THE TREATMENT OF THE HARP IN ORCHESTRAL
LITERATURE FROM THE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY TO THE PRESENT

THESIS

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By

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Anita Tsianina Harvey, B. M.

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CHAPTER I

MECHANICAL EVOLUTION OF

THE HARP

Although the harp is an instrument of great antiquity, having originated before the earliest records of civilization, it has existed in its approximate present form for less than a century and a half. One often hears the statement that the harp is the oldest of musical instruments. Of this Carlos Salzedo says,

While this is true historically speaking, it is, musically, a fallacy; for the harp of the Jews, Egyptians, Greeks and Irish bears as much relation to the harp of today as an ox--historically the oldest means of transportation--to an airplane, scientifically the most modern instrument of transportation.

When one realizes how little the harp of the 1700's had advanced from its Biblical predecessors, its neglect by such masters as Bach, Haydn, and Beethoven does not seem remarkable. Why should a serious composer waste his time in writing for an instrument with no facilities for modulating, an instrument the weak tones of which would be lost in an orchestra?

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the harp differed from its medieval ancestors only in the greater number of its strings; it was still a diatonic instrument unequipped with a satisfactory method of producing semitones. The first attempt toward adapting the harp to the modern evolution of music had been made in the second half of the seventeenth century. A number of pivoted hooks made of iron were driven into the neck of the harp close to the upper ends of the strings. Any one of the hooks, when turned to press upon the corresponding string, acted as does the stopping finger of the violinist; by shortening the length of a vibrating string, it raised the pitch of that string by a semitone. Thus it was possible to avoid a continual playing on "white key" strings, as the G major scale could be produced by turning all F hooks, and so on.2

There were two notable defects in the hook system. The first was that one hand was temporarily lost to the performer while engaged in manipulating the hook. Not even a simple modulation could be accomplished without interrupting the performance. Perhaps even more of a hindrance to the harpist was the second defect: only the single string and not its octave was affected by the simple arrangement of hooks.3

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3 Grattan Flood, The Harp, p. 102.
Imperfect as was the invention of hooks, it opened up immense possibilities for the harp, and from the year 1701 attempts were made by various composers to elevate the instrument to an honored place in the orchestra.  

About 1720 a tangible advance was made over the hook system. At that time a certain Hochbrucker, a Bavarian, devised a mechanism by which the hooks, instead of being manipulated by the fingers, were joined in octaves along the neck of the harp and connected with seven pedals through an action of wires inside the hollowed column. The pedals, acting mechanically through the pedestal of the harp, thus regulated the stopping of the strings, each note of the scale being affected in all its octaves.

In order to permit these changes, the proportions of the harp were greatly altered. The addition of pedals required that the harp should stand on the level of the floor to be played, thus increasing the overall height of the instrument, while the pedal rods, running through the column of the harp, necessitated the complete straightening of that column, which previously had been curved.

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4Ibid., pp. 115-16.  
5Sachs, op. cit., p. 400.  
6Flood, op. cit., p. 111.  
7Roslyn Rensch, The Harp from Tara's Halls to the American Schools, p. 29.
1. Feet
2. Base
3. Eyelets
4. Strings
5. Column
6. Tuning-pins
7. Bridge-pins
8. Neck
9. Metal plate covering mechanism
10. Rotating discs
11. Ivory pegs
12. Body
13. Sounding board
14. Pedals

Fig. 1. -- Lyon and Healy harp
The single-action harp, as it is called, was not without its deficiencies. Although the improved instrument, which was tuned in E flat, could be played in eight major and five minor keys, it was impossible to play in flat tonalities other than E flat and B flat. As a flat was produced by sharpening the next lower string, D flat for example by sharpening the C string, there was no string left to provide C. Other major defects were the disarranging of the fingering when a string, acted upon by a pedal, was removed by the hook from the plane of the open strings; the unpleasant jarring sound made by the use of a pedal; and the incorrect curvature caused by the mechanism's adjustment to the wooden neck, which was intractable for the curving required. In addition, the tone of the stopped strings was vastly inferior to that of the open strings.

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8 Sachs, op. cit., p. 400.
9 Flood, op. cit., p. 112.
The first to improve on Hochbrucker's invention were two Frenchmen, the Cousineaus, father and son. Their research made it possible to construct harps without hooks, and yet to produce half tones. They passed each string between two small plates of metal (bequilles) which were placed beneath the bridge-pin. By the pedal action these plates were made to grasp the string and shorten it by the required length. About 1782 the Cousineaus doubled the number of pedals and the connecting mechanism, thus constructing the first double-action harp. The pedals were arranged in two rows, one above the other, and the tuning of the open strings was changed to C flat instead of E flat, as in the single-action instruments. The harpist could now play in fifteen keys if he was able to manage the labyrinth of pedals. It appears, however, that the Cousineaus made few double-action harps, perhaps because of the technical difficulties involved in pedalling. Their work was curtailed by the French Revolution. 10

Sebastien Erard, the famous French piano-maker, began work on improvement of the harp mechanism about 1786, at first confining himself to the single-action instrument. His improved single-action harp utilized the fork mechanism; the disc which controlled the string contained two studs,

and, in its revolution caused by the action of the pedal, gripped the string without drawing it from the level of the other strings, as was previously the case.¹¹

In 1794 Erard patented in London a mechanism external to the plate. He made a double-action harp in 1801, patenting it in 1809 (his early attempts at double movement affected only the notes A and D). In 1810 he introduced the double action throughout.¹²

The harp presented to Europe by Erard in 1810 is the model on which all harps have been based since his day.¹³ Of Erard's invention A. J. Hipkins says, "We now arrive at the perfecting of the harp by that great mechanician Sebastien Erard, whose merit it was to leave this instrument as complete as the Cremona school of luthiers left the violin."¹⁴

In this instrument, as in the single-action harp, there are only seven pedals. Erard simply augmented the extent of movement of the cranks and levers acted upon by the pedal rods.¹⁵ Connected with these levers are two sets

¹²Hipkins, op. cit., p. 326.
¹³Arthur Elson, Orchestral Instruments and Their Use, p. 112.
¹⁴Hipkins, op. cit., p. 326.
¹⁵Ibid., p. 326.
of discs, and from each disc project two pins which allow the string to pass between them. Two discs, one from each set, are ready to clasp the string. When a pedal is depressed one notch the discs rotate slightly, the first disc of the two gripping the string with its pins, and raising the pitch a semitone. A further depression of the pedal causes the second disc to act, raising the pitch another semitone. The contrivance is so ingenious that the position of the upper disc—the first to move but the second to act upon the strings—is not changed when the lower disc completes its movement of revolution and acts upon the strings.

