The Critical Reception of Beethoven's Compositions by His German Contemporaries, Op. 86 to Op. 91

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Contents

Foreword

The reviews in this installment continue the originally planned third volume of *The Critical Reception of Beethoven's Compositions by His German Contemporaries*. From today's perspective, the most important work treated here is the Mass in C Major, Op. 86. E. T. A. Hoffmann devoted one of his five Beethoven reviews to this piece—the only mass setting that Beethoven wrote before the *Missa Solemnis*, Op. 123—and the concert reports that follow suggest that it was performed occasionally during the decade after its appearance and was generally well received.

With the exception of the Piano Sonata in E minor, Op. 90, the other works reviewed here are not part of today's active repertory. However, the large number of reviews and concert reports devoted to *Wellington's Victory*, Op. 91, show that this work, largely dismissed by scholars and audiences today, was initially one of Beethoven's most successful compositions.

Originally written for a mechanical orchestra and designed in collaboration with Beethoven's friend the inventor Johann Nepomuk Mälzel, *Wellington's Victory* depicts the clash of French and British forces at Victoria, Spain, in graphically realistic terms. Its first performances, around the time of the Congress of Vienna, were greeted rapturously, as the early correspondence reports make clear, although farther from the capital there were dissenting voices. The Leipzig *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* gave it an extended review (no. 91.7), replete with music examples, in which it is treated as a major work on a par with Beethoven's symphonies.

By far the longest review, though, is contained in an article by Gottfried Weber, normally one of Beethoven's admirers, published in *Caecilia* in 1825 (91.16). In words derived from earlier writings stemming from the time when *Wellington's Victory* was first performed, Weber blasted the work for the same reasons later observers have generally rejected it; he saw it as a transparent potboiler unworthy of Beethoven's genius. It is also notable that after the initial rash of concert reports, the piece dropped out of currency quickly.

I would like to thank Wayne Senner and William Meredith for their central role in initiating this project, and to acknowledge the Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals (RIPM) for permission to copy the music examples from the original sources. Readers will notice that

while the translations are newly typeset, the music examples are reproduced exactly as they first appeared.

Information on the dates of composition and publication of Beethoven's works is based on the new edition of the Kinsky-Halm catalogue, edited by Kurt Dorfmüller, Norbert Gertsch, and Julia Ronge. The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition, is the default reference source for biographical information. This installment was supported by a summer sabbatical from Baylor University.

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Op. 86. Mass in C Major

86.1.

Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann.

"Review."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 15**
(16 and 23 June 1813): 389–97 and 409–14.[1]

The reviewer is not familiar with any earlier mass of B.; all the more was his expectation aroused as to how the ingenious master would have treated the simple, glorious words of the High Mass. Prayer and devotion certainly arouse the soul, according to the predominant mood which is proper to it, or to a momentary one, such as may be engendered by physical and psychic well-being, or by suffering of just the same kind. Now devotion is an inner remorse to the point of self-hatred and shame, sinking down into the dust before the annihilating lightning bolt of the Lord of the world, who scorns sinners; now it is a powerful exaltation toward the infinite, a childlike trust in divine mercy, a presentiment of promised blessedness. The words of the High Mass give, in cyclic form, only the instigation—at most the guide to edification—and in every mood they will awaken the appropriate harmony in the soul. In the *Kyrie* the compassion of God is called up; the *Gloria* praises his omnipotence and magnificence; the *Credo* expresses the faith on which the pious soul firmly depends, and after the holiness of God has been extolled in the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, and blessing promised to those who draw near to him in faith, the mediator is once again appealed to in the *Agnus* and *Dona*, that he should grant comfort and his peace to the pious, believing, hoping soul. Because of this very generality, which does not encroach upon the deeper connection, the inner significance which everybody attaches to it according to the individual mood of his soul, the text adapts itself to the widest variety of musical treatments, and this is why there are *Kyries*, *Glorias*, etc., often by the same master, which differ so greatly in character and disposition. Simply compare, for example, the two Kyries in the masses in C major and D minor by Joseph Haydn,[2] and likewise his *Benedictus*. From this it follows that the composer who

[1]The Mass in C major, Op. 86, was written in 1807 on a commission from Joseph Haydn's patron, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, and was first performed on 13 September in honor of his wife's name day. It was not published until September 1812, by Breitkopf und Härtel in Leipzig, and this edition is the subject of this review, the fourth of Hoffmann's five Beethoven reviews for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*.

approaches the composition of the High Mass gripped, as should always be the case, with true devotion, will let the individual religious mood of his soul predominate, to which every word can willingly be accommodated, and not let himself be led astray in the course of the *Miserere*, *Gloria*, *Qui tollis*, etc. into a colorful mixture of the heart-wrenching distress of the remorseful soul with jubilant clangor. All works of this latter kind, such as are *made* in recent times, since it has become fashionable to compose masses, the reviewer rejects as miscarriages, begotten by an impure soul. But before he shows praise and admiration for the magnificent works of Michael and Joseph Haydn, Naumann,[3] et al., he cannot help but recall the old works of the pious Italians (Feo, Durante, Benevoli, Perti, etc.),[4] whose elevated, worthy simplicity, whose wonderfully artistic way of modulating inward without colorful deviations, seems to have been completely lost in more and most recent times. It cannot be doubted, without wishing on that account to hold fast to the original, pure sacred style because what is holy scorns the colorful decoration of earthly niceties, that this simple kind of music is also more musically effective in church, since the faster the notes follow upon one another, the more they become lost in the high vaulting and make everything indistinct. It is partly for this reason that good chorales have a great effect in church. An ingenious poet (Tieck, in the second half of *Phantasus*), completely rejects all recent sacred music and values the old Italians exclusively.[5] As much as the reviewer concedes a preference for the sublime sacred songs of past times on account of their truly holy and always consistent style, he is nevertheless of the opinion that the riches which have accrued to music in more recent times, primarily through the use of instruments, do not have to promote spectacular pomp in church, but can be used in a

[2]Presumably this refers to the *Missa in tempore belli* and the "Lord Nelson" mass of Haydn, both of which were also written for Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, in 1796 and 1798, and appeared in print in 1802 and 1803, respectively. David Charlton points out that the earlier *Missa Cellensis*, also in C major, appeared in print in 1807, though it was written in 1766 (*E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], 327n6).

[3]Johann Gottlieb Naumann (1741–1801) was an extremely prolific composer of operas and sacred music.

[4]Francesco Feo (1691–1761) was a Neapolitan composer of operas and sacred music. Francesco Durante (1864–1755), also Neapolitan, was known primarily for his sacred music. Orazio Benevoli (1605–1672) was a sacred composer active in Rome. Giacomo Antonio Perti (1661–1756) was for sixty years maestro di cappella at San Petronio in Bologna; he wrote both sacred music and opera.

The sacred works of all of these composers illustrate, in differing degrees, the tension that is present in much church music of the baroque period between old-fashioned stile antico and "modern" style. Thus the way Hoffmann presents them here is rather one-sided; if they seemed old-fashioned to him, it was because intervening stylistic changes made the innovations in their music less obvious than they would have been to their contemporaries.

[5]Ludwig Tieck's Phantasus: *Eine Sammlung von Mährchen*, *Erzählungen*, *Schauspielen und Novellen*, was published by the Realschulbuchhandlung in Berlin in 1812. The comments cited by Hoffmann were given by Tieck to the character Ernst, who claims that his musical sensibilities were awakened by an even older generation of composers than those mentioned here: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Leonardo Leo, Gregorio Allegri (composer of the famous "Miserere"), "and those of old." Music, he says, "is entirely devotion, longing, humility, love; it cannot be pathetic, and boast of its strength and power, or wish to vent itself in despair. Here it loses its spirit, and becomes only a weak imitator of speech and poetry" (467–68). In view of Tieck's reputation as a champion of Romantic musical aesthetics, established in the collaborative works with Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, the distrust of contemporary music implied by this statement is intriguing. Ernst grudgingly admires Mozart, but compares his works with the legend of Orpheus, with its blending of the divine and the underworld.

noble, worthy manner. It might be rather striking, like putting the church of St. Peter next to the cathedral of Strassburg, to dare to compare the old sacred music of the Italians to the more recent German music. The grandiose proportions of the former building elevate the soul by remaining commensurate; but the onlooker is astonished with a strange, inner unrest by the cathedral, which rises up into the air with the most audacious twists, with the most singular intertwining of colorful, fantastic figures and ornaments. Only this very unrest excites a feeling of presentiment for the unknown, the wonderful, and the spirit willingly gives itself up to the dream in which it believes it recognizes the otherworldly, the infinite. Now this is exactly the impression of the purely Romantic, as it lives and moves in Mozart's, in Haydn's fantastic compositions! — It is easy to explain why it is not so easy for a composer to go about setting a mass or any other sacred song in that elevated, simple style of the old Italians; most are not able to do so, since it is exactly in this highest simplicity that profound genius has its most powerful pinions. It also is infrequently done, however, because of insufficient self-denial. Who will gladly leave that rich domain, where his task is to shine before all eyes, and be satisfied with the approval of that *individual* connoisseur, who loves *purity* the most, or loves it alone, even without brilliance? Since the same means of expression have now begun to be used everywhere, it has nearly come to the point where there is no more such thing as style. In comic opera one hears solemn passages striding forth massively, in serious opera teasing little songs, and in church oratorios and masses of operatic cut. It belongs, however, to a rare depth of spirit, an elevated genius, to remain serious and dignified, in short, to remain churchly, while making use of the most elaborate singing and of the entire domain of instrumental music! Mozart, as galant as he is in both of his better known masses in C major, has performed this task magnificently in the *Requiem*; this is truly Romantic-sacred music, issuing from his innermost being.[6] The reviewer will certainly not be the first to point out how magnificently Haydn also speaks of the most holy and sublime things in magnificent notes in many of his masses, even though many would now and then accuse him of frivolity. The reviewer suspected that Beethoven, in regard to style and deportment, would rank among *these* masters before he had read or heard even a note of the present work, even though in regard to expression and understanding of the words of the High Mass, his expectations were disappointed. Elsewhere B.'s genius gladly moves the lever of horror, dread, etc. So, the reviewer supposed, the contemplation of the celestial would fill his soul with inner horror, and he would express this feeling in notes. On the contrary, however, the entire mass gives expression to a childlike, happy soul, which, building upon its purity, trusts faithfully in God's mercy and appeals to him like a father who wants the best for his children and hears their prayers.[7] Along with this general character of the composition, the inner structure, and also the clever instrumentation are worthy of the ingenious master, *if one is willing to accept the trend* which the

[6]According to Charlton (*E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, 329), the "better known masses" in C major are the "Credo" mass, K. 257, and the "Coronation" mass, K. 317.

[7]Here Hoffmann, like so many others, quotes twice from his own review of Beethoven's 5th symphony. However, second of the two characterizations, describing this music as expressing "a childlike, happy soul," is one that he had previously applied to Haydn, not Beethoven.

reviewer noted above in regard to the rich domain of music appropriate to the church. There is no movement in the whole work that does not contain many imitations and contrapuntal devices, although not a single strictly worked out fugue is to be found, and old masters accustomed to the pure sacred style will censure many a violation of it. For example, there are false successions of fifths (specifically from the diminished to the perfect), cadences with parallel octaves, unharmonic cross-relations and so forth—which, however, the reviewer will not mention further, since he confesses himself to be a musical free spirit in this regard, at least when not dealing with a chorale, where every chord falls heavily upon the ear, since he goes by what the old, good-natured Haydn said when Albrechtsberger wanted to ban all fourths from the strictest style of composition.[8] Having expressed himself concerning the character and structure of the work in general, the reviewer may now go into detail to the extent that is necessary to back up his judgment, and to call attention to many truly splendid moments in which the composer's genius shines forth.

Without any ritornello[9] the bass singers alone intone the *Kyrie*, whose lovely theme is completely the plea of a child who trusts in the mercy and attention he will receive. The reviewer sets down the first eleven measures in full score.

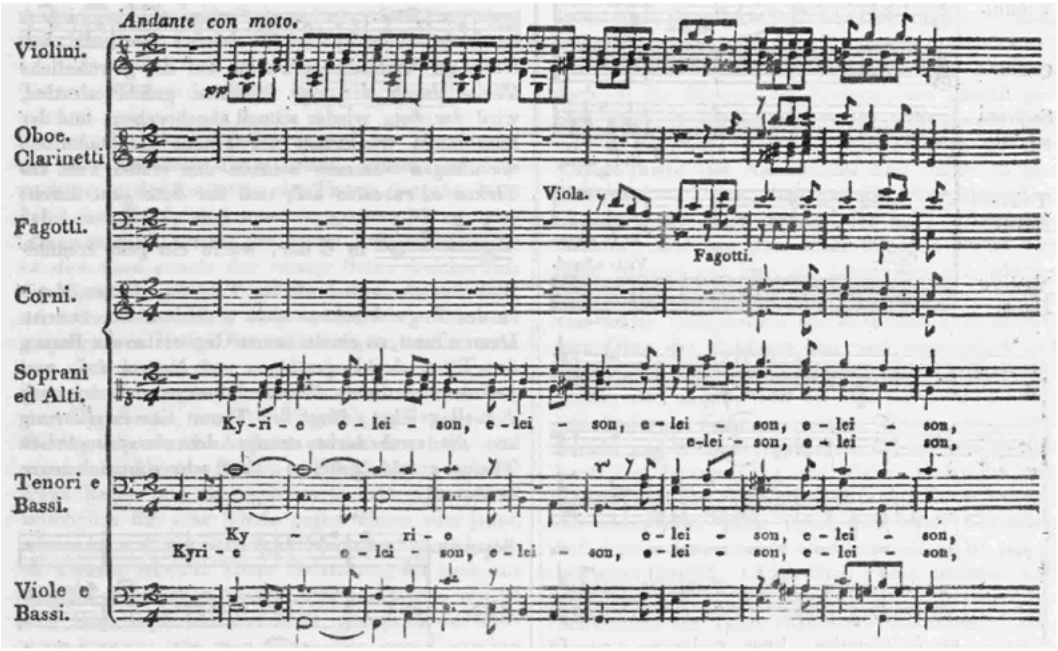

Figure 1. *Op. 86, Kyrie, mm. 1–11*

[8]This story appeared in Griesinger's "Biographische Notizen" on Haydn, which were first printed in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1809, the same year that Hoffmann's writings began appearing there. To a report of this preposterous suggestion by his exact contemporary Georg Albrechtsberger (1736–1809), Haydn is said to have responded that "art is free, and cannot be limited by any artificial fetters. The educated ear must decide, and I consider myself as qualified as anyone to make rules in this regard" (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 11 [1808–1809], col. 740).

[9]That is, there is no orchestral introduction.

The violin motion peculiar to the master Haydn runs through the entire movement, indeed through practically the entire work. In the fifteenth measure the soprano begins a figure by means of which the music modulates to E minor and which bass, tenor, and alto imitate canonically at the distance of a measure. Without further accompaniment, soprano, alto, and tenor then sing in E major in the manner of a chorale—first solos, then the choir. The *Christe eleison*, which is uncommonly effective, proceeds likewise. The imitative phrase appears only once more, as a soprano solo shortly before the end, which is treated in an original manner, in that all the voices remain on the dominant, G, while the instruments repeat the first measure of the theme. Incidentally, this movement contains a thoroughly distinctive modulatory scheme, moving from C major to C minor and then to E major, in which key four full cadences follow quickly upon one another, and then, after the theme has been repeated again in E major, returning very quickly back to C major:

Figure 2. *Op. 86 , Kyrie, partially inaccurate reduction of mm. 77–80. Both staves begin in the treble clef.*

The reviewer cannot exactly recommend this modulation for imitation.

