin, very spiteful, and very affected. He had been the first to praise Gounod in England because Madame Viardot patronised him. Davison, consequently, who detested Chorley and Madame Viardot, abused Gounod in the *Times*. Gounod had a strong antipathy for Chorley. He made me nearly die of laughter by playing over the piece to me (without the four first bars, and without the fugued bit in the middle). He could not think of a title to give it; I told him it was a little like *Marionette* music; and, a few mornings later, Gounod, radiant with delight, told me that he "*had found one*," and the *Burial of a Marionette* (changed by me into a *Funeral March*) was thus christened. Gounod intended to dedicate it to Chorley, but his death put a stop to that. Gounod later on, scored it, and I used to ruminate over and over again how we could manage to make the public swallow this silly *stuffed* music, which was "like Chorley." It would have been useless to print in the book of words: "This march is an imitation of Chorley;" so I then invented my little tale, and I advised Gounod to add the four first bars, to imitate a fight, and, as I considered it necessary to have some music to describe the conversation on the way to the cemetery, he added the fugue. My dodge was successful, the march was encored and applauded by every one present; the critics, who understood the story and not the music, were absolutely *forced* to confess that the spirit and wit of the composition were inspired by the subject!!! "French wit, cleverness, etc., etc."

Its success everywhere in England increases every year (34). . . . But though my little tale has made the *March of the Marionette* sell extraordinarily well, I do not consider myself equal to Gounod as a "*creative genius*."† M. Barbier is very likely a being infinitely superior to Gounod (it is not very difficult), but as to genius, that, in my opinion, is a mysterious thing quite apart, and I am sorry I am made in such a way as not to have been able to have agreed with

* 1st November, 1875.—Nearly £350 (Gounod's share) till this date.—G. W.

† It is not really the fragment of a *suite burlesque*!—G. W.

him when he wrote to me, that "*his débuts had fully proved that he was equal to Gounod in genius*;" for this difference of opinion, he bears me a decided grudge; I know it well. (See page 144, No. 2.)

The public, and specially the commercial and musical public, will understand whether I advised M. Gounod badly. (See pages 69, 142, 143, etc., of my letters to M. Delacourtie, etc., in No. 2.)

* * * * *

In November, 1874, a solicitor, Mr. A., told me that, if I would declare that I would not burn the MSS., an action could not be brought against my husband, who would have hated and detested finding himself involved in squabbles with the rabble. A long time before that, I had told Gounod that he had only to come and fetch them; that he owed us *that* at least, after the abominable stories he had allowed to be circulated about us. Mr. A. persuaded me to write to M. Delacourtie, which I did, much against my inclination (see page 255, No. 2), for I did not like to disgrace myself by even writing his name.

At the same time, I wrote the letter of the 26th of November, 1874, to M. Gavard; for I really thought it unjust that Messrs. Moreau, Gavard, and Taylor should continue busying themselves about an affair which Gounod and his friends in France had made up their mind not to settle amicably. . . . Thanks to the advice of a friend, to whom I communicated this letter, I took a copy of it. This friend gave it an importance which I do not consider it has. (See page 256, No. 2.)

A few days later, I was speaking to Mme. Gérard (formerly Maison Meissonnier) of my despair at not being able to get anything settled, and she said to me: "If my husband were to consent to make M. Gounod an offer for *Polyeucte*, would you give up the MSS.?" Of course, I answered, "Most certainly, as soon as I know the work will be advantageously sold to M. Gounod's benefit, most thankfully should I be rid of it."

M. Gérard thereupon made Gounod a splendid offer for his opera *Polyeucte*, and for *George Dandin*, which would have brought him in, in a few years, seven or eight times more than any other work had ever brought him in. At their wit's end, and having no more excuses, they (Messrs. Gounod and Delacourtie) threw off the mask, and boldly declared, "*they would not consent to any transaction made through Mrs. Weldon's intervention.*"

They ought to have said so five months earlier. M. Gounod would have avoided a useless bill of costs at Mr. Taylor's, a great show of hypocrisy and deceitfulness, . . . and . . . would have saved me time and useless writing; for although I had immediately had the presentiment, that they intended to get rid of us completely, to cheat us, to pretend that we were thieves, *nobody* would believe me: I myself could not have persuaded myself that Gounod was capable of being vile and cowardly enough to try and make a woman like me pass for a prostitute, an adventuress, and a thief. My husband . . . Mr. Taylor said—"Nonsense! they are too fond of money, they will only be too happy to have things settled!"

"No," said I, "believe *ME*, *they* wish to ruin his affairs, so as to tell him and make him believe that it is our fault; this is all they are aiming at!—that is all the *satisfaction* they seek!"

I then sent to warn Gounod, that, if he refused to come to an understanding, and if he did not make with me an agreement properly signed by him before the *5th of December, 1874*, nothing remained for me but to show him up by publishing a faithful narrative of our dealings with him; that his letters, and other documents which he had given *for my defence*, and which were in my possession, would prove the truth of everything I said. I waited patiently till the *5th of January, 1875*, and then I sent officially my solicitor to M. Delacourtie.

My solicitor answered me on the *12th of January, 1875*, that M. Delacourtie could not accept my propositions.

A few days after this, I received a letter from Mr. Taylor, dated *January 16th, 1875*, saying, that "he thought he could guarantee me certain copyrights, which would more than satisfy my claims, and which would put Smith entirely in my power!" I answered first, that Gounod had no *copyrights* to dispose of, that I understood but one thing, and that I would listen to nothing but Gounod's own words: "*I leave to you, as to a dear little mother, the care of everything which concerns the direction of my affairs.*" Besides, M. Gounod could not guarantee *copyrights*.

But Mr. Taylor could not understand that.

If I have done anything dishonest, let them accuse me, and give me the chance of defending myself!

Mr. Gounod and M. Delacourtie say I have done *nothing* for him in England.

I only claim, as my right, the half of that *nothing*—that is to say, half the Royalties, etc., of M. Gounod in England.

The right of stamping with my signature *for the Orphanage* M. Gounod's music. (M. Gounod, if he likes, can give his signature to others, I only insist upon the *right* of superintending everything myself.)

Of being henceforth considered the only exclusive publisher of any new work by M. Gounod (in England). Of being his *responsible agent*. It should be stipulated that, without my signature, no treaty (agreement) which M. Gounod might make would be valid in England.

I would engage myself to obtain for him his author's rights, without other commission than £1 in £100.

On each new work I might publish at my own expense, he should receive his royalties in full of 6d a copy, and if he has really remained on friendly terms with Smith I will make no difficulty whatever about taking my publications there, and of selling them under the name of Smith—not exclusively.

A clause of my contract should be, the explicit understanding that I should have the right, should I deem it necessary, to make M. and Mme. Gounod sign a retraction of, and apology for, all the unheard-of infamies they have spread about myself and my husband, to be dictated by me.

I would ask to keep, for the expenses caused by Gounod's conduct,

the £90 of his I have in hand, and the sum of money which is in the bank—surplus (of £300, I think) of the GOUNOD CONCERTS, and I will submit, with my opinion on that subject, my wish to the committee of the Concerts as to how the money should be spent.

I to keep all the orchestral parts and orchestral scores of M. Gounod (not *manuscripts* except those which he wrote expressly for us and our "*Gounod Concerts*," and which, he said, "were always to remain in his dear and benevolent Tavistock—*his London house*").

Should he wish this book to be suppressed, he will have to pay me (as I have warned him beforehand), either in money or value of musical compositions, £3 per printed page for the trouble, the time, and the sorrow which the composition, compilation, and printing of this said book have caused me.*

The correspondence (Schott) which I have had printed (*pages 99, 100, 101, 102, No. 2*) will show that even in 1872 the rumour had been spitefully circulated that I was making capital out of M. Gounod *with rapacity*, and that M. Schott did not scruple to publicly accuse me thereof; another proof of my activity; and that M. Gounod knew perfectly well to what he was exposing me in conducting himself as he did.

M. Schott died last year, and his successor must certainly repudiate the kind of business which I expose as dishonest; therefore, in relating what was customary at the time of the lamented deceased, I beg the public not to fancy I am slandering an *honourable* publishing firm. I do not think this Dutch edition can be procured at Schott's, and if my readers have any doubts on the subject they have only to go and ask for it to be convinced of the contrary. A copy without M. Gounod's signature would prove piracy.

I cannot here discuss the complicated iniquities of international laws on artistic property. The patent laws in England and the enormous prices which must be paid for an invention, have been passed only for the sake of preventing the inventor profiting by his own invention, and to throw him, in despair, into the hands of the sharkish tradesmen with enough capital to enable them to profit by the fruits of the intelligence of these victims of laws which are supposed to have been made for their protection! In order to secure a patent in England, it is necessary, I believe, to spend £60.

I will confine myself to relate the simple facts which occasioned the Schott correspondence.

When I left England for Spa in July, I wrote to M. Achille Lemoine, M. Gounod's French publisher. I sent him two copies of several new compositions of M. Gounod, saying, "Such-and-such composition was brought out two months ago, another six weeks ago, you must, therefore, make haste to print these and to have them registered in every country. As conventions with France exist in more countries than with England, and that it is not necessary to

* And now that it is printed I may safely say that only for the time which the correction of the proofs has taken me, £3 a page would not be sufficient. What loss of time! Good heavens!—G. W.

have them registered in two countries, if the French edition comes out before the English one, I will ask you to take charge in the future of the *dépot*, etc., of M. Gounod's compositions."

I left England with a *light heart*!

While in Brussels, I entered into negotiations with M. Schott on M. Gounod's account. What he tried to persuade me to do was, to sell him at a certain price every work which would come from M. Gounod's pen, and he gave me to understand that I should get a good portion of it. I laughed, and told him that I was not a tradeswoman; but what I liked to do for M. Gounod was to sell his English publisher's music, on the royalty system, for him, and that if he would buy that music of me it would give me a great deal of pleasure. He asked me how much I got on the sale. I answered, "Nothing." "What do you do it for then?" he said to me rather slyly. "In the first place, because I love him, and he would be so happy if he were rich, and then when once his daughter's dowry is saved, he will help me to establish my Academy." "Then do you really gain *nothing* on the sale of his music?" He looked very incredulous; he amused me—he was a tradesman. When I was a young girl he was an assistant in the shop, and I had bought music from him without even knowing who he was.

What superb disdain we aristocrats have for any one in trade! and little do we suspect how important they are, or how we *want* them!

"No, M. Schott," said I, "*nothing* at all, except the pleasure and the love of the thing. I have all the publishers in London against me. I shall at last prove to them that M. Gounod's genius and my energy are irresistible, and that M. Gounod will have a fine income in spite of them all."

He shrugged his shoulders. "That is very praiseworthy, madam! You are '*toquée*!' (cracked)!" I have often been told that! M. Schott took, from a shelf, a book, in which, at a sidelong glance, I perceived a list of musical compositions. I saw the name of several of Gounod's latest ones.

He asked me how I managed about registering the copyrights for foreign countries, etc. "At first a few mistakes were made," I replied, "but neither Gounod or I had ever heard of the law, but now M. Gounod has a French publisher (an old experienced firm) everything will go on smoothly." I explained the errors,—he was so friendly,—he had a vivid recollection of the beautiful Miss Morgan Thomas who used to sing so well! Then said he, "Of course you know that some publishers might annoy M. Gounod for an error in registration?" "Only a thief would do that," I retorted; "besides, it would be a very difficult thing to discover!" I only found out later on that the publishers keep a careful look out for faulty registrations (they, of course, know composers are ignorant of copyright law), and the book which M. Schott had taken from the handy shelf was his book of memorandums on that interesting subject! I left Brussels, M. Schott and I on the best of terms. The correspondence explains why he died without my blessing. I will only add that M. Lemoine did not know the law as well as I did. Instead of making

haste to print (as I had warned him he must do) and register M. Gounod's compositions at once, he sent for copies *printed in England*; he registered these, and as those absurd Copyright laws decree the *printer* as a person of greater importance than either the publisher or the composer, the copies were returned to M. Gounod *six months* after this by the Foreign offices. The law only grants *three months'* delay; Gounod's copyrights had been confiscated, and had, by becoming public property, fallen into the claws of the great foreign publishing firms.

No one is responsible for this heavy loss, and the author is the only sufferer!

M. Gounod had undertaken with me to compose a great work on the "*Fifteen Mysteries*." I spent a great deal of time choosing Bible texts for him. The ANNUNCIATION, which is the first, is finished. The overture to the *Fifteen Mysteries* was suggested by me: he has also begun the NATIVITY. In France an association of this kind is respected, if the newspapers are to be believed. I spoke to him of, and gave him the subject of, the SEA OF GALILEE. Therefore I do not for an instant doubt that the readers of this book, as well as those of No. 2, "*Original Letters and Documents*," are entirely of opinion that a heavy compensation is due to us for all that which M. Gounod accepted from us, and will be shocked to know his mean and shameful conduct towards friends who have done what we have for him,—a man so talented and so charming as the composer of all this music which bears the impression of such an elevated mind, which one might suppose the reflection of a true and candid heart.—Can FAUST be the work of the most accomplished *False good man* (*faux bonhomme*) on earth?

It is awful!—awful!

Another thing I was forgetting. Every one is very anxious to know what Mr. Weldon says about all this. It is surprising what interest is shown in Mr. Weldon! What?—he allows me to do this! What?—he allows me to do that!

Yes, he allows me to do it; and for a very good reason: because I *will* have my own way.

We have entirely different dispositions. Mr. Weldon is very fond of M. Gounod; but, if he knew what I know, he would feel so horribly grieved at it, the consequences might be fatal to M. Gounod.