Fig. 3.—Diagram of Erard's disc movement

It is not necessary to keep the foot upon a pedal not in use, as it may be fixed in a notch and set free when not required. Spiral springs with two arms fixed beneath the pedestal accelerate the return of the pedals.

Fig. 4.—Diagram of Erard's double-action pedals

The harp is tuned in C flat and can be played in fifteen major and twelve minor keys. Modulation to all keys is possible, and the same passage may be played in any key with the fingering unchanged. 17

Erard's inventions removed the principal limitations which had prevented many composers from including the harp in their orchestral works; the further improvements made by his nephew Pierre brought still more favor to the instrument. In 1836 Pierre Erard patented the Gothic-column harp, which superseded the Grecian column typical of Sebastien Erard's models. This harp, being equipped with a broadened sounding board and having a greater distance between the

strings, was larger and more powerful than its predecessor. With few alterations it is the model generally used in Europe at the present time. 18

About eighty years after the first appearance of the Erard double-action harp, the first harp of American make was introduced to the world. From 1840 many European harps had been imported to America by the Lyon and Healy Music Company of Chicago, but were unable to endure the American climate's abrupt changes of heat and cold. 19 Increased demands for an instrument that would withstand the climatic conditions prompted Patrick J. Healy, founder of Lyon and Healy Music Company, and George B. Durkee, the factory superintendent, to attempt to produce a sturdy harp, one which would also be free of the mechanical faults which characterized even the finest of European instruments. In 1889, following two years of research and experiment and at an initial cost of $10,000, the first Lyon and Healy harp was completed. It featured thirteen improvements, including increased hand room in the upper octaves and more precise pedal action. 20 This harp, with additional improvements through the years, is the instrument which at present is most used in America. Its apparent superiority to the French harps is expressed by Salzedo, who says;

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18 Rensch, *op. cit.*, p. 45.  
"These lovely instruments cannot be compared to the sonorous splendor of the concert grand harp made today in America by Lyon and Healy."²¹

Although the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company manufactured harps for some time, Lyon and Healy is now the sole maker of harps in America, and the Lyon and Healy instrument is used by the leading symphonies of the nation, including the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic Symphony, the N.B.C. Symphony and the Metropolitan Grand Opera Orchestra.

²¹Salzedo, op. cit., p. 482.
CHAPTER II

THE TREATMENT OF THE HARP IN THE ORCHESTRA

BY COMPOSERS OF THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL

Like several other instruments, the harp was admitted into the orchestra through opera and oratorio. It was first used for special effects, often appearing only in one act, scene, or chorus of a large work. It was not until the nineteenth century that the use of the harp became fairly frequent in the orchestra. Significant harp parts are few in the classical period, as the century that brought to the keyboard instruments some of its greatest composers found the harp mechanically unprepared.

Among the masters of the first half of the eighteenth century, George Frederic Handel (1685-1759) deserves credit for the introduction of the harp into his orchestral scores. He first used the harp in his opera Julius Caesar, which was produced in 1713; inexplicably, his first attempt at orchestral harp writing was his best and most detailed. Possibly he became discouraged by the inadequacies of the harp of the early eighteenth century; at any rate the originality and effectiveness of his harp parts declined after Julius Caesar.
In *Julius Caesar* the harp is used only in the Sinfonia in the first scene of the second act. The right-hand part doubles the oboes and violins, and the left-hand doubles the theorbo, bassoons, and cellos.

Fig. 5.—Handel, *Julius Caesar*, act two, scene one, measures 71-79.

The harp part in the remainder of the Sinfonia, which is too lengthy to be quoted, is one of Handel's finest examples of harp writing. Contrary to the method of doubling
the harp with strings or winds which prevailed at the time, Handel here composed a part entirely independent of the other orchestral instruments.

When Handel produced his oratorio *Esther* in 1720 he inserted harp parts into one of the choruses in order to avail himself of the services of two Welsh harpists, the Powells. In this work Handel for the last time wrote the harp part on two staves, the lower part alternating between alto and bass clef. The writing seems more suitable for a keyboard instrument than for the harp, yet it shows off the harp to better advantage than does the writing in his later works.

Fig. 6. --Handel, *Esther*, act one, scene two, measures 127-30.

In the second and larger version of *Esther*, produced in 1733, Handel gives less attention to the harp. It is employed only in combination with cembalo and theorbo, the parts for all three being written on one staff as a single line with figured bass.

![Fig. 7.--Handel, Esther, act one, scene one, measures 3-4.](image)

In his oratorio *Alexander Balus* Handel uses the harp only in the orchestral introduction and accompaniment to Cleopatra's air, "Hark! Hark! He strikes the golden lyre." As in the second version of *Esther*, the part is written on one staff; in this instance, the mandolin part is written below the harp part on the same staff. The harp usually doubles the first violins.

![Fig. 8.--Handel, Alexander Balus, act one, scene one, measures 466-73.](image)
In addition to the harp parts in his operas and oratorios, Handel in the year 1735 composed a Concerto in B flat which, after many years of controversy, is now generally believed to have been written for the harp. Frank Llewelyn Harrison says:

In 1738 Handel's Six Concertos for the Harpsichord or Organ were published in London by John Walsh. The composer originally devised these pieces in 1735 to be played by himself as interludes during the performances of his oratorios. . . . Marcel Grandjany has pursued some researches which indicate that the sixth concerto of this set was actually written for harp and orchestra. Of this the Walsh edition gives no indication, but the edition of the Handel Gesellschaft, initiated in 1859, gives "Arpa o Organo" as the medium. The crowning piece of evidence is Handel's manuscript, which is now in the British Museum in the collection called the King's Music Library. . . . The printed catalogue of the King's Music Library indicates that the manuscript of the concerto in question is contained in a volume of Handel's instrumental music, and is there entitled "Concerto per la Harpa."2

When Handel composed this concerto he indicated a simple figured bass, as was done for the keyboard instruments, without giving any specific consideration to the harpist's technique. For present day use the figured bass has been realized by both Marcel Grandjany and Carlos Salzedo. The concerto is orchestrated for two flutes, muted violins, violas and cellos, and pizzicato bass. It was first performed by the harpist John Powell during the

intermission of George Frederic Handel's oratorio, *Alexander's Feast.*³

Cristoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787) used the harp in several of his scores, notably in *Orfeo ed Euridice.* In this opera, as in many works of the period, the harp is used in an isolated instance; here it is scored for only in the first scene of the second act. As in Handel's later works, the harp part is without exception written on one staff. Whether such parts were meant to be doubled and played by both hands an octave apart is not known. Possibly as the hook-system harp was the only one in existence at that time, the part was written for one hand in order to leave the other hand free to manipulate the hooks.