The Gloria likewise begins without a ritornello with a C major chord sustained by singers and winds, to which the violins add a flourish in eighth notes. It rushes on fervently and brilliantly until the seventeenth measure, when suddenly singers and instruments grow quiet and the first violin alone descends in quarter notes along with the cello. This is the preparation for the *Et in terra pax*, and this passage is too captivating in its effect, too happily conceived in its simplicity, for the reviewer not to set it down for the reader's immediate inspection:

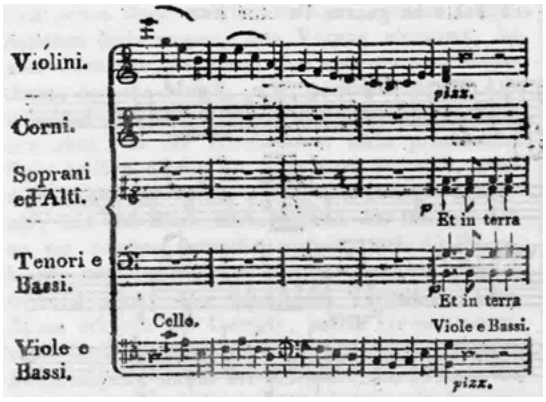

Figure 3. *Op. 86, Gloria, mm. 17–28*

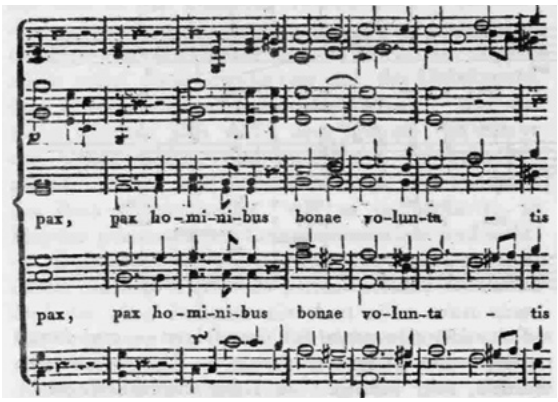

Figure 3 (*continued*)

The canonic imitation at the octave which now begins is broken off after it is carried through all four voices, and the music is led by means of alternating tuttis and solos through extensive modulations into F minor for the *Qui tollis*, which is delivered by the alto in a moving melody. The tutti enters with the *Miserere*, and a bass solo leads the music into A-flat major. The *Suscipe* is set in the genuine sacred manner with deep feeling,

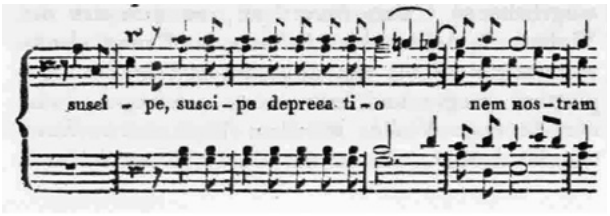

Figure 4. *Op. 86 , Gloria, mm. 162–67, reduction of the choral parts. The top staff is in soprano clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef, with a key signature of four flats.*

as is the following imitation, in which all four voices participate for the *Miserere*. The Quoniam is a truly jubilant unisono, and at the cum sancto spiritu there enters a powerful fugue theme in C major.

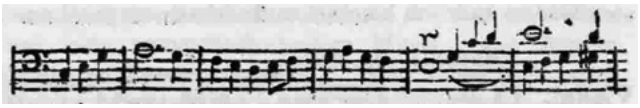

Figure 5. *Op. 86, Gloria, mm. 238–43, bass and tenor parts*

However, after this theme has been led through all four voices in the customary manner, the passage is soon broken off, and the bass alone repeats the theme of the Quoniam. The remaining voices take up the first measure of the theme al rovescio, and the music continues through:

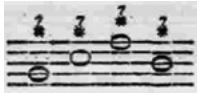

Figure 6. *Op. 86, Gloria, harmonic reduction of mm. 257–65, in bass clef*

in G major, where a completely foreign countersubject, whose motive is nowhere contained in the fugue, enters for fifteen measures. Then, as a new counterpoint to the bass, the tenor takes up the fugue theme anew, and after it has been led through all four voices and into A minor, the tenor begins a stretto, which certainly does not hold strictly to the original form of the theme, but is arranged very ingeniously:

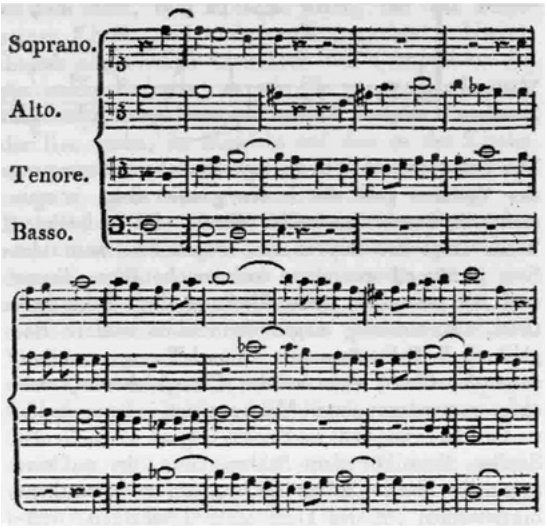

Figure 7. *Op. 86, Gloria, mm. 297–307*

The music returns to C major with the canonic imitation of the second and third measures of the theme and makes a full cadence, from which the voices move forward directly to a new passage in half notes for the *Amen*. Now the *Quoniam* enters again with the earlier theme; there follows a fugue theme in thirds, with soprano, alto, bass, and tenor likewise following in thirds, and then again a full cadence in C major. The first violin proceeds with the fugue theme, and the soprano enters solo in imitation. The Amen is sung tutti in whole notes, with the theme of the fugue in the first measure.

Figure 8. *Op. 86, Gloria, mm. 350-52, soprano part. The notes are in the soprano clef, and the text placement should be "amen, a-."*

Now comes a kind of organ point on the dominant, which, however, contains only three measures, and afterward the bass proceeds with the imitation of the theme. Now the *Amen* returns tutti, in whole notes, bringing the entire movement to an end. This *Cum sancto* is the only passage that for the most part resembles a proper fugue. The reviewer has thus spent more time with it, in order to confirm the judgment that he expressed earlier. Let him only add that he will not find fault with many small violations of the strict style, for once a genius, who has otherwise not given offence, has usurped the freedom which is certainly granted to him, that genius can tolerate no further restraint. The free movement and activity during the sensation

of his own power cannot be considered a sin against this or that law, which is perhaps entirely dictated by convention. This observation is intended only to pacify those overly strict critics who might otherwise have been able to shake their heads sufficiently in wonderment as to how this or that could have been overlooked, etc.

The Credo, 3/4 time in C major, is a lively, fiery movement whose manifold, well-ordered imitations stand out magnificently. After the *Et incarnatus* in E-flat has closed hollowly with the *Sepultus est*, a bass solo begins the *Et resurrexit* in common time, accompanied by the strings in unison, and this passage as well is powerful and ingenious, worked out with alternating tuttis and solos, and likewise with manifold imitations, which bear witness to the master's lively imagination. With the *Et vitam* another exultant fugue theme enters:

Figure 9. *Op. 86, Credo, mm. 279–85, soprano and alto parts*

We become eager for it to be worked out further and will gladly relinquish ourselves to the waves of the storm that is roaring past. But here as well the passage is unfortunately broken off after it has been led through the four voices, and, apart from a stretto and the imitation of the second measure through three voices, the magnificent theme is not used again. Most composers make the Sanctus grandiose, sonorous, and pathetic; in keeping with the character of the whole, however, it is written here gently and movingly, in A major, common time. The four-measure ritornello is played by violins, oboes, A clarinets, bassoons, and violoncello, and then the voices enter without any instrumental accompaniment. The reviewer will mention the original enharmonic surprise in the seventh measure, and likewise the ingenious modulation that follows, and the wonderful effect of the timpani, which are heard alone with the voices in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth measures, only in order to draw the reader's attention to the great variety of means that are at the master's disposal in order to touch our innermost being with unaccustomed power. The *Pleni sunt coeli* is an exultant Allegro, and *the Osanna in excelsis* a short fugal movement, once again with a magnificently original theme:

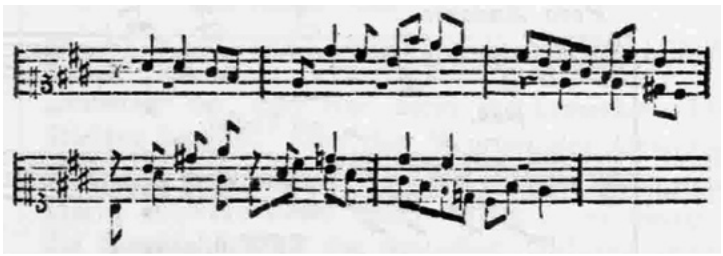

Figure 10. *Op. 86, Sanctus, mm. 33–37, soprano and alto parts. Both staves should be in soprano clef, and the first two notes of the theme should be tied.*

We are reluctant to hear the movement rush by so quickly; after the working out through all four voices, and after the soprano has repeated a measure and a half of the opening, it breaks off quickly, and the cadence comes five measures later. A quartet of voices, without any instrumental accompaniment, begins the *Benedictus, Andante* in F major, very gently, flowingly, and melodiously. Later a four-voice choir comes in as well, which sometimes interrupts the four solo voices with short phrases and sometimes accompanies them. The first entrance of this choir in deep, hollow tones, after the alto has cadenced all alone without any accompaniment, has a very strange effect:

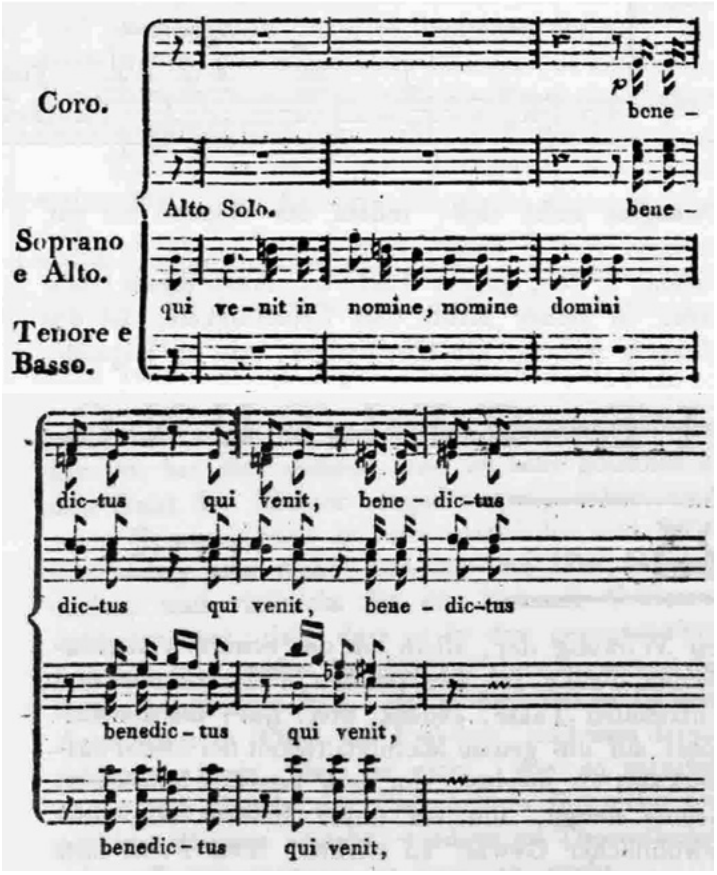

Figure 11 *Op. 86, Benedictus, mm. 18–24. Both choral and solo parts are in soprano and bass clefs.*

The music moves forward by means of contrived and very melodious twists and turns of the four obbligato voices. The expression of the whole has an indescribably moving quality, and the soul is surrounded by an intimation of the infinite blessing that is poured out upon those who come in the name of the Lord. According to the customary arrangement, the *Osanna in excelsis* is repeated in its original form after the *Benedictus*. The *Agnus Dei*, in C minor, 12/8 time, expresses a feeling of inner melancholy, which, however, does not rupture the heart, but does it good, and which, like the pain that comes from another world, resolves itself into transcendent joy. The instrumentation and structure of the first eight measures are very original and effective; the

reviewer will all the more willingly set them down here because they determine the character of the whole.

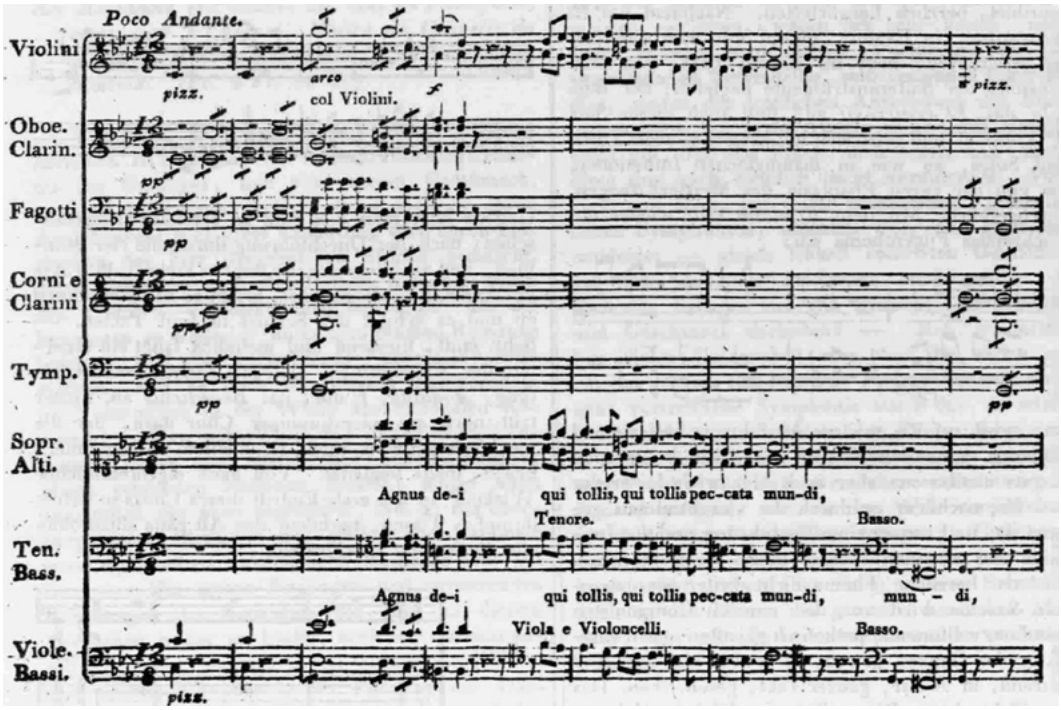

Figure 12. *Op. 86, Agnus Dei, mm. 1–8*

The *Dona nobis pacem*, C major, common time, follows effortlessly after the *Agnus*, as the soprano rises from G up a seventh. This last movement as well, in its power and liveliness, is worthy of the master. The reviewer will leave it undecided, however, whether passages like the following, which occurs just at the close of the *Agnus*, do not sound too operatic; it at least reminded him of a similar figure in the well-known duet of both basses in the *Matrimonio segreto*.[10]

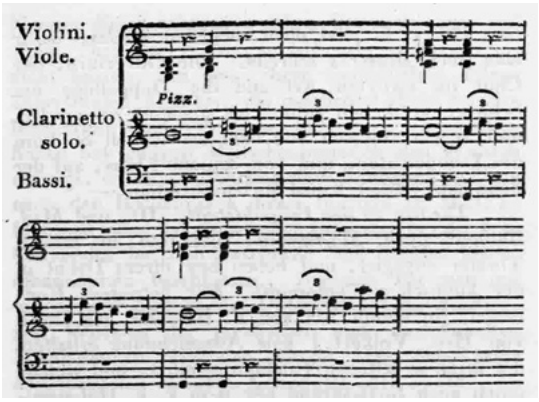

Figure 13. *Op. 86, Agnus Dei, mm. 82–87*

[10]The duet in question is "Se fiato in corpo arete" from *Il matrimonio segreto* by Domenico Cimarosa, which was first performed in Vienna in 1792. Hoffmann is presumably referring to the melismas on the syllable la in the coda.

Considering the brilliance and richness of this work, which the master obviously created with love, it is not so difficult to perform compared to his instrumental compositions. Particularly those who are accustomed to performing Haydn's sacred music will easily assimilate the composer's ideas. The tempos, by the way, should not be rushed, as often as this does unfortunately now happen. Let singers and instrumentalists exert themselves to give this work all that it deserves through exact observation of the *Pianos* and *Fortes*, and of all expressive means in general. Then not just the connoisseur, but also those incapable of entering into its most essential nature, will be appropriately exalted and moved by this composition.

Now may the reviewer be allowed to say a few words about the German text that is set underneath and beside the Latin words of the High Mass.[11] It is well known that the three principal parts of the Mass are formed by the *Kyrie*, the *Credo*, and the *Sanctus*. Between the first and the second falls the *Gradual* (usually a sacred symphony), between the second and the third the *Offertory* (customarily treated as a sacred aria). Accordingly, even in the German arrangement the whole is divided into three hymns, probably so the magnificent music may also obtain entry into Protestant churches and concert halls.[12] In practice this is quite suitable to the work. As for the words, they needed to be as simple as possible, and to be at their best and most powerful, purely biblical, in order not to damage the meaning and significance of the whole. Handel, as is well known, said to the bishop who proposed to write the text for the *Messiah*: "Do you think that you can devise better words than I have found in the Bible?"[13] The true nature of sacred texts has never been better expressed. In place of the highest simplicity, however, the words of the hymns are somewhat modern, affected, precious, and long-winded. The simple, biblical *Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison* is drawn out as follows:

Deep in the dust we worship
You, the eternal Lord of the world,
You, the all-powerful.

[11]In the original Breitkopf und Härtel edition an alternative German text by Christian Schreiber was printed underneath the Latin one.