I am, therefore, very careful that Mr. Weldon should know nothing, and manage in such a way that he should not hear anything about it. He hides his portraits, and would rather not hear a note of his music or see his name, because they remind him painfully of "*his dear old man*." I, on the contrary, can think and speak only of two things—M. Gounod and my Orphanage. Sometimes, in his letters to me, my husband mentions the "*poor dear old man*," and that makes me very happy. I cannot, in spite of my indignation, think of Gounod as the REAL CULPRIT.

For a long time it was impossible for me to admit, for a single instant, that M. Gounod himself could be capable of encouraging the infamies which were spread about us; and what pained me most was

to hear people say that he was responsible for the newspaper articles. I am quite aware now that he not only encouraged them, but suggested them. I had, in his defence, *on the 1st September, 1874*, published the letters, which are with the notes (*see p. 247, No. 2*).

Two months after Gounod had left us, I still wept and sobbed constantly; my husband said to me (we were at the Rigi), "Do you know, it makes me feel so desperate to see your sorrow which it is not in my power to lessen, and for which I cannot blame you, that it will drive me mad; and one of these days I feel that I shall start off and go and break that man's head."

Since that time, frightened by his stern and determined tone, I tried hard not to cry in his presence,—I even, for that reason, made up my mind to spend the winter in Italy without him. He is a very tall, very strong, very passionate, and *very quiet* man, but I have seen him in a passion twice in my life, and I am afraid of him. My poor old man would become pulp in the furious grip of a young and extraordinarily strong man as my husband is, and I shudder every day at the thought of what might happen, if, notwithstanding my entreaties and my warnings against anonymous letters, etc., some imprudent person got hold of my husband's ear and advised him

"To horsewhip Gounod on the staircase of the Grand Opera."

END OF THE SECOND PART.

EPILOGUE.

I HAD finished my book at Leghorn, at the Anglo-American Hotel, on the 9th of March, 1875, and I had returned to Florence, where I was preparing to give a concert, and to make a longer stay in this town, which was for me a second mother country. I wrote to my Paris printer—who had undertaken the publication of my MSS.—to send me back what he had of it, for I had been warned by a Mr. C., who was my agent, and who I do not wish to name, that Gounod threatened to prosecute, without mercy, *the printer* who would undertake the publication of my book. (*See page 263, No. 2.*) This good man would have been a great help to me, and no doubt it is for fear of the unpleasantness the enmity of Gounod and of his allies might have caused him, that I received no answer whatever to the last letter I wrote him, in answer to his of *the 30th March*. I thus found myself deserted by my agent, in spite of all his protestations of devotion. I only publish fragments of his letters; the other portions of them are only of interest to me personally. I only wish to give the history of it, as, from a *legal point of view*, it proves that Gounod, by his false and scandalous misrepresentations of me, has turned my agent against me, and has, consequently, done me real and tangible injury.

I also said to myself that even if Gounod had the impudence to prosecute me for documents, of which he had himself authorised the publication by taking care beforehand to put them into my hands "*for my defence*" (as he himself said) as guarantees against any malevolent insinuations, I was not at all afraid of losing the action; a public trial would clear up the whole situation, and even if I lost it legally on the point of libel, I should have the opportunity of proving all I had done for M. Gounod, and that neither my husband or I had wronged him of a farthing; I was only afraid that the printer, by some legal quibble, might be made to suffer; I therefore decided to publish my books in Italy.

The French printer, after thinking it over for three days, answered me, that he could not possibly send me back my MSS. unless he received the receipt which he had given the person who had brought him the MSS., and who had left neither name, or address.

Consequently, I wrote to the person referred to, asking her to give the printer the above-mentioned receipt, in order that I might get back my MSS. at once. While this was going on, I received from my husband a letter, which made me resolve to quit Italy immediately, and to return home as fast as possible. My agent had failed; though the municipal authorities at Leghorn had promised me by word of mouth, a building where I could establish my Orphanage,

they gave me no *written* promise, and I saw clearly that, as for my musical career, my agent, etc., everything had failed. I was disheartened; my mind was full of my publications; home and the children seemed stretching out their arms to me.

On leaving Florence, I thought I should be in England by the end of the same week. *Femme propose, Dieu dispose*. I remained fourteen weeks in Paris, and this is why: The day I left Italy, I received a letter from A. L. (the person to whom I had entrusted my MSS.), as follows:

"A gentleman called from you for the MSS. I gave him the printer's address, where he will fetch them, but, in his hurry, he forgot to take the last batch you sent me. I forward them to you by express."

Imagine my anxiety! I guessed directly that there was a plot to steal my book from me, and I really thought that a gang who could calumniate, bring false witnesses against and rob a poor woman, who had never done any harm to any one, would not be incapable of assassination. There was only one person who knew the name of the people to whom I had trusted my manuscripts, and at whose house I had proposed to read him my manuscripts. It was Mr. C—. I had planned a little plot, which did not succeed, because Mr. C— would not help me, and though he had faithfully promised to serve me, he did nothing for me, when he saw the very compromising (to me) letters, the documents, and the very grave accusations, which Gounod makes use of as a scarecrow to my friends in his own private study.

He has, no doubt, since he left us, studied the law of libel, and he knows that he can, at his own house libel me with impunity, or in private letters, which he takes great care to word so as to do me as much injury as possible, without fear of the consequences of his lying inventions and insinuations. In spite of all his precautions, he went a little further than he wished (see the correspondence between Mr. J. J. and himself), for his *honour* could not have been flattered by Mr. J. informing him that his letters were "*cowardly, false, and ungrateful*."

I felt in mortal anguish during my journey from Florence to Paris; but, on arriving, how great was my consolation when I heard, "*All's safe! all's safe!*" My friends had received my letter which announced my arrival; our letters had crossed. They, too, had seen through the snare—they had felt sure I had not returned the receipt (which they had sent me in a letter) to the printer. General satisfaction! Only my friends did not understand how it was that I had never had the receipt.

Providence again was watching over me! The letter containing the receipt (as often happens in Italy) had been lost; had I received it, I should, without doubt, have forwarded it to the printer when I asked him for my manuscripts, in which case it would have been infallibly lost to me. This is how I nearly managed to find out the name of the very person who had attempted to rob me. On the 17th May, 1875, I went to the *Figaro* office to speak about a short

paragraph which had been inserted the preceding day in the column signed "*Masque de fer*." I was desired, at the door, to go up to M. Gille's office. I then went upstairs, and saw there a gentleman whom I took for M. Gille. He was very polite and asked me to sit down, while I explained to him the object of my visit. I told him that as my solicitor had advised me to take legal proceedings against M. Gounod, but as, however, I was in hopes that things might be arranged amicably after all, that M. Gounod was entirely in the wrong, and that the more they attracted public attention to the subject the more it would be to Gounod's disadvantage, if everything were known and understood, I was desirous of reading to M. Villemessant, or to some responsible man on the staff of the *Figaro*, as a proof of what I said being true, the pamphlet I had written, "*La destruction du Polyeucte de Ch. Gounod*."

He asked, down a tube, if Mr. — was present, and was answered, "*No*." He told me that neither he nor Mr. — had written the short article, but that he would send for M. Périvier, M. Villemessant's secretary. The latter came up immediately. He glanced through the pamphlet rapidly. When he came to page 20, in which I state that some one had wished to steal my manuscript, and "*that I was even afraid to come to Paris*," etc., etc.

"Why write that?" said M. Périvier, "B. J.* is much too courteous with the ladies to be capable of wishing to injure you. He is M. Gounod's personal friend. We know all about this better than you do. It was he who went to the printer, etc., to try to obtain it. We even thought of making a good deal of it in the *Figaro*, but M. Villemessant has his private reasons for not wishing it to be talked about, and I am even astonished to see this short paragraph has slipped into our columns; if M. de V. had seen it, he would not have let it pass."

"Then B. J.," I retorted, "are the initials of the gentleman who, at M. Gounod's instigation, no doubt, tried to abstract from me what belonged to me."

"It is not B. J.; he is known by the name of Bécher here. He is an old backbiter. He has the knack of cutting one up nicely; that is how it is we gave him that nickname!"

"Well," I answered, "Gounod is the only person who could have told Bécher where my manuscript was, for we had kept it a profound secret, with the exception of *one* person, who must have communicated its whereabouts to Gounod."

"Certainly! Gounod knew where everything was. I can even tell you that Bécher has read every word you sent the printer; he did his best to get hold of the whole thing, and the rest besides!"

I then explained to them by *what a miracle* I had saved my MSS., and M. Périvier assured me that if I were willing to entrust the MSS. to him, only M. Villemessant and himself should see them. I told

* At the date of the publication of this English edition (1882), I can state with authority that it was *M. Benedict Jouvin*, the well-known *rédauteur* on the staff of the *Figaro*, who, being Gounod's personal friend, had attempted to steal my manuscript.—G. W.

him I had run much too great a danger of losing them, that I must in future be more careful, but that if he really wished to come and read them at my house, I would agree to that, for I was persuaded that if M. de Villemessant understood how wrong M. Gounod was, he would use his influence to bring him to reason, and would advise him to make with me the arrangement I demanded.

M. Périvier told me that he would come to read them at my house "*next Thursday*." He even seemed very anxious to see them. But he did not come, and I have heard nothing more of him.

I asked M. Périvier to tell me *Bécher's* real name, but he answered that he could not give it me, that he was on the staff of the *Figaro*, and that among them these secrets were never revealed. It was against the rule. *It was a point of honour!* I told him that I did not care very much about knowing the real name, because I intended, in my book, to describe the way in which people had tried to rob me of my MSS., and now I should be able to add that having gone by chance to the office of the *Figaro*, that he (M. Périvier) had told me the nickname of their *confrère Bécher*, Gounod's intimate friend, who happened to be the very man who was the culprit.

M. Courcelles and M. Gille's representative were present. M. Courcelles introduced himself to me, when he heard who I was, telling me that he had heard of me through his son in London, who had been at Mr. Weldon's house several times to visit Gounod at Tavistock House. M. Périvier seemed very much annoyed and dismayed at the idea of my repeating what he had related to me, and he said: "But, madam, you ought not to repeat anything. All I told you was in confidence!" I laughed, and answered: "Now you are caught out! you are in for it! Why did you let all that out of the bag? I am very indiscreet."

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When I say I *intend*, I say what is not quite the fact, for, if I cannot find a French lawyer determined to make me win my suit, I will not undertake it. What is the good of spending my time and my money when both are so useful to me, over a lawsuit? I

they gave me no *written* promise, and I saw clearly that, as for my musical career, my agent, etc., everything had failed. I was disheartened; my mind was full of my publications; home and the children seemed stretching out their arms to me.

On leaving Florence, I thought I should be in England by the end of the same week. *Femme propose, Dieu dispose.* I remained fourteen weeks in Paris, and this is why: The day I left Italy, I received a letter from A. L. (the person to whom I had entrusted my MSS.), as follows:

"A gentleman called from you for the MSS. I gave him the printer's address, where he will fetch them, but, in his hurry, he forgot to take the last batch you sent me. I forward them to you by express."

Imagine my anxiety! I guessed directly that there was a plot to steal my book from me, and I really thought that a gang who could calumniate, bring false witnesses against and rob a poor woman, who had never done any harm to any one, would not be incapable of assassination. There was only one person who knew the name of the people to whom I had trusted my manuscripts, and at whose house I had proposed to read him my manuscripts. It was Mr. C——. I had planned a little plot, which did not succeed, because Mr. C—— would not help me, and though he had faithfully promised to serve me, he did nothing for me, when he saw the very compromising (to me) letters, the documents, and the very grave accusations, which Gounod makes use of as a scarecrow to my friends in his own private study.

He has, no doubt, since he left us, studied the law of libel, and he knows that he can, at his own house libel me with impunity, or in private letters, which he takes great care to word so as to do me as much injury as possible, without fear of the consequences of his lying inventions and insinuations. In spite of all his precautions, he went a little further than he wished (see the correspondence between Mr. J. J. and himself), for his *honour* could not have been flattered by Mr. J. informing him that his letters were "*cowardly, false, and ungrateful.*"

I felt in mortal anguish during my journey from Florence to Paris; but, on arriving, how great was my consolation when I heard, "*All's safe! all's safe!*" My friends had received my letter which announced my arrival; our letters had crossed. They, too, had seen through the snare—they had felt sure I had not returned the receipt (which they had sent me in a letter) to the printer. General satisfaction! Only my friends did not understand how it was that I had never had the receipt.

Providence again was watching over me! The letter containing the receipt (as often happens in Italy) had been lost; had I received it, I should, without doubt, have forwarded it to the printer when I asked him for my manuscripts, in which case it would have been infallibly lost to me. This is how I nearly managed to find out the name of the very person who had attempted to rob me. On the 17th May, 1875, I went to the *Figaro* office to speak about a short

paragraph which had been inserted the preceding day in the column signed "*Masque de fer*." I was desired, at the door, to go up to M. Gille's office. I then went upstairs, and saw there a gentleman whom I took for M. Gille. He was very polite and asked me to sit down, while I explained to him the object of my visit. I told him that as my solicitor had advised me to take legal proceedings against M. Gounod, but as, however, I was in hopes that things might be arranged amicably after all, that M. Gounod was entirely in the wrong, and that the more they attracted public attention to the subject the more it would be to Gounod's disadvantage, if everything were known and understood, I was desirous of reading to M. Villemessant, or to some responsible man on the staff of the *Figaro*, as a proof of what I said being true, the pamphlet I had written, "*La destruction du Polyeucte de Ch. Gounod*."