The harp is given a prominent part in the following orchestral interlude from *Orfeo ed Euridice.*

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 9.--Gluck, *Orfeo ed Euridice,* act two, scene one, measures 22-23.

³Ibid.
In this opera the harp is frequently used in combination with pizzicato strings, as above. The part is composed entirely of various broken chord patterns and is easily heard, as other orchestral parts are written with almost severe simplicity when the harp is employed. The use of the harp almost invariably coincides with the solo songs of Orfeo. The following example shows an effective accompaniment to one of Orfeo's airs.

Fig. 10.—Gluck, Orfeo ed Euridice, act two, scene one; measures 212-114.
Haydn never wrote for the harp, and the sole contribution of W. A. Mozart (1756-1791) to harp literature is the **Concerto for Flute, Harp, and Orchestra in C** (K. 299), which was composed in 1778. This work was commissioned by the Parisian Duc de Guines to be played by himself and his daughter. The Duc was a flutist and his daughter, a pupil of Mozart's, was a proficient harpist. The concerto,

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although characterized by a keyboard style of technique, is readily playable and is frequently heard on symphonic programs today. In 1778 Hochbrucker's single-action harp had been in existence for over fifty years, and it was for this instrument that the concerto was written. Perhaps being poorly impressed by the harp's weak tone and restricted facilities for modulating, Mozart never again attempted to compose for the instrument.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) used the harp only twice—in Leonora Prohaska and the ballet The Creations of Prometheus, which was produced in 1801. Although the harp is used in only one section of the ballet, its treatment is particularly noteworthy. At the beginning of the movement the harp is given a solo of three ascending rolled chords. The remainder of the part consists mostly of broken chord patterns and rapid arpeggios, but also contains some important melodic lines. One passage appears which seems unusually chromatic to have been written for the single-action harp of the period; it was, however, playable by producing the D flat and B flat enharmonically.

![Fig. 11.--Beethoven, Creations of Prometheus, number 5, measures 102-103.](image-url)
The harp is used liberally and successfully in this score, its tones never being obscured by the orchestra. It is unfortunate for the symphony harpist that Beethoven did not continue his skillful writing for the instrument.

The harp did not come into wide use orchestrally until the end of the classical period. The belief that its advancement was influenced by the shift of favor from the harpsichord to the piano is expressed by Curt Sachs, who says:

The harp may owe its advancement at the end of the eighteenth century to the victory of the piano over the harpsichord. As long as the harpsichord existed, between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries, the harp, which was also a plucked instrument, was regarded as inferior in chords, polyphony and technique. With the disappearance of the harpsichord, the field was clear for an instrument like the harp, provided that it could be given a chromatic scale.\(^5\)

CHAPTER III

THE TREATMENT OF THE HARP IN THE ORCHESTRA

BY COMPOSERS OF THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL

The chromatic scale which was to establish the harp as an orchestral instrument was provided by the advent of the double-action pedal harp in 1810. However, not all harpists immediately purchased one of these expensive instruments; it was necessary for some time to elapse before composers could write for it with any certainty that it would be available in an orchestra. Adam Carse notes of the double-action harp:

Choron did not mention it in his book of 1813, and although Catrufo knew of it in 1832, he still regarded the single-action harp as the standard instrument. In 1836 Kastner advised composers to write for the old harp until the newer one was more generally available.¹

Nevertheless, the invention of the double-action harp induced a greater number of composers to write for the instrument, and after 1810 it began to appear more frequently in orchestra scores. The composers of the romantic period brought to the harp its first opportunities as a regular instrument of the orchestra.

¹ Adam Carse, The Orchestra from Beethoven to Berlioz, p. 399.
Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1863) may be said to be the first composer of note to utilise the double-action harp in the opera, being in this respect the forerunner of Wagner. He employs two harps effectively in *Robert Le Diable*, and in the finale to the third act of *Le Prophète* he accompanies the singing of the prophet with the unusual combination of four harps and timpani.

![Musical notation](attachment:image.png)

Fig. 12.—Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, act three, "Hymne Triomphal," measures 10-12.

Grattan Flood, *The Harp*, pp. 177-78.
The earliest known instance of two separate harp parts, independent of one another, is to be found in Zauberharfe, by Franz Schubert (1797-1828). Although two harp parts had been used frequently before this time, both parts had been almost identical, usually written an octave apart.

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) used two harps in William Tell and Le Siège de Corinthe. He wrote skillfully for the instrument, and, like Schubert, wrote independent parts instead of merely doubling the second harp with the first. The following example of separate parts is quoted by Prout.

Fig. 13.—Rossini, Le Siège de Corinthe

Louis Spohr (1784-1859), whose first wife was a concert harpist, wrote copiously for the harp. François Boieldieu
(1775-1834) was the first composer to make use of harp harmonics in an orchestral score when he produced his opera *La Dame Blanche* in 1825.

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) was an untiring exponent of the harp, and mentioned the instrument frequently in his *Memoirs*. During his tour of Germany in 1843 his harp parts frequently had to be played on the piano for lack of harpists; his close friend Mendelssohn had suffered the same experience only a short time before, and Berlioz commented bitterly, if a bit inaccurately, upon this:

> The study of that fine instrument is neglected here, for no discoverable reason, in an absurd and even barbarous way. Indeed I am inclined to believe that this was always the case, considering that none of the German masters have ever made use of it. There is no harp part in any of Mozart's works, neither in *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, the *Magic Flute*, the *Seraglio*, *Idomeneo*, *Cosi fan tutte*, nor in his masses or symphonies. Weber also abstained from using it, likewise Haydn and Beethoven; Gluck alone wrote an easy part in *Orfeo*, for one hand only, and anyhow that opera was composed and represented in Italy. There is something in this at once amazing and annoying to me. . . . It is a disgrace to the German orchestras, who ought all to have at least two harps, especially now that they perform French and Italian operas, in which they are so frequently employed.³

Berlioz's indignation is understandable when one considers the care and detail which he lavished upon the harp parts of *Harold in Italy*, the *Symphonie Fantastique*, and the *Damnation of Faust*.