[12]On the title page of the original edition, the work is described both as "Messa a quattro Voci coll'accompagnamento dell'Orchestra" and as "DREY HYMNEN/für vier Singstimmen mit Begleitung des Orchesters,/in Musik gesetzt." The "hymns" were, respectively, the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*; the *Credo*; and the *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei*. When Beethoven performed the *Gloria* at his "Akademie" in 1808, he also described it as a hymn, and the term was also used at the Akademie in 1824, when the 9th symphony and portions of the *Missa Solemnis* were premiered, apparently to mollify censors who were concerned about the presentation of liturgical music at a commercial performance.

[13]There appears to be no basis for this story. Charles Jennens, who wrote the text of *Messiah*, was not a bishop, and Geoffrey Cuming argues that much of the text was derived from Anglican liturgy, rather than from the Bible directly ("The Text of 'Messiah,'" *Music and Letters* 31 [July 1950]: 226–30). Handel's comment that "I have read my Bible very well and shall choose for myself" (ibid., 226) applied to the coronation anthems for George II, not to *Messiah*.

Beethoven expressed his own serious reservations about the German text for the Mass in C in a letter to Breitkopf und Härtel dated 16 January 1811 (Sieghard Brandenburg, ed., *Ludwig van Beethoven Briefwechsel Gesamtausgabe* 484 [Munich: G. Henle, 1996], vol. 2, 176–77).

Who can name you, who comprehend you?
Eternal one!—Alas, unmeasured,
Unnameable is your might!
We only stammer with childlike babbling
The name of God.

The reviewer cannot be the first to notice what a bad effect the "worship" makes right at the beginning. The poet could, perhaps, following the words of the original, have said only: "Deep in the dust we pray to you, Lord, have mercy on us."[14] The reviewer, who certainly does not mean to deny the skill of the German poet, finds proof on every page of the judgment he made above. He will stop here, however, since he is convinced that every musician, and every connoisseur, who carries within himself the true nature of sacred music and of the texts appropriate to it will agree with him, and will make use of the Latin original when not constrained by unavoidable circumstances.

[14]Hoffmann complains about the misplaced accent in the German word "anbeten" in the phrase "Tief im Staub anbeten wir" (which replaces "Kyrie eleison"), and suggests "Tief im Staube beten wir" as more metrically correct.

86.2.

"News. Mannheim. Overview of the Summer Half-Year from April to September 1815."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 17**
(15 November 1815): 776.[1]

. . . Among the larger vocal pieces at these concerts that deserve to be mentioned are Mozart's *Masonic Cantata*;[2] Vogler's *Praise of Harmony*, as an arrangement of Rousseau's Trichordium;[3] and several movements from the Mass by Beethoven in C (published by Breitkopf und Härtel).

Sacred music. The last-mentioned Mass was performed anew in the church, and was then repeated. Even in this area Beethoven shines as a star of the first magnitude. The work proclaims itself as inspired in all of its parts. The originality of the ideas, and the noble demeanor, in which (with hardly any exceptions) only the sacred is to be seen, do not allow this judgment to be doubted for a moment. It is hard to pick out any details from such a whole. However, the reviewer obtains the pleasure of recollection by indicating the feelings that were irresistibly awakened by the individual movements: the exaltation by means of which the heart is led to devotion in the *Kyrie*; the expression of greatness and power in the *Gloria* and the fugal closing passages on *Cum sancto* and *et vitam*; entreaty in the middle movement of the *Gloria, Qui tollis*. In the quartet, *Benedictus*, the soul tarries, sunk in praise of the Eternal One, while the theme continuously returns in all harmonic configurations. The transition from the pious litany of the *Agnus Dei* into the *Dona nobis pacem*, which overflows with comfort and joy, has an indescribable effect.

[1]The first sentence of this excerpt from a lengthy news section concludes a report describing four summer concerts by the Gesellschaft der Museum, one of several early-19th-century organizations aimed at promoting middle-class musical life in Mannheim.

Also performed were Beethoven's Second Symphony and the Egmont music. The concerts are not detailed individually.

[2]This was probably "Laut verkünde unsre Freude," K. 263, written in November 1791: one of several works that Mozart wrote for his Masonic lodge toward the end of his life.

[3]This unusual work was reviewed by Gottfried Weber in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 17 (1815), 513–18. Georg Joseph Vogler had apparently taken it as a challenge to write an extended work for choir and orchestra based on a simple Romance that Jean-Jacques Rousseau had written as a demonstration of a melody with a range of only three notes. Rousseau's melody was set to a new text, by a Professor Meissner, and used as a *cantus firmus* in a variety of different settings. The work was published by Johann André at Offenbach in 1799.

86.3.

"Musical Association in Passau."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(25 September 1816): 673.

Let the considerable progress that our orchestra has now made be proven, not just by the praise that is generally given to it, but rather, as above, through simple, indisputable facts. This summer Beethoven was our most honored favorite. Approximately a decade and a half had passed since any new musical composition of significance had stumbled into Passau. For this reason, we were not a little astounded this and the previous year by the progress of musical composition, and by the further development of taste that had gone on in the meantime. Much surprised us as new that actually could already almost be counted as old if considered according to the length of its existence. Thus our sensibilities were not at first receptive to genuine novelty. In this way, for example, we received Beethoven's grand Mass in C major. We certainly recognized a rare spirit in it, but we found this spirit to be only impudent and bizarre. However, after the sixth and seventh rehearsals—for we had so many that we became familiar not only with the letter of the work, but with its spirit as well—the magnificent genius was revealed to us, who with a mighty abundance of power unfolds a harmonic brilliance and majesty as scarcely any other has done before him. So as not to wear out the magnificent work too quickly, we performed it only two more times in the church, and those on particularly solemn feasts.

86.4.

"News. Leipzig."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 19**
(21 May 1817): 355.[1]

13 March …
Mass by L. van Beethoven, Leipzig, printed by Breitkopf und Härtel. If one turns one's back on what for centuries has been acknowledged as the sacred style, then one must praise several portions of this work highly, particularly in the Credo. It was performed as it deserved to be.

[1]The concert described here began with a symphony in E-flat major by Anton Eberl (ca. 1765–1807), followed by the Beethoven. The program continued with a piano concerto in C-sharp minor by Ferdinand Ries, with Friedrich Schneider playing the solo part (he probably directed the orchestra as well), and concluded with an overture in E major by Fränzl—probably Ferdinand Fränzl (1767–1833). One of the soloists in the Beethoven was Marianne Tromlitz Wieck, Clara Schumann's mother.

86.5.

"Sacred Music."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung besonderer Rücksicht auf den österreichischen Kaiserstaat* 1**
(20 November 1817): 401–2.[1]

On 26 October Beethoven's grand Mass was given. This little known, very peculiar, and yet sacred composition was performed by an orchestra of eighty people with such perfection as one is accustomed to hear only from practiced orchestras. …

The sensible choice of the conductor, Mr. Franz Xav. Gebauer,[2] and the already mentioned qualities of the other participants, assure us that we will hear many more works that do not simply deafen or flatter the ear, but elevate the spirit.

[1]This is an excerpt from a description of performances of sacred music given that year at the Imperial Royal Hof-Augustiner-Pfarr-Kirche, which also included works by Joseph and Michael Haydn, Mozart, Johann Gottlieb Naumann, Ignaz Seyfried, Vincenzo Righini, and Gottfried Weber.

[2]Franz Xaver Gebauer (1784–1822) directed the choir at the Augustinerkirche in Vienna, whose performances he raised to a very high standard. Two years after the performance described here, he began a new concert series, the *Concerts spirituels*, which focused on choral and symphonic music at a time when these were becoming less fashionable; many works of Beethoven were included in these programs. Beethoven himself referred to Gebauer somewhat disdainfully as "Geh! Bauer" (Go! peasant). See Thayer-Forbes, 770–71.

Op. 87. Trio for Two Oboes and English Horn in C Major

87.1.

Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung 11
(16 November 1808): col. 108–10.[1]

These three are one; only the title designates this one piece as being for three kinds of instruments, and it is not immediately clear for exactly which ones the composer actually wrote this trio. The length, arrangement, and also several figures might almost lead one to believe, at least in comparison to the other instruments, that it was first written for string instruments. On closer examination, however, one does not doubt that the composer may originally have written it for oboes and bassoon. The reviewer does not believe that this celebrated composer would have wished to write simultaneously for different instruments whose range and effect are so distinct; the substitution seems to him more likely to stem from someone else. Certainly, though, this trio can just as well be played by clarinets instead of oboes, and, without losing much, by string instruments, even if it is not suitable to the greater range of those instruments. Which is the original, however, should be indicated in the title.

Under whatever circumstances and at whatever time this little work may have been written, we nevertheless find that it is of no little value. It is a happy painting tossed off with a light but capable and accomplished hand, which certainly satisfies no great demand but makes none either. It contains no bold, sublime ideas, but rather agreeable ones, and, as everything is now assembled, makes up an attractive whole. Never does one observe an incongruity, never anything affected or unnatural, and it thus provides, for all its artistry, an agreeable, untroubled, if not elevated enjoyment. The small number of instruments, and also the simplicity of the three-voice writing, will make it seem to many to be less substantial than it is. It is certainly not difficult to perform on any of the three instruments, but it nevertheless demands, if it is to be effective, accomplished players who know how to perform their parts

[1] Op. 87 was written in 1795 and published in April 1806 by Artaria in Vienna; it was not published in score until 1848. The trio was originally announced as Op. 29, although this number did not appear on the title page; the opus number 87 was assigned by Hofmeister in 1819. The present review refers to three transcriptions published by Simrock in Bonn in 1806–1807 for two violins and violoncello, two oboes and bassoon, and two clarinets and bassoon (the latter two as a single edition, with parts for either oboes or clarinets). The reviewer is apparently unaware that none of these arrangements is the original.

tastefully and pleasantly. Due to the abundance of short notes, which are less idiomatic to these wind instruments, they must be particularly practiced in staccato playing, and they should also have great stamina, since, like most recent quartets for string instruments, it consists of four movements, which likewise are drawn out to rather great length.

Op. 88. Song "Das Glück der Freundschaft"

88.1.

"Brief Notices."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 6**
(13 June 1804): 626.[1]

A well-chosen little poem, through-composed, and in style certainly approaching a simpler rondo. The composer took it up tenderly and warmly and gave it back splendidly. The little work is as it should be—nothing further needs to be said, but is that not enough? Various editions appeared simultaneously at various publishers; the reviewer cannot find out which is the authentic one. The one by Simrock named above has a pretty exterior, and one by Hoffmeister and Kühnel has, apart from this, an Italian adaptation next to the German text.

[1]The song "Das Glück der Freundschaft" was completed in 1803 and first published in October of that year, without an opus number, by Löschenkohl in Vienna. The previously vacant opus number 88 was assigned to it by Artaria in 1819. This review refers to the edition by Simrock in Bonn, which was issued later in 1803, as was the Hoffmeister and Kühnel edition, which included German and Italian texts and listed the title as "Lebensglück (Vita felice)."

Op. 90. Piano Sonata in E Minor

90.1.

"Review."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(24 January 1816): 60–61.[1]

(Mentioned: Piano sonatas in E major and G major, Op. 14, nos. 1 and 2)

The eviewer takes great satisfaction in calling attention to this new sonata. It is one of the most simple, melodious, expressive, comprehensible and *gentle* among all of those that we owe to Mr. B. Whoever knows his two magnificent earlier keyboard sonatas, printed together as Op. 14—and what good keyboard player does not know them!—will find it sufficient characterization of this new one, as regards character and manner of writing, if we say that it resembles those. The first movement, though, is less consistently worked out (it more closely resembles free improvisation), and is much more sharply inflated in regard to harmony and modulation, so that some passages, particularly p. 9, system 4, mm. 1–, and p. 13, system 4, mm. 3–6, even when treated delicately, are scarcely endurable, even if one ignores all the rules and queries the ear alone.[2] But who is not happy to ignore individual details of this kind–particularly since the master by no means lets them slip by negligently, but rather openly glories in them, accepts no contradiction, and consequently will have to submit to the judgment of time as to whether things of this kind will become customary, and hence sanctioned? Who, I say, is not happy to ignore such details if, as here, he can rejoice in so much spirit, feeling, originality and attentiveness to extraordinary effects of good playing and a good instrument in the piece as a whole! These superiorities cannot be shown through individual demonstrations and examples, since they run through the entire piece, and every excerpt from it only looks and functions as it should in its place, in its context. With Mr. v. B.'s music, however, such demonstrations and examples, even if they were possible, seem completely unnecessary, and a general description, such as we give here, seems sufficient. These further observations, however, do belong here: 1) the sonata consists (unfortunately) of only two movements: an Allegro, full of effects, whose tempo should not be rushed, 3/4 time, E

[1]The sonata Op. 90 was written in 1814 and first published in June 1815 by Steiner in Vienna. This review refers to the print released simultaneously by Breitkopf und Härtel in Leipzig.
[2]This refers to mm. 48–51 and 188–91 of the second movement, in which the hands play simultaneous trill-like figures written in such a way as to produce a constant dissonance of a major second.

minor; and a very lyrical rondo, which likewise should not be taken too fast, 2/4 time, E major; 2) with two passages excepted, it is one of the easiest of all those by Beethoven in regard to mechanical dexterity, and finger technique in particular, though it demands all possible care in regard to the performance of individual passages and the spirit of the whole; 3) it is very well engraved.

90.2.

"Literary Notices."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung für den österreichischen Kaiserstaat* 3**
(30 July 1819): 483–84.[1]

High originality, which sometimes truly borders on the peculiar, characterizes all the works of the ingenious composer. In so saying, we have also described this work, which stands worthily by the side of its ancestors and descendants in terms of peculiarity, striking turns of phrase, and a strange, but nonetheless consequential working out. Practiced with precision, and declaimed with all the nuances in the author's spirit, it will excite no little interest, and will only raise the veneration for the sublime talent of its creator to new heights.

[1]This review refers to the first edition, published by Steiner in Vienna in June 1815.

Op. 91. *Wellington's Sieg oder die Schlacht bei Vittoria* (*Wellington's Victory*)

91.1.

"Grand Musical Performance."
***Wiener allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1**
(15 December 1813): 747–50.[1]

(With 7th symphony, Op. 92)

The 8th and 12th of December of this year belong among the most memorable days in the history of Austrian art. On both, Vienna's most eminent musical artists united in the imperial royal university hall and undertook the performance of the two most recent works of Mr. von Beethoven, under his personal direction. There was a grand symphony and a special self-contained instrumental composition written on Wellington's Victory in the Battle of Victoria. The perfection of the symphonies of Mr. v. Beethoven, the greatest instrumental composer of our time, is acknowledged. This most recent one earns the ingenious composer no less admiration than the previous ones. It may even have a significant advantage over these in that, while not inferior to them in regard to compositional artifice, it is so clear in all its parts, so pleasing and easily comprehensible in all its themes, that every friend of music, without even being a connoisseur, is powerfully drawn in by its beauty, and burns with enchantment. Analysis of the individual details of this symphony, for all the trouble it would demand, would never be sufficient to sketch out a picture of the whole for those of our readers who were not present at its performance. The evaluation of works of art requires that they be observed without mediation. While Mr. v. Beethoven did not himself specify the character of this symphony, as he has with several others,[2] if we may nevertheless be allowed to anticipate him in this regard and specify our unauthoritative opinion, we would observe that the various parts of it seem to us to belong together in one romantic rhythm of melodies.

The second composition by Mr. v. Beethoven belongs in the category of tone paintings. It is the most accomplished one that art has to show in this area. The approach of the two opposing armies is expressed by national marches (the melodies of the songs Brittania

[1]This and the next three entries describe the "Akademien" of 8 and 12 December 1813, at which *Wellington's Victory*, which had been written earlier that year in celebration of the defeat of Napoleon, and the 7th symphony, written in 1811–1812, were introduced to the Viennese public, initiating a period in which Beethoven enjoyed broad-based popularity for the first time in his life. The correspondent perhaps reflects this new status by referring to him as "von Beethoven": the first time this erroneous designation of Beethoven as a member of the nobility appears in any of the reviews collected here.
[2]The only symphonies so characterized by Beethoven are no. 3, the "Eroica," and no. 6, the "Pastoral."

Rule and Marlborough),[3] whereupon the murderous tumult of battle begins. One hears the thunder of the cannons, the clatter of small weapons fire; everything is the most furious motion. With a storm march the armies advance on one another; the laments of the wounded cut through the roar of the fiery abyss. Gradually victory is determined, the defeated retreat to a plaintive repetition of the Marlborough march, isolated cannon shots resound faintly from the distance. A magnificent symphony, in which the jubilation of the English army is expressed in Handel's well-known folk song God Save the King,[4] announces complete victory.