He asked, down a tube, if Mr. — was present, and was answered, "*No*." He told me that neither he nor Mr. — had written the short article, but that he would send for M. Périvier, M. Villemessant's secretary. The latter came up immediately. He glanced through the pamphlet rapidly. When he came to *page 20*, in which I state that some one had wished to steal my manuscript, and "*that I was even afraid to come to Paris*," etc., etc.

"Why write that?" said M. Périvier, "B. J.* is much too courteous with the ladies to be capable of wishing to injure you. He is M. Gounod's personal friend. We know all about this better than you do. It was he who went to the printer, etc., to try to obtain it. We even thought of making a good deal of it in the *Figaro*, but M. Villemessant has his private reasons for not wishing it to be talked about, and I am even astonished to see this short paragraph has slipped into our columns; if M. de V. had seen it, he would not have let it pass."

"Then B. J.," I retorted, "are the initials of the gentleman who, at M. Gounod's instigation, no doubt, tried to abstract from me what belonged to me."

"It is not B. J.; he is known by the name of Bécher here. He is an old backbiter. He has the knack of cutting one up nicely; that is how it is we gave him that nickname!"

"Well," I answered, "Gounod is the only person who could have told Bécher where my manuscript was, for we had kept it a profound secret, with the exception of *one* person, who must have communicated its whereabouts to Gounod."

"Certainly! Gounod knew where everything was. I can even tell you that Bécher has read every word you sent the printer; he did his best to get hold of the whole thing, and the rest besides!"

I then explained to them by *what a miracle* I had saved my MSS., and M. Périvier assured me that if I were willing to entrust the MSS. to him, only M. Villemessant and himself should see them. I told

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him I had run much too great a danger of losing them, that I must in future be more careful, but that if he really wished to come and read them at my house, I would agree to that, for I was persuaded that if M. de Villemessant understood how wrong M. Gounod was, he would use his influence to bring him to reason, and would advise him to make with me the arrangement I demanded.

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have been told that, being a foreigner, I have not the least chance of winning a lawsuit against a Frenchman in France. That is but fair, for I believe, in England, a foreigner would not stand a better chance. M. Gounod lost two lawsuits in England, which he would certainly not have lost had he been a native. The last one was against Metzler, a London publisher. The affair is so short, so simple to relate, that I am not afraid of wearing out my reader's patience if I here relate it.

M. Gounod had agreed to subscribe for 250 copies of a paper published by Mr. Metzler. Mr. Metzler had agreed to forward them weekly from the office to the subscribers, with whose addresses I had supplied him; the remainder of the copies was to be sent to Tavistock House every week. The papers were posted so irregularly that it caused serious disaffection among our choir and our subscribers. Sometimes the balance of the papers left at Tavistock House would amount to 43, 52, 61, and so on, or none at all!

In vain we complained every week, things did not mend. The paper was worse than useless. Mr. Bowen May, M. Gounod's solicitor, advised him to refuse the balance of the papers which were brought every week, and to give up the paper. We followed the lawyer's advice. Mr. Metzler then brought an action to enforce payment of the 250 subscriptions to the paper, *which he had not sent*. The solicitor said that M. Gounod was not obliged to pay for what had never been received. Mr. Metzler broke his contract in not sending the papers. He had been the first to break it, therefore M. Gounod was justified in subsequently ignoring it.

When the trial came on for hearing, Mr. Metzler's counsel pleaded that he found no clause in the agreement which stipulated the forwarding of the papers! M. Gounod's lawyer, on the other hand, pleaded that neither was there a clause which stipulated the payment by M. Gounod. It seems to me that both lawyers pleaded a thing equally false and dishonourable; but what we poor, stupid people of the world think criminal, Justice (which is called *divine*) finds more than praiseworthy, when practised by gentlemen of the long robe.

Any one, endowed with an intellect, not legally trained, would suppose that a subscription signified obligation on the part of the newspaper office to *send* (specially when the promise had been made verbally to do so, and the addresses accepted) the paper weekly, and obligation on the part of the one who subscribes, *to pay*. But, on the contrary, in England, as it happened to be a question between an English tradesman and a French artist,* justice decided against the latter. Why, then, should I expect justice in France? My cause is not more clearly right against M. Gounod than M. Gounod's was against Mr. Metzler. M. Gounod prefers the publicity and the ad-

* In May, 1882, I see more clearly than I did then, why Gounod was made to lose this trial—simply on the same principle as I have been made to virtually lose everything since then. People hate JOANS OF ARC; that is the light people look upon me. It was done to sicken Gounod of me!—G. W.

vertisement my publications will give him and his works. From a commercial point of view, he knows so well they will do him a great deal of good, and he is well known in his native town as a capital "dodger" for getting himself talked about—a quality I never should have suspected in him. The symptoms (I did not even confess it to myself) with him were so awkwardly, and apparently so simply developed, that I fancied (and I used to feel quite touched by it), when he proposed to me some dodge or stratagem, he only did so in the hope of rivalling his "*Female Machiavel*," and being praised by her. Unfortunately, I always used to think his arguments very useless or indelicate, and I would simply say to him, "What a poor old child you are!" "Remain an angel," I would add, "and do not meddle with worldly things, lest you might sink lower than other people!"

Well, am I not right? What, until now, has been the use to him of his having been a dodger? His name was hardly worth anything in the market when we first knew him. If he is worth something now, it is, thanks to us and to our energy; and if he asks enormous prices for his operas now, it is because I have taught him (*with the system we had adopted*) what they were worth. But, as soon as he destroys the system, his works in the market are not worth more nor so much as those of Offenbach, or Hervé, or Lecocq. Gounod's *name alone* does not sell a single copy* (for example, see *Stances à Livingstone*). In 1875, his *Ulysses* was bought for 1000 francs (£40); and songs by comparatively unknown composers for 14,000 (£600) for a single copyright. . . . Gounod must be very much puffed up and pushed in England before he can become a commercial success.

For example: Victor Hugo is certainly an immense genius, but his theatrical works even now do not bring him in as author's rights what Meilhac and Halévy's bring in their authors. . . . Genius is not paid like talent, and to make genius worth as much as talent in the market, the same commercial strategy must be employed. This is considered legitimate in the case of the latter, but by the uninitiated, unnecessary, and quite unworthy of genius.

My French solicitor and Gounod made several objections on my position as regards Gounod. First, they warned me that the adverse party would say, "that I had had what I had worked for, in sharing Gounod's glory, and that my name would for ever be associated with his." I replied that "what was considered *glory* in France, was called *shame* in England, and that it did not at all help my Orphanage. It I did not die of grief from what Gounod had made me suffer, it would be because God (and not Gounod) had not willed it so."

"Secondly, I was guilty," they said, "of having urged Gounod to sing in public—a thing unheard of, most detrimental to his dignity, his position, etc., etc., etc.; and then he had no voice, . . . this would be reproached to my dying day."

* *Stances à Livingstone*, published by Gérard, Boulevard des Capucines, Paris. "Ilala," 23a Oxford Street, London, W.

This is the exact truth of that story !

First, as I told these gentlemen, Gounod has as much voice, and even more, than Capoul, Valdec, and many others I could mention, and it is not necessary to have the voice of a bull to succeed in pleasing the public. As for his method, he is as capable and more worthy to sing in public than a great many tenors and baritones I know. He has, during his stay with us, sang *twice in public*, and this is how that happened. . . . A public subscription was being raised for the old lady for whom Byron had composed his celebrated poem : "*Maid of Athens*." Gounod, in order to help her, composed a song to these words, and made her a present of the royalty thereon for her lifetime. (This song brought in over £100.) To attract public attention to this lady and in order to push the sale of the composition, Gounod made up his mind to sing it himself at his benefit concert given *on the 15th July, 1872*. . . . He sang very well and was encored. Was that very dreadful? The second time he sang in public was in a small concert at Spa. He sang "*Barcarola*" (a duet of his) with me, because, at the last minute, the gentleman who had been advertised to sing it, did not know it well enough to sing it in public. Is that a very great crime? These are the only times he *sang in public* ! Alas ! when I think of all the atrocious stories which are told of Gounod, without speaking of what he has been capable of as far as we are concerned, I laugh indeed at the accusations "*of assaults on his dignity*" which has been showered against me. It was necessary to do so ! To run him down by insulting articles, false accusations, and make him believe that I was his evil spirit, and the sole cause of all ! ! ! It was very clever of them, and it has succeeded in a wonderful manner—thanks to the intimate knowledge which people, who inspired the newspapers, possessed of Gounod's disposition. (See the articles in the *Evénement* by Jules Claretie, and in the *Renaissance* by S. S. in the book called "*My Orphanage and Gounod in England, Letters, Documents,*" etc.). It was an organised persecution, and there was no end to those kind of articles ! I could fill a whole book with them.

In short, what would be the good of a lawsuit? In France you have not the chance even of putting your opponent in the witness-box. In England, at least, Gounod could have been cross-examined inside out so as to force him to exculpate me, and to own that not only had I not robbed him, but that he owed my husband and myself his life, large sums of money, treaties cleverly drawn up and constructed, an increasing income, etc., etc. But, in France, his lawyer can lie as much as he pleases ; he could bring forward false accusations which would puzzle the judges. In France, it seems there is not even a jury. . . . And Gounod would not have to dread being sentenced as a perjurer, as witnesses in England would run the risk of if they did not tell the truth, and nothing but the truth ; perjury is punished in England,* and all Gounod's Jesu-

* May 1882. Yes, when it suits the Judges !—G. W.

itism would not mislead the Judge, Jury, or Counsel.* He would then be obliged to speak the truth, and, indeed, it would be felt and understood in spite of him. It would be in vain for him to go off in a fit! This unfortunate affair would be thoroughly sifted; our honour and our reputation would remain perfectly unstained.

Many things which I have said in my book will no doubt make people laugh at my expense, and now I am going to relate something which will make them laugh still more. While in Paris in 1875, I at last received spiritualistic communications addressed to myself. I do not wish to expatiate here on the circumstances which brought this result. But I became *absolutely convinced* of having been put in communication six times with the spirit of Gounod's mother. The table answered my mental questions. The table raised itself completely from the floor, etc., etc., in my own room—with my own table as well as at my friend's house.

At all events, this made such a strong impression on me that the first night I slept at home, at Tavistock House, after my return from Paris, I dreamt that Gounod's mother had a long argument with me. (It was on the *4th July*.)

She told me that I had done all I could to save her son's affairs in keeping back his things: that my care was useless, because he had ruined everything.

That as they had given up the point of the forced restitution of the MSS. I should give in, though they all had played me false, and that I should never be able to do anything with them.

She advised me to write to her son to tell him that I wished to send him back his MSS.; that he had made up his mind to their loss; that it had given him a pretext for not paying the money he owed us, and that having them back, would take away from him the only pretence for complaint which he had been able to formulate against us, with any appearance of truth. It was a very long speech, full of common sense, which she addressed to me, but I will not here relate it at full length. In short, I did what she advised me; I wrote to Gounod on the *5th July*—it was, to the very day, one year since Mr. Taylor had communicated his intention of prosecuting us for the restitution of the manuscripts, but till now (16th July, 1875,) I have received no answer.

Another thing M. Gounod says: He affirms that he had never been ill while with us, and that we, somehow, had made him believe he was out of health; that we had placed a sanitary *cordon* round the house, so as to keep him a close prisoner, and prevent him from returning to his *angel of a wife*, and his dear children.

Though all his letters prove most incontestably the contrary, my lawyer has, however, advised me to mention besides an incident which occurred in 1874, before he left us. I mean Carpeaux's illness, which caused Gounod apparently much sorrow. The first letter he wrote Gounod contained reference to his family affairs, which

* I know better now. I used to believe in *English* justice in those days.—G. W. (May, 1882.)

I need not reproduce; he could not be nursed at home; he had evidently been deeply touched by the care and devotion he saw us bestow on Gounod; he longed to be nursed by us, and at our house. Gounod asked us, with tears in his eyes, to save the life of that great artist, as we had saved his.

My husband—the most wonderful sick-nurse in the world—accepted the task; he consulted his friend, Dr. Chepmell, and I publish, as a proof of what I have just said, two of Carpeaux's letters. Poor man!—it was too late! Does France prefer to know her great sculptor writhing in deathly agony, wretched and unloved; or her great composer, restored to health, dishonouring the friendship, insulting the hospitality of English friends who saved his life as well as his reason?

If Carpeaux had been saved by us, I should have been given the credit of another lover; I should have been accused of causing a separation between him and his wife; it would have been me who would have made him a tradesman, mercenary, and what not?

France and the French have their Gounod safe and sound again, and do not know how to show their gratitude towards the hosts who have sheltered him better, than by passing the husband off as a . . . and the wife as a thief and a prostitute! . . .

How can Gounod say that he was not ill? Why did he keep memoranda like the one of which I have had the *fac-simile* lithographed? And his *exhema*? His shirts covered with blood? And Dr. Raymond, who said that it was a nettle-rash (see page 273, No. 2)? And I who had recommended him in Paris, in 1871, to tell Dr. Raymond that he had been eating mussels, . . . and all the moral and physical symptoms, the sufferings, the pains and aches, which he amused himself by making a list of? Did he live for more than three years in one continual state of deceit with himself and us? It is horrible!—it is as a fearful nightmare to be obliged to suspect him of such a clever and systematic course of duplicity! Alas! alas!

In finishing the recital of this sad and inexplicable history, I will repeat thoughts which have been expressed to me, and which I think very just and logical.

