

THE PROFESSOR'S STORY.

BY GEOFFREY CUTHBERT STRANGE.

I am a musician! Nay more, I am in my modest way a composer. Many of my compositions have been published, and some have attained a popularity which has proved to be more than passing, so that my friends, and I rejoice to say that I have many friends now in this strange country—are good enough to think that some day I shall be a great man. I hope so. I have dreamed of it since I was a child. Mozart! and Beethoven! they have almost been my Gods. I think I used to say my prayers to them when I was a little lad, and if a few, just a very few, leaves

then some one would have to turn it into English before the greater number of people could read it, and though I have learned to speak the English very well, they tell me in these three years, I know that I can write it but stiffly, and that my words sound quaint, for I have still to be careful about many of the long words, so I choose the simplest language I can find, lest I should spoil the sense by using terms I do not quite grasp the right meaning of. For the rest I will do the best I can.

I was born in a small town on the Rhine. I will not put down the name of the town, for all my people live there still—my father was the chief magistrate, what is called here the mayor, and we were important people in the town. I was the youngest of

mother would find me and carry me off to bed again. By and by I went to school, and the master complained that the copies he set me were defaced with bars of music scrawled over them, and that instead of learning my lessons I drummed on my desk as if it were a piano, and when he stood me beside him for punishment I played symphonies on the back of his chair.

My father said: "The boy is a fool, and will never do us any credit."

My mother answered: "Not so Wilhelm! our youngest son is a genius, and we will yet be proud of him."

So it was settled that I would make music my principal study, and if my progress was such as to justify my adopting

hard study. The organ was my chief aim, and I studied organ composition eagerly, but I loved the violin dearly too.

At last I graduated. I won my diploma and not only that, but I carried away the gold medal, and with it the good wishes of all the professors. "You have done well Max, my son," said the old principal, "and we expect great things of you. The conservatoire is your mother, and every success of yours will reflect an added glory upon her. You leave us to-morrow, and after your three years of service are over your career will begin—a glorious career! I hope and believe!"

"After your three years of service are over."

The words kept ringing in my ears, over and over again, like a death knell.

high hopes: left to receive my diploma to take the honors I had justly won.

Alas! it I had forgotten I knew but too well that the military authorities had not; that my name and age were preserved with fatal care at the war office, and if I failed to report before the morrow had passed I would receive a sharp reminder in the shape of a visit from a *gens d'arme* and a tender inquiry as to my health, nothing but illness being excepted as an excuse for a failure to report.

Both my brothers had entered the army from choice, so it was scarcely to be wondered at that the conscription had passed out of my mind, absorbed as I was in my studies. It seemed a monstrous injustice that I in every way unfitted for the army

My father and mother! Ah! to leave them without a farewell word! could I do it? Well, better so. My father was one of the municipal authorities. Better that he should not know; better that he should mourn his son as dead, rather than be suspected of having assisted him to escape.

I would go that night, when all was quiet, and my goal should be the great Republic across the water, where all men were free, and none lacked for work. I could scarcely wait for the night. I packed up the few belongings I could dare to take, in a small bundle. That and my beloved violin formed my only luggage. Long I debated about the violin, but at last I decided that life without my chosen companion would not be worth living. So I took it.

I counted over my small store of money. Not much; for was it not the end of the autumn term at the Conservatoire, the 1st of December, and my allowance was nearly all spent. Well, I had my watch and my little diamond pin, both valuable; so I could not starve.

At last the great building was wrapped in slumber, and with a beating heart and a strange choking in my throat, I stole out from the place where I had been so happy to face the world alone. All that night I walked. I dare not travel by the railway, for fear of being recognized, and till I was some distance away I must keep out of sight by daylight, so I rested in a barn among the hay till the next night. It was very cold, and I suffered terribly from hunger, but I slept a good deal; and at nightfall, knowing I must be 20 miles from Leipsic, I ventured into the farmhouse near the barn, and asked for supper and a bed. It was nothing new to the farmer and his wife. A student, too poor to travel by train, walking home by easy stages, was too common a sight to cause remark, and the next morning the farmer took me with him in his farm wagon to the nearest market town.

There I took train and reached the frontier in safety. I stepped hurriedly from the carriage, only eager to pass the boundary line and stand on Bavarian soil, the first step towards freedom. The train stood waiting. All was bustle and activity, and I struggled into the crowd to get my ticket.

"Passports! Gentlemen, show your passports!" shouted an official.