The friendship of Mr. v. Beethoven for the organizer of the academy, Mr. Mälzel, moved him to dedicate his talent to a lesser-known area of musical composition. He sketched out the ideal form of a battle, with a symphony of victory for the latter to use to his advantage during his stay in London.[5] This friendly disposition toward one who is likewise a great artist in his sphere is undoubtedly the only thing that induced Mr. v. Beethoven to undertake this work, for Mr. v. Beethoven is as well or better convinced than anyone else that painting with notes in order to illustrate natural events or human actions is an inferior objective for musical art.

Both compositions were performed by Vienna's most outstanding musical artists (approximately one hundred in number), with Mr. v. Beethoven directing the whole, and Mr. Schuppanzigh directing from the first violin, with such expression, power and precision, that the former, deeply moved, confessed that this was the *non plus ultra* of art, and that he knew of no demand to make of an orchestra that was practicing his compositions which this one had not perfectly satisfied. Truly the greatest praise that any orchestra has ever earned! when one considers the difficulties, certainly motivated by gigantic effects, of a work by Beethoven and the equally strict demands of this great master in regard to execution. It was noteworthy as well, however, to see how, with a sense of the importance of the task that had been undertaken, everything worked together with fervor and love for the highly treasured composer, how he led his works in transfigured enchantment, how every expression of piano and forte, of accelerando and ritardando passed through every single artist, contributing with heightened attentiveness, and the ideal form of Beethoven's creation thus seemed to proceed from out of him.

If we may, in conclusion, draw closer attention to the impresario, the most famously well-known imperial royal court mechanic, Mr. Mälzel, who took advantage of this opportunity

[3]"Marlborough s'en va-t-en guerre" is the tune known to most English speakers as "For he's a jolly good fellow"; it is used by Beethoven to characterize the French armies, as is "Rule Brittania" to characterize those of the British. The writer gives the title of the latter in English with the words transposed.

[4]The term folksong (*Volkslied*) is here used in the sense of "national song"—that is, a song expressing the identity of the British people. There is no evidence, though, that "God Save the King" was written by Handel.

[5]TBeethoven's friendship with Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (17721838), the inventor of the metronome, forms the background for this composition. Actually, it was Maelzel who sketched out the plan of the work, which he intended to perform with his mechanical orchestra, the Panharmonicon. Maelzel then suggested to Beethoven that he orchestrate it as a crowd-pleaser for these benefit concerts, which were intended to raise money for a proposed trip to London. Maelzel's later attempt to assert his sole ownership of the piece led to a quarrel with Beethoven and a lengthy legal battle.

to let his mechanical military trumpeter be heard with great applause as an intermezzo,[6] let it be with no little attention to his ceaseless activity, his untiring zeal, which no obstacle can hinder (the act of uniting so many artists in great Vienna in a common task necessitates attention to both of these), and his patriotic disposition, by virtue of which he only demanded the friendly participation of the local virtuosos in order that the proceeds of the performance, which through the liberality of Vienna's generous residents turned out to be quite significant, despite the high admission prices of ten and five florins, might go to support the imperial Austrian and royal Bavarian soldiers who were disabled in the battle of Hanau. Although all the artists who participated without pay have an unmitigated share in this benevolent gift and in the thanks of the soldiers whom it benefits, it is particularly praiseworthy of Mr. Mälzel to have given occasion for it through so many sacrifices.[7]

The applause with which this performance was received is indescribable. The strongest proof of this is the fact that, contrary to the impresario's original intentions, it had to be repeated (on 12 December) by popular demand. Mr. von Beethoven's fame obtained a new basis from it; at each presentation he was received with enthusiasm.

[6]The mechanical trumpeter was another of Maelzel's inventions. In between the two Beethoven works, it performed two marches, by Jan Ladislav Dussek and Ignaz Pleyel.

[7]This is rather different from the account given in Thayer-Forbes, which suggests that Maelzel conceived these concerts as a way of raising money to support a trip to London, while the idea of a benefit was secondary. See Thayer-Forbes, 559–67.

91.2.

"Vienna."
***Wiener Zeitung* no. 198**
(20 December 1813).

(With 7th symphony, Op. 92)

The local citizen and court mechanic Johann Mälzel, celebrated for his mechanical artistic skill, for the panharmonicon that he invented,[1] and for other works of art, intends to set out on a journey to England with some of the works of his artistry, and wanted to give the local public yet another proof of his respect beforehand, tying this together with a patriotic-benevolent purpose. Hence, he obtained as a friendly gift from our celebrated composer, Ludwig v. Beethoven, for whom the occasion to lay down his art on the altar of the fatherland was at this time very welcome, a grand instrumental composition for full orchestra, newly composed by him, which has as its subject Wellington's victory at Victoria. At Mr. Mälzel's request, he showed the most select practicing artists of this imperial city, inspired by one disposition, to be equally eager to take on even subordinate parts, without regard to their fame and the rank due to their artistic skill, in order to expound the genius of this composition of the celebrated composer in all its perfection.

Thus was an artistic festival given on the 8th of this month, in the hall of the university, with the proceeds designated for the Austrian and Bavarian soldiers disabled in the battle of Hanau. It was unique of its kind due to the overpowering beauty of Beethoven's composition and the perfect performance by more than one hundred virtuosos of the first rank, among whom the imperial royal court conductor Salieri did not find it beneath himself to give the beat of the drums and cannon fire, while Ludwig Spohr and Mayseder, each of whom has been raised to the highest station by his artistic ability, took second and third positions, Hummel struck the bass drum, and Siboni, Giuliani, and other celebrated artistic names occupied subordinate places,[2] due to Mr. Mälzel's artificial trumpeter, and finally due to the unanimously enthusiastic applause of all the listeners.

[1]The panharmonicon was the name of the mechanical orchestra for which *Wellington's Victory* was originally conceived.
[2]Giuseppe Siboni (1780–1839) was a prominent tenor. It is unclear how he contributed to the performance. Mauro Giuliani (1781–1829) was the best-known guitarist of his day and also a composer. He played cello on this occasion.

The performance consisted of a grand symphony, completely newly composed by Mr. v. Beethoven, after which Mr. Mälzel let his mechanical trumpeter be heard, to whose playing the orchestra performed an accompaniment composed by Dussek and Pleyel, and it closed with the above-mentioned instrumental piece by Beethoven, in two parts, of which the first has as its subject Wellington's battle and the second his victory at Victoria.

The applause that Beethoven's powerful compositions, which he himself directed, and the foremost artists of the imperial city, united for this occasion by artistic fervor and the cause of the fatherland, received from all listeners, mounted to enchantment. The continuous clapping necessitated the repetition of several pieces of music from the Beethoven compositions, and finally the repeated presentation of this entire musical undertaking. The union of artists, ever animated by the same disposition, was prepared to do this, and thus on the 12th of December the repetition was given before an even more numerous and imposing gathering of art lovers, and was received with equally unanimous applause.

At the head of the first violins stood the highly celebrated artist and chamber virtuoso to Count Razumovsky, Mr. Schuppanzigh, who seemed to sweep the orchestra along with him with his fiery, expressive playing. Among the other artists who played one observed Messrs. Bellonci, the brothers v. Blumenthal, Bogner, Breymann, Dragonetti, Dreßler, Fridlovsky, Gebauer, Gerling, Gottlieb, Hänsel, Hanschka, Hummel, the brothers Kail, Kraft, father and son, Lieber, Linke, Mayseder, Maverbar, Moscheles, Pechatschek, Pixis, Romberg, Salieri, Schlesinger, Siboni, Sina, Louis Spohr, Weis, and other consummate artists, all of whom there is not space to name.[3]

The net receipts of both performances, after the unavoidable costs were deducted, came to 4,000 guldens, which will be respectfully presented to the war presidio for the purpose mentioned above.

[3]Josef von Blumenthal (1782–1849) was a violinist and composer. Breymann might be Joseph Breymann (1761–1831), who was a contributor to the *Allegemeine musikalische Zeitung mit besonderer Rücksicht auf den österreichischen Kaiserstaat* (and perhaps the author of 90.2, above), but apparently not a professional musician. Domenico Dragonetti (1763–1846) was an Italian double bass player and composer. Peter Hänsel (1770–1831) was a German violinist and composer. Pixis could be either Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis (1785–1842), a violinist and composer, or his brother, Johann Peter Pixis (1788–874), a pianist and composer. Schlesinger might be the publisher Adolf Martin Schlesinger (1769–1838). Linke, Mayseder, and both Krafts were at different times members of the "Schuppanzigh Quartet," which introduced many of Beethoven's string quartets. This was an impressive list, constituting a who's who of prominent musicians living in and visiting Vienna at the time.

91.3.

"News. Vienna. Concerts."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 16**
(26 January 1814): 70–71.

(With 7th symphony, Op. 92)

Concerts. The friends of musical art received one of the most interesting and highest enjoyments on the 8th and 12th on the occasion of a concert in the great hall of the new university building. The impresario was the most famously celebrated imperial royal court mechanic, Mr. Mälzel, and the receipts (tickets were 10 and 5 florins W. W.)[1] were designated for the benefit of the imperial Austrian and royal Bavarian soldiers disabled at the battle of Hanau under the command of Mr. General the Cavalier, Count von Wrede.[2] The pieces of music heard there were: 1) A completely new symphony (A major) by Mr. L. van Beethoven. 2) Two marches for the trumpet by Dussek and Pleyel, accompanied by the full orchestra, performed by the well-known mechanical military trumpeter of Mr. Mälzel. 3) A grand instrumental composition by Mr. van Beethoven titled *Wellington's Victory at the Battle of Victoria*, of which the first part makes up the battle, the second the symphony of victory. Long honored here and abroad as one of the greatest instrumental composers, Mr. v. B. celebrated his triumph at these performances. A bounteous orchestra, made up entirely of the most eminent local musical artists, had truly united in a common effort, without compensation, out of patriotic fervor and deeply felt gratitude for the blessed success of the combined German exertions in the present war. Under the direction of the composer, it provided, with its precise cooperation, a general satisfaction that rose to the level of enthusiasm. Above all, the new symphony mentioned above deserved this great applause and the extraordinarily good reception that it obtained. One must hear this most recent work of B.'s genius for oneself, and probably also as well performed as it was performed here, in order to be able to appreciate its beauties fully and fully enjoy it. After hearing it twice, the reviewer considers this symphony

[1]In other words, Wiener Währung. For an explanation of this and other currency terms, see the section on Viennese and European Currencies, 1792–1827 in Wayne Senner, Robin Wallace, and William Meredith, eds., *The Critical Reception of Beethoven's Compositions by His German Contemporaries*, vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), xv–xvii.

[2]Carl Philipp von Wrede (1767–1838) was a Bavarian officer who initially allied with Napoleon but later joined the coalition against him. He represented Bavaria at the Congress of Vienna (*Dictionary of German Biography*, 10:618).

to be the richest in melody, the most pleasing and most comprehensible of all B.'s symphonies. Nor did it lack that solid working-out and elaboration of the principal ideas that we are accustomed to finding in the other works of this master. If it is well performed, anyone anywhere who simply pays attention to it must find it as appealing as could be desired. The Andante (A minor) had to be repeated each time, and enchanted connoisseurs and nonconnoisseurs. As regards the battle: if one has to attempt to express it through musical notes, then one will have to do it in just the way that it has been done here. Once one accepts the idea, one is happily astonished by the abundance of artistic means, and even more by the ingenious use of them to this purpose. The effect, indeed the very illusion itself, is completely extraordinary, and it can be maintained without any deliberation that there exists nothing in the domain of musical painting that can equal it. That, however, the composer's rich, magnificent spirit resolved for once upon such a work finds even further justification, if it needs another such, in the fact that Mr. Mälzel, Mr. v. B.'s friend, intends to make an artistic journey to London, for which purpose and for which public this work is primarily designated. With this in mind, the favorite national songs of the British: *Rule Brittania*, *Marlborough*, and *God Save the King*, are also introduced both before and after the noisy din of battle, and with great success. By the way, we hardly need to add that the musical laity was completely alarmed and astonished by this work, and did not know at all what was happening, but that the connoisseurs placed the preceding symphony far above it as a nobler, purer work of art. And this is only appropriate: every expression of true genius, even the most unusual, that is great and powerful of its kind should receive due recognition: however, distinctions must be maintained! Schiller's *Räuber* is one thing, his *Wallenstein* and *Tell* another![3] Beethoven, by the way, to the satisfaction of all true friends of art, received at each appearance renewed proof of the great interest and appreciation of the countless members of the audience, which was estimable in every regard.

[3]Though perhaps not as well respected as the other two works mentioned, Friedrich Schiller's first play, *Die Räuber* of 1780, which deals with "disappointed filial love, fraternal hatred and (planned) patricide," was a sensational success at its first appearance in 1782 and for many years afterward (*Dictionary of German Biography*, 8:674). It served as the basis of Giuseppe Verdi's opera *I masnadieri*.

91.4.

"News. Vienna."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 16**
(5 March 1814): 201–2.[1]

(With 7th symphony, Op. 92; 8th symphony, Op. 93;
and "Tremate, empi, tremate," Op. 116)

On the 27th Mr. Louis van Beethoven gave for the second time a concert for his own benefit in the grand Redoutensaal. All the pieces of music were of his composition. 1) Once again the new symphony (A major) that has been so favorably received. Its reception was just as lively as the first ones; the Andante (A minor), the crown of recent instrumental music, had to be repeated as always. 2) A completely new Italian trio (B-flat major), beautifully performed by Mrs. Milder-Hauptmann, Mr. Siboni, and Mr. Weinmüller, is at first conceived entirely in the Italian style, but ends with a fiery Allegro in Beethoven's own style.[2] It met with approval. 3) A completely new symphony never heard before (F major, 3/4 time). The listeners' greatest attention seemed to be directed to the *newest* product of B.'s muse, and everything was eager expectation. After *one* hearing, however, they were not sufficiently satisfied, and the applause that it received was not accompanied by that enthusiasm by which a work is distinguished that has pleased overall. In short, it made—as the Italians say—no furore. The reviewer is of the opinion that the reason by no means lies in a weaker or less artistic treatment (for here too, as in all of B.'s works, breathes that unique spirit by which his originality always asserts itself), but partly in the ill-considered determination to let this symphony follow the one in A major, partly in the surfeit caused by having already enjoyed so

[1]The concert described here took place on 27 February 1814 and featured the first performances of the 8th symphony, Op. 93, and of the trio "Tremate, empi, tremate," Op. 116.

[2]The trio "Tremate, empi, tremate" had actually been sketched in 1801–1802, but it was not completed until 1814, in preparation for this concert. It was not performed again until July 1824, at the repetition of the "Akademie" at which the 9th symphony and portions of the *Missa Solemnis* were premiered, and it was not published until February 1826, by Steiner in Vienna.

Regarding Pauline Anna Milder-Hauptmann (1785–1838), see the various descriptions of her performances of the role of Fidelio in vol. 2. of Wayne Senner, Robin Wallace, and William Meredith, eds., *The Critical Reception of Beethoven's Compositions* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001). Giuseppe Siboni (1780–1839) was an Italian tenor who is possibly also mentioned in connection with the first performances of *Wellington's Victory* in 91.2. Carl Friedrich Clemens Weinmüller (1764–1828) also sang the role of Rocco at the revival of Fidelio a few months later.

much that was beautiful and first-rate, which naturally resulted in exhaustion. If this symphony in the future is given *alone*, we have no doubts that it will succeed auspiciously. 4) In conclusion *Wellington's Victory at the Battle of Victoria* was given once again, and the first half, *The Battle*, had to be repeated. The performance left nothing to be desired; the gathering was also very numerous.

91.5.

"News. Munich, 10 April."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 16**
(27 April 1814): 291.[1]

We would not speak of Mr. Mälzel's automaton, the well-known trumpeter, if on the occasion of its being displayed at the theater on the 16th and 17th Beethoven's Battle Symphony of Victoria, about which we had read so much in the public papers, had not been performed by our orchestra. A preference for native works of art is certainly not among our weaknesses. Nevertheless, Mr. v. Beeth.'s composition seems to be only an occasional work, upon which he employed little exertion. With no particular preparation, it begins right off with a cannonade, and then describes the ingredients of a battle, while our Winter, in the composition mentioned in the previous report, introduces the subject with much forethought, wins over the listeners and speaks more to their spirit. *God Save the King* was certainly worthy of being worked out nobly and greatly, but was played only with imitations and figurations that pale into insignificance. By unanimous judgment, which was already expressed at the rehearsals, Mr. v. Beethoven's originality is this time inferior to Winter's academically correct form.