If a man enters a woman's room and carries off £2000, that man is arrested, is tried; he is condemned as a thief. That man, however, has only taken that woman's money; he has not robbed her of her reputation, of her husband's honour, of her peace of mind, of her heart, of her rest, of her days and nights of hard work—he has compromised neither her peace of mind or her health. . . .

Another man under the pretence of ill-health—thanks to the sympathy which he inspired, on account of the unheard of misfortunes of his country (which had also, as he pretended, ruined him)—another man is admitted into a family, remains three years with these friends, takes advantage of his position to take everything he can, leaves them sobbing with grief at parting from them for a month, and then, to avoid the debt of gratitude, of affection, and of money, which he

* See page 76 of *Lettres et Documents originaux*.

owes, seeks the means of insulting them, of wounding them, and of blasting for ever the happiness and the honour of a wife, of a husband who he knows he has sacrificed out of sheer wantonness. "*He is the responsible accomplice of all the sorrow his enemies have caused us*" (see page 174, No. 2).

These are his very words. During three years we had borne for his sake, and on his account real persecution. He knew what risks his friends were incurring for him. He has been unable to find anything more honorable, in order to regain the favour of his French fellow-citizens,* than to accept for them all the blame of a conduct, for which (if it deserves to be censured, which I do not admit, unless, however, he has knowingly deceived us during every minute, every hour of his three years' sojourn with us) he *alone* has been, and is guilty and answerable.

ANOTHER EPILOGUE.

THE last preceding pages were finished on the 16th of July, 1875. To-day is the 7th January, 1876. Many curious things have happened since then. I waited, hoping against hope, for a few words from M. Gounod. I had written to him on the 5th of July, to tell him that I wished very much to return him his manuscripts, etc., and begged him to send me back one of his empty trunks, so as to enable me to pack up all that was still remaining. I acted under the very deep impression my dream had caused me. I was in hopes, notwithstanding the warnings his mother's spirit had given me, that he might yet smile on me, and that he would let me arrange everything as it ought to be for our mutual profit, as well as for our mutual good and peace of mind. . . . But days and months passed away; not a word was vouchsafed me. I had immediately related in a letter to Mr. Charles Read (whom I have not yet mentioned in this narrative) my dream and my intentions; I had, at the same time, written to Mr. Oscar Comettant to announce my decision to him. I told him that I had written all the details to Mr. Read, asking him to communicate them to him. Mr. Read had seen us all together in London at Tavistock House. He is the most charming and honest Frenchman who came to Tavistock House during Gounod's stay with us—at all events, his advanced age and his kindness had inspired me with profound confidence.

In my distress and despair, I addressed myself to him, and subsequently to other friends of M. Gounod, hoping by their mediation to bring back to reason this unhappy man, surrounded by evil spirits, who was disgracing himself, and making himself ridiculous, by raving against

* (May, 1882) Queen Victoria's, our Royal Family's, the House of Novello & Co.'s favour and esteem.—G. W.

people he had so much praised, and who, for three years, had shown him nothing but kindness. Mr. Read did what he could, as well as other friends, to calm him! In vain; the EPILOGUE proves it but too clearly! Mr. Read asked me, after having tried every means he could think of, if there was no one among Gounod's friends or acquaintances who might yet try, more successfully than himself, to act the part of friendly go-between? I was on my road to Italy; it was too late to interest others on the subject. I answered, that I had thought of Mr. Comettant, but that Gounod had spoken so much against him—that he was cynical, sceptic, and false, etc., that I was afraid of him.* Mr. Read assured me that Gounod must have judged him wrongly, adding that he had seen M. Comettant, who was persuaded that there was no fault whatever on my side, and that Gounod would feel better disposed to listen to a journalist who had the power to set the musical press and "*Le Siècle*" against him than to anyone else. I mention this fact on purpose, because when I shall speak further on of Mr. Comettant, I wish you to know that Mr. Read is a witness who can certify the repugnance with which I solicited the intervention of Mr. Comettant. So I wrote to him, by Mr. Read's advice; he lost no time in coming. Mr. Gérard had made Gounod the proposition which was considered splendid, for *Polycute* and *George Dandin*, and I hastened to consent to return the MSS. on condition that M. Gounod would give them to me *for England* on the same conditions as he did business with his London publishers. Mr. Comettant thought this proposal of mine more than reasonable, and even said that he had always perfectly understood that there was, between Gounod and myself, a kind of monetary partnership (Gounod in London had clearly spoken to him on the subject), and that everything I said only confirmed his views and impressions. I even recollect, and I can take my oath to it, that Mr. Comettant mentioned ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND FRANCS as the sum of money which, according to his opinion, Gounod ought with justice and honour to pay me for all I had done for him. I answered, that never would I accept from Gounod any sum of money; that I wished positively to continue our mutual work, and that I never gave up what I had once begun. "Besides," I went on to say, "as long as I can have the power of managing his affairs, and of sending him money, he will love me again, and return to us." I then set out for Italy; Mr. Comettant had pleaded for me to Gounod, who repeated to him the same horrible things and the same absurdities, the same parables from the Scriptures, and the same falsehoods in which he still delights, and had left Gounod, like others had done, with the conviction, "*That there was nothing to be done, and that he was in a very curious state of mind!*" Nevertheless, he had put a glimmer of hope in my heart; he had told me that, having visited him in Paris with M. Détrouat, chief editor of the "*Liberté*," they had waited in the drawing-room a few minutes before Gounod came in; they heard

* This turned out a most correct estimate of M. Oscar Comettant as far as I am concerned. (May 1882).—G. W.

him in violent altercation in the next room, only divided from the drawing-room by curtains, that he came in excitedly, crying out: "But on the contrary, I tell you she loves me! I can swear to you that she loves me!!" That could only refer to me; so then he still valued my affection; he knew, how well, that I loved him dearly!—He was torturing me; I knew him stupidly cruel, unmerciful! however, I took courage, "Patience," I thought, "and I shall have my old man back again!" He began to recite his lesson, as though he had learnt it by heart—how that I had robbed him, how that I was Satan himself, that he could see the "evil spirits hovering round my angel face;" "that I attracted little children to my house, like the evil spirits, to seize their souls;" in short, Gounod's conversation ran—as usual till now, at meals, and everywhere in private,—on me and my iniquities.

We had, at the time, sent him two boxes full of his things, but I had kept the MSS. and his father's drawings, hoping that one day he would be happy to have an excuse for crossing the English Channel to come and fetch them (*see pages 97, 100 of this volume*); but now, not hoping or even wishing it, I keep what I keep for the reasons I will now give with minuteness and care. First his gold snuff-box, given by the Queen during the time he enjoyed the gracious favour of the house of Novello & Co., I sent back to him by the correspondent of the *Gaulois* while in London, and by whom I was so well taken in that he cheated me out of, abstracted, borrowed, robbed (I do not know the exact word) me of the first volume of this book.* The *Gaulois* has it in its possession now since three months; I cannot get it back. M. Edmond Tarbé, to whom I wrote to claim it, sends me no answer. I had supposed that when the Editor-in-chief of a journal printed in his paper that his London correspondent had had a long interview with me, and fills the whole first page of his paper with an account of his interview, that he publishes that they have "*in their hands that curious book,*" etc., the editor would be answerable for the MSS. his correspondents borrowed. His own acknowledged correspondent had borrowed the book from me for two or three days at the most. I, who was always trying and hoping for a means of settlement and a way of avoiding the publication of my book, I thought that if, at last, *The Gaulois* understood and took my part, Gounod would get frightened, and would hasten to arrange the affair amicably. In consequence, I had no objection to lend my MSS. to the *Gaulois* correspondent, who then, without my leave, hastened to leave England, taking it with him, in order "*to show it to M. Tarbé.*" It became then quite evident from letters sent from Paris by that gentleman to me, that M. Tarbé wanted to be paid by me for the enthusiasm he intended to display on my behalf, and this was an expense I had no intention whatever of incurring. *The Gaulois* had insulted and slandered me for a long time, and the least they might have done was to tell the truth to the public, and apologise thoroughly for all they had said. In the

* Rewritten in 1878, and printed in 1882.

meantime, as I was wanting my book—"MUSICAL REFORM,"—translated into French, I wrote to the correspondent, Mr. John Murray (an assumed name), that I would give him £10 (250 francs) if he would translate it. He wanted the £10 sent beforehand, but I thought it better to send him £5 on account. He promised me to finish the book in two or three days' time. From that time to this I have seen no more of my £5, or of my MSS., or the promised translation. The clique Gounod was more successful through the *Gaulois*, than through friend Bécher of the *Figaro*, in seizing my MSS. It is, I suppose, very clever to keep back the first part of my MSS., and to send me back the second—they calculated that it would yet further delay the publication of my books. Of course, I waited for a short time, then seeing through their game, I went on with the printing. It is not published under favourable conditions, for the first part, which speaks of my life before making Gounod's acquaintance, about our first meeting, now nearly five years ago, my singing school, my children, and our mutual relations, etc., etc., etc., is far more amusing and interesting than this second part, which is only about BUSINESS. The title of the first is FRIENDSHIP. I can conceive no other motive than the hope of delaying my publications, which can have induced the *Gaulois* to retain my MSS., perhaps to rob me of it altogether? It is incomprehensible! For some reasons it is very tiresome for me to have lost it so stupidly, but, on the other hand, I think I shall be able to write it over again still better. I have even acquired, since then, a great deal of experience from the teaching point of view. Another inconvenience which the theft of my MSS. causes me, is that I cannot add the explanatory notes which belong to the numerous numbers in my books, and so are wanting in desirable lucidity. But patience! As I am constantly, all day, from half-past eight in the morning to half-past eight in the evening with my pupils, I shall only have from nine to twelve at night to re-write it, and this will take me at least two months longer. I sincerely beg the *Gaulois* to return it to me, and if they will not, I beg some good French solicitor or lawyer to tell me if I can force them to return it to me. Could my Consul obtain it for me? I have not the time to prosecute them. To write the book again would take me less time, but is it not most disgraceful for a French newspaper to send a correspondent to the house of a lady to rob her of her MSS.? I suppose the French papers are all so impudent that they do not know what shame is, and that a trick in which one is successful, is an act which makes them envied and admired by all their colleagues, and by most of their fellow-countrymen! and for which they will, in the end, receive the Legion of Honour.

While I am reviewing the *qualities* of French journalists I will mention a subject which has highly disgusted me lately. I mean the attitude the newspapers have taken up, in propagating the

* This is after all what really occurred, and I learnt on good authority Gounod had bought it and destroyed it. (May 1882, G. W.)

coarse Will of their "GREAT MAN" Carpeaux. The Will could only mean one thing. That one single newspaper should have printed it; that the friends who surrounded Carpeaux have not known how to take sufficient precautions to avoid the odious gossip which, in reality leaves an everlasting stain on their "GREAT MAN," and not on his wife, would have been incomprehensible to me, had I not experienced the manner with which, in France, Gounod's conduct towards us has been accepted. Mme. Carpeaux is no friend to me. She used to come very often with Carpeaux to our house, and we knew them intimately. I have even been told that she had not spoken very kindly of me and Gounod—at all events, like many others who made love to us at the time we were so happy, when our terrible sorrow befel us, not a single French creature wrote to me to try and comfort me. Most of those who have seen me since, thought it all very amusing, "very droll!" Few were shocked at Gounod's conduct. "Everybody knows Gounod by reputation, you ought to have known him too!" This is the verdict Frenchmen pronounced on a man who has deceived friends like us. But that is no reason why I should not do justice to Mme. Carpeaux. I formally state that that unfortunate Carpeaux was quite unreasonable, ridiculous, and wanting in delicacy on that subject, and I think it cowardly and shameful of his acquaintances to have helped to publish such a scandalous affair. Mme. Carpeaux has not been kind to me, but she was very fond of her husband, very attentive to him, and in the presence of a suspicion which might injure her or her children, I wish to give evidence, which may be of some value, having known them intimately at that time. I saw with pleasure that she had won a lawsuit for libel against the *Liberté*.

M. Alexandre Dumas who, I think, has something to do with the papers, was a great friend of Carpeaux. I have been told he was now Gounod's friend. He seems to have seriously studied the aptitudes of the *she monkey*!

I am convinced that my books will help him to make new experiences on those of *he monkeys*; I shall be sure to send them to him. I should very much like to know what this man of high morality would say to the progress of the refined and chivalrous sentiments which seem to me not even to exist in *male* French hearts! Wife or friend, both are equally *protected* by the man whose legal—or illegal—caprice distinguishes her! Oh! how sickening!

* * * * *

Gounod, in the good old time, would say to me, that if *ever* I could find it in my heart to desert him he would haunt me all through my life; that when death would have relieved him of the torture of having pined away in this unhappy world without me, he would haunt me from his grave, and that he would never leave me a moment's peace.

When he used to say this, I would laugh tenderly at his fears. I knew my nature, that I was the most constant and affectionate creature in the world, and that the kind of affection I give those I

love is not the sort which only lasts a moment. The idea never entered my mind that he could ever abandon me, for the same reason it was impossible for me to suspect him of duplicity or deceit towards me. I cannot be unfaithful, deceitful, or false; that is why I could not mistrust Gounod.

