British van. The comte de Grasse recalled all his vessels, and bore down towards the British. Rodney ordered the last of his ships to lead into action, the others following her in succession, and the detached ships falling in behind as they returned from the pursuit. The two fleets in line of battle passed one another, the French steering in a southerly, the British in a northerly direction.. Both were going very slowly. Fire was opened about 8 o’clock, and by 10 o’clock the leading British ship had passed the last of the French. While the action was in progress, one of the variable winds of the coast began to blow from the south, while the northern extremities of the fleets were in an easterly breeze. Confusion was produced in both forces, and a great gap was created in the French line just ahead of the “ Formidable” (100), Rodney’s flagship. The captain of the fleet, Sir Charles Douglas, called his attention to the opening, and urged him to steer through it. The fighting instructions then in force made it incumbent on an admiral to preserve the order in which he began the action unchanged. Rodney hesitated to depart from the traditional order, but after a few moments of doubt accepted the suggestion. The “Formidable” was steered through the opening, followed by six of those immediately behind her. The ships towards the rear passed through the disordered French in the smoke, which was very thick, without knowing what they had done till they were beyond the enemy. About 1 o’clock the British had all either gone beyond the French or were to the east of them. The French were broken into three bodies, and were completely disordered. The comte de Grasse, in his flagship the “ Ville de Paris,” with five other vessels, was isolated from his van and rear. Rodney directed his attack on these six vessels, which were taken after a very gallant resistance. It was the general belief of the fleet that many more would have been captured if Rodney had pursued more vigorously, but he was content with the prizes he had taken. Two more of the French were captured by Sir Samuel Hood, afterwards Lord Hood, in the Mona Passage on the 19th of April.

See Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs* (London, 1804), vol. **5;** and a careful analysis from the French side by Chevalier, *Histoire de la marine française pendant la guerre de l'indépendance américaine* (Paris, 1877). (D. H.)

SAINT-SAËNS, CHARLES CAMILLE (1835- ), French

composer, was born in Paris on the 3rd of October 1835. After having as a child taken lessons on the piano, and learned the elements of composition, he entered the Paris Conservatoire in the organ class, then presided over by Eugène Benoist, obtaining the second prize in 1849, and the first two years later. For a short time he studied composition under Halévy, and in 1852, and again in 1864, competed without success for the Grand Prix de Rome. Notwithstanding these unaccountable failures, Saint- Saëns worked indefatigably. In 1853, when only eighteen, he was appointed organist at the Church of St Merry, and from 1861 to 1877 was organist at the Madeleine, in succession to Lefebure-Wély. An overture entitled “ Spartacus,” which has remained unpublished, was crowned at a competition instituted in 1863 by the Société Sainte Cécile of Bordeaux. The greatest triumph of his early career was, however, attained in 1867, when the prize was unanimously awarded to him for his cantata “ Les Noces de Prométhée ” in the competition organized during the International Exhibition of that year—a prize competed for by over two hundred musicians.

Though he had acquired a great name as a pianist, and had made successful concert tours through Europe, he had not succeeded in reaching the ears of the larger public by the produc­tion of an opera, which in France counts for more than anything else. After the tragic events of 1870, when Saint-Saëns did his duty as a patriot by serving in the National Guard, the opportunity at last offered itself, and a one-act opera from his pen, *La Princesse jaune,* with words by Louis Gallet, was produced at the Opéra Comique with moderate success on the 12th of June 1872. *Le Timbre d'argent,* a four-act opera performed at the Théâtre Lyrique in 1877, was scarcely more successful. In the meanwhile his “ symphonic poems” “ Le Rouet d’Omphale,” “ Danse Macabre,” “ Phaéton ” and “ La Jeunesse d’Hercule ”

obtained for him a world-wide celebrity. These admirable examples of “ programme music ” count among his best known works.

At last, through the influence of Liszt, his Biblical opera *Samson et Dalîla* was brought out at Weimar in 1877. This work, gener­ally accepted as his operatic masterpiece, had been begun as far back as 1869, and an act had been heard at one of Colonne’s concerts in 1875. Notwithstanding its great success at Weimar, its first performance on French soil took place at Rouen in 1890. The following year it was given in Paris at the Eden Theatre, and finally in 1892 was produced at the Grand Opéra, where it has remained one of the most attractive works of the *répertoire.* Its Biblical subject stood in the way of its being performed on the London stage until 1909, when it was given at Covent Garden with great success. None of his works is better calculated to exemplify the dual tendencies of his style. The first act, with its somewhat formal choruses, suggests the influence of Bach and Handel, and is treated rather in the manner of an oratorio. The more dramatic portions of the opera are not uninfluenced by Meyerbeer, while in the mellifluous strains allotted to the temptress there are occasional suggestions of Gounod. Of Wagner there is but little trace, save in the fact that the composer has divided his work into scenes, thus avoiding the old- fashioned denominations of “ air,” “ duet,” “ trio,” &c. The score, however, is not devoid of individuality. The influences mentioned above, possibly excepting that of Bach in the earlier scenes, are rather of a superficial nature, for Saint-Saëns has undoubtedly a style of his own. It is a composite style, certainly, and all the materials that go towards forming it may not be absolutely his; that is, the eclecticism of his mind may lead him at one moment to adopt an archaic form of expression, at another to employ the current musical language of his day, and sometimes to blend the two. It is perhaps in the latter case that he shows most individuality; for although his works may denote the varied influences of such totally dissimilar masters as Bach, Beethoven, Liszt and Gounod, he ever contrives to put in some­thing of his own.

After the production of *Samson et Dalila* Saint-Saëns stood at the parting of the ways—looked at askance by the reactionary section of the French musicians, and suspected of harbouring subversive Wagnerian ideas, but ready to be welcomed by the progressive party. Both sides were doomed to disappointment, for in his subsequent operas Saint-Saëns attempted to effect a compromise between the older and the newer forms of opera. He had already entertained the idea of utilizing the history of France for operatic purposes. The first and only result of this project has been *Étienne Μarcel,* an opera produced at Lyons in 1879. Although of unequal merit, owing partly to its want of unity of style, this work contains much music of an attractive kind, and scarcely deserves the neglect into which it has fallen. Forsaking the history of France he now composed his opera *Henry VIII.,* produced at the Paris Grand Opéra in 1883. The librettists had concocted a piece that was sufficiently well knit and abounded in dramatic contrasts. While adhering to his system of compromise by retaining certain conventional operatic features, Saint-Saëns had in this instance advanced somewhat by employing *leit motiυs* in a more rigorous fashion than hitherto, although he had not gone so far as to discard airs cut after the old pattern, duets and quartets. *Henry VIII.,* which was given at Covent Garden in 1898, occupies an honourable place among the composer’s works. *Proserpine,* a lyrical drama produced at the Paris Opéra Comique in 1887, achieved a *succès d'estime* and no more. A not much better fate befell *Ascanio,* an opera founded on Paul Meurice’s drama *Benvenuto Cellini,* and brought out at the Grand Opéra in 1890. *Phryné,* however, a two-act trifle of a light description, produced at the Opéra Comique in 1893, met with success. In 1895 *Frédégonde,* an opera begun by Ernest Guiraud and completed by Saint-Saëns, was produced in Paris. The “ lyrical drama ” *Les Barbares,* given at the Grand Opéra in 1901, was received with marked favour.

Saint-Saëns worked successfully in every field of his art. Besides the operas above alluded to, he composed the following oratorios