[1] In this report Op. 91 is contrasted with the *Schlachtsymphonie* by Peter von Winter (1754–1825), whose first performance was described on pp. 75–76 of the same volume of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. Winter's work, which was first published by Breitkopf und Härtel, is reprinted in Barry Brook, ed., *The Symphony: 1720–1840*, Series C, Volume 11 (New York: Garland, 1982). In addition to the usual orchestral forces, it calls for piccolos, bass drum, snare drum, four timpani, six horns, four trumpets, three trombones, and a four-part choir. At its premiere the performance included about three hundred people. Except for the text, which provides verbal commentary on the stages of the battle being described, it is similar in layout to the Beethoven, including a trumpet call, march, battle depiction with cannons and platoon fire, and a march of victory. After a performance in Leipzig, it was described in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18 (1816), 606, as "far more popular and simple than the Beethoven, and more easily understood by a mixed audience"—a surprising comment given the fact that Op. 91 was by far Beethoven's most popular composition during his lifetime.

91.6.

"Austria."
Kölnische Zeitung, no. 184
(10 December 1814).[1]

(With 7th symphony, Op. 92, and "Der glorreiche Augenblick," Op. 136)

The court newspaper relates the following: "On the 30th around midday Mr. Ludwig van Beethoven provided all friends of musical art and of his musical compositions an enchanting enjoyment. He gave at the imperial royal Redouten-Saal his beautiful musical representation of Wellington's victory at Victoria, preceded by the symphony written to accompany it. Between these two pieces a new cantata was inserted, written by Doctor Aloys Weißenbach[2] and set to music by Mr. v. Beethoven, titled *Der glorreiche Augenblick*, in which the fiery spirit of one of Germany's most treasured poets moved in step to attain the goal of perfection. The individual parts were undertaken by Mrs. Milder-Hauptmann, Miss Bondra, Mr. Forti, and Mr. Wild, of the imperial royal theater.[3] The applause was unanimous; however, as Vienna sang:

> What is high and exalted upon the earth
> Has assembled within my walls!
> The breast throbs! The tongue stammers!
> I am Europe–no longer a city,

[1]This concert, which included the premiere of *Der glorreiche Augenblick*, Op. 136, is also described in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 16 (1814), 867–68. That report, which says the concert took place on 29 November, with a repetition on 2 December, appears in Robin Wallace, ed., *The Critical Reception of Beethoven's Compositions by His German Contemporaries, Op. 126 to WoO 140* (Boston: Center for Beethoven Research, Boston University, 2018), as 136.1 (https://www.bu.edu/beethovencenter/files/2017/06/crit_recep_beethoven_op126_to_WoO140_feb21-2.pdf).

[2]Alois Weißenbach (1766–1821) was a Viennese surgeon and military officer. He had established himself as a playwright and poet before writing the text of Beethoven's cantata (*Dictionary of German Biography*, 10:432).

[3]With the exception of Franz Wild (1791–1860), author of a famous description of Beethoven's conducting, all of these singers also took part in performances of *Fidelio* described in vol. 2 of Senner, Wallace, and Meredith, *Critical Reception*.

and as the sibyl and the genius sang:

> There is no eye
> That does not encounter its prince!

and the other two voices entered with:

> No heart is near
> Which does not bless the father of the country;

enchantment broke forth from all present with the loudest applause, which completely drowned out the composer's strong accompaniment. The other two compositions likewise received the customary unanimous applause. The entire highest court, the sovereigns who were in residence, and the foreign queens honored the performance of this music with their presence.

91.7.

"Reviews."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(10 April 1816): 241–50.[1]

The extended reputation which this work has received through repeated and successful performances in Vienna and London has long made the friends of musical art, and of Beethoven's genius in particular, eager to see it in print. The worthy publisher who has caused seven different editions of it to appear—namely, apart from the full score, in parts for the whole orchestra; as a quintet for string instruments; as a trio for pianoforte, violin and violoncello; for pianoforte both four and two hands; and arranged as a complete piece of Turkish music—deserves the thanks of our time and of posterity for this costly undertaking, whereby he has endeavored to increase the fame of the admirable composer and to gratify the wishes of all music lovers.

The score establishes anew B.'s many-sided talent, his original ideas and points of view, and the working-out that, of its kind, is so unique to him, so disdainful of everything commonplace, so rich in art. Without even mentioning all of this, what rich experience and praiseworthy proficiency the composer of spirit acquires. The work falls into two parts. In the first the battle is joined; in the second victory celebrated. The composer has allowed some

[1]The first published edition of *Wellington's Victory*, which is the subject of this review, was released simultaneously in February 1816 by most of the major music publishers in the German-speaking world. S. A. Steiner and Comp. in Vienna was listed as the primary publisher. The various arrangements mentioned in the opening paragraph, as well as one for two pianos, were released at the same time. The "Turkish" arrangement featured piccolos, flutes, clarinets, oboes, bassoons, contrabassoon, horns, trombone, serpent, and drums.

As the various correspondence reports describing performances of this work make clear, a large-scale orchestral work like this one, calling for unusual performing forces, could only rarely be performed, and then usually only on a single occasion. In the days before broadcasting and recordings, arrangements like these made the music accessible to a broader audience of amateur musicians who wished to hear or perform it at home or in other informal circumstances.

The simultaneous publication of both score and parts, highly unusual at that time, was also a first for a work of Beethoven. All of these factors together testify to the extraordinary significance that was for a short time attached to this work, as do the many accounts of performances excerpted here.

comments on production, the placement of the instruments, and so forth to be printed in the German and French languages, which will serve as guidance for the director.[2]

Invisible drums on the English side form the introduction to the work itself, with which a parade of several trumpets in E-flat is joined, at first very distant, then drawing ever nearer. Then the orchestra (2/4 E-flat) enters quietly with the march (*Rule Brittania*), played by the first wind band, along with janissary music[3] and an obligato principal trumpet, while the drums roll on in a *Crescendo*, and the close is very powerfully reinforced by the entry of the string instruments in the last eight measures. In the same manner the distant drums and trumpet blasts now resound on the French side in C, whereupon the second wind band plays through with increasing force the march *à la Marlborough*, which is then repeated by the full orchestra. The following passage from the second half may partly demonstrate how much B. hates the well-traveled paths, and understands how to ennoble even a trivial street song to some extent, or at least how to make it more interesting, with a single stroke of the pen.

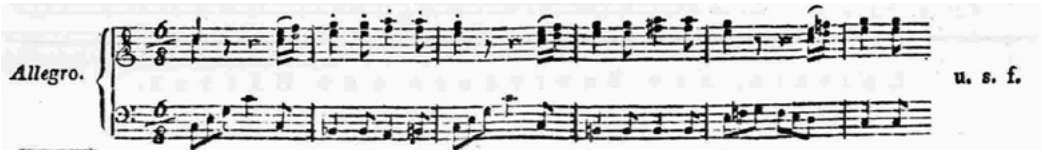

Figure 14. *Op. 91, mm. 38–43, reduction to two staves*

[2]These comments are reprinted in both the old and new *Gesamtausgaben*. Dated "Wien im Dezember 1815" and signed by Beethoven himself, they call for the following:

1. Two separate choirs of wind instruments to play Rule Brittania and Marlborough at the beginning, after which they are to join together. The rest of the orchestra should be as large as possible in relation to them, and all the more so the bigger the room in which the piece is to be performed.
2. "Cannon machines" consisting of two bass drums, as large as possible (these are distinguished from the "Turkish" drums, which are to go in the orchestra), to be placed at a distance from the orchestra proper, one on each side, to represent the English and the French cannons.
3. Machines similar to those used in theaters to produce thunderclaps, to represent small-weapons fire, which are also to be placed on opposite sides, next to the cannon machines. (These are referred to in the text as Ratschen, or "rattles").
4. Trumpets in E-flat and C, respectively, on the English and French sides, near the cannon machines, with four additional trumpets in the orchestra.
5. Two "customary military drums," one on each side, to play the intradas that precede the introductory marches. These are to play for an unspecified time, but not too long, and to begin in the distance and draw closer so as to represent the approach of the troops on the respective sides.

Beethoven also gives detailed characterizations of the tempos for the various sections, calls for a conductor (Kapellmeister) in addition to the first violinist to beat time (something that was still not taken for granted at orchestral performances), and specifies that both wind bands are to play during the symphony of victory, but that the second one should not play during the pianos and solos.

[3]The term *janissary music* refers to the use here of triangles, cymbals, and the "Turkish" drums described by Beethoven in his introductory comments.

After this march the invitation to battle resounds from the French through a trumpet call in C, which is answered by the English with E-flat trumpets, and accordingly the battle is undertaken. Immediately hereafter the full orchestra—namely all the string instruments; the doubled winds with piccolos; four horns, in E-flat and C; four trumpets, in D, E-flat and C; three trombones; drums; and, unseen on opposite sides, yet more trumpets in E-flat and C, two great cannon machines, and two so-called rattles—enters with the greatest force in the harsh key of B major, Allegro, C meter, and modulates with the following chords to C minor and then to C major:

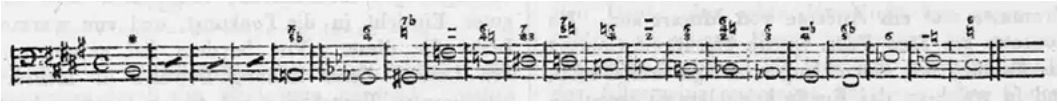

Figure 15. *Op. 91, harmonic reduction of mm. 74–103*

Now the time changes to 3/8 meno Allegro, and beneath the blasting of the C trumpets, after a rising movement through sixteen measures, the violins take up the following figure:

Figure 16. *Op. 91, mm. 130–32, first violin part*

which the basses work against, the second violins giving the downbeat in full chords, the wind instruments giving the second upbeat, while in what follows the same idea mingles with this one:

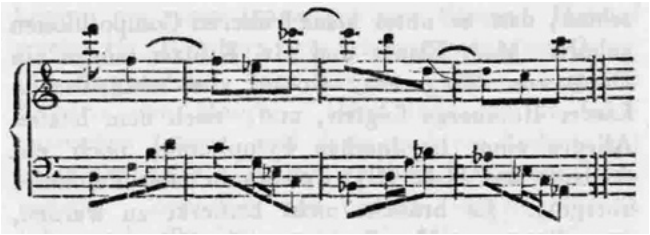

Figure 17. *Op. 91, mm. 150–53, first violin and cello/bass parts*

both of them, by means of inversion, appearing now in the upper, now in the lower voice. After a variety of modulations, the storm march, Allegro assai, now begins amid the battle cries of both armies' trumpets, with a powerful Unisono, reinforced by all the drums:

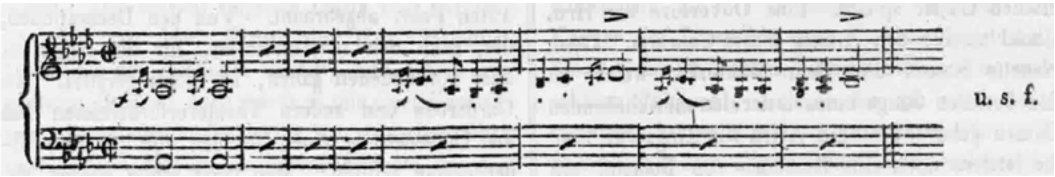

Figure 18. *Op. 91, mm. 200–207, reduction of the string parts*

rises in a quickening tempo up toward A major, B-flat major, B major, and E-flat major, in which key the following Presto then begins:

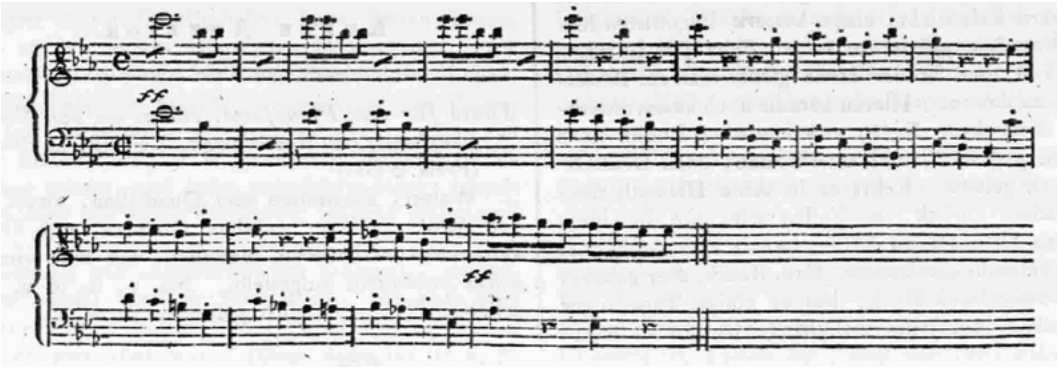

Figure 19. *Op. 91, mm. 242–53, reduction of the string parts*

whose theme is answered by the basses at the lower fifth, by the violins at the fourth above, appearing later broken up and in stretto, to which the wind instruments perform the following figure, while the brass instruments state powerful fundamental notes:

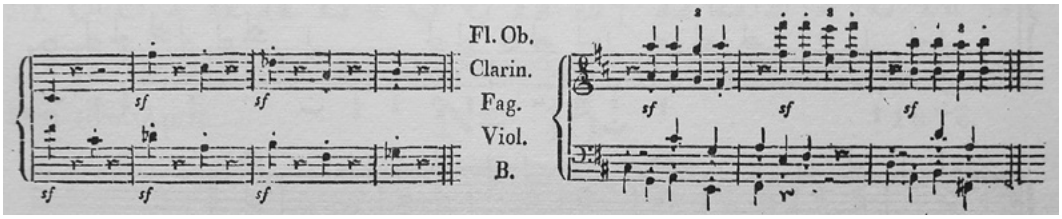

Figure 20. *Op. 91, mm. 266–70, first violin and cello/bass parts, and an inaccurate version of mm. 276–78*

It is impossible to describe the strangeness, unfamiliarity and peculiarity of this use of the instruments, which has certainly never been attempted before. Even in reading it one obtains no very clear concept of it; one absolutely must have heard it oneself, this unruly bustling and raging, this sea of notes whipped up by a raging hurricane, this confused tumult of battle, with all its whining and howling, which nevertheless falls together in one colossal image—in order to stay spiritually in step with the energetic composer's lively imagination. This passage, after which he wanders through more major scales, gradually becoming softer, resolves into a short Andante of seventeen measures (6/8 B minor), in which gloomy key reminiscences of the initially so cheerful march *à la Marlborough* are stated, and certainly very meaningfully, and with which the first part closes, or more properly expires, on a barely perceptible *pizzicato*.[4]

The cannon shots as well as the platoon fire (the rattles) start right at the beginning of the battle and fall alternately upon strong and weak parts of the measure. By the time of the storm march the French small-weapons fire has already stopped; in the last Presto the French

[4]Mm. 346ff; the key is actually F-sharp minor.

cannons gradually become silent, and during the plaintive final Andante one can only hear the dull thundering of the English guns coming from the far distance, as the victorious armies pursue the defeated enemy. With just such a work as this, whose existence and entire purpose is to presuppose the authority of musical painting in the well-known, customary sense of the word, it would be useless to discuss that authority, its limitations, and so forth in general terms. It is enough to say that as it now stands, it could not possibly have been conceived with more fidelity to nature.

The second part, labeled "Siegessinfonie," opens with an intrada in D major by all the string instruments, all the trumpets, and drums, after which the full orchestra enters with a splendid, stately triumphal march in the same key. In the middle of this, the following instrumental passage proclaims the original master:

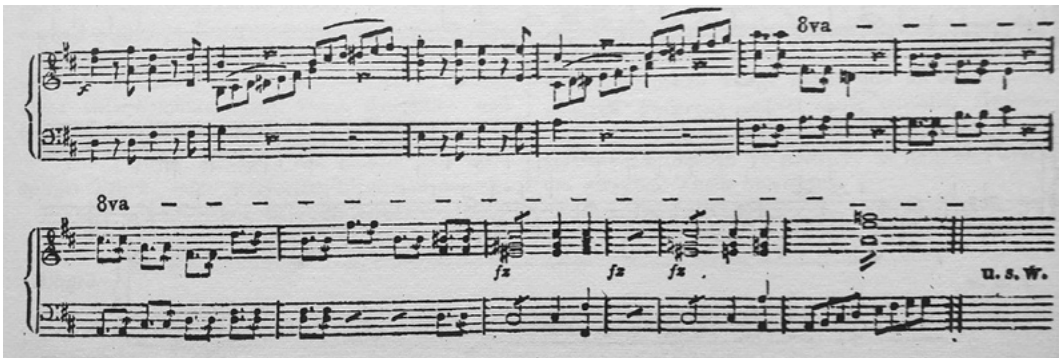

Figure 21. *Op. 91, mm. 385–96, reduction*

At the conclusion of this passage the brass instruments hold the tonic for two measures; then begins an Andante grazioso, B-flat major 3/4, in which first the strings, then the wind instruments state the fundamental tone, whereupon the latter, accompanied *pizzicato* by the former, quietly play the simple folk song *God Save the King* as a prayer of thanks, and through the following *inganno*[5] prepares for the repetition of the preceding victory march in a startling manner:

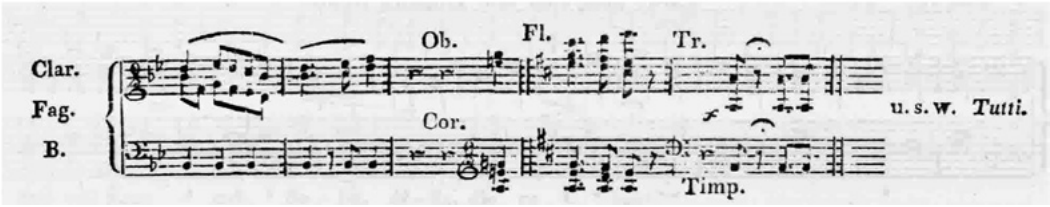

Figure 22. *Op. 91, mm. 435–39*

[5]The Italian word *inganno*, which can also refer to a deceptive cadence, is here used to mean a harmonic trick, or unprepared modulation.

