



CLASSIC AND ROMANTIC SERIES

ART PUBLICATION SOCIETY  
Musicians' Text Books  
ST. LOUIS, MO., U. S. A.  
VIENNA LONDON BERLIN

19—SONG WITHOUT WORDS, CONSOLATION



## SONG WITHOUT WORDS, CONSOLATION, OP. 30, NO. 3.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—JACOB LUDWIG FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

Born at Hamburg, February 3d, 1809.

Died at Leipsic, November 4th, 1847.

**M**ENDELSSOHN was of Jewish extraction, being the grandson of Moses Mendelssohn, the distinguished Jewish philosopher. He knew little of the cares and vexations of life, having been surrounded from his boyhood with all that wealth and refinement could procure. The world owes a great debt of gratitude to this distinguished musician, for besides the legacy of beautiful music which he bequeathed to it, he stimulated and aroused interest in the works of the great Sebastian Bach, by producing his "Passion Music," at Berlin, in 1829; he founded the Leipsic Conservatory of Music, and he was instrumental in bringing several noted musicians to the notice of the world, notably Robert Schumann.

His talent for music developed itself at a very early age, and he was given the benefit of the best instruction which an artistic home and wealthy surroundings could procure. He was the first director of the Leipsic Conservatory of Music, and in 1840, he was appointed director of the department of music of the Academy of Fine Arts at Berlin, founded by the King of Prussia. He traveled extensively on journeys connected with his art, notably to England, where he was beloved and appreciated. He was the personal friend of Goethe and of Queen Victoria of England, who held him in high regard.

He had great facility in composition, and his musical ideas are characterized by elegance and refinement, if they are not always of a profound depth. Symphonies, Operas, Oratorios, Overtures and works for various instruments, flowed from his pen. Among these works must be mentioned the "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture, the oratorio of "Elijah," and the "Songs Without Words" for the piano. These latter compositions have made his name a household word throughout the world; they are, as their names indicate, songs without words; they show a great mastery of form and are for the most part very refined and lovely in their contents. The oratorio of "Elijah" is, with the possible exception of Handel's "Messiah," the greatest Oratorio ever written.

**FORM AND STRUCTURE:**—The form of this piece is three-part song form. The first two measures consist of short arpeggios rather introductory in character. The first period closes in measure 11, the second period closes in measure 17, and the third period closes in measure 25. We wish to call attention to some special features of this song form. The first period is constructed of two four-measure sections, the second one being very similar to the first. The first half of the measure is exactly the same in both sections. The first complete measure in each of these sections are different, as are also the first half of measures 5 and 9, respectively. The second half of measures 5 and 9 are identically the same, and measure 6 is exactly like measure 10, except for a very slight change in the bass notes on the second half of the measure. One is almost tempted to call this a repeated section, because both sections close in the key of the piece. However, it makes no difference in the final result whether we regard these two sections as different parts of the period, or whether we regard them as repeats; it is the same thing. The first section of the third part, the last half of measures 17 to 21, is like the first section last half of measure 3 to measure 7. The next two measures contain new matter, different from anything found in the first or second section of the first period, or in the first section of the third period; but this is not sufficient to destroy the correspondence between these two periods, and for purpose of form analysis

Ano. 19-2

*Copyrighted 1913, United States of America, Great Britain and International Copyright Union and Austria by Art Publication Society, St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A. Copyright Canada 1913 by Art Publication Society, Limited. Rights of Translation and all other rights reserved.*



they must be regarded as the same. The composer is not strictly bound to make literal repetition of his material, but great liberties in this regard are allowed, and in fact, the more liberties the composer takes, while still preserving the identity of his ideas, the more interesting will his music be. Mendelssohn was a consummate master in the handling of musical forms. His forms are always logical, while, at the same time, they are original and take advantage of all the possibilities of form construction.

The middle period is somewhat shorter than the other periods, and is, in reality, a lengthened section. The part beginning in measure 21, second half of the measure, gives an impression that the *coda* of the piece is beginning here, but we have regarded this as a second section of the last period, the *coda* being the last three measures of the piece, which repeat the material of the introduction.

**THE POETICAL IDEA:**—We have retained the sub-title of this piece, "Consolation." A "Song Without Words" is a composition having a song-like melody for an instrument; that is to say, the song, instead of being sung by a singer, is played on the instrument, together with the accompaniment to the song. The term was original with Mendelssohn, and he was the first composer to name his works in this way. This type of composition can include duets as well as solos. This particular piece has long been a favorite, not only with students, but with music-lovers in general. The melody is very expressive and appealing, and is one of the gems of musical literature.

**HOW TO STUDY:**—Commence by playing the melody by itself, especially with reference to the marks of expression, the slurs, *staccato* dots, *non legato* signs, etc. The five eighth-notes in the latter part of measure 4 must be delivered with great expression, and have an effect as though one were playing them with one finger as *legato* as possible. The beginning of the repetition of the melody in the last half of measure 7 leads over, in measure 8, to E, while the corresponding part in measure 3 leads only up to B. This change of the melodic interval, in conjunction with the wide skip and change of harmony, necessitates these notes being played very loud and strong, and the composer has put in a *sfz* mark to indicate this. The second half of measure 6, and the corresponding melody in measure 10, should be played with very great expression. The part beginning on the second half of measure 11 should begin softly and gradually *crescendo* as it goes along until the second half of measure 13 is reached; this is played *forte*. Measure 14 contains a syncopation between the first and second beats of the measure, which should be carefully accented. Otherwise, this measure and the next one are played softer, beginning with the second half of measure 21; here we have a *forte* passage followed by a soft passage in measure 23.

After studying the melody it will be necessary to go through the other parts and work them out in the same way, and then combine the parts, always allowing the melody, however, to be predominant. This will necessitate the fingers of the right hand frequently striking with more force than the other fingers are using. It will need a special exercise to overcome this difficulty. The bass notes beginning in measure 11 must be played *legato*, but firmly, and in such a way that the melody outline of these notes may be easily perceived.

**PEDAL:**—We cannot as yet give explicit directions for the use of the pedal. We will only say that where the pedal is used with a chord or note, it is usually depressed just after the chord or note is played, and it is only held till the chord changes, or until a descending melody is played. The object of this latter rule is not to mix or blur two different harmonies, or two melody notes in such a way that one obscures the next one. The pedal, if properly used, would add to the richness and beauty of tone of this piece, and we see no reason why the pupil should not experiment. Listen that you get no discords, as we may call them, that is, no intermingling of different harmonies, and that your melody is perfectly distinct. The piece can be well executed by a careful attention to the finger movements and to the connection of tones without the use of the pedal.

We explain the following marks of expression: *Adagio non troppo*, *espressivo*, *risoluto*, *tranquillo*, *sfz*. *Adagio non troppo* means, "not too slowly." *Espressivo* means, "with expression." *Risoluto* means, "with resolution," "with firmness." *Tranquillo* means, "peaceful, tranquil." *Sfz* means, "with sudden accent."

# CONSOLATION.

*Specially Edited.*

Mendelssohn, Op. 30, No. 3.

Adagio non troppo. (♩ = 72.)

*espressivo*