not succeed in placing it on the stage. *Alruna* was equally unfortunate, though it was rehearsed with approval at Weimar in 1808. During this year Spohr accomplished one of the most extraordinary musical exploits on record. Hearing that Talma was performing at Erfurt before the reigning princes assembled for the famous congress, and failing in his attempt to obtain admission to the theatre, he bribed a horn-player to send him as his deputy ; and, though he had never touched a horn in his life, he learned in a single day to play it so well that in the evening he was able to fulfil his self-imposed duty without excit­ing suspicion or remark. Spohr’s third opera, *Der Zwei­kampf mit der Geliebten,* written in 1809, was successfully performed at Hamburg in the following year. In 1811 he produced his (first) *Symphony in Eb,* and in 1812 composed his first oratorio, *Das jüngste Gericht.@@*1 It was while employed in the preparation of this work that he first felt the inconvenience inseparable from an imperfect theoretical education ; and, with characteristic energy, he set about the diligent study of Marpurg’s *Abhandlung von der Fuge.*

In 1812 Sphor visited Vienna, where his splendid violin-playing created a profound sensation, and he was induced to accept the appointment of leader of the orchestra at the Theater na der Wien. He then began the preparation of his greatest dramatic composition, *Faust,* which he com­pleted in 1813, though it was not performed until five years later. His strength as a composer was now fully developed ; and the fertility of his imagination enabled him to produce one great work after another with aston­ishing rapidity. He resigned his appointment at Vienna in 1815, and soon afterwards made a tour in Italy, where he performed his eighth violin concerto, the *Scena Cantante nello Stilo Drammatico,—*the finest of his compositions for his favourite instrument. The performer was described by the leading critics of the country as “ the finest singer on the violin that had ever been heard.” On Spohr’s return to Germany in 1817 he was appointed conductor of the opera at Frankfort; and in that city in 1818 he first produced his dramatic masterpiece, *Faust.* The favour with which this was received led to the composition of *Zemire und Azor,* a romantic piece founded on the story of *Beauty and the Beast,* which, though by no means equal to its predecessor in merit, soon attained a much higher degree of popularity. There can, indeed, be no doubt that *Faust* suffered from the very first from the weakness of its miserable libretto. Had the words been worthy of the music *Faust* would have taken rank among the finest German operas in existence.

Spohr first visited England in 1820, and on 6th March played his *Scena Cantante* with great success at the first Philharmonic concert. At the third he produced a new *Symphony* (No. 2) *in D minor,* written expressly for this occasion, which is remarkable as the first on which the conductor’s *bâton* was used at a concert of the Philharmonic Society. Spohr’s new symphony met with an enthusiastic reception, as did the earlier one (No. 1, in Eb), which was played, together with his *Nonetto,* at the last concert of the series. Indeed he had a triumphant success both as com­poser and as *virtuoso ;* and he on his side was delighted with the performances of the Philharmonic orchestra. Before leaving London he gave a farewell concert, at which Madame Dorette Spohr played on the harp for the last time. Her health at this period was so delicate that she was recommended to exchange her favourite instru­ment for the less fatiguing pianoforte ; and Spohr, with his accustomed facility, wrote a number of pieces for pianoforte and violin, which the husband and wife played

together with perfect artistic sympathy. After supple­menting his visit to England by a short sojourn in Paris, Spohr returned to Germany and settled for a time in Dresden, where German and Italian opera were flourishing side by side under the direction of Weber and Morlacchi. His artistic relations with the composer of *Der Freischütz* were not altogether satisfactory ; nevertheless Weber did not hesitate to recommend him strongly to the elector of Hesse Cassel as “ kapellmeister.” Spohr entered upon his duties at Cassel on 1st January 1822, and soon afterwards began the composition of his sixth opera, *Jessonda,* which he produced in 1823. This work—which he himself always regarded as one of his best productions—marks an important epoch in his career as a dramatic composer. It was the first opera he ever wrote with accompanied recitative throughout in place of the usual spoken dia­logue ; and by a remarkable coincidence it was produced in the same year as Weber’s *Euryanthe,* a work charac­terized by the same departure from established custom. Unhappily Weber’s early death prevented him from making a second essay in the same direction ; but Spohr consist­ently carried out the idea in his later operas, and always with marked success.

Spohr’s appointment at Cassel gave him the opportunity of bringing out his new works on a grander scale and with more careful attention to detail than he could have hoped to attain in the service of a less generous patron than the elector. And he never failed to use these privi­leges for the purpose of doing justice to the works of other composers. Soon after his instalment in his new office Mendelssohn, then a boy of thirteen, visited Cassel with his father ; notwithstanding the disparity of their years, a firm and lasting friendship sprang up between the rising genius and the already famous composer, which ceased only with Mendelssohn’s death in 1847 ; and in other similar cases Spohr always proved himself ready to ap­preciate and foster the talent displayed by others, though it must be admitted that as a critic he was very difficult to please. The success of *Jessonda* led him to produce in 1825 a seventh opera—*Der Berggeist—*founded upon the old German legend of Rübezahl, the ruling spirit of the Riesengebirge. Though less popular than its predecessor, this fine work attained a very fair success. But a far greater triumph awaited the composer at the Rhenish musical festival held at Düsseldorf in 1826. On this occasion his oratorio *Die letzten Dinge* met with so en­thusiastic a reception that it had to be repeated a few days later for the benefit of a charity. This work, known in England as *The Last Judgment,* is undoubtedly the greatest of Spohr’s sacred compositions, and is remarkable as the first oratorio in which the romantic element is freely introduced, with marked success throughout, and without detriment either to the solemnity of the subject or the sobriety of style which has always been regarded as an indispensable characteristic of sacred music of the highest order. In 1827 Spohr produced his eighth opera, *Pietro von Abano,* the plot of which depends for its chief interest upon the resuscitation by the famous necromancer of a lady long since dead and committed to the tomb. The work met with a fair, though not a lasting, success ; and the same may be said of a much finer opera, *Der Alchymist,* produced in 1830. Spohr’s next publication was of a very different character. His *Violin School,* produced in 1831, is so useful as a code of instruction for advanced students that there is probably no great violinist now living who has not been more or less indebted to it for the perfection of his technique. It holds with regard to the violin a position no less important than that which Cramer’s *Studies* has so long held in connexion with the pianoforte.

The year 1833 Spohr spent in the preparation of a new

@@@1 Literally The Last Judgment, but not to be confounded with the oratorio now so well known by that name in England.