At the end of this repetition the clarinets and horns hold the *dominant* for two measures, whereupon the above-mentioned folk melody begins again in the same key, D major, with the second measure always performed *fortissimo* by the full orchestra, with the conclusion introducing the final tempo in the following manner:

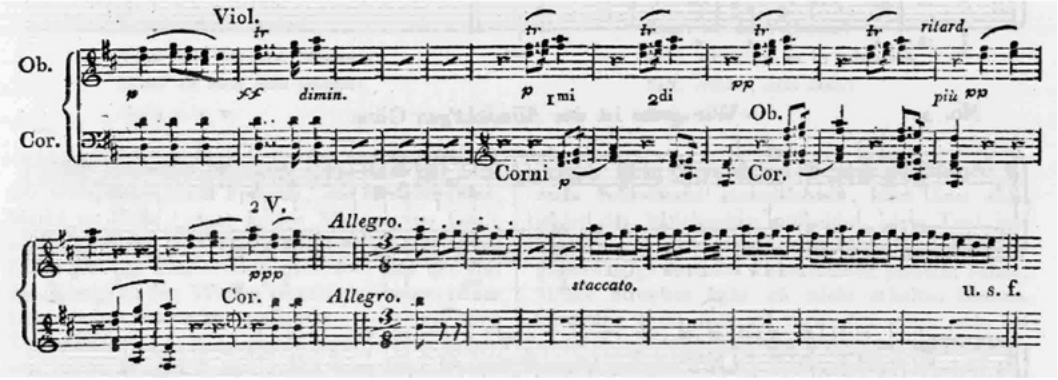

Figure 23. *Op. 91, mm. 503–24*

In this finale the second violins now take up the same national melody *pianissimo* and only *à due*, to which the *first* state the following countersubject:

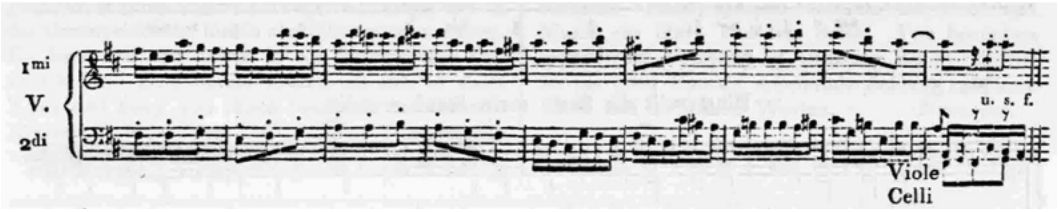

Figure 24. *Op. 91, mm. 527–36. The lower staff should be in the treble clef.*

This theme is now freely fugued through all the voices, alternately as *dux* and *comes*;[6] various instruments gradually enter with increasing power, and after seventy measures janissary music enters as well. After the fundamental melody has been brought back one more time *pianissimo per augmentationem* in the quartet,[7] with unusual turns of phrase, the whole concludes, as though with the release of a victoriously intoxicated, popular jubilation.

This writer is far from imagining that he has called attention to all the distinctive and beautiful features of this so boundlessly complicated work in this concise notice, and will be satisfied to make way for another who, in the future, may perhaps set down his thoroughgoing opinions in these pages. He has at least accomplished perfectly the more immediate

[6]These are common Latin terms for the statement of a theme and its fugal imitation, which may differ in minor details in order to accommodate standard key tonality. Here they appear to be used synonymously with "subject" and "countersubject."
[7]Mm. 654ff.

purpose of his article if he has merely succeeded for now, when the work is newly published, in giving B.'s many admirers a small foretaste of the enjoyment that awaits them, while above all publicly offering thanks to the great master, to which he is not indifferent.

That there are quite a few difficulties to be overcome in the performance of this tone-painting, that even the seemingly insignificant parts of it must be assigned to reliable men, and so forth, will certainly be expected after this notice. Nevertheless, good will and unity of purpose can accomplish much, and it can be produced on a rejuvenated scale even in smaller places with lesser means—where, however, the composer's suggestions, particularly in regard to the placement of instruments and to tempos, must still be taken to heart.

The keyboard reductions for two and four hands, prepared under the composer's direction, demand capable and practiced players, but, like the other arrangements for a few instruments, can admittedly give only the outline of a whole which is predicated on the distinctive qualities of all the instruments and on a great combined effect.

The engraving is good, and even, apart from a few mistakes which are easy to improve upon, correct. It could only be wished that all copies should be printed with equal purity, and that this first attempt would conform so completely to this energetic publisher's expectations that he could soon fulfill the promise that he made in regard to his editions of the two last splendid symphonies by this master (in A and F).[8]

[8]The Viennese correspondent in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* had observed the previous October (17 [1815], 725) that Steiner had purchased *Wellington's Victory*, along with the 7th and 8th symphonies and some important works of Spohr, and was busy arranging for editions that would be "correct, beautiful, and as inexpensive as possible."

91.8.

"News. Leipzig. Concert Music."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(24 April 1816): 283–84.[1]

The second half, however, comprised *Wellington's Victory* or *The Battle of Victoria* by Beethoven. Concerning this wonderful work, which far surpasses everything that has yet been accomplished in this kind of instrumental music, we refer to number 15 of this periodical.[2] In place of anything further, for it can be assumed that people will soon want to hear it everywhere, we will make a few comments here that will make it easier to undertake it successfully. What the composer himself has said in the preface to the score must certainly be considered and very precisely observed, particularly as regards not exaggerating the tempos and giving the secondary parts to confident musicians throughout. (Here, as in Vienna, men volunteered to handle the cannons and so forth who otherwise serve music in very different capacities.) Everything that can summon the image of the battle forth from memory or engender it in the imagination should be assisted as much as possible through placement, the use of whatever advantages are offered by locality, and so forth, partly in order to perfect the image (here, for example, the ballroom that adjoins the concert hall was used to effect the gradual approach of the drums and so forth), but partly also so that the admirable string parts, which in some passages are even almost learned, are not drowned out. The performance of these, which here and there contain very difficult passages, particularly as regards pure intonation, can be facilitated, if at the first rehearsal the work has been played through with all the apparatus, so that everyone will be generally familiar with his post and his obligations, by then letting it be played without any of the noise-making instruments. In this way, every instrumentalist can hear himself precisely and become confident, and every marksman and

[1]This is an excerpt from a report describing the annual concert given in Leipzig for the benefit of the local institutions for the poor. The first half of the concert consisted of the overture to *Calypso* by Peter Winter; a German scene and aria by C. G. Meyer; a concertino for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, violin, viola, and violoncello with orchestra by Winter; and a setting by Gewandhaus director Johann Philipp Christian Schulz (1773–1827) of Theodor Körner's prayer "Hör' uns, Allmächtiger" for choir and wind instruments, which was regarded as a preparation for the second half of the concert.
[2]See 91.7.

suchlike can take note of exactly what his contribution is to the masses, and everyone can be clear about the overall relationships of the details as well as the manner in which they fit together with the composition as a whole. Without joy and pleasure in the work itself and in its success, however, this will never take place as intended, even assuming much skill and even diligence. These requirements were truly fulfilled by our valiant orchestra and all those who had joined themselves with it, and thus the performance came off admirably. The gross proceeds for the poor came to between four and five hundred thalers.

91.9.

Carl Maria von Weber.

"Concert of Mr. Clement (6 April 1816)."
Königliche kaiserliche priviligierte Prager Zeitung
(4 May 1816).[1]

Trio for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello by Eybler[2]—and in conclusion *Wellington's Victory or the Battle of Victoria* by Beethoven. The reviewer will defer expressing his opinion on this tone-painting until after a repeated hearing of it, as today he was scarcely able to hear the actual music amid the frightful noise of the cannons, rattles etc., and the great expectations that the public had brought along also seemed not to be fulfilled. This is always an uncertain thing with a subject that lies so far beyond the boundaries of the realm of notes, since the imagination of each individual finds its own way to conceive of it, which is then difficult to suggest and pales into insignificance in comparison to the great subject matter. The symphony of victory manifestly has traits of great genius, as cannot fail to be the case with this powerful composer. The true jubilation of victory sometimes prevails in it; even *God Save the King* is at one point brought in and accompanied in a highly characteristic and powerful way.

These are the first impressions that remain with the reviewer.—More on the whole on the occasion of a future performance.[3]

[1]This is a review of a concert by Franz Clement (1780–1842) that also featured the storm scene from Cherubini's *Medea*, a violin concerto by Clement, and a quartet from Mozart's *Idomeneo*, followed by the works described here. The information in the heading is from Georg Kaiser, ed., *Sämtliche Schriften von Carl Maria von Weber* (Berlin: Schuster and Loeffler, 1908), lxxx.
[2]According to Eitner (*Quellenlexikon* 3:336) a trio in E-flat major by Joseph Leopold Eybler (1765–1846) was published in Brussels as Op. 4. *New Grove*, 2nd ed., 8:480–81 gives the date of this work as 1798.
[3]See 91.12.

91.10.

"News. Breslau. Month of April."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(8 May 1816): 315–16.

On the 6th Mr. Schreinzer,[1] bass at the local theater, gave a concert, the second half of which was taken up by Beethoven's *Battle of Victoria*.[2] Mr. Sch. deserves thanks for so quickly giving the friends of musical art the opportunity to hear this music, whose great reputation had preceded it from Vienna. The master's genius is unmistakable in this work as well; he has summoned up all the power of musical speech in order to lead the listener's imagination to the battlefield, and one understands the composer without any explanation down to the smallest details—that is, if one understands how to listen. The entire harmonic edifice, the detailed treatment of the wind instruments, for example the original basses underneath the melody of Marlborough, the entire treatment of the melody of the English folk song, and much else is completely worthy of the great Beethoven. Nevertheless, we must ask: can music alone make a battle perceptible? and, if not, should one employ it, and its magnificent means, to this end? In my opinion the language of notes is stretched to its utmost in supporting representations of battles (and likewise other visible subjects) in the theater. For if such representation occupies and leads the sense of sight, and by means of it the understanding, music awakens feelings, and each is therefore in its place, and the whole comes close to the effect of nature. It would be well worth the effort to read something that is clever and appropriate to the state of art in our time (as Engel's well-known treatise no longer comes close to being)[3] on

[1]Matthias Schreinzer (d. 1831) was a bass active in Prague and other cities in Eastern Europe. He was the first bass at Breslau from 1814 to 1817 (www.weber-gesamtausgabe.de/de/A001786, accessed 20 January 2015). Of his performance as Axur in Salieri's opera of that name, the Breslau correspondent of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (*AmZ*) wrote: "Mr. Schreinzer brought personality, voice, singing, and acting to this role, and it would have been one of his most significant if, with all of his other capabilities and outstanding talents, he had not forgotten precisely what is most important here, namely *dignity*" (*AmZ* 18 [1816], 428).
[2]The *AmZ* gives no indication of what was on the first half of the program.
[3]*Über die musikalische Malerey*, by Johann Jakob Engel (1741–1802), was a widely read treatise whose emphasis on subjective expression in music has been linked with Beethoven's designation of the "Pastoral" symphony, Op. 67, as "more expression of emotions than painting."

musical painting in general, particularly, however, with regard to whether it should be used with or without representation. I do not need to be the first to name for you the man by whom all friends of music would probably most like to see this subject treated.[4]

[4]It is possible that this last line was directed at AmZ editor Friedrich Rochlitz, who wrote widely on a variety of musical topics.

91.11.

"News. Prague."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(8 May 1816): 319–20.[1]

Beethoven's *Battle of Victoria* was given here twice, and certainly aroused great interest, but by no means pleased to the extent that had been expected, perhaps precisely because expectations had been stretched all too high and out into the blue. Something of this kind should always have been seen as being highly circumscribed by its genre, and have been received more as a clever joke on the part of the master.

[1]The performances referenced here are the same ones reviewed by Carl Maria von Weber in 91.9 and 91.12.

91.12.

Carl Maria von Weber.

"Concert for the Benefit of the Institute for Musicians' Widows and Orphans." *Königliche kaiserliche priviligierte Prager Zeitung* (24 May 1816).[1]

On 14 April, a grand musical performance in the established theater for the benefit of the Institute for Musicians' Widows and Orphans.

1. Grand symphony by Mozart, the so-called English, in D major.[2]

A grandly conceived, clear and powerfully proceeding work, very nicely performed under the direction of Mr. Conductor Witasek.[3]

Oratorio *Der große Tag des Vaterlandes*, composed for voices and wind instruments alone by I. Sauer.[4]

It is deserving of the most serious censure that in choosing works to perform, one can behave with such indifference to the public as to bring before them what is in every regard such a lamentable piece of make-work. One can find no more commonplace melodies, insipid harmonies and nonsensical treatment of the text than are presented here, and the patience of the listeners was truly amazing, in that they let it pass without greater signs of displeasure.

All the more comforting was the successful performance of Beethoven's warlike tone-painting: The Battle of Victoria. The advantages offered by the location were wisely put to use in order to clarify the approach of the troops as intended by the composer. The cannons, rattles, and drums had a good effect in what followed, but they were placed so much in the background of the picture that one was able to follow the course of the music, and no all-consuming noise confused the listeners' ears.

The presence of Mr. Conductor Hummel from Vienna, who had heard this work under the composer's own direction, gave Conductor Carl Maria von Weber, who directed,

[1]The information in the heading is from Kaiser, *Sämtliche Schriften*, lxxxii.
[2]John Warrack suggests that this was K. 504, the "Prague" symphony (Carl Maria von Weber, *Writings on Music* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981], 179).
[3]Jan August Vitásek (1770–1839) was a Czech church musician who directed the choir at St. Vitus's cathedral in Prague."
[4]This probably refers to the Austrian music publisher Ignaz Sauer (1759–1833), who also dabbled in composition.

the opportunity to make all the intended effects stand out with certainty, which he did with the love and zeal that he preserves for all that is beautiful and good.

The whole went truly admirably, and yet the effect on the public was not great, which the reviewer attributes to that which he has discussed before.[5]

The effect of the battle itself seems to him to be marred by its breaking out too quickly, since no further increase of power is possible, and without it we ultimately become indifferent, despite the admirably powerful figure of the storm march, which advances continually through the steps of the scale. Whether this advancement could not have been brought about by other means that lie within the boundaries of the rules, the reviewer will leave undecided.

The house was full, and thus the Battle was still effective.

[5]For example, in 91.9, written just the week before.

91.13.

"News. Frankfurt."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(28 May 1816): 374.

On the 12th of April, as on Good Friday, the *Creation* of Haydn, with an orchestra consisting of 200 persons, and the *Battle of Victoria* of Beethoven were performed at the playhouse by Mr. conductor C. J. Schmitt.[1] The magnificent work was given with much applause. The solo parts were praiseworthy; the following, however, seemed to me to be deserving of censure: choir and orchestra were not in the right numerical proportion to each other. Could not this evil at least have been diminished if all the performers had been arranged more advantageously? Many of the choruses should at least not have been taken so quickly, and everything in them sung so entirely without light and shadow. This would be avoided by reasonably careful rehearsals and attentive study. This great number of performers is to be praised, however, for always staying precisely together, which is all the more worthy of notice as many of them, particularly among the string instruments, are only amateur artists. Beethoven's *Battle of Victoria* is a colossal work, full of new ideas, artistically and powerfully arranged. Certainly the ingredients of musical battles in general must admittedly be similar to each other. The clever composer, however, knew how to create the means for much that no other musical battle painter has probably ever thought of before, and much of it certainly portrayed reality more strikingly than anyone else has ever succeeded in doing. The powerful work greatly impressed and pleased the listeners. The audience was uncommonly numerous.

[1] J. P. Schmitt had been music director in Amsterdam before taking the same position at the theater in Frankfurt. He became Kapellmeister at Frankfurt in 1811 (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 13 [1811], 354).

91.14.