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Only one harp is used in *Harold in Italy*, and is given a simple but important part. In the first movement, entitled "Harold in the Mountains," it is used to accompany the solo viola with an arpeggiated figure topped by two repeated notes.

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 14.---Berlioz, "Harold in the Mountains," from *Harold in Italy*, measures 34-39.

In the second movement, "March of the Pilgrims," the harp plays two notes only, B and C, in a chime effect with horn, flute, and clarinet. Harmonics are skillfully used
in the third movement, "Serenade," and the harp is tacet in the final movement.

In his *Symphonie Fantastique* Berlioz uses the harp in the second movement only, but writes elaborate parts for two harps. In this movement, called "Un Bal," both parts, although independent, are equal in importance; the writing includes many arpeggios and chords, but is in some instances more pianistic than harpistic. Here is one such part, where the harps, however, are given unusual prominence.

![Fig. 15. --Berlioz, "Un Bal," from Symphonie Fantastique, measures 61-66.](image)

The two harps are often required to double the wind parts.
In the section of the Damnation of Faust known as "Ballet des Sylphes" Berlioz exploits harmonic sounds. The two harps are given harmonics for the first forty-nine bars, and the movement ends with sustained lower strings, timpani, and harp harmonics.

Although Berlioz occasionally wrote without considering the technical peculiarities of the instrument, his harp parts are usually effective and playable. He did a great deal toward bringing the harp to the attention of his contemporaries and followers.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) used the harp in three of his works: Athalie, Oedipus in Colonos, and Antigone. The combination of harp and pizzicato strings, also a favorite device of Gluck's, is often to be found in his writing. Figure 16 illustrates the use of such a combination.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) employed the harp in his cantata Faust. His writing is characterized by simple arpeggios used as an accompaniment for solo voices or instruments. Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896) included a harp part in his comic opera Mignon, and wrote a harp cadenza in the overture which, though florid and brilliant, is very soundly written and not difficult to play.
Franz Liszt (1811-1886) wrote harp parts for several of his scores, among which are Les Préludes, the Dante Symphony, and Eine Faust-Symphonie. Liszt's scores are filled with the long series of ornamental arpeggios which are so frequently found in this period. He often used extended chords to emphasize an orchestral crescendo, and accompanied solo instruments with broken chord figures played on the harp. Liszt sometimes made the common error
of doubling the harp with the virtuoso parts of flute, oboe, or violin. In Eine Faust-Symphonie he writes for one harp a series of intricate arpeggios which culminate in a truly Lisztian flourish.

Fig. 17.--Liszt, "Mephistopheles" from Eine Faust-Symphonie, measure 775.
The harp parts of Richard Wagner (1813-1883) are paradoxical. Although the composer was extremely fond of the harp and included it in all of his operas, he frequently ruined what should have been its most important passages by devising overly complicated parts and submerging them under the brass section. Prout states that Wagner wrote more poorly for the harp than did any other great composer. However, he did a great deal toward establishing the harp in the orchestra, particularly in Germany, where its use had been limited until the time of Liszt and Wagner. Adam Carse says:

In Germany, where the harp was not much in demand, the double-action harp was rarely to be found until after the mid-century. As late as 1846 Wagner recommended that the two old single-action harps at Dresden be replaced by double-action instruments. Soon after the mid-century, when Wagner and Liszt were writing more important and more exacting harp parts, the Germans were obliged to pay more attention to the instrument, and had to see that better instruments and competent players were included in their orchestras.\(^4\)

Wagner used the harp profusely with full orchestra, but favored it particularly as an instrument of accompaniment for solo songs. In *Tannhäuser* the song of Wolfram to Elizabeth is accompanied solely by the harp. In instances such as the Prelude to *Die Meistersinger* he used full, rolled chords to good advantage; arpeggios were frequently employed as harmonic background or mere effect. A good

\(^4\) Adam Carse, *The Orchestra from Beethoven to Berlioz*, p. 399.
example of arpeggios suddenly coming through the orchestra is to be found in the overture to the Flying Dutchman.

Fig. 18.—Wagner, the Flying Dutchman overture, measures 322-23.
While Wagner has to his credit many beautiful and effective harp parts, he has also written some of the most difficult and unplayable passages to be found in orchestral literature. The following is an excerpt from Die Walküre, of which Prout says:

To show the student how NOT to write for the harp, we quote an almost impossible passage from the final scene of "Die Walküre." Here almost every group of semiquavers requires the changing of two, sometimes of three pedals. The entire passage is absolutely antagonistic to the nature of the instrument. One of the best harpists in London, the late Mr. Ernest Lockwood, once informed the author that he had to practice this passage an hour a day for some weeks, before he was able to play it at one of the Richter concerts.

Fig. 19.—Wagner, Die Walküre, act three, scene three, measures 707-709.

In *Die Götterdämmerung* Wagner uses six harps, but does little more than double them with the violin parts. Among the errors in harp writing to be found in Wagner's scores are the frequently occurring passages in which a trill or octave tremolo is given to the right hand while the left hand is required to play arpeggios or broken chords. The harpist generally uses two hands for the trill or tremolo, and to play such a figure forte with one hand while simultaneously executing a complex left hand part is virtually impossible.

One must not assume, however, that much of Wagner's harp writing was in vain. As has been previously stated, he wrote many successful and playable parts; even those parts which are impractical were written in the effort to elevate the instrument to a respected position in the orchestra, and one must revere them even while being conscious of their faults. Perhaps more than any other composer Wagner brought prominence to the harp by his wealth of orchestral parts for it.

The harp was used very freely in the operas of Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) and Charles Gounod (1818-1893). It is employed in Verdi's *La Traviata* and *Il Trovatore*, but receives its most effective treatment in *Aida*. In the introduction to the second act of *Aida* the harp is given a twelve-measure solo. In the second scene of the first act, the invocation of Phthà is accompanied by harp alone.
In the final scene of the opera Verdi writes important parts for two harps, one on the stage. The harps, which are often the only instruments to accompany the singers, add greatly to the atmosphere of mystery and tragedy which pervades the opera's finale. The writing is uniformly good; tremolos are the only unharpistic devices to appear, and these occur very rarely.