No doubt, could I have suspected him, I might have promised him what he promised me—*i.e.*, that I would haunt him all my life, and he might have relied on *my promise!* Therefore he must not wonder, neither go on his knees in public and pray to heaven to shorten his days, in order to escape my persecutions. I shall torment him and worry him, if I can, all my life, he may be sure of that! It does him good. It makes him do heaps of work, and it is much better for him and his family to provide him with this element of quarrel (so indispensable to his Muse's inspiration), *out* of his home than *in* his home. I acknowledge now that what made him work so much at our house was not the quiet, the peace, of which he boasted so much, but the quarrels and calumnies of his wife, the persecutions and the intrigues of the publishers. . . . He was always saying, "I will show them all, that they do not prevent *me* from working!" and I am quite sure that, even if he does not say so now, he thinks, "I will show her that *she* does not prevent *me* from working!" He says that he works to "*assure bread to his children*, which that horrible Mrs. W." (for he amuses himself by never pronouncing this hated name) "*has so shamefully robbed!*" But I know you so well, my old man, you work through rage, and not for any other reason. You hesitate between the desire of doing nothing so as to be pitied and hear people say that *I have ruined your health and your brain,** and the wish to work, to show me that I do not prevent you from working. What a wicked and silly child!!! If the former brought you in more money, you would feign madness, but you earn money which you do not know how to spend, and so you have preferred to choose that way.

There is one side of this which now rather amuses me. As long as I knew nothing positively of his antecedents, I was in despair, and felt as though I should go mad in trying to imagine why he had shown himself so unmerciful to me. But now that I know all, I wonder how I could have been such an idiot as to have been caught by the honeyed words of that Charles Gounod who is depised and known by everybody. That man, who, I thought, before I knew him, a hermit, a monk, a saint; that man, for whom I would have borne every disgrace, every calumny, every persecution. . . . I was hated, despised as the favourite (*of one day*, as was said) of a hated and despised being—I, who, during three years, believed myself the standard-bearer of a General without fear or reproach! Ah! I am amused when I think that I, Georgina Weldon, have been thus deluded! Had I been twenty years old I might have been forgiven;

* See the article in the *Gaulois* (in French) page 244, *Les Lettres*, and the same in English in my pamphlet "*What next?*" . . . also Gounod's letter to 'r. Bodson, page 260, *Les Lettres*.

but at thirty-three or more, to be taken in so—oh! no. It is too incredibly stupid! No one cares for the sorrow of a woman forty years old. I know that! Gounod says I have 120 drawings of his father's. It is quite possible. They are in the port-folio where he left them in the "*strong room*." So much the better! I mean to send them back to him two at a time, so through his father's drawings he will be obliged to receive my messenger sixty times, and will have news direct from me. I have other things besides. The gold snuff-box, he must have received it, for M. Tarbé—"his dear M. Tarbé" (*see page 89, No. 2*)—"would not keep the snuff-box of his poor dear, illustrious and sympathetic Gounod" (*see page 247, No. 2*).

Besides this, M. Gounod will be obliged to receive my money. . .

The famous schedule (*see p. 94 of this book*) was not so useless as I imagined. It gave Mr. Weldon the right legally, and unquestionably, by two single fortunate little words, to sell the royalty due on the pieces mentioned in the said schedule, and composed from the *1st May, 1871, to the 1st May, 1873*, by private contract, for the sum mentioned therein, and he sold it to the same Mr. J. J. who writes to M. Gounod on the *27th May, 1875* (*see p. 267, No. 2*), that his letters are "*cowardly, false, and ungrateful in the highest degree!*"

Mr. J. J. is honour itself, and though my fate and that of the royalties are entirely in his power, I rely on him to procure to me the small compensation and the pleasure of sending my cheques to my Old Grumbler, who will not hesitate, I am sure, to turn them into pretty little gold pieces. With what I shall think right, I can open a small shop for my pupils; I intend publishing again everything of Gounod which is public property, and besides, to give him royalty on it.* He has offered me, through his solicitor and mine, all the royalties in England—so it was without the least hesitation, when the terms of the schedule were explained to me (a paper which I had never seen and which Mr. Taylor had several times begged of me to take), that Mr. Weldon sold it again to Mr. J. J. It is on the *16th October, 1875*, that I had it in my possession for the first time and accepted it from M. Taylor, and it is on the *20th November, 1875*, that I rid myself of it with all the required formalities and all the legal precautions imaginable. This is another chance I have of enabling me to remind M. Gounod of my existence, and through money! Who knows what I may not still be able to do for him? Another annoyance for M. Gounod! Each composition of my pupils—he is so jealous! Each future success of my pupils. Each Gounod Concert which I intend to go on with "*just as if he were with me*"—and still more than that! Now listen. . . . His son Jean has fits of morality, fits of justice, and other good qualities; though this boy hates me, he will not be able to help sometimes, for the pleasure

* All these plans were frustrated for many reasons, the principal being that a person, whose acquaintance I made through M. Gounod, swindled me out of nearly all my capital to the amount of £1000, and through others (Mr. Gounod's acquaintances) I lost nearly another £1000. Having the Press against me, made it, besides, impossible for me to make headway. (*See An Appeal for Mrs. Weldon's Orphanage, a small pamphlet, price 2d.*)—G. W. May 1882

of teasing his father, saying to him, "Come, father, you are quite aware that the poor woman has only done you good—are you not tired of abusing her as you do?" And the little girl—his Jeanne—this nice young creature, who will want to know one day all about me—who will insist upon knowing—who will eagerly read my books, and who then will understand the truth. She also will have fits of filial shame, reproaches, questions. She will want to find excuses for the "*darling father*." And the more she will try, the less able will she be to frame any. Poor Gounod! When he was advised to threaten us with an action, did those people, his advisers, calculate on what a courageous, desperate woman was capable of doing for the sake of defending herself? I, to give a single soul in the world, for one single moment, the right of believing me a hypocrite? NEVER!!! I, who have written MUSICAL REFORM, to let one single soul believe that I was writing thus so as to become the venal and covetous mistress of M. Gounod? Alas! how badly he must have known me! But I must return myself the compliment. Can I have appreciated HIM so badly, not to have thus reasoned once: "My dear woman, if he can change like a weather-cock from day to day as he does for trivial reasons, he may play you the same trick! He calls you ANGEL to-day, to-morrow he may call you DEMON." What a consolation to think that Providence played her cards so well for me!—that Heaven has been on my side! Had not Gounod made with Smith the agreement of the 18th June, 1874 (*see p. 172, No. 2*), and had a quarrel between us been raised later on (a thing premeditated evidently by M. Delacourtie and the De Beaucourts, I am now convinced of it), Gounod would have had the right to sell all his copyrights, and I should have been completely and irrevocably "done" without even the minutest or shallowest compensation, as, in fact, I thought I was till the 16th October, 1875. That against which, solely in Gounod's interests, I had so much struggled, and for which the quarrel which caused our separation was got up, has been my salvation—for though what I obtain is very little, yet it is £350, with 5 per cent. interest on the sum which Gounod owes me, recovered, and in a few years, by working hard, the royalties might still be of considerable value.* Against the influx of new works which Gounod sells in England, without royalty (quickly to earn a few pence!), in spite of his admiration for this system of working (*see his Autobiography, p. 45*), it will be difficult to compete with the great publishing firms; but as, so far, God protects me and my children, I trust and hope to be able to found my Institution on the surest foundations—that is to say, on the principle of pure and conscientious Art wedded to unavoidable Commerce. I am myself so convinced of it, that I cannot understand how it is I do not convince the whole world!

I wait! I believe, I see, I know! my little children, in the meantime, work, learn and are healthy, and notwithstanding my sorrow I am, as the song has it, "*very happy although I seem cursed*." Every-

* May 1882. Thanks to the opposition, influx of new works, etc., they barely bring in £200 a-year.—G. W.

thing which vexes me now, I believe happens for our common happiness. I have become accustomed to what I had thought impossible to survive—the destruction of my idol. I cannot repair it now, it was very much cracked, I know that now, before I worshipped it. My adoration was a folly—unworthy of me. I am more vexed with myself than with him, for I think if any mortal were to worship me as a saint, I should like to keep him in his illusion and to be really a saint. Gounod did what he could to deserve my trust and my worship, but when once away from the pedestal on which I had placed him, he hated and detested the place where I had kept him. The balloon of the comedy which he had been artful enough to act for so long, had burst in returning to its less rarified atmosphere, and he remembered with horror that he had scarcely dared to breathe. How is it possible otherwise to understand the repulsion and rage which he exhibits towards me? It must have annoyed him considerably on receiving his scores, to see the name of Georgina Weldon signed across each page. The newspapers seized hold of this, to report, that the scores were so disfigured by pencil marks of different colours, as to be useless. No, that is not the case; I took care, on the contrary, to avoid spoiling anything. I would not, for the world, do him a real injury. But I must confess that I have no objection to torment him. I do not wish him to forget me, or to be put in the waste paper basket where he puts all those he knows and pretends to love, and from whence he picks them out (complaining of the loss of time the thought of them costs him) once a year—for a birthday, for anniversaries of death in the family, and for which he has a wonderful memory. I used to laugh to myself when I saw him sitting down to write, saying: “Ah! Mimi, what a waste of time all these ceremonies are!” Thank God, except during the time he took so much trouble to obtain my sympathy, he was so polite, so quiet, so calm, so *holy*; so desirous of converting me to Roman Catholicism; since that *so very polite* time, which lasted seven months, I used to say to myself, “Thank goodness, he does not care to be civil to me, so he will never care to be false with me, or to speak of me as he speaks of others!” Therefore, when he had to be absent from me I used to tell him: “Do not write letters to me, only post cards!” Gounod, moreover, says that I only sent him back his scores because I knew he had written them over again from memory. It would have been a reason for me to keep them. Mr. C— told me in *February*, 1875, that the score of *Polyeucte* was finished. I did not believe a word of it! Mr. Comettant, in July of the same year, said that Gounod had finished the orchestral score of his *Polyeucte*. I again did not believe a word of it! As to *George Dandin*, *Redemption*, and his *Messe Instrumentale*, I sent him all these at the same time. I suppose he does not pretend to have finished these also! No, his mother, on the contrary, in the dream which I had, told me the score was not by any means finished, and that he really wanted it. I wished to please Gounod, thanks to the gratitude I felt for the spirit which had consoled me. I fancied and I tried to believe in affairs smoothing down, notwithstanding the

communications I had received, and which foretold the contrary. As belief in Spiritualism is more or less ridiculed and persecuted, I have resolved to faithfully narrate my experiences on that subject, which every one must agree is one of considerable importance. Call it imagination, hallucination, electricity; it is not here (having already alluded to it in the first part of my narrative) that I mean to carry on a dissertation on the subject. No matter what people may call it; how will you explain to me what makes a table rap under one hand, then under another, and so on at different distances in a large table? Explain how, when a word is written with the point of anything on the table, under the table an invisible hand answers, in writing, the same word or the same sentence. Explain how, what I am going to describe, can be produced; then I shall be the first to wish not to be deceived, and to admit that I have been taken in. I think it my duty—believing I have not been deceived—to help to propagate a doctrine which can only have sweet and comforting results, and which to me has rendered this life bearable. *Page 21 of No. 2, note 14, is Gounod's phrase, "I heartily laughed at the 'Spirits!'" This is what happened.* A lady (Mme. de Sievers) had asked me to be present at a *séance* where there was to be only myself, herself, and Mdlle. Huet, a celebrated rapping medium. I was asked to think of *some one*, and perhaps that *some one* would answer me by rappings in the table. Mme. de Sievers, Mdlle. Huet, and I placed our hands on a small table, and after a few minutes, slight rappings were heard in the middle of the table. Mdlle. Huet asked if the table would answer me. The table knocked the sign "Yes." (It was one knock I think). As for me, I wished very much to communicate with a member of my family who was dead, and, at the same time, I felt that the great desire of knowing if my plan of singing in public for my school was approved of, and if it would have the success I augured, thanks to Gounod's co-operation, was stronger, and prevented me from concentrating my thoughts on my deceased relation. In fact, I was thinking about two things. I made no sign. This is the message which the table rapped out:—
"You are not seriously thinking of the person evoked, I come instead to encourage you to continue in your generous sentiments.

(Signed) "AUBER."

To tell the truth, at that time, I laughed to myself at this message, for the tittle-tattles, "*Gounod-Weldon*" had already begun, and I fancied that these good women supposed that I was on the eve of falling in love with Gounod, and that I was thinking of him! Had I better understood the theory of Spiritualism, this would never have entered my head; for spiritual mediums do not pretend to put you in communication with the living, but only with the dead. I now think this message, signed "AUBER," may have been genuine. People knew that I gave a great deal of time to the education of children, and that I sang in public for a philanthropic purpose. This message gives no proof whatever of identity; it, therefore, is open to doubt. Let it be refuted, and let it be said that it proved nothing, it matters not; I only say that, though at that time I was distrust-

ful, I am convinced, from the experience of which I became, last year,* the fortunate witness, that neither Madame de Sievers nor Mdle. Huet were deceiving me.

One morning in Paris, M. de Veh (the Spiritualist whose acquaintance I had made at the Rigi) called on me. He told me that one of their friends, Colonel Devoluet, was coming to spend the evening with Madame de Veh and himself, with his servant, rather a powerful medium, and asked me if I would not like to be present at their *séance*. I answered, that I had been told (as had often been said) I was contrary to the manifestations, I therefore felt some hesitation in accepting his kind invitation for fear of disturbing the spirits; I was dining out, and it might be impossible for me to be there in time. I had assisted at some *séances* M. and Mme. Veh had held at the Rigi. Nothing happened. No manifestations of any kind—no raps, notwithstanding our faith, and there was no show of anything except exceeding great patience on the part of every one present!! I felt myself (and they said I was) *contrary*, though sympathetic and believing. I longed too much for three different spirits, and my thoughts not being concentrated enough, perhaps, they influenced, in spite of myself, unfavourably, the mystic circle.