***Der Verkündiger,* no. 248**
(13 June 1816).[1]

Among recently heard pieces of music, Beethoven's work *The Victory at Victoria* is the most significant; the subject seems, however, particularly without words, to be yet a little beyond the domain of composition. One can perceive only individual beauties; the whole remains dark,[2] and there is often so much noise that one cannot hear the music, which is certainly more excellent if one can understand it on the basis of the performance alone.

[1]This periodical (full title *Der Verkündiger oder Zeitschrift für die Fortschritte und neuesten Beobachtungen, Entdeckungen und Erfindungen in den Künsten und Wissenschaften und für gegenseitige Unterhaltung*) was published at Nuremberg. It is not clear what performance the reviewer heard.
[2]The reviewer uses the word *dunkel*, which in eighteenth-century aesthetics referred to a lack of clarity and aesthetic form. The term can also be translated as "confused."

91.15.

"News. Berlin. Overview of the Month of May."
***Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 18**
(19 June 1816): 423–24.

(With Septet, Op. 20; *Christus am Ölberge*, Op. 85; String Quartet, Op. 95; String Quintet, Op. 29)

On the 1st, Mr. Ignaz Schuppanzigh from Vienna gave a concert. A significant reputation had preceded this violinist, and he confirmed it completely. He played a Polonaise of his composition with orchestral accompaniment, and a septet for violin, viola, violoncello, clarinet, bassoon, horn, and contrabass by Beethoven, accompanied by Messrs. Semler, Krautz, Tausch Jr., Schwarz Sr., Schunke, and Eysold.[1] All rejoiced at Mr. Schuppanzigh's beautiful tone, and the finely nuanced, humorous, very lively delivery. (Many connoisseurs nevertheless wished to observe, and certainly not unjustly, that Mr. Sch.'s individuality and manner of playing are on the whole more suited to quartets than to concerts, that in his solos the capably energetic ripienist at times stood out too strongly, and that in the Allegro he now and then took tempos that were all too fast, so that at times the clarity of the whole was impaired.)[2]

In the second half he gave us for the first time Beethoven's *Battle of Victoria*. Since Mr. Sch. had been present and made essential contributions at the performance of this work by the composer himself, it was all the more possible to present it, under his direction, in the composer's spirit. The composition itself was so thoroughly evaluated in this periodical on the occasion of its first performances in Vienna and then in Leipzig, and then also in the review in no. 15 of this year,[3] that it only remains for me to add something about its performance and reception here. The performance was successful; on the whole, however, it seemed

[1]On the basis of the frequent citations of their performances in the correspondence sections of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (*AmZ*), it appears that the performers listed here, along with the violinist Henning, mentioned later in this report, were all prominent chamber musicians in Berlin. Two horn players by the name of Schunke, a pair of brothers, are mentioned several times. The clarinetist, Tausch Jr., is also cited as a composer.
[2]This observation is interesting in terms of performance practice, since it suggests that Schuppanzigh was willing to vary the tempo considerably within a single movement, and that not all contemporary listeners were pleased by this degree of tempo flexibility.
[3]See 91.3, 91.7, and 91.8. Further performances were reported in Königsberg (*AmZ* 18, 639) and Frankfurt am Main (*AmZ* 19, 310–11); the correspondents in both locations commented primarily on the unsatisfactory nature of the performances.

less to the taste of the public, perhaps because it was not always possible to follow the composer completely, to grasp his intentions quickly enough, than were more admirable details, for example the introduction of *Rule Britannia*, *Marlborough*, and *God Save the King*, with ever new turns of harmony and instrumentation. Of the larger sections the attack and the lively victory march had the greatest effect. —Mr. Schuppanzigh, prior to his departure for Posen, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg, gave two more quartet entertainments. The first, on the 17th, included three quartets, one by Haydn, one by Mozart, and the newest one by Beethoven, in F minor, which, like nearly all the most recent works of this master, was difficult, dark, and gloomy, and thus found little acceptance. The second, on the 28th, contained the Haydn quartet in E-flat major with the Adagio in B major,[4] the one by Mozart in D minor,[5] and the Beethoven quintet in C major. Mr. concertmaster Möser played the viola, Mr. chamber musician Henning and Mr. chamber musician Krautz the second violin and violoncello. On the 8th, on the day of repentance, Mr. conductor Weber organized a musical academy. The first half was taken up by Beethoven's *The Battle of Victoria*, and the second half by the same master's mostly magnificent oratorio *Christus am Oelberge*, which had already been heard here before. The battle depiction was performed by an unusually powerful orchestra, and quite well. The weapon and cannon fire, effected by rattles and old timpani, which is usually so repugnant in musical productions, was this time fortunately situated in the background, covered by decorations, but still often destroyed our enjoyment. Messrs. Eunike and Blum and Miss Sebastiani sang the solo parts in the oratorio. The choruses, though difficult, were nevertheless well performed. The net receipts, which were designated for the benefit of an institute to be established for blind veterans, totaled over 1,096 thalers.

[4]This is a reference to Haydn's Op. 76, no. 6; the unusual slow movement is simply titled "Fantasia."
[5]This was probably K. 421, the second of the four quartets dedicated to Haydn.

91.16.

Gottfried Weber.

"On Tone-Painting."
***Caecilia* 3, no. 10**
(1825): 154–72.[1]

(Mentioned: *Egmont*, Op. 84, and 5th symphony, Op. 67)

Thus, in a purely instrumental tone-painting as well, the tone-poet sets out to speak, limiting himself to notes alone, and undertaking the bold course of conjuring up images in our imagination by means of this one artistic medium alone, an undertaking which certainly cannot be objectionable in this genre. One will not suppose, to be sure, that I wish to put in a good word here for the countless battle pieces for the pianoforte and similar commonplaces which otherwise come with this territory. I simply believe that, from the point of view given above, I may maintain, in opposition to the unconditional opponents of such tone-paintings, that the idea behind the genre is not in itself objectionable.

In this genre as well, moreover, one will find the same thing to be true which I have expressed as a maxim right from the beginning concerning this entire classification called tone-painting—namely, that in general it belongs less properly to the more serious, elevated style than to the vulgar, to which last-mentioned imitations done precisely to a T, indeed at times even burlesque caricatures are fully appropriate, whereas, as has been said, only gentle hints and intimations are suitable to the more sublime style.

Here as well, this truth can be proved by the quotation of various examples from such purely instrumental tone-paintings as Beethoven's *Pastoral symphony*, from his *Battle of Victoria*,

[1]This is an excerpt from a substantial article on the subject of tone-painting. Weber, a traditionally oriented critic in the context of the 1820s, still fundamentally agreed with the aesthetic views of J. J. Engel (see 91.10, n3), which may have inspired Beethoven's "Pastoral" symphony. He saw music primarily as a language of the emotions, and believed that outright tone-painting was justifiable only in music with a text, and even then should be used only with great restraint, just as civilized speakers gesticulate less frequently than primitive ones. The excerpt quoted here was designed to show what kind of errors composers can fall into when they apply this technique indiscriminately in a purely instrumental work. For more on this article and its context, see Robin Wallace, *Beethoven's Critics: Aesthetic Dilemmas and Resolutions during the Composer's Lifetime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 69–71.

As Weber states in footnotes at several points, the comments on Wellington's Victory are derived from earlier writings of his that appeared nearer to the time of the work's initial success.

from Vogler's *Battle*,[2] Mehul's *Chasse*,[3] and others. Perhaps it is more interesting, however, instead of quoting many fragments in this manner, to go through one of these tone-paintings, which in recent times has more than made the greatest sensation that anything of its genre has ever produced—namely the above-mentioned *Battle of Victoria* by Beethoven—from beginning to end, treating it in context, in this way concluding the present treatise as attractively as possible through the application of the principles that we have derived to an interesting subject.[4]

When an artist like *van Beethoven* takes up the lyre in order to celebrate a great event, the age whose hero he is is certainly entitled to expect something grand, full of spirit, and uplifting. When, furthermore, that which he determines to offer to such a celebration is actually a tone-painting, every admirer of *Beethoven's* muse at first will rightly reserve judgment for a while in the presence of the name *van Beethoven*, in order to see what nobler and more artistically satisfying side such a genius will extract from, or know how to bestow upon, a genre which in itself is so paradoxical—no matter how strongly he may subscribe to the teaching that would like to banish all tone-paintings from the domain of music as a genre incompatible with art. He takes up the score with heightened expectation, or goes to hear a performance of the work which has been so highly and greatly praised openly in east and west. —What will he find?

Instead of prejudicing the readers by expressing an opinion here, I would prefer to induce them to produce their own first, in order to see then if it coincides with mine. In order to make it possible even for those who have no opportunity to get to know the work by hearing it themselves or by looking over the score to form such an opinion on their own, I will begin first of all with a scrupulously exact description of it.

It is a symphony for a large orchestra. The whole is divided into two parts; the first part is designated "*The Battle*," the second part titled "*Symphony of Victory*."

First the former. The performance requires (so it is dictated at length in the published score) special preparation of the location where it is to take place. Apart from the main orchestra, a chorus of military wind and janissary instruments must be employed on either side of it. So-called *cannon machines*—that is, monstrously large drums "*five Viennese shoes square*"[5]—are likewise set up on either side of the orchestra, but at somewhat greater distance from it, and invisible to the hearers. They are supposed to imitate the noise of cannons. Next to the

[2]Georg Joseph Vogler (1749–1814) was a many-sided musician, composer, conductor, theorist, teacher, and organbuilder. *New Grove*, 1st ed. (20:62) mentions several illustrative pieces for the organ, but none with this title.

[3]Etienne-Nicolas Méhul (1763–1817) was a French composer of operas and symphonies. Eitner (*Quellenlexikon* 6, 422) mentions a piano sonata by him titled "La Chasse," which was published in London.

[4]A footnote in the original text reads: "I note here that I have already publicly expressed these opinions in No. 145 f. of the Jenaischer allgemeine Literaturzeitung from the year 1816, pp. 217–227, after repeated hearings of the celebrated work and after performing it myself repeatedly. Also compare the Intelligenz Blatt No. 70, p. 559 of the same periodical, and Intelligenz Blatt No. X from the Leipzig Musikalische Zeitung of 1816."

The last note to which Weber refers actually appeared in Intelligenz-Blatt 18, no. 9, and served to clarify that he was the author of the article in Jenaischer allgemeine Literaturzeitung, which was signed "G. W."

[5]The specification that these drums should be "fünf Wiener Schuh ins Gevierte" is from Beethoven's own performance instructions (see 91.7, n2).

cannon machines are found several so-called rattles, *crécerelles*. These are rotary rattles, like those with which in many places Catholic schoolboys are called to church on Good Friday, or (so says the preface) like those with which the cracking of thunder and platoon firing is represented in many theaters. Here they are supposed to imitate small weapons fire. Besides the cannon machines and rattles, a special choir of trumpeters is also to be found on each side, and finally, likewise on each side of the orchestra, but at the greatest possible distance, perhaps in distant rooms, are placed several conventional military drums.

The performance begins. The drummers on one side (which is assumed to be the English side) begin to beat the English march in the distance, and approach the music hall, drumming continuously. After they have arrived, the trumpeters on this side also sound the English signals, whereupon the English oboe choir strikes up the British national march *Rule Britannia*, first *piano*, then *crescendo*, and in the last four measures finally *forte*, reinforced by the entry of the main orchestra.

Thus does the English army arrive at the chosen place. End of the first scene.

Second scene. Distant trumpets on the opposite (consequently French) side, approaching gradually as above, finally drawing into the music hall on their part, whereupon once again the trumpeters on this side also sound the French signals, and the military band on this side strikes up the French march *Marlborough s'en va-t-en guerre*, *piano*, *crescendo*, and finally *forte*, reinforced by the entry of the main orchestra.

Third scene. Both armies now stand opposite, facing each other. Trumpet call from the French side—signifies the "*Invitation to Battle*." Answering call from the English trumpeter—signifies the "*Acceptance of the Invitation*."

Fourth scene. *Battle*. In an Allegro, the violins take up a figure consisting of a run through two octaves:

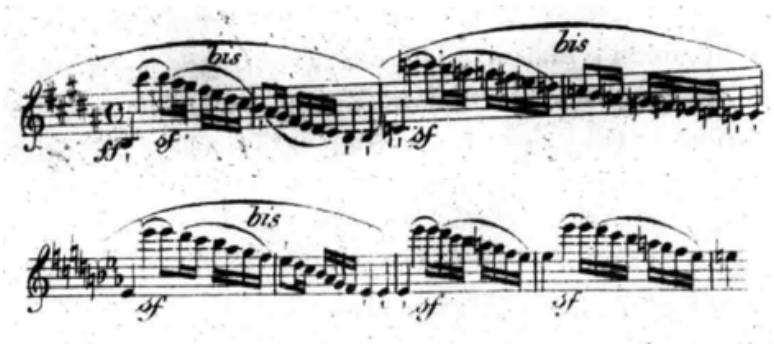

Figure 25. *Op. 91, mm. 74–88, first violin part*

and repeat it through the most diverse keys, while the other instruments merely contribute harmonic chords, and the rattles and cannon machines on both sides begin to play violently, and with equal animosity on both sides. (The last-mentioned, which have to enter now on this, now on that quarter or eighth note of a 4/4 or 3/8 measure, are in fact not an easy task for the playing cannoneer, or cannoneering player, for which reason in Vienna these heavy guns were "*played by the foremost music directors*," as is recounted in the printed preface to the score.)

So it goes on for a time, until this *Allegro* is broken off by a *Meno allegro* in 3/8 time, which primarily plays through, at rather great length and extent, a figure which seems to stretch here and there:

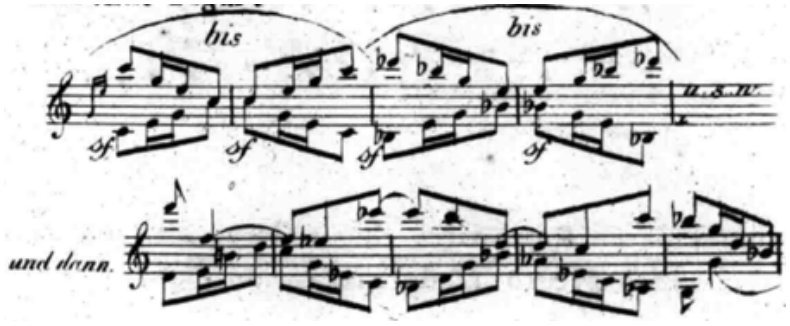

Figure 26. *Op. 91, mm. 130–37, 150–54, first violin and viola parts*

fortissimo and amid the continuing thunder of the guns set up on the sides. There suddenly enters, *allegro assai*, a storm march with a harsh, wild, monotone theme:

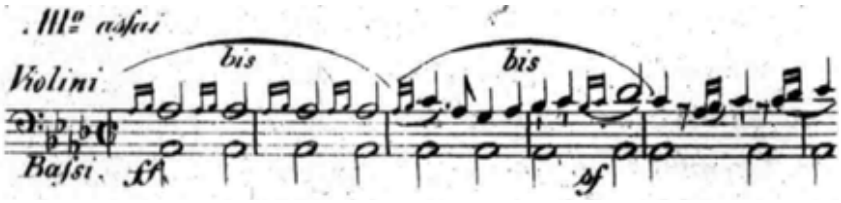

Figure 27. *Op. 91, mm. 200–209*

which, having moved exclusively around its tonic harmony of *A-flat* for twelve measures, suddenly and without transition plunges into *A* major and repeats, then leaps into *B-flat* major in the same way, then into *B*, and finally even more violently all the way into *E-flat*. Throughout all this the drummers on both sides beat the assault march continuously, while guns heavy and light redouble their activity. A dozen more violent shocks of this kind, and a fiery *Presto*, *Alla-breve* time, *E-flat major*, begins with a rushing figure:

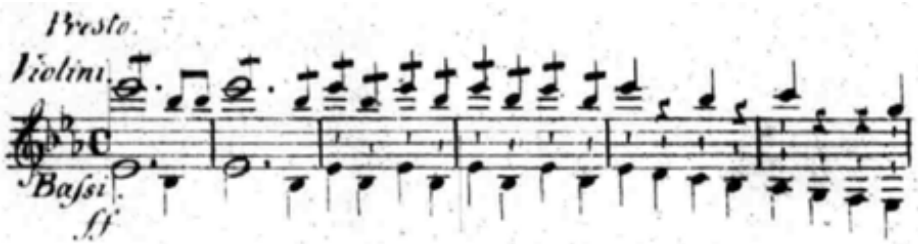

Figure 28. *Op. 91, mm. 242–47*

under the buzzing of which another figure consisting of rhythmically distinctive quarter-note triplets for the wind instruments, which is drawn out through the entire *Presto*:

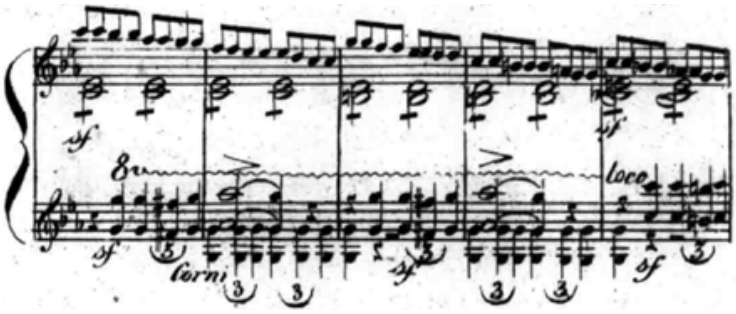

Figure 29. *Op. 91, mm. 260–64, reduction*

paints the moaning and howling of the wounded and the dying. Light and heavy gunfire rages furiously during all this; only, perhaps halfway through the piece, the shots on the French side become fewer and fewer, while those on the English side, however, become more and more lively. Finally the French ones are brought to complete silence, while on the English side alone victorious cannons still resound.