Gounod gave the harp much prominence in "Romeo and Juliet" and "Faust." Harp and timpani are given a solo in the first scene. In Mercutio's ballad, "Queen Mab," the harp plays a clever scherzando accompaniment, and the instrument is often used to accompany the solos and duets of "Romeo and Juliet." Gounod employs four harps in "Faust," although there are no divided passages and the part may be
successfully played by one harp. Except for the double arpeggios which are also found in the works of Wagner, the writing is very sound.

César Franck (1822-1890) included the harp in many of his sacred works, and also wrote a part for it in his D minor Symphony. The harp opens the second movement with a solo accompanied by pizzicato strings. This passage later becomes the accompaniment for an English horn solo.

Fig. 21.—Franck, Symphony in D minor, second movement, measures 1-5.
The movement is ended by a harp arpeggio. In the third movement there is a return to the theme of the second movement, and the harp part is concluded with arpeggios played over sustained brasses.

Bedřich Smetana (1824-1896) and Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), used a similar style of harp writing, as can be seen from the scores of "Die Moldau" and Danse Macabre respectively. In each of these works the composer has used the harp only where it can be clearly heard, and the writing is always kept within the strongest phases of harp technique. In "Die Moldau" the harp is skillfully combined with instruments which will not obscure its tone. The harp is used in an unusual manner in Danse Macabre; while horns and violins play sustained tones, it strikes twelve times the note D, thus producing a chime effect. Smetana used two harps in several of the movements from his cycle of tone poems, Má Vlast, of which "Die Moldau" is the second part. In the first movement, "Vyšehrad," the first harp plays a long cadenza while the second harp plays harmonies beneath it. Saint Saëns wrote harp parts for Phaeton, Le Rouet d'Omphale, La Jeunesse d'Hercule, and Samson et Delilah.

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896) and Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) used the harp only once in orchestral compositions. Bruckner wrote a part, consisting mostly of arpeggios, for his Ninth Symphony, indicating that it was to be played by
three harps. Brahms included a part in his *German Requiem* which is to be played by two harps. In this work he includes, in addition to the usual chords and arpeggios found in this period, a solo doubled by the flute in which the doubling is practical harp writing.

![Musical notation](image)

**Fig. 22.**--Brahms, *Requiem*, second movement, measures 107-109.

Georges Bizet (1838-1875) and Jules Massanet (1842-1912) followed the traditions of Verdi and Gounod in the use of the harp in opera. Bizet, who also wrote a harp part in his *L'Arlesienne Suite No. II*, gave the harp many prominent passages in his opera *Carmen*; particularly successful is the famous Intermezzo from the third act, in which the harp provides a broken chord accompaniment for the flute solo. Massanet included the harp in many of his works, among which are *Manon*, *Le Cid*, and *Thalès*. His style of writing for the harp is similar to that of Gounod, although he did not use the harp as liberally as did Gounod.
Peter Ilyitch Tschaikovsky (1840-1893) wrote harp parts for a number of his works. Especially worthy of note are the parts in the Nutcracker Suite, the Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantaisie, and the Capriccio Italien. In the Nutcracker Suite, the harp is used only in the section entitled "Waltz of the Flowers." After some preliminary arpeggios, the harp is given an eighteen-measure cadenza, the technique of which is very pianistic. Tschaikovsky has written broken chords in contrary motion to be played at a rapid tempo, and has concluded the cadenza with the common mistake of writing double arpeggios in thirty-second notes marked fortissimo.

Fig. 23.—Tschaikovsky, "Waltz of the Flowers," from the Nutcracker Suite, measures 25-29.
There are several more practical and effective revisions of this cadenza, which are used by the harpists of most of the major symphonies. The harp part of the Capriccio Italian, although it contains some skillful harp writing, is marred by the inclusion of awkwardly placed arpeggios which must be slightly altered in order to be playable. In the Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantaisie Tschaikovsky employs chord sequences for the harp simply, yet with excellent effect.

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) was the first composer to treat the harp as an indispensable instrument in his symphonies. The harp was to the symphonies of Mahler what it was to the operas of Wagner. Mahler used two harps in many of his symphonies, writing the parts independent of one another. He seldom doubled the harp parts with other orchestral instruments. Although he employed all the devices of chords, arpeggios, and harmonics which had been utilised by other composers of the romantic period, he also gave the harp consideration as a melodic instrument, writing for it its first important melodic passages. He was also the first of the romanticists to use the harp glissando to any extent. Almost every type of harp technique is to be found somewhere in Mahler's scores; the lower strings of the instrument received his particular attention. He frequently ended movements with harp alone.
Mahler also used the harp to accompany solo instruments. His writing was more practical than that of Wagner; Mahler's harp parts were written to be heard.

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) included the harp in most of his orchestral works, the most important of which are Don Juan, Don Quixote, Death and Transfiguration, and Also Sprach Zarathustra. He exploited both the scale and chord glissando more than Mahler did, using it to emphasize the sweeping crescendos which characterize his works. Strauss was obviously unfamiliar with the fundamentals of the harp, often writing chords containing nine or ten notes and long

Fig. 24.—Mahler, Fourth Symphony, fourth movement, last six measures.
passages composed of five-finger patterns. The following excerpt from *Don Juan* is an example of the latter.

![Score snippet](image)

**Fig. 25.**--Strauss, *Don Juan*, measures 144-45

Strauss frequently used the tremolo effect in combination with full orchestra. As the tremolo is a very delicate effect, almost inaudible even in solo, it is invariably lost when combined with strings, winds, and brass. Usually Strauss's errors in harp writing are those common to Wagner. Percy Scholes quotes Carlos Salzedo as saying: "In general orchestral harp parts are a sort of compromise between the piano and an imaginary harp. . . . Richard Strauss's scores, for instance, are filled with such unharpistic parts." 6

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Although themselves diverse in principle, both the Russian Nationalists and the French Impressionists were alike in that they rebelled against the ideals of the Romantic composers; their rejection of the Romanticists' orchestral technique is as apparent in their treatment of the harp as in the treatment of other instruments. Whereas the Romanticists used the harp chiefly for ornamentation and, through thoughtless orchestration, frequently obscured it under the rest of the orchestra, the Russian Nationalists and French Impressionists sought to break away from the overworked formula of chords and arpeggios and give to the instrument a newer, more purposeful idiom.

