

nignity of his disposition, nor more highly respected for the extent of his various attainments in languages, literature, and in science.

MUZIO CLEMENTI.

MUZIO CLEMENTI was born at Rome in the year 1725, His father was a worker in silver of great merit, and principally engaged in the execution of embossed vases and figures employed in the Catholic worship. At an early period of his youth he evinced a powerful disposition for music, and as this was an art which greatly delighted his father, he anxiously bestowed the best instructions, by placing him under BURONI the principal composer to St. Peters, after which, and at the age of six years, he began sol fa-ing and was instructed by Cordicelli in thorough bass. At nine years of age he passed his examination, and was admitted as an organist at Rome. He next went under the celebrated Santanelli, the last great master of the true vocal school, and between eleven and twelve he went under Carpini, the deepest contrapuntist of his day in Rome. A few months after he was placed under this master, he was induced by some of his friends, and without consulting his Preceptor, to write a mass for four voices, for which he received so much commendation, that Carpini expressed a desire to have it. It was accordingly repeated in Church in presence of his master, who being little accustomed to bestow praise on any one, said to his pupil, after his dry manner, "Why did you not tell me you were about to

write a mass, this is very well to be sure, but if you had consulted me it might have been much better."

At the age of fourteen a Mr. Beckford residing in Dorsetshire in England, then on his travels in Italy, was extremely desirous of taking him over to that country. The declining riches of the Roman church, at this period not giving much encouragement to the talents of the Father, he agreed to confide the rising talents to the care of Mr. Beckford.

The country seat of Mr. Beckford being in Dorsetshire, by the aid of a good library and the conversation of the family, CLEMENTI quickly obtained a competent knowledge of the English language. His efforts to acquire pre-eminence on the harpsichord, were in the mean time as indefatigable as they were successful, and at the age of eighteen he had not only impressed all his contemporaries in the powers of execution and expression, but had written his Opera 2, which gave a new era to that species of composition. The simplicity, brilliancy, and originality which it displayed, captivated the whole circle of professors and amateurs. It is superfluous to add what all the great musicians of the age have uniformly allowed, that this admirable work is the basis on which the whole fabric of modern sonatas for the piano forte has been erected. When Schroeter arrived in England, he was asked if he could play the works of CLEMENTI, he replied that they could only be performed by the author himself, or the devil. Yet such is the progress executive ability has made, that was once an obstacle to the most accomplished talent, is now within the power of thousands.

After he quitted Dorsetshire, he went to London, and was engaged to preside at the harpsichord, in the Orchestra of the Opera house, where he had an opportunity of improv-

ing his taste by the performances of the first singers of the age. The advantages he derived from this species of study was quickly shewn by the rapid progress he made beyond his cotemporaries, either in the dignity of his style of execution, and in the powers of expression. This also he carried into his compositions and Dussek, Steibelt, Woelfl, Beethoven, and other eminent performances on the Continent, who had no opportunity of receiving personal instructions from CLEMENTI, declare that they had formed themselves entirely on his works. His ability in extemporaneous playing, has perhaps no parallel. The richness of harmonic combination, the brilliancy of fancy, the power of effect, and the noble style of execution which he displays, make him stand alone in an age which has produced such a host of executive talent.

In 1780 at the instigation of ПАСЧИЕКОВИ, he determined to visit Paris, where he was received with enthusiasm, and had the honour to play before the Queen, who bestowed upon him the most unqualified applause, the warmth of French praise, contrasted with the gentle and cool approbation given by the English, quite astonished the young musician, who used jocosely to remark, that he would scarcely believe himself to be the same man. Having enjoyed the unabated applause of the Parisians until the summer of 1781, he determined on paying a visit to Vienna. At Vienna he became acquainted with Haydn and Mozart, and all the celebrated musicians resident in that capital. The Emperor Joseph who was a great lover of music invited him to his palace, where in the latter end of the year 1781, he had the honour of playing alternately with Mozart before the Emperor and the Grand Duke Paul of Russia and the Dutchess. In 1782 he returned to England, and some time after he took John B. Cramer then about 15 years old, under his tuition. The following