But as regards the *séance* in Paris, at Mme. de Veh's, I managed to get there rather early. I was the first in fact to get there, and Mme. de Veh exclaimed: "Dear Mrs. Weldon" (for I did not know them at all intimately), "I felt so vexed when my husband returned from his morning walk, and told me that you were perhaps coming this evening. I have been all over the place to get other mediums, in the hope of counteracting your '*negativity*,' or your opposition—we shall be four mediums this evening against your influence; so let us hope we may obtain something. Madame Rodière, a rapping medium, who lives in the Faubourg St. Antoine, is coming with her daughter, who is also a medium; with myself, who am a tiny bit of a one; and the Colonel's maid-servant, we are four. So try to remain neutral, and not to wish for anything at all."

No one, except the master and mistress of the house, knew my name, no more than I knew the name of those who arrived after me. We sat, nine of us, round a large and very heavy table, so heavy that I alone could scarcely raise it on two legs from the ground. There was a large lamp lit on the table, a pencil, a sharp point, an alphabet marked on white linen, and some paper.

We had hardly been seated five minutes when the table cracked loudly, and rapped energetically.

"The *séance* will be good," said one of the initiated, with enthusiasm. "A powerful spirit favours us this evening!"

"Dear spirit," said another, "if you come for one of us, show us by some sure sign for whom you come." Thereupon the table turned hurriedly and with violence, towards me, and seemed to push up against me.

"That is right!" said Mme. de Veh, "you will at last obtain something!"

I was very much astonished, for I had tried to remain perfectly neutral. My wish, however, was so strong, I confess that, against my will, I thought of "*Our Mie*," as Gounod and I always called his mother when we spoke of her (and that was often). I often had thought—but, however, without ever having uttered or written to a single mortal soul about it—that I felt so bewildered, so astounded, so confused, so doubtful of myself through Gounod's strange and inhuman conduct towards poor me, who had so tenderly loved and bravely worshipped him, that if what Gounod often said were true, "that his mother saw me and blessed me," she might now come and curse me, if I had done him harm in any way—but, as God knows it,—innocently either in consequence of his apparent determination, his prayers, or through ignorance: I often had asked myself whether I had been governed by love or pride, but without being able to trace any pride in my conduct. I had left my own society, and lowered myself in the eyes of my friends by sacrificing myself to Art; and when Gounod appeared to me, apparently with convictions the same as my own, strong and armed, as I thought, with pious motives, as well as worldly experience, I hailed in him my master and my saviour. When he fell ill in our home—dying, perhaps—he became "*my poor dear old man*;" pity for his sufferings, indignation caused by the calumnies and nagging worries of the French and English press, of his family (who, he said, were to him coarse, vulgar, void of anything like refined feelings, without sympathy, without faith, without honour); and by the music publishers, their cowardly and cunning injustice, with which they persecuted us, and against which I shall protest all my life—all this would have made me go through fire and flame for him, and for our *cause*—I had placed in him for so long a faith so divinely foolish!

Therefore, when I went to Mme. de Veh, I went impregnated with the idea that were "*Our Mie*" really near me, she might communicate with me in some way. So when the table turned to me I had only one thought. "*Can it be her?*" So that no one should say it was "my imagination which had caused this or that," I remained perfectly indifferent apparently, and said, aloud—"It cannot be meant for me!" "Yes! Yes!" struck the table, and it pushed itself still closer up to me.

"If the spirit wishes to speak to you, you will see," said M. de Veh; "I will write your name with the point on the table; and, under the table, you will hear the same name being traced." He did it, and under the table we distinctly heard my name written again, as if under my hand. Then I took the point and I wrote with the greatest rapidity, "*Charles*"—the same name repeated itself under the table nearly at the same time. "Now ask the spirit of some one you have known to speak to you!" "I had never known '*Our Mie*'" (she died thirteen years before I met her son). So I *prayed mentally that the spirit for which I had the most attraction would speak to me and tell me its name.*

The table rapped at the letters L U C—I was asked if that was the right name, I answered, "Yes," for I did not want to help. I

did not exactly know the name of "*Our Mie*," and if the theory that the table raps in answer to your thought is true, the table would then have rapped "*Our Mie*," but on the contrary! after L U C it spelt "*VICTOIRE GOUNOD*," which turned out to be her name. Then I asked directly, "*Are you thinking of him?*" and it rapped several times "*Yes*." "*Do you believe I love him?*" I asked, quite trembling (I was so afraid the table would rap *No*). "*Yes! Yes!*" very loud. "*Then do you love me?*" was my next question. Then, immediately the wonderful phenomenon which is called, I think, levitation of the table, took place. This immense and very heavy table raised itself five or six inches from the floor, and rested on my chest for one minute certainly. It then gently left me without the least noise or shock, its four legs again touched the floor. The hands of the nine persons present were on the table. The lamp was a large one and gave a very good light all round. The levitation of the table had been an accomplished fact. The tears stood in my eyes. I was comforted, and I thought "*his mother at least does me justice!*" I asked leave of the company to allow me to ask something else, and as they were very obliging they granted my request. I asked: "*Have you any message for him?*" The table rapped "*Yes*," strongly and repeatedly. It then dictated the following message: "*I wish Charles to show you kindness and gratitude for all the proofs of devotion you give him; let my remembrance keep him from ingratitude. My heart rests near you with delight.*"

Those who are accustomed to spiritual *séances* well understand how it is done; but I will explain for those who have never seen one that the sharp point or pencil held by one of the company indicates the letters of the alphabet, the pencil held by another writes the letter, on paper of which I have already spoken, which the table raps. I had refused to hold the point, to look at the alphabet, or to write the letters, for fear any one might say that my thoughts had led the table to rap out the letter I wished.

When the table had struck *l a m*, the person who was writing began to write "*amour*" ("*love*"), the table rapped with energy "*No*." Then she said, "*amitié*" ("*friendship*"), and the table rapped "*Yes*" with decision; at the word *gratitude* it rapped still louder. I asked her if she was sorrowful, and she answered several times "*Yes*."

The guests were not interested in this "*striking*" *séance*, for they did not know who I was, and they were impatient to go to the other room to hold a manifestation *séance* in the dark. I was, therefore, obliged to be satisfied this time. A week after this I was present at another *séance*, at Madame de Veh's: "*Victoire Gounod*" came and again gave me proofs of her presence. I asked her to tell me my name. She answered, "*MARIE*." But my name is not "*Marie*." I asked, "*Why do you say my name is Marie?*" She answered, "*Mimi*," without hesitation. Now, Gounod had never called me "*Georgina*." Always either "*Raton*," or "*Mimi*," or "*Ma poule*," etc., etc., never "*Georgina*." It is only in his cruel little note of the 10th of October, '74 (page 254, No. 2), that he begins "*Georgina*."

This name, coming from him, did not sound like my own. It was like running a dagger through my heart!

A short time after, I went again to Mme. de Veh. A doctor, Baron du Potet, a celebrated mesmerist, was present. He could hardly do anything all the evening. I felt that I was the cause of it against my will. Although I would not go near the table, I longed so eagerly for another communication from "*Victoire Gounod*," I felt I put a stop to all his endeavours. At half-past twelve, every one was weary with the failure. I then went up to the table, and I said to them: "I will come and help you." The Doctor wanted to get the window-curtains to draw open. I asked, mentally, putting my forehead close to the table—"Are you here?" Immediately the table, till then dumb, began to rap "Yes." "*That's right!*" said the Doctor. "*At last we shall obtain something.*"

"If it is really you," I again whispered, under the table, quite inaudibly, "*prove it to me by coming towards me!*" At these words, the table moved towards me. The Doctor thought I was playing a trick, and that I was pulling the table towards me. He left the table abruptly, the séance was over, and I rejoiced quietly in the positive certainty that I had not been mistaken, and that SHE really was near me.

On the 4th June, I was present at another séance at Mme. de Veh's. The table rapped for other people, and a great deal of time was lost, because it did not rap well. At last I got my turn. SHE came as usual, and I said to a lady, whose name I did not know (she was quite a stranger, and was even afraid of the spirits): "I am going to ask *mentally* to that spirit, who answers all my questions, the name which her son gave her; it was *Ma mie*. You will then see whether or no the table will answer me. The table answered: "*Maman.*" I again said, mentally, "*I know that, but pray tell me the other name?*" "*Ma mie!*" and the table, without stopping, went on rapping, so that the medium, thinking it was talking nonsense, ("*m-a-m-i-e-t-a-p,*") said that the table was rapping nonsense, and wanted to begin again; but the table, seeing like me, that it began by "*ma mie,*" insisted on being allowed to proceed. I could not yet understand the meaning of *tap*, "*ta pauvre v-i-c-t,*" it continued. "Oh, how tiresome!" said the person who wrote down the letters. "There she is again, giving her name, '*VICTOIRE!*'" "*No, no!*" rapped the table, and it spelt: "*ta pauvre VICTIME*" (*your poor victim*). Now, this is a reproach," I said to myself, and I became quite red with anguish, "*de l'amour m-a-t—Maternel,*" wrote again the young lady. "*No, no!*" rapped the table, "*M-a-t-r-i-m-o-n-i-a-l.*" I breathed freely again. "*Who is the victim?*" I asked, anxiously. "*M-i-m-i.*" "*There are two Mimis! Which?*" I asked again (I could not believe I was, my husband's victim). "*CHARLES,*" rapped the table. "*And who is he the victim of?*" "*ANNA*" (his wife's name). "*Are you, then, speaking to her?*" "Yes." "*As you seem to remember all the family names, will you tell me the name of your granddaughter?*" "*JEANNE.*" "*And the name of your grandson?*" "*JEAN.*" "*Now, dear Mimi,*" I said to her (for I could not help being incredulous), "*to prove that it is really you, tell me the name of your son who died?*" "*URBAIN.*" All

these names were given without a moment's hesitation, and after having said "URBAIN," it turned suddenly on me, and raps were heard in the table, retreating. The medium said that that was the signal for "*Au revoir.*"

All this made me resolve to ask Mme. Rodière to come to my apartment; for I said to myself: "In my room, with my table, no one can say that tricks were being played me!" So she came. The first thing I wished to know from HER was, what was "VICTOIRE GOUNOD's" greatest fault, so as to be able to explain to myself her avarice and the maternal influences which, to my mind, had had a disastrous influence on her son's nature. I asked her, and she answered me: "*Pride.*" Then I said: "*It was not, then, only out of simple avarice you put so much money by, and urged Charles to contract this marriage?*" "*No.*" "*Therefore it was pride?*" "*Yes.*" I then begged of her to tell me Charles's greatest fault. She answered me: "*Jealousy.*" "*Has he not another yet more fatal than that?*" (for I attributed everything to his avarice.) "*Obstinacy,*" she continued. I again asked the same question. "*Deceit,*" then "*avarice,*" then, without stopping, "*P-o,*" a word which she refused to finish; then "*c-o,*" which also she would not finish; and lastly, "*c-o-m.*" The table rapped as if it had a great deal to say, but I had such a longing for a word from a member of my own family whom I had tenderly loved, that I asked Mme. Rodière to beg of VICTOIRE GOUNOD to give up her place to another spirit. She told me rather to ask VICTOIRE GOUNOD myself, who was very kind to me, if she would not bring her to me; this I did, and after a few minutes, she came again with the one I had asked for, who gave me her name as well as that of her little boy. VICTOIRE GOUNOD answered several questions on the same subject. She also dictated, "*I am very much grieved at my son's conduct, he goes to his ruin; our advice will not be listened to; your kind friendship does not touch him.*"

She answered me that her husband's name was "*Louis.*" She did not give me her daughter-in-law's right name.

Lastly I asked mentally, "*Must I send Charles your message?*" and I said aloud, "*Seriously, ma Mie, will you answer me what I long to know from you?*" The table rapped, "*Yes.*" "*Then I beg of you tell me,*" and this is what she answered: "*You will not be listened to; be friendly to the end, my heart will bless you.*"

Mme. Rodière then left, promising me to come again four days after. I forgot to say that during that evening the table raised itself from the floor at least ten times, and remained more than a minute or so, pressing lovingly against me.

The last *séance* that I could have in Paris was on the 29th June, 1875, for I left at the beginning of July. Another spirit at the commencement of the *séance* rapped the following message: "*Light of my soul, attracted to you to enlighten your heart in its misleading affections, the happiness which you seek, does not exist on the earth where true devotion is a chimera; give up the thought of being appreciated as you deserve, and become one of our angelic sisters.*"

(Signed) "LOUISE MARIE."

Mme. Rodière told me that it was Louis XV.'s sister (a Carmelite nun), who came to give me this message. I do not say it is not authentic, but I cannot be satisfied without obtaining what I believe to be *proofs of identity*.

I then asked if another spirit did not wish to communicate with me. VICTOIRE GOUNOD came, as usual, and dictated to me the following sentence :

"My wishes are as ardent as yours. I know at the price of what sacrifices you would save our unhappy erring one. You work too hastily, and that is why you suffer from debility. If the one for whom you display so much solicitude, had a parcel of the sacred fire with which he is credited, he would be a better master as well as a better physician, but he has enough of his own burden. What slavery! we ought not to wish any other revenge."