Bit by bit the tumult of battle has subsided, and in its place one hears, as though from the distance, a strange gentle trembling, whose exact significance one at first hardly can explain. After a few measures, however, one recognizes it as the Marlborough march, which stepped out so haughtily at the beginning of the piece, but which, having been wretchedly treated, now reappears in pitiable condition, in the tragic key of *F-sharp* minor, frequently interrupted by *soupirs* and *demi soupirs*, *andante*, *tremolando*, *pianissimo* and finally *morendo*:[6]

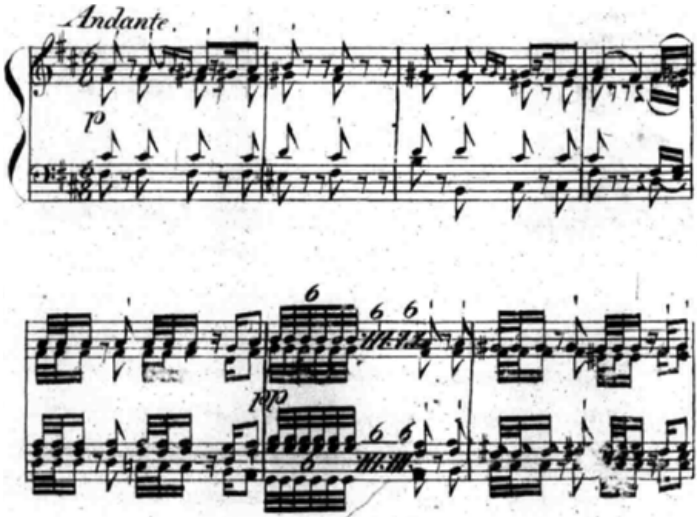

Figure 30. *Op. 91, mm. 346–49, reduction*

[6]These musical terms indicate "sighs and half sighs," "walking," "trembling," "very quiet," and finally "dying."

a tragicomic symbol of the hordes of French soldiers who slink away mangled and wheezing, shivering, with bloodied heads and chattering teeth, while several mischievous British cannoneers still send isolated, efficient cannon shots after them on their way home.

With this joke the first part ends.

The second part consists of the symphony of victory, about which hereafter.

It would astonish me if, in the course of my as yet dry report, the judgment of the reader has not already been formed—let us see if it concurs with mine.

Let us first discuss the design and layout of the whole, and ask: where in this layout of the work, which has been accurately described up to this point, is to be found any great, new, or ingenious idea whatsoever? Where is there *one* feature that betrays a more than ordinary battle writer? Let us enumerate once again the ideas and features of which the whole is formed: drums advance from two opposing sides, signals are blown, and the regimental oboists play through their march—a rushing Allegro, an assault march, a violent Presto, obbligato shots throughout—these are probably the most absolutely commonplace ideas that everyone can make use of for a tone-picture of a Battle of Victoria, or of every other battle, and this is what every other composer, to whom such completely commonplace ideas would not appear trivial, would likewise have done. Thus, no one should find anything to admire in such a design, in such a layout of the whole.[7]

Or do we perhaps want to make something of the joke with which the great battle portrait ends, of the tragicomic return of the Marlborough march?

The idea of bringing this march back in such a mangled form after the ensuing defeat is certainly an amusing joke in itself—a gag that, brought out with a glass of wine in a cheerful private circle, on a Viennese fortepiano equipped with a Turkish drum stop, can give everybody present much amusement (and so, to *Beethoven's* honor, would we really prefer to imagine the origin of this tone-painting, which unfortunately was later more fully orchestrated;[8] we therefore prefer the simple keyboard edition of it over all the others as being the most appropriate). But here, in a grand work of music, in a piece of music of great pretensions, *as the very conclusion* of the tone-painting, as the *pointe* and keystone of the total impression of a battle picture, here what would otherwise be a very good joke truly becomes a feeble—yes, let us say it outright, an unworthy and disgraceful—joke, which deserves just as much scorn as might perhaps befall a poet or other storyteller who did not know any better way to conclude a description of a gruesome pitched battle than with a biting satire upon the misery of the bleeding, a witty mockery of the maimed.

[7]The reader will recall that the basic plan described here by Weber was essentially drafted out by Johann Mälzel, rather than by Beethoven (see 91.1, n5).

[8]Weber writes in a footnote: "So I wrote in the year 1816, and since then I have heard with satisfaction that the *tableau* in fact had a similar origin, if not this one exactly. Namely, as I have verified through trustworthy sources, it was first written for an artificial steam organ of Mälzel. Since, however, the world gathers up as Ambrosia everything that someone who has once been established as a great genius produces, and values it dearly, why not offer it as well this scurrilous shooting star, fully orchestrated?"

Without being intimidated by Beethoven's otherwise well-earned authority, I can thus freely declare that the ideas of which the whole is put together, and the aesthetic viewpoint on which the whole depends, at least never rise *above* the mediocre, and are neither ingenious nor even in any way new. Or is the fact that *Beethoven* sets in action several material means that have not hitherto been used—cannon machines, rattles, etc.—perhaps to be celebrated as new? At the appearance of this composition, even his admirers in other journals were very concerned that such a powerful increase of instrumental extravagance might cause their darling to be reproached for making inappropriate use of material effects. But he can anticipate no such reproach from me, since it is my belief that, while in morality the end certainly does not justify the means, it does do so in art, and with an artist who has succeeded in reaching a great artistic goal, I do not wish to nitpick and haggle like a Jew over the bottom line.[9] However, *van Beethoven* remains subject to a completely different and perhaps more serious reproach, that of having used completely *inartistic*, *pointless*, *indeed unsuitable* means, and of having manifestly *exceeded the limitations of musical art*. I have already explained at the beginning of this evaluation that I wish to steer clear completely here from the dispute over the question of how far tone-paintings as such already lie outside of the proper domain of musical art. What can we say, though, if *van Beethoven* sets extraordinary artistic means in motion in order to give us *not even a tone-painting*! If musical art (whose highest and perhaps only vocation is *to express emotions*) is also allowed *to paint events* and *things*—and such a tone-painting can therefore also be considered a proper work of art, van Beethoven's battle symphony *is certainly not even a tone-painting*. For, instead of *describing to us in notes* the horrible approach and onset of battle, the awakening belligerence, the battle itself, the tumult of battle, the rattle of weapons and the thunder of cannons, he actually lets us hear real drums advancing from opposite sides, lets us hear real cannon noises, real artillery and sniper fire (the cannon machines and rattles are only a cheap substitute, a cheap means to bring forth such noise), somewhat like a landscape painter who, instead of *painting* the rising sun in his picture like *Claude Lorrain*,[10] cuts a round hole in his sky and lets the real morning sun or some other light shine through. It is not *musical* colors that *van Beethoven* makes use of here, not the means of musical art, but rather the[11] deceptions of scenic acoustics. There, on the stage, we have a thousand times had drummers advance from the most distant corner of the building, trumpeters blow invisible signals behind the scenes, and, with or without music, cannon machines and other noisemakers mimicking the noise of battle as well as they can. *Van Beethoven's* only merit is to have transplanted these tricks of the theater machinist from the

[9]The original text reads "ich . . . nicht cameralistisch rechnen and jüdeln mag über den Verwand an Fonds." The casual racism expressed by this remark is, unfortunately, only too typical of this period.

[10]Claude Lorrain (1600–1682) was a French landscape painter. Some of his best-known paintings contain striking images of a rising sun; see, for example, *Morning in the Harbour*.

[11]It was at this precise point that Beethoven, in his copy of this issue of *Caecilia*, wrote at the bottom of p. 166: "Ach, du erbärmlicher Schuft, was ich scheisse, ist besser, als wie du je gedacht"—"Ah you wretched cur, what I shit is better than anything you ever thought of." See William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), plate 13.

stage, where, amid the action of the piece, amid the illusion of the scenery, intertwined with scenic, mimetic, and musical art, they alone can be effective, into the concert hall, into the temple consecrated to the pure art of notes, which can be desecrated only by artificial detonations, in which these can only appear childish and ridiculous, and from which, if a composer less respected than *van Beethoven* had dared to wish to introduce them, they would certainly have been scornfully banished as charlatanism. If *this* is the tone-sculptor's task, just to make his image of the thing or event being described *as alike as possible* (this would rather be the case with the landscape painter, and thus he could more easily be excused his hole in the canvas)—if *this* is his task, then Mr. *van Beethoven* would actually be more in the wrong for not having set up moaning machines (as a substitute for actual death moans) instead of painting the moans of the dying very strikingly and truly movingly with notes, as he did—whizzing machines for the whizzing of the large and small bullets; clanking machines for the clanking of bayonets swords, and ramrods; cursing machines; neighing machines; etc. This is no mere joke; rather, whoever found *the former* to be good, must in all seriousness find the latter to be even better, for it would only enhance the likeness.

After this consideration of the musical work as a whole, let us now go back into detail. *Here as well* we find only a weak reflection of Beethoven's otherwise so elevated and abundant genius. The *Meno allegro*, 3/8 time, may be a striking picture of stormy combat (or perhaps it is better understood as a resemblance of a storm in the human breast), the furious upward climb of the assault march by half-step may be a bold idea, the indication of the death moans most striking of all, but this is still too little—and, were the good and striking details ever so many, it would still not be enough to ennoble a work that is mistaken in the layout of the whole, just as the most striking ornaments are not capable of making a building laid out according to ideas that are fundamentally inartistic into a work of beautiful architecture.

So much for the *first* part of the work, *the battle*.

One rightfully expects from the second part a substitute for the expectation that was so painfully disappointed in the first. *A symphony of victory* by *van Beethoven*! A triumph, idealized in notes by the great master of instrumental composition! Only, it hurts to have to say it, here as well one finds something entirely different than one had expected. The entire symphony of victory is simply a short, six to seven minute long overture-like piece of music. It begins with a flourish of timpani and trumpets (reinforced by the string instruments) and an Allegro of eight lines (fifty-two *Allabreve* measures), which is almost nothing more than an extended intrada, or perhaps a somewhat worked-out march, from which a sparklingly jubilant triplet figure

Figure 31. *Op. 91, mm. 385–88, reduction*

nevertheless stands out with beautiful effect. To this is attached the well-known *God Save the King* for sixteen measures, then the preceding short *Allegro* again, —*God Save the King* once again, and in its thirteenth measure is introduced a swift *Allegro*, wherein the serious *God Save the King*, profaned into 3/8 meter, jumps around, freely fugued with a whirling countersubject in sixteenth notes:

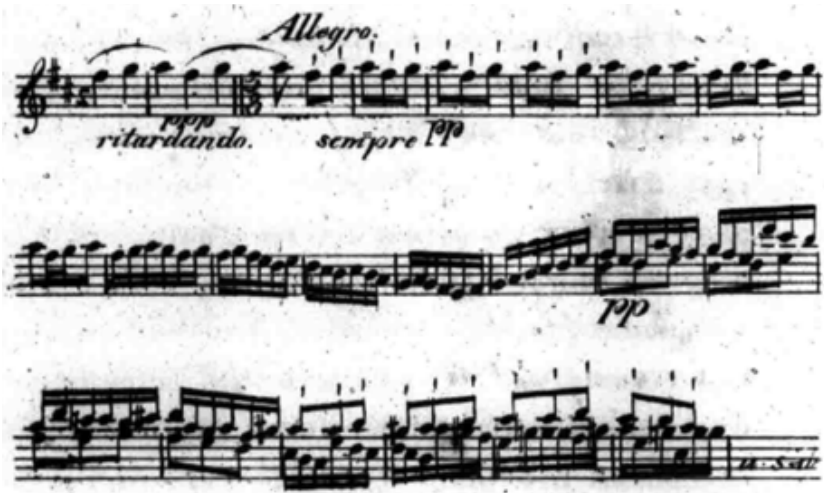

Figure 32. *Op. 91, mm. 516–35, first and second violin parts*

And in *this* character the whole ends once again! *This* is the crown that the master puts upon his work, *this* the exaltation with which he sends forth his listeners! Even *van Beethoven's* warmest supporters know of no higher title to confer upon this finale than "*the release of a victoriously intoxicated, popular jubilation*."[12] Fortunate, however, if it does not recall an even more vulgar type of mob entertainment!

That a *Beethoven* saw fit to conceive of a great subject in such a vulgar way! What a contrast with other works of his! Just compare this Dutch[13] piece with *other tone-paintings* by the same master, for example his overture to *Göthe's* Egmont, in which the main features of Göthe's picture are as magnificently reflected as though in a magical mirror: in the first half now the oppressive force that dominates the entire action; now the noble, impartial greatness of the hero; now the tenderness of his love; now Klärchen's lament—in the second the high triumph of his death, before which every lament is silent, and the lofty glory and transfiguration of the one fallen but unbowed. What a contrast between such glory and the commended "*release of popular jubilation*!" Let one hold up these rocket and straw fires against other earlier products of the *Beethovenian* fire—for example, against his *C* minor symphony, this fiery stream, which in the first movement is perceived as a fire contained within itself, never entirely breaking out, in the *Andante*, more grandiose than tender, seems only to rest in preparation for

[12]This is an exact quotation from 91.7, the full-length review in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*.
[13]The original text reads "niederländisch," another casual ethnic slur.

higher expressions of power, in the finale (a tense *pianissimo*, interrupted only by isolated *fortes*, aspiring and soon sinking down again)[14] proclaims ever more the proximity of the eventual overflow of power, finally, after a long, ever more tightly intensified organ point, unfolding its full power in such magnificent transfiguration at the entry of the broad 4/4 time, striding proudly along its path like a triumphal procession, with the use of all the most splendid instrumentation, ascending to the highest level of sublimity, and, with its broad, powerful final cadences, leaving behind the highest exaltation in the listener's soul. *This* is greatness, *this* jubilation and triumph and transfiguration! and—how vulgar, in such a comparison, does the present battle- and show-piece appear! and—must not everyone therefore, *the dearer Beethoven and his art are to him*, wish all the more deeply that forgetfulness will very soon throw a forgiving veil over such a mistake of his muse, with which he desecrates his subject, art, and himself.

[14]Weber is referring here to the beginning of the third movement.

91.17.

Heinrich Börnstein.

"Fantasy at Beethoven's Grave 1827."
***Allgemeine Theaterzeitung*, no. 11**
(5 April 1827).

Whom did you bear out there so quietly?
Into the grave, into the cooling earth
To lay the body in its earthly house,
Until its growth resounds again!
    For whom does the dull trombone sound?
    Whom does the gloomy dirge lament?
Who is the pale sleeper?

Then it exults forth with joyous strength,
And the sounds that he boldly bore,
That have consecrated the palm of mastery for him,
They resound for listening ears:
    "Dead is the hero of song,
    But we, we preserve for the world to come
The memory of the dead one."

"Come out, you fighters, to the joy of battle!
The bright trumpets call,
The bare breast offered to the enemy,
He cannot kill the enchantment;
    And thereon and thereafter, and courageously into
    The despairing rows of the frightened enemy!"
So the singer, enchanted, once called.[1]

[1]A footnote in the original text reads: "Beethoven's grand tone-painting: *The Battle of Victoria*."

And again like youth so cheerful and bold,
Of what love and friendship achieve,
From the land, where the lemons bloom,[2]
The master certainly used to sing,
    And that which spoke within him, in his own breast,
    Is named by the notes in joyous delight
Joyously shouting it to the listening crowd.

And as the outer world departed from him,[3]
He turned his senses upward,
And in enchantment certainly sang many a magnificent song,
In praise of the lord of notes.
    He beckons. The angel puts out the torch
    And the singer is borne lightly into his heavenly house
By the march of victory from the *Battle of Victoria*.

[2]This is a reference to Goethe's poem "Mignon," set by Beethoven as Op. 75, no. 1, which begins with the line "Kennst du das Land wo die Zitronen blüh'n?"
[3]A footnote in the original text reads: "In his last years the great master became deaf."