My heart sank with a thud that I could actually feel. Here was a difficulty that I had overlooked, an obstacle that was insurmountable, and I grew faint and sick with the shock.

However, freedom looked all the more enchanting, now that it seemed slipping from my grasp, and I would not give it up without a struggle.

Each man drew out a package of papers, and I did the same, hoping against hope, that by some happy chance I might pass with the others. The first thing my eyes lighted on was a huge official seal, and my heart bounded with joy. It was my certificate of baptism, which I had forgotten to take out of my pocket, where I had placed it for reference on the day I graduated.

It was indeed a happy accident. I was in the centre of the crowd. Others were jostling me in their haste to present their passports and secure their places. The official was worried and harassed; he took my paper hurriedly, half opened it, glanced at the seal, and then, thank Heaven, stamped it and handed it back to me.

Once more I was safe; only to reach the nearest seaport now, and beyond lay the land of promise. I reached it safely, and after selling my watch and pin I had just enough money to take me to New York by steamer, and third class at that; but what did classes matter to me. I was on my way to a land where there were no class-distinctions, and it was well to get used to it. I landed at New York with just two marks in my pocket, but I had a stout heart, and I was young.

It all seemed very strange to me. There was so much noise, and every one seemed in such a hurry, and jostled their neighbors so rudely.

I got into every one's way, somehow, and though I could not understand anything that was said, I felt sure that a great many of the rough men swore at me; so I made my way as well as I could away from the docks and up towards the city. I could not even ask my way, for I thought that no one would understand me, and I felt terribly forlorn.

I did not know enough to look for some one who could speak German. It seemed to me that I must be the only German in that great city, where every one was in such a hurry.

I was growing very tired, and longing for a place to rest, when I saw a German name over the door of a small restaurant. So I went in at once, and asked in my own language for some dinner. The man behind the counter looked at me a moment, and then called another man, who spoke to me in German, and asked what I would have.

I ordered my dinner first, and then asked him where he thought I could get work.

"What can you do?" he asked. "I can play," I answered. "I am a musician."

He looked me over coolly for a moment,



from their crowns of laurel should rest upon my brow, I ask no more of life. I shall be content! It was very strange the way I came to be in this country where I have found a place for myself and so many kind people. Yes! it was strange; and sometimes I have thought I would try to write it all down, and perhaps one day after I am dead, if I leave any work behind me that will live, the world might care to know how Max Rosenthiem came to live in this great republic; and how great were the hardships he went through to get here where every man is free.

I cannot write it in my own language for

the boys, and from the time I could sit alone I was always at the piano. Music was the first language I learned. Before I could speak plainly I could play, and I believe I learned to talk by singing. As I grew older it was the same. To learn my letters was a bitter task, but I learned my notes without being taught. I asked my sister to show them to me, and I never forgot them.

Sometimes I lay awake in my little white bed and thought and thought. It was always music that I thought, and by and by I would steal down stairs to the piano and try to play, all that was in my mind, till my

it a profession, I should be sent in time, to the conservatoire at Leipsic.

My progress did justify it, and I entered on my four years course, with very much the feeling of one who was going to Heaven unexpectedly. I would not make a great singer, they told me, for my voice, to my great disappointment, had developed into a baritone, instead of the golden tenor I had hoped for. So a first place in the rank of singers was denied me. A *primo tenore*! that had been my dream—a star of the operatic stage—and I felt the disappointment keenly. Take a second place I never would. So I devoted all my energies to

Heavens! How blind I had been; how could I have forgotten it? How dreamed that I could escape the doom of all my countrymen—the conscription? "Each male over the age of twenty-one shall serve in the army not less than three years," so said the constitution, and I should be twenty-one to-morrow!

There was no hope for me. I was not a cripple. I was tall and strong and glowing with health. My mother was not a widow and even if she had been I was not her only son. I paced up and down my little room like a caged tiger; the little room I had left but a few short hours ago with such

should be forced by tyrannical law to sacrifice all my prospects in life for a three years service in a body where I should be only a useless supernumerary. Suddenly a thought occurred to me, I would not submit to it. I would run away, yes! sooner than give up my hopes of a musical career I would bid farewell to my beloved Fatherland and seek a home in some country where young men were free to follow their own inclinations and not forced to serve as slaves.

I was very young, a hot-headed boy, and to resolve was to act. There was no time to be lost. Tomorrow would be too late.