Then I asked : "*Who is his burden?*" "ANNA." "*But you arranged the marriage?*" "Yes." "*And that grieves you?*" "Yes." "*Do you regret your pride?*" "Yes." "*Do you remember Anna's mother?*" "Yes." "*Do you remember her name?*" "Yes." "*Will you tell it me?*" "No." I wasted an hour at least in teasing her, begging of her, coaxing her to tell me the name. I then only begged for the first and last letter of that name. At last it rapped "H E." Then I worried her so much that at last she gave me the whole name—*H-o-r-t-e-n-s-e*. She answered that she did not wish to give her name, because she did not like her. Then I said, "*Did you like Anna?*" "Yes," she answered to my great surprise. "*But why?*" I asked astonished. "*For her fortune.*"

That very day I had been to Montparnasse, to put a wreath on her tomb, and to know exactly her's and her husband's name, and I asked : "*Can you tell me where I went to-day?*" She answered immediately : "*To the Cemetery.*" Her name is VICTOIRE. The name of Gounod's father is FRANÇOIS LOUIS, and I should feel very grateful if, by chance, any old friend reading this narrative could tell me if he was usually called FRANÇOIS or LOUIS. This is, with as few details as possible, the account of my spiritualistic experiences. I have not the time to pursue them. I am convinced that I cannot be better employed than I am. The experiment I have tried is sufficient to show me that the spirit of Gounod's mother protects and loves me. She helped to reassure me for all I had done for Gounod, and convinced me that it has been his innate jealousy, his stubbornness, his hypocrisy, and his avarice, which are at the bottom of all these miserable squabbles, these scandals, this nonsense, this indelicate behaviour!

Now let us come to the letter of M. Oscar Comettant (*page 280, No. 2*), who took the trouble to write and to publish a letter which was false from beginning to end, at the time the *Gaulois* published its novel called "*A Valuable Parcel*" (*see page 277, No. 2*).

In the first paragraph of his letter, speaking of Gounod's manuscripts, is the following passage : "*which the composer might have believed last for ever.*" M. Comettant was well acquainted with the offer made to Gounod in November, 1874, by M. Gérard, and knew

I was then only thinking of selling them for Gounod profitably, and that I should have been only too happy to have returned them to him.

First false insinuation of M. Comettant!—"The possessor of the manuscripts seemed quite determined not to part with them." After what I have related concerning M. Gérard, it is false to say I was "determined not to part with them."

Second false insinuation of M. Comettant!—The phrase of my letter: "Neither heaven nor earth would have made me part with them," is the only one which he quotes from my letter to turn it against me; why not publish the whole letter?

Third false insinuation of M. Comettant!—The sentence beginning: "For more than a year," is false from beginning to end. I myself, in the months of October and November, went to Paris to Mr. Gounod's friends, and the last one to whom I should have thought of addressing myself was Mr. Comettant. He is the one, and M. Gounod knows it well, who was the first to whisper tales to me about him in my own house; but these had not made any impression on me, as Mr. Gounod had warned me against him from the very beginning of my visit to Paris in 1871, when I brought, from my old and faithful friend, Sir Julius Benedict, letters for him, as for many other artists and journalists. It is Sir Julius who gave me letters for Ambroise Thomas, M. Louis Enault, M. Jouvin, M. Tarbé, M. François Oswald, and many others whose names I have forgotten.

No one advised me to return the manuscripts before I had been paid what M. Gounod owed me, and Mr. Oscar Comettant fixed the sum which Gounod owed me at 100,000 francs (£4000). If for £4000 Gounod would agree to give me half his royalties, and the right of publishing *Polyeucte*, *George Dandin*, and what had been composed at our house in England, I would willingly have accepted the agreement.

The phrase about Diderot beginning "*we in vain repeated*," is a pure invention! Mr. Oscar Comettant said all he could against M. Gounod to me, and said that even had I been the most abandoned woman in the world, Gounod ought to have left me decently, and not have caused this ridiculus scandal, which amused him and made him laugh, while my own heart was wrung and torn by the desperate efforts I was making to conciliate everything.

Fourth and fifth false insinuation of Mr. Comettant:

The phrase, "*about eight months ago*," is a wholesale invention. Gounod had his brain blunted only by his own wickedness, for at our house work never had harmed him. Besides, I have my reasons for believing he had not been ill at all in any case about that time. He wrote to England to try to tempt a poor wretch (who is always out at elbows) to write and say he had been my lover, but in such a sly way—so jesuitical! so artful!—impossible to catch him out legally!

The sentence, "*Monday, the 13th instant*," is again "*lollypops*" for Gounod.

Mr. Comettant committed a gross indiscretion when he undid the triple covering of the parcel. He was expecting the parcel ever

since the 20th August, and it was only because he waited to answer my letter, till the 3rd September, that the manuscripts were not sent sooner. Besides, another letter, sent on the 4th September, arrived in Paris two or three days before the manuscripts (sent on the 4th September), so that it is evident that Mr. Comettant, M. Gonzalès, etc., had all agreed to lie to their heart's content.

Mr. Comettant had no right whatever to break the seals, or to open a well-tied-up, well-closed parcel, addressed, "*From Mrs. Weldon to M. Ch. Gounod.*" If he had not committed that action, considered in every country as perfectly dishonest and discreditable, he would not have risked what the delicacy of his guests would present to their respective papers! and the wretched little words, dictated by despair, would not have been presented to the public in an insulting and ridiculous light. Ah! gentlemen, you wanted something to write about; there you have it, you gentlemen of the French press—perhaps more, and not quite of the quality you expected. I am odd—am I not? Mad? But you did not count on oddity—on madness! Did you? You knew that I was in good society, that I was a well-bred lady, a majestic and religious artist, a philanthropist. Those "good sort of fools" fear scandal, dread publicity; they have no venom!—BUT I HAVE. You wanted to crush me by slander and scandal—you thought you would have some fun! Gentlemen, a woman who loves God and children fears no one—neither slander or scandal. These are things which must be; the world is made so, and I do more good in accepting, sword in hand, the battle you began thoughtlessly, than in allowing myself to be crucified. For years you have artfully schemed to take away from me what was my happiness, what helped me to do good. So much the worse for him! So much the worse for you! Why did not you leave me alone? I have Scotch blood in my veins, and I am like the emblem of that country—vigorous, hardy, simple"—

"Nemo me impune lacessit."

"No one injures me with impunity!"

To revert to Mr. Comettant: his story of *Fideli-commis* is a farce; he had no business to open what was not his.

As for the receipt which I asked for, only for the sake of once again seeing the name of "The Old Man," he has not sent me any; and if on the 13th October, just one month after the arrival of the manuscripts in Paris, Gounod had not had a fall, when with his evil spirit, M. Delacourtie, and if, like another Ananias, God had not struck him down, and by his terrible accident the whole world had not been made acquainted with the fact that he was again in possession of his manuscripts, they would all have continued to swear, even to this day, he had not received them!

Mr. Comettant did not even answer my letter, which asked, with anxiety, after the poor old man, and for a whole month, had it not been—thanks to other more compassionate souls—I should have suffered still more than I did, with anxiety and misery. I am quite aware that he had to pay a sister of charity to nurse him, and take care of

him. She is still with him. The first thing one of my pupils said with bitterness, on hearing of the accident, was—"Had he remained here, he would not have had that accident!" I watched his every movement. He is very awkward, my poor "Old Man!" If he is not looked after, he would knock either his head, his hands, or put too much ointment on his knee; or he would sit down on nothing, and then, PAFF! down he would go! Therefore, a hen could not have watched more carefully over her chickens than I did over my Old Man. At our house, we *ourselves* always nursed and took care of him; he never spent a farthing to be nursed by any one else.

So much for M. Comettant and his colleagues. . . .

THE GAULOIS came to my house and feigned loyalty, justice, etc., etc. I again hoped the affair would be settled amicably (I caught at the least straw). He keeps back my manuscripts, one of my letters to Gounod, etc., etc. If the law was not so stupidly arranged, I would most certainly go to France and prosecute all these newspapers; but what would be the good of obtaining damages which would neither pay my expenses nor my time? If the law would condemn a paper to devote daily a column, for one year, to the service of the slandered party, then it would be worth while to get them condemned, only just to torment them; but the law, as it is, only helps to persecute honest people, and to reward the wicked. Every honest man dreads the law and the press like poison; therefore I have not yet met with a single person, not even my solicitor, who would undertake to recover my manuscripts for me, so afraid are they of "*these dirty Gaulois cads!*" as they are called. The terror which these "*ignominious creatures*" inspire is incomprehensible to me. The disgust which they appear to inspire is really laughable! Nevertheless, everybody reads the papers, . . . and one could not live without them!

M. Gounod has had in his hands both this book and the one containing "LETTERS AND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS." I doubt his having read them, for had he read them I cannot conceive but that, had he done so, he would have been touched by the truth of all I have written in them, the remembrance of that which had inspired his letters, and the proofs of my disinterestedness; but, alas! he is so well coached! he never opens a parcel or a letter if he thinks either come from me! Whatever hour of the night it may be, he takes a fly and goes to Mr. Delacourtie, who tells him, no doubt, that he is quite right not to read anything. This is what happened with my last parcel, which a friend, with a good deal of diplomacy, entrusted to an enemy of mine who was going to Paris, in order to give it to Mr. Gounod when he should be alone. It was in vain, every precaution was useless trouble, and the unhappy Gounod, at 11 o'clock at night, parcel in hand, obliged the unconscious messenger, who was going to bed, to go instantly with him, in a fly, to see Mr. Delacourtie, where the parcel was opened with the most imposing legal forms. As it is likely that my enemy, since then convinced of my innocence and become my friend, may relate elsewhere his visit to M. Gounod, I will not say any more now on that subject (*see Notes, page 29*

No. 2). Every attempt was vain, and I am compelled to publish my defence.

It might perhaps be more aristocratic, more *distingué*, very eloquent, very interesting, to treat Gounod and his *clique*, as my husband does, with the silence of contempt which they deserve; but I myself think, and have always considered this a most senseless argument, to which I, for one, will not and cannot submit. I earnestly begged my husband to come to Paris with his Solicitor, when I was there, to oblige Gounod to reflect seriously, to apologise to us and make a proper agreement; but he was sick of the whole business, and I should have been afraid of making him too angry with Gounod had I told him all, though I would not have opposed myself to anything my husband would have thought right to do. My husband was kindness itself, full of generosity, and he acted like a *perfect gentleman*, he acted a very fine part in the eyes of society. I do not contest that; I may be considered bad taste, vulgar, mad, foolish—anything you please, but I have more faith in GEORGINA WELDON than in any one else in the world, and I do not hesitate to say that I should consider myself unpardonably stupid and good for nothing if I allowed a single soul in the world to believe that I am or ever had been the vile and hypocritical creature Gounod and his *clique* wish to make me out. Poor Gounod! Such a gifted, charming man! A man who could have been and who ought to have been so good, so happy! As to the first part of my book, God knows when I may be able to write it over again; I have been more than three weeks writing these few pages! After having worked and played with the children all day, my head is not good for much; I must wait for summer and the opportunity of going away for a short time to write it again,* if however public opinion does not compel *the Gaulois*, before then to return it to me.

I beg of my readers to do what they can to help me with my Orphanage. The book of letters and documents alone costs me more than £120, and I dare not sell it, as the law forbids the sale of private letters. Everything is useful to us! I am very happy to hold my classes and to hear the children say their lessons before strangers. They are accustomed to it, and are neither awkward nor shy. They astonish those who listen to them by their different accomplishments which they seem to possess with the same degree of intelligence.

I forgot to say that after having written THE FIRST EPILOGUE, the phase of my mind had been forced to change. I did not know at that time that my pupils had great taste for composition. They had, in fact, hidden it from me, as I had always preached up Gounod's music, and had encouraged them to exclusively learn by heart all they could of it, to read it and thoroughly study it. However, since my return from Italy, I very often heard them playing what I thought was not Gounod's music, and I felt vexed. I wondered

* I waited, after all, till the month of March, 1878, to rewrite it, and even then was interrupted in a most extraordinary manner; but this will form the subject of another volume altogether.—G. W.

what could have induced them to think of reading any music but Gounod's, and where they could have got hold of it.

I heard fugued airs, fine, grand melodies, pretty four-part tunes, very much like old English music. It was pretty, very pretty sometimes, but it was not Gounod's. I refrained from speaking about it to my pupils, for as they evidently liked this strange music, I did not wish to hurt their feelings by disapproving, so I pretended not to hear it. However, one evening, about three months after my return, I began to feel quite grieved; they continued reading new music (as I thought), and every day Gounod's seemed more abandoned by those whom I had destined to become his APOSTLES. I could bear it no longer. I went in to the room, and said to Alfred Rawlings, "What you are reading is very pretty, it is good practice to try to read a great deal of all kinds of music, but where did you get it from?" The child stopped, evidently taken aback, and I, looking on the desk, saw no music was there! "Why! do you know all that by heart? Whose music is it? You quite forsake Mr. Gounod's." The child coloured up and answered: "It is only a little tune which came in my head." "What, Alfred," said I again, "do you mean me to believe you composed that?" "Yes, of course I did!" he said. "I have heard you sing and play a deal of different music, and very often, and Charlie, too. Do you mean to say that you both compose?" "Yes, Grannie!"* I was quite upset. I certainly had felt certain of turning out any number of good vocalists, *creature* instruments, destined to propagate my musical creed . . . But composers! *creators!* I had never dreamt of such a thing. I felt like Frankenstein, terrified at the thing I had created. I, however, remained that evening (feeling vexed) for two hours with the child, who, encouraged by me, went on improvising and playing his compositions. I came to the conclusion he had a real and serious talent. . . .