Of the composers of the Russian Nationalist school, Alexander Borodin (1834-1887), Modest Musorgsky (1839-1881), and Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908) are the three whose works are most frequently heard today. The harp writing in their works was a departure from that which preceded, and is worthy of note.
Rimsky-Korsakov had a clearer understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the harp than most composers usually attain. He stated that the harp in the orchestra was almost entirely a harmonic or accompanying instrument, but innovated accompaniments of more interest than the seemingly interminable arpeggios of the Romantic school. Although he used only one harp in many of his earlier works, he later came to believe that several harps were necessary in order to be heard against a full orchestra, and said, "Full orchestras should include three or even four harps. My operas Sadko, the Legend of the Invisible City, and the Golden Cockerel are designed for two harps, Mlada for three."¹

Rimsky-Korsakov used the harp in almost all of his orchestral works. In his symphonic suite Scheherazade he displays practical and effective writing for one harp. In its initial appearance the harp, playing rolled chords, provides a harmonic background for the solo violin. This pattern is repeated several times in the course of the composition. In the second movement the harp and flute play a solo over string tremolo. Though the solo is marked piano, it carries well because of the discriminate choice of instruments. Near the conclusion of the work Rimsky-Korsakov has written a very long series of glissandos.

¹Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakov, Principles of Orchestration, p. 28.
His works abound with glissandos, yet he did not make superfluous use of them. He understood their purpose well, and had definite ideas as to their employment:

The technical operation known as glissando is peculiar to the harp alone. Taking for granted that the reader is conversant with the methods of acquiring different scales by means of double-notched pedals, it will be sufficient to remark that glissando scales produce a discordant medley of sound owing to the length of time the strings continue to vibrate, and therefore, as a purely musical effect, glissando can only be used in the upper octaves, quite piano, where the sound of the strings is sufficiently clear, yet not too prolonged. Forte glissando scales, entailing the use of the lower and middle strings, are only permissible as embellishments.\(^2\)

It was the latter type of glissando which he utilized in the following example from the last movement of *Scheherazade*.

Fig. 26. -- Rimsky-Korsakov, *Scheherazade*, measures 588, 591.

In his *Capriccio Espagnol*, Rimsky-Korsakov includes the harp in the third, fourth, and fifth movements. Here

we find examples of a decidedly different kind of accompaniment than has been seen previously; the following excerpt from the fourth movement shows a pattern which is forcefully rhythmic.

![Fig. 27.--Rimsky-Korsakov, "Scena e canto gitano" from Capriccio Espagnol, measures 32-33.](image)

The harp is given a brilliant cadenza in the fourth movement. Although the rapid repeated notes make the execution of the cadenza rather awkward, this difficulty can be lessened by a slight enharmonic alteration. See Figure 28.

Rimsky-Korsakov also includes a new form of glissando in this work, one which is today known as the "Aeolian chord" effect. Here the pedals are arranged so as to produce a harmonic glissando and the strings are struck shortly and brusquely to give the effect of an unbroken chord.
Fig. 28.—Rimsky-Korsakov, "Scena e canto gitano" from *Capriccio Espagnol*, cadenza number 5.

Figure 29 illustrates the "Aeolian chord" effect.

Fig. 29.—Rimsky-Korsakov, "Scena e canto gitano" from *Capriccio Espagnol*, measure 78.
Alexander Borodin, although he did not use the harp as extensively as did Rimsky-Korsakov, used it often and with good effect. Interesting parts are to be found in his opera *Prince Igor*, which was orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov, and in his Second Symphony.

In the introduction to the "Polovetsian Dances" from *Prince Igor* the harp provides the basic rhythmic background over which the cellos play a syncopated pattern. With clarinets, bassoons, and cello pizzicato it accompanies an oboe solo at the beginning of the first dance. In this skillfully orchestrated passage the accompaniment is properly subordinated to the solo, yet the instruments of accompaniment, while blending well, are each heard distinctly. Later in the same dance, the harp, second violins, and violas play a rhythmic accompaniment on alternate portions of the beat. (See Fig. 30, p. 49)

In the third dance the harp is given a short independent melodic line in the upper strings. The remainder of the part consists of chords or single notes outlining chords.

Borodin uses one harp in the second, third, and fourth movements of his Second Symphony. In the second movement, a scherzo, isolated chords and single notes are used rhythmically rather than harmonically.
Fig. 30.—Borodin, Polovetsian Dances, measures 31-32.

In the third movement of the Second Symphony, Andante, harp and clarinet have a short solo introduction.

Fig. 31.—Borodin, Second Symphony, third movement, measures 1-4.
The harp plays broken chords and octaves frequently throughout the movement to provide harmony and accompaniment for solo winds. Chord patterns appear which are similar to those used in the works of Berlioz. The movement concludes with a return to the theme of the harp and clarinet introduction. In the final movement, in addition to well-placed arpeggios, Borodin writes broken fifths and sixths to accent chord changes in the string accompaniment. The writing throughout the symphony is very harpistic and playable; the balance of harp to orchestra is quite good.

The harp is used in Mussorgsky's opera Boris Godunov and the orchestral piece Night on Bare Mountain, both of which were orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov. In Boris Godunov we find the antithesis of Romantic harp writing; the treatment of the harp is very dry, being completely free of the rolled chords and arpeggios which the harpist is usually required to play in opera scores. Glissandos are used occasionally but for the most part the harp is given passages of a character similar to that of the following example, which is played in unison by flutes, clarinets, strings, piano and harp. (See Fig. 32, p. 51)

At the end of the opera the harp has a long solo passage of single harmonics, which are written in an effective range.
The harp is given only fifteen measures in the entire score of a Night on Bare Mountain, yet every note it plays is clearly heard because of the careful orchestration. The part consists of the simplest sort of arpeggios; while the harp plays the rest of the orchestra sustains tones pianissimo. In spite of its short duration, the part fulfills its purpose better than some many times its length.