year CLEMENTI returned to France, in 1784 he again came back to England. From this period to 1802 he remained pursuing his professional labours with increasing reputation ; and wishing to secure himself sufficient time for the prosecution of his studies, he raised his terms to one guinea per hour. His fame however was so great that this augmentation of pence rather increased than diminished the candidates for instruction. The great number of excellent pupils which he found during this period, proves his superior skill in the art of tuition ; the invariable success which attended his public performances, attracted his pre-eminent talents as a player, and his compositions are a lasting proof of his application and genius. About the year 1800, having lost a large sum of money by the failure of the well known firm of Longman and Broderip, 26 Cheapside, he was induced by the persuasions of some eminent mercantile gentlemen, to embark in the concern.

A new firm was accordingly formed from that period and he declined any more pupils. The hours which he did not thenceforward employ in his professional studies, he dedicated to the mechanical and philosophical improvement of piano fortes, and the originality and justness of his conceptions were crowned with complete success. The extraordinary and admirable talents of John Field, CLEMENTI had cultivated with encreasing delight, and he had been often heard to say, that such was his quickness of conception, retentiveness of memory, and facility of execution which this highly gifted boy possessed, that he seldom had occasion to make the same remark to him a second time. With this favourite pupil in the autumn of 1802 he paid a third visit to Paris, where he was received with unabated esteem and admiration. From Paris he proceeded to Vienna, where he intended to place Field under the direction of Albrechtsberger, to which his pupil seemed to assent with

pleasure ; but when the time came, for CLEMENTI to set off for Russia, poor Field with tears trembling in his eyes, expressed so much regret at parting from his master, and so strong a desire to accompany him, that CLEMENTI could not resist his inclinations—they therefore proceeded directly to St. Petersburg.

In Petersburg CLEMENTI was received with the greatest distinction. He played extemporaneously in the society of the principal professors, with his accustomed excellence, and to the admiration of his audience ; and having introduced Field to all his friends, soon afterwards left Russia, for Berlin and Dresden. At this place Klengel introduced himself to the acquaintance of CLEMENTI, and after obtaining some instructions, became desirous to accompany his master in his travels. CLEMENTI was so much pleased with his character, that he took him on to Vienna, where, during some months, worked very hard under his direction.

During the following summer CLEMENTI took Klengel on a tour through Switzerland, and returned immediately afterwards to Berlin, where he married his first wife. In the autumn he took his bride through Italy, as far as Rome and Naples, and on his return to Berlin, having had the misfortune to lose his wife in child bed, he immediately left the scene of his sorrows, and once more visited Petersburg. In this journey he took with him another promising pupil of the name of Berger, who is now the principal professor of the piano-forte at Berlin. At Petersburg he found Field in the full enjoyment of the highest reputation, he might be said to be the idol of the Russian nation. Here he remained but a short time, and went back to Vienna. Having heard of the death of his brother, he proceeded once more to Rome, to settle the affairs of his family, and afterwards arrived in England in 1810, and the year fol-

lowing married his present wife. His first publication after his return was the "Appendix," to his "Introduction to the art of Playing on the Piano Forte," a work which has been of infinite use both to the profession and to the public, and the demand for which, has constantly augmented in proportion as its excellence has been discovered. He next adapted the twelve grand symphonies of Haydn for the piano forte, with accompaniments for the flute, violin, and violincello. Afterwards he adapted "Haydn's Creation," the oratorio of the "Seasons," and Mozart's overture to Don Giovanni, besides various selections from the vocal compositions of the same author.

We now come to mention a work, by which the author must, have established his fame as a composer of the first eminence, had he never written another note. We allude to his "*Gradus Parnassum*." The public must anticipate much pleasure from the knowledge that there are in press several new compositions from the fruitful and unexhaustable pen of the accomplished subject of this memoir. We must now close our sketch of the life of this extraordinary man, whom we rejoice to see on the verge of seventy, retaining all the vivacity, freshness, and vigour of intellectual strength, and in the enjoyment of a constitution which promises the musical world rich harvests still to come from the fertility of his comparable genius.