"This is a pretty thing!" I thought. "I knew they would all be vocalists; but composers!—what shall I do? I do not know a single rule of harmony; I cannot teach them thorough-bass. And, then, what a time it would take! They have to help me with the little ones, to keep the accounts, to do the marketing, to go shopping; as Gounod has left me, I am compelled to sacrifice the elder ones to the younger. How vexatious! how grievous this mania for composition! And my Old Man, and my Gounod-worship!—where will it all go to? These little monsters will prefer bringing out and pushing their own music to his. I am nicely sold!"

I could not say that what they composed was bad. No; it was superior, and what specially astonished me was, that Alfred's compositions were no mere imitations of Gounod's. Yet all his life he had only heard either Gounod's or the hurdy-gurdies! The few strangers who heard Alfred play would say instantly: "Ah! this is a *concerto* of Weber!—He must have studied Spohr, Mendelssohn,

* Grannie is what the children call me.—G. W.

a great deal!" Of course, he had never heard a note by any of these composers!

Alfred's talent proves to me what I have always maintained, that Gounod alone sufficed to give birth to all the other composers in the world, ancient or modern. And this is the only satisfactory reflection which occurred to me, when I discovered that my purely mechanical method of instruction procreated what may, perhaps, one day be called "GENIUS!"

"And if some day they feel the want of the science, notwithstanding all I have done for them, they may reproach me for it; and then it will be my turn to regret." . . . I prayed to God to show me the right path as HE always had done! I implored of HIM to guide me, resolved as I was to obey HIM! . . .

There is only one thing I should dread, and that is not to give my children the example of a blind confidence in the decrees of Providence. All my life, therefore, I shall crave forgiveness of God for having doubted,—at the time of my bitter sorrow, of my awful despair,—Gounod having been sent to me to help me, and for not having understood that, in leaving me, HE was blessing me still more effectually. It was because I suffered beyond endurance; it was in spite of myself I doubted!

It will appear incredible to my readers when I say, that the very next day after I had made this, to us, very important discovery, Mr. Bernardin Rahn, the Professor of Harmony and thorough-bass, whose name was very familiar to me, was announced. He came by chance, to call on me; I was quite unacquainted with him. He had been eight months in London. Most certainly, had he called the preceding day, I should have told him his visit was useless; that I taught every thing myself; that, so far as *Harmony* was concerned, I had managed to compose very tidily myself without knowing the first rule of thorough-bass; and that I hoped God would spare me from ever hatching composers! His unexpected visit appeared to me to be a direct answer to my prayers, and, without hesitation, I engaged him to give the boys lessons. Sometimes he would stay six or seven hours a-day with them. He still teaches them, and they rapidly learnt to write with care and intelligence. I am publishing and shall yet publish some of these compositions, and, if they can give their time to it, they may become first-rate little composers. I hope nothing will tempt them to wish to write operas and symphonies. We have too many composers, and too miserably few executants. At least that is my theory. The world is large enough to allow certain *cliques* to devote themselves to certain composers. I devote myself, and should like my children to devote themselves to Gounod's music. The better known it is, the more it will be appreciated. . . . But still I am not blind, or exclusive enough not to admire a great deal of other music besides Gounod's: and he ought not to allow the publication of such painful insignificances as "*La valse des Sylphes*," "*En avant*," and several other things I could mention.

The newspapers, while he was with us, used to amuse themselves by stating that I made him compose for *the market*. This is perfectly

false. The only work which he composed at our house, *on order*, was "*Jeanne D'Arc*." A person who repeated this rubbish to me, closely cross-questioned by me, could not quote as inferior compositions a single thing but the duettino, "*Little Celandine*." It is not my opinion by any means, that if a composition is easy, written for children's voices, it must be necessarily inferior. I maintain that if people know how to sing, *simply and in time* (Heaven knows how rare it is!), *Little Celandine* is a charming little duet, neither vulgar or commonplace.

As for me, what has hurt me quite as much as his inhuman and inexplicable conduct towards us, has been the publication of commonplace pieces, such as "*Valse des Sylphes*," "*En avant*," etc.

They are so bad that some one, on seeing them, said to me: "*He must have been well paid to put his name to such rubbish. There are composers who do that sort of thing!*" To think that I was obliged to listen to such words, and not dare to say, "*Gounod is not capable of doing such a thing!*"—"Of what is he not capable?" as people have often said to me already.

I picture to myself a man who passionately loves his wife or, may be, his mistress. The unhappy man knows that this woman cares no longer for him; he knows that he buys from her with a dress, an ornament, or a horse—a smile, a loving word. He clings to her as long as he fancies no one is aware that this woman prefers luxury, the world and flattery, to his devotion, his love, and to everything which makes a mutual life so precious and so sweet to two beings who appear to understand each other and of whom one, at least, believes they are living *in communion*. I understand, then, that that man, in order to avoid the least blame being whispered against his idol, should leave her under some pretext, and that during his whole life he would even try and make himself believe that *he* and not *she* had been capricious, fickle, false—that *he* and not *she* had played a part.

I lay my hand on my heart, and can most conscientiously say that, had I ever perceived in Gounod the least symptom of weariness or sickness of the life he led by our side—could I have suspected for a single moment that he *hated* the sight of an *intellectual existence, of a well ordered, laborious, charitable, and honest home* (see p. 275, No. 2)—had I been able to suspect for a single minute that he was working up his imagination to believe that this existence was "*penal servitude*," that he *hated* the hand which brought him his medicine; that he *detested* that patience which never forgot him, and which waited on him every hour; that he *loathed* the loving eyes which met his always with smiles (often with many tears); that he would have revolted (had he not lacked the courage) against the gentleness, the moderation of my husband; that *his* qualities were a reproach of every hour, every minute to him, I would have torn out my own heart, and I would have been *the first* to say I was tired of that life—that it was better to separate—that he had the right to reproach me for being inconstant, of being unworthy of his tenderness—that I deserved anything he might say of me and of that evil disposition of mine

which hindered me from being happy with any one for more than a certain time, but part we must. . . .

He would have wept, he would have begged, he might have cursed me, but we should have parted from each other with dignity, with decency.

Arrangements which would have protected his interests in England, as well as those of my orphans, would have been settled with justice, according to the agreement, thanks to which, Gounod obtained from us all we have sacrificed and lost for him !

I who have so much idolised him, to whom I believed myself indispensable—whose life depended on mine !—yes, I believed that ! . . . I, the Mimi who *worshipped* her Old Man, I should have died preserving my illusion, and MRS. WELDON would not have been *compelled* to protect herself from the cowardice, the inexplicable lies, the astounding ingratitude, and the senseless hostility of MONSIEUR GOUNOD. Some day, indeed, everybody will know what MRS. WELDON was !

And some day—yes, indeed, they will !—the whole world SHALL know what MONSIEUR GOUNOD was ! (*See p. 273, No. 2.*)

NOTES.

As it is impossible for me to publish the notes which correspond with the figures in my books, I hasten therefore to justify myself from a calumny which may seem ridiculous, but which, all the same, does me a great deal of harm. I had not paid much attention to it till lately, but as the expected time of the publication of my books draws near, all the batteries have again been unmasked, and the most deadly *mitrailleuses* levelled against me. One person has read my "divorce" in the *Times* ; another says that I let half my house, that I keep a *maison de passe*, and goes about talking of all that Mr. Gounod went through in consequence of me and my awful temper ; but the following is the calumny which affects me the most, and to which I specially reply.

As I wrote in my pamphlet "*The Quarrel of the Albert Hall Co. with Mr. Ch. Gounod*" (page 37), that any one who wished to see the original correspondence at my house would be welcome to do so, I wonder anybody can have had the impudence to repeat such rubbish. To publish the whole of the Albert Hall correspondence would cost me at least £40, and would amuse nobody, especially as I have nothing at all to do with it, *as usual*, and that, *as in many other cases where everything was put on my shoulders*, I am entirely innocent of that of which I am accused.

It is reported, and it is still reported with as much industry as formerly, that the reason why Mr. Gounod had quarrelled with the Royal Albert Hall Commissioners was because "*Mrs. Weldon had insisted, not only on singing all the solos at the Choral Concerts, but that she insisted on singing them, to the exclusion of any other soloist.*"

The first concert took place on the 1ST OF MAY, 1872, and it was only on the 20TH OF APRIL, by a mere chance, that Mr. Gounod was warned that the Commissioners were plotting to introduce solo-singing into HIS Choral Concerts, at which it had been stipulated no songs were to be sung. *There was not, and there had never been, any idea or any thought of any kind of my singing the solos.* I possess (curiously enough) positive proof to the contrary.

My readers must refer to M. Gounod's letters of 1871, and they will see that it never entered his head to *have solos at his Choral Concerts*. He looked forward to having the pleasure of showing Messrs. Costa and Sullivan how to conduct choirs, etc., and I swear solemnly that my name was *never in any way* mentioned in connection with this Royal Albert Hall affair.

I herewith publish M. Gounod's letter on the subject, and this was the only occasion upon which the question of solo-singing was mentioned in connection with the CHORAL CONCERTS.

All kinds of tales were circulated about me. At the Liverpool Festival, where I was engaged to sing a few solos in JEANNE D'ARC, and some of Gounod's songs, my name, *as usual*, was altogether omitted from the preliminary announcements of the Festival among the list of artists' names. The report was immediately circulated, that I refused to give my services at Liverpool, because the Committee had refused to announce my name at the top of the list, and specially before Mme. Adelina Patti's. By ridicule, by shame, by humiliation, by scandal, not a stone had been left unturned to ruin me by silly and perfidious falsehoods! May God protect me and my dear little adopted children! May God, through them, send me justice, and may I live to see them reach that promised land, which I shall only behold from afar!

* * * * *

LETTER FROM MR. CHARLES GOUNOD TO THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL COMMITTEE.

"20th April, 1872.

"To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I have learnt through Captain Egerton that in defiance of all written and verbal agreements between H. M. Commissioners and myself, you have made some arrangements, without consulting me, about 'God save the Queen,' and engaging a solo-singer at the first Choral Concert. I hasten to give notice that I consider such a fact as an infringement on my rights as Conductor and Sole Manager of the Music on that occasion, and that unless I receive before Monday, at 2 P.M., an apology and complete withdrawal, Monday evening next will be the last time I shall have the pleasure and honour of speaking to my excellent Choir. At the same time, I warn you that I shall bring an action against you for breach of contract, and claim damages.

"I hope, however, no such scandal may arise: and in that belief I will go on to say that Captain Egerton has agreed to allow my publisher to sell the books of music and the books of words on my account in the Hall on the days of the Concert. There appears again to be some strange misunderstanding about this, as this also has been unequivocally stated, verbally and in writing, to Captain Egerton, who, I have been led to believe, was acting by your authority in all matters. This permission, without amendment or condition, I require also stated in writing before I conduct the Choir again; neither will I admit of any question of Royalty on the sale of the books to H.M. Commissioners; this should, if any objection were to be raised, have been distinctly gone into at the time. Most of the words are arranged by me, or written and arranged by persons who have ceded to me their copyright. The copyright of books and words are mine, and I will not cede it to any one.

"I also hear it is the intention of H. M. Commissioners to introduce Solo-Singing in the Choral Concerts. This, I beg to remind them, is again an infringement of my rights. I am, however, of opinion, that if the Soloists were exclusively chosen from among the Choir, it would be very beneficial to the Society, and procure a legitimate spirit of emulation among its members, which in a few years would cause great and radical improvements in the art of singing. Therefore, I should be disposed to entertain this idea, with the proviso that

should, as in the case of everything else connected with the musical arrangements of the Choral Concerts, be left entirely to act according to my own judgment.

“CH. GOUNOD.”

- “WE, Her Majesty’s Commissioners for the International Exhibition, make the following arrangements with Mr. Charles Gounod :

“1st. Mr. Charles Gounod, as sole Conductor and Director of the Royal Albert Hall Society Choral Concerts, has the sole and exclusive right to accept or to refuse, or to effect the introduction of any Solo-Vocalist, or of any foreign element to the Choral Concerts of the said Society.

“2nd. Mr. Gounod has the *exclusive* right of determining the choice of any Soloist whatever (under the express condition that he or she must belong to the said Choral Society).

“3rd. The ‘copyright’ of the *Book of Words* is the exclusive property of Mr. Gounod, and the books are to be sold for his benefit on the occasion of the Concerts, without Her Majesty’s Commissioners having the right to levy any Royalty whatever on the sale thereof for their profit.”

* Agreement stipulated by M. Gounod, in which it is seen that M. Gounod had the sole right to introduce Solo-singing. Neither I or any other Vocalist, however, ever sung any Solo, although the Coles did their best to cram their cousin, Miss Anna Williams, into the programme at the first Concert.

This agreement was carried out. The Commissioners did not dare disappoint the Choir. But they lost no time in turning out M. Gounod; they even refused to hire the Hall to him for his Benefit Concert (*see page 68 of this volume*), and since then the *Kings of the Music Market*, Novello & Co., with Littleton’s head-clerk, Mr. Barnby as conductor, wields the baton in the place of the greatest composer of modern days! And all this was managed for the sake of *ruining me and my School*. As long as M. Gounod panders to NOVELLO & Co., he will be restored to favour with the QUEEN herself; REDEMPTION, insolently refused by the Birmingham Festival Committee in 1873, is accepted for the Festival of 1882; Gounod accepts large sums from Mr. Littleton; the music upon which my children are fed and clothed is “tabooed,” the rest is sung, played, pushed, praised; the press no longer kill him with silence, as in my day, when we both struggled together for Right against Might.

(This foot-note I have added in May, 1882, to this 1875 Edition.—G. W.)

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