The treatment of the harp by the foremost exponents of the Impressionist school, Claude Debussy (1862-1918) and Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), differed even more widely from the Romanticist technique than did that of the Russian Nationalists. Both Debussy and Ravel were thoroughly familiar with every peculiarity of the instrument. They did not write the double sharps, non-existent on the harp, which are found so often in the scores of the nineteenth century; they were the first composers to simplify certain passages by writing them enharmonically. Neither of them
used the harp for a mere ornamental filling-in, nor did they make impossible demands on the harpist. Only a meticulous study of the technique of the instrument could result in such sensible and effective harp parts as were written by these two composers.

Percy Scholes says,

The impressionist school initiated by Debussy has found in the harp an admirable exponent of the misty and mystical, and nowadays two harpists are to be seen on the platform when large-scale works of late nineteenth or of twentieth century origin are to be heard.3

The importance attached by Debussy to the use of two harps is shown by his works L'Enfant Prodigue, La Damoselle Elue, Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'Un Faune, Pelléas et Mélisande, Nocturnes, La Mer, Gigues, Iberia, Rondes de Printemps, Première Rapsodie, Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien, Jeux, Fantaisie pour Piano et Orchestre, and Le Roi Lear, in all of which he used two harps and in most of which he wrote separate and distinct parts for them. Of the character of Debussy's harp writing Carse says,

The importance and careful elaboration of Debussy's harp parts, and indeed his dependence on the harp generally, are typically French. Harmonics for harps abound, and glissando scales carried out on a whole-tone-scale tuning are, of course, in constant requisition.4

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4Adam Carse, The History of Orchestration, p. 325.
In the opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* Debussy skillfully uses the harp to contribute to the mystical atmosphere of the work. As in most of Debussy's compositions, the harps do not double other instruments, nor are they given arpeggios to provide harmony.

Fig. 33.—Debussy, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, act three, scene two, measures 71-72.
When they play florid passages it is to provide a special effect, as is the case in Figure 33, an example from the music descriptive of the subterranean chambers.

In the first measure Debussy has simplified the arpeggios by dividing them between the two harps; in the second measure he achieves an interwoven effect by writing arpeggios in contrary motion.

In the Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'Un Faune Debussy uses double grace notes, which are seldom found in harp parts, but are quite effective here.

Fig. 34. -- Debussy, Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'Un Faune, measure 35.

One of his rare instances of doubling the harp with another instrument is to be found in "Nuages," the first of Debussy's Nocturnes. Here, however, it is done to good advantage; flute and harp play a solo in unison over sustained strings, and the combined tones of the two instruments produce an unusual effect. Two harps are used in
"Fêtes" and are given separate parts. The following illustration from "Fêtes" provides, as does an earlier quotation from Wagner's Overture to the Flying Dutchman, an example of the harp suddenly coming through the orchestra, and also displays the contrast between the timbre of the harp and the strings.

Fig. 35.--Debussy, "Fêtes," from Nocturnes, measures 56-59.
Of the effect of the harps in this piece Thompson says, "The harp became something aerial and atmospheric rather than an accompaniment or a decoration." 5

In "Sirenès," the second of the Nocturnes, two harps are employed much as they are in Pelléas et Mélisande; they provide an ethereal aura by the use of harmonics, glissandos, and patterns similar to that quoted from the opera's music descriptive of the subterranean chambers.

The aerial and atmospheric qualities to which Thompson refers are even more pronounced in La Mer and the Images. Whole-tone triad glissandos are used to great advantage in La Mer; the first harp plays an ascending glissando, at the top of which the second harp begins a descending glissando. Debussy makes wide use of enharmonics to facilitate passages such as the following from Iberia.

Fig. 36.—Debussy, "Par les rues et par les chemins" from Iberia, measures 212-13.

5Oscar Thompson, Debussy, Man and Artist, p. 320.
Single and double grace-notes (as in Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'Un Faune), extremely rare in the harp parts of other composers, appear prominently in all of Debussy's scores.

The harp was as indispensible to the orchestral works of Ravel as it was to those of Debussy, although Ravel often used only one harp. His writing for the instrument differs from Debussy's in that he used the harp more harmonically; instead of assigning prominent melodic passages to it, he wrote for it chords and chordal glissandos, using it as an instrument of accompaniment. Like Debussy, he drew frequently upon harmonics and glissandos. In his Bolero the harp supplies the beat throughout most of the work, first in single notes, then in intervals to which notes are gradually added until, in the concluding section, it plays extended eight-note chords. In Ma Mère l'Oye the harp receives a similar treatment, being used to establish a waltz rhythm. In the section entitled "Le Jardin Féerique" it is combined with winds, celeste, and solo violin; this combination produces an unusual sound.

Ravel uses the harp principally for accompaniment in La Valse. He most nearly approaches Debussy's style of writing in the Daphnis et Chloe Suite No. 1; the quietly undulating figurations and the use of grace notes and harmonics are particularly reminiscent of Debussy's work.
In his *Daphnis et Chloe Suite No. 2* he uses two harps to alternate in playing glissandos built upon different chords.

![Musical notation]

Fig. 37.--Ravel, *Daphnis et Chloe Suite No. 2*, measures 1-2.

In "Prélude à la Nuit" from *Rapsodie Espagnole* Ravel achieves a novel effect by having the harp first play harmonics, then natural tones an octave higher. This produces identical notes with differing timbres. The second harp plays the same pattern an octave below the first.

The works of Debussy and Ravel represent for the harpist a tremendous advance over those of the preceding period. Their harp parts have seldom been equalled in the compositions of our time.
Fig. 38.--Ravel, "Prelude a la Nuit" from Rapsodie Espagnole, measure 46.
The composers of the twentieth century have treated the harp in many varied ways. Some have followed the techniques of previous schools while others have devised new and interesting methods of their own.

Of the post-Impressionists, Frederick Delius (1862-1934) in particular has given prominence to the harp; his writing shows the influence of the works of Debussy. Delius included carefully written parts for one or two harps in almost all of his major compositions. His Appalachea, Sea Drift, and Briggs Fair all contain two harp parts which are equal in importance to one another, yet definitely individual and independent. In North Country Sketches, Dance Rhapsody No. 2, "The Walk to the Paradise Garden" from A Village Romeo and Juliet, and the "Intermezzo" and "Serenade" from Hassan, Delius has written one part to be played by one or two harps. With the exception of some five-finger patterns, his writing is very harpistic; many beautiful and playable harp solos are to be found in his works.
Jan Sibelius (1865– ) follows the type of writing used by composers of the Romantic school, although he writes with a better knowledge of harp technique than did the Romanticists. He opens and concludes his tone poem The Bard with harp solos, and uses the harp prominently in Valse Triste and his First and Sixth Symphonies. Sibelius often gives the harp an underlying rhythmic motive; although the harp is sometimes used to double strings and winds, no unharpistic patterns are employed. Scale glissandos are frequently utilized in these works. In the last movement of the First Symphony the following pattern is used sequentially throughout the entire concluding section.

Fig. 39.--Sibelius, First Symphony, fourth movement, measures 386-87.
Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915) wrote parts for two harps in *Le Divin Poème*, *Le Poème de l'Extase*, and *Prométhée*, *le Poème de Feu*. Although not particularly original in his treatment of the instrument, Scriabin was familiar with its fundamentals and wrote practical, well-sounding parts for it. He frequently used the second harp to produce glissandos while the first harp played broken augmented triads.

Perhaps the twentieth century's poorest example of harp writing is to be found in the symphonic poem *Pelleas und Melisande* by Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). Two elaborate harp parts combine every device against which orchestration books warn; they are even less playable than some of Wagner's worst harp writing. The harp, with the exception of numerous glissandos, is treated as a pianoforte.

In the *Three-Cornered Hat* Manuel de Falla (1876- ) displays a style of harp writing similar to that of Rimsky-Korsakov. His use of glissandos and rhythmic patterns such as the following is strongly reminiscent of the Russian composer.

![Fig. 40.--de Falla, "Les Voisins" from the Three-Cornered Hat, measures 81-82.](image-url)
Many different types of harp writing are to be found in the works of Ernest Bloch (1880- ). Much of his writing contains the faults of the Romanticists, but often one or two harps are used to great advantage. In his epic rhapsody America, he employs two harps to produce an effect which would not be possible on one instrument.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1881- ) treats the harp much as does de Falla; in several of his works, however, he writes the harp and piano parts together, which seldom results in practical composition for the harp.

Bela Bartok (1881- ) uses the harp sparingly but sensibly in his Tanz-Suite, in which all passages of
pianistic character are assigned to the piano. He treats
the harp in much the same manner in his Hungarian Peasant
Songs; here glissandos are used to double thirty-second
note scales played by flute, oboes, and clarinets.

Although he has occasionally subjected the harp to
some impractical writing, Igor Stravinsky (1882- ) must
be given credit for the imaginative experimentation which
he has exercised in composing orchestral parts for the
instrument. It is interesting to note that in his Symphony
in Three Movements it is the pianoforte, not the harp,
which plays all the glissandos. In the Symphony, Chant du
Rossignol, Orpheus, and Petrouchka Stravinsky employs sons
etouffés and sons près de la table, the former being muf-
flled tones and the latter the playing of tones next to the
sounding-board, which produces a sound similar to that of
a guitar. The following are examples of the above effects.
Fig. 42 illustrates sons étouffés.

Fig. 42.—Stravinsky, Symphony in Three Movements,
third movement, measure 43.
Fig. 43 illustrates sons près de la table.

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 43.—Stravinsky, Orpheus, scene 1, measures 1-2.

The influence of the Impressionists upon Stravinsky's harp writing is clearly seen in his use of enharmonics and his frequent writing of single and double grace notes. Glissandos are rarely used for harmony; when they appear, they are usually short and are built upon dissonant intervals. Their purpose is generally to provide rhythmic accent. Chords are often marked *non arpeggio*, even those which include ten or more notes! Stravinsky is one of the few composers of this century who has given the harp any melodic importance. In *Scherzo a la Russe* the harp is written in counterpoint against the piano. Stravinsky used two harps in most of his scores; in *Scherzo Fantastique* he used three.

The orchestral harp treatment of Serge Prokofieff (1891-) is similar to that of Stravinsky, although
Prokofieff uses the instrument more for accompaniment and less for melody. In his *Fifth Symphony* Prokofieff's use of the harp is a complete departure from the ornamental type of harp writing; in contrast to that of Schoenberg, for instance, it is dry and precise, almost percussive. The chords which are employed are used as rhythmic accents rather than as harmonic background, and non-chordal glissandos, marked *con precissione*, are used in the same manner. Bass octaves are frequently used alone, and the part is sometimes written on one staff, as in the Classical period. The harp is used almost entirely for accompaniment in the *Romeo and Juliet Suites Nos. 1 and 2*; any melodic lines it may have are doubled by other instruments. In *Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 1* are to be found some difficult skips at a fast tempo and a long passage similar to that quoted from Berlioz's "Un Bal." Prokofieff's use of two harps in the "Scherzo" from the opera *The Love of the Three Oranges* is interesting; the orchestration in the following passage is excellent. (See Fig. 44, p. 67)

Howard Hanson and Ralph Vaughn-Williams have employed the harp in a number of their works, but have made no innovations. Vaughn-Williams often wrote the fortissimo double arpeggios which are so impractical on the instrument.
Hindemith, Milhaud, and Honegger used the harp very little. Shostakovich included one or two harps in several of his symphonies, but they are unessential to the music; the harp parts are usually a mere doubling of two or more wind instruments.

Fig. 44.—Prokofieff, "Scherzo," from The Love of the Three Oranges, measures 127-28.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This document has not attempted to present all phases of orchestral harp writing; space and reference material have been too limited for that undertaking. Instead it has been the aim to show the important transformations which the harp has undergone and to present the major developments in its treatment as an orchestral instrument. Although only a small portion of the harp repertoire has been considered here, the examples which were analyzed were chosen to illustrate either new and successful ideas in the treatment of the harp or impractical treatment of the harp.

The discussion in the preceding pages has set forth the causes of the lack of classical repertoire for the instrument, and has shown how unfamiliarity with the idiom of the harp has been responsible for the many ineffective harp parts in orchestral literature. The fact that composers have too often seen the harp only as a source of arpeggios and accompaniments does not mean that it will continue to be treated as such in the music of the future. Debussy in particular has helped to give composers a
different conception of the harp, and in our time, Stravinsky has contributed to the expansion of the instrument's orchestral technique. It is to be hoped that composers of following generations will elevate the harp to an even more important and respected position in the orchestra; this can be done only by means of a study of the harp as thorough as that of the other orchestral instruments.
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