The music of Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (1847-1935) : a critical study.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to provide a contextual survey of the music of the Scottish composer, conductor and educator Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (1847–1935). His life and works have not previously been the subject of extensive research and, among other issues, this thesis will address why Mackenzie has been hitherto neglected in favour of his contemporaries and the subsequent generation of composers.

As a musician and administrator, Mackenzie was an important figure in the British musical establishment during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and his career had a great impact on the development of important national institutions such as the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Royal Academy of Music. Having been brought up in Scotland, trained in both Germany and London, and resident in Tuscany for almost a decade during his thirties, Mackenzie was a truly cosmopolitan composer and the influence of these cultural experiences is evident in his work. Through a generic survey of his output, this thesis sets the composer’s major works in their historical and biographical contexts, isolates stylistic precedents from other nineteenth-century composers, and examines more general compositional tendencies and preoccupations in his music. The discussion in each chapter concentrates on a representative number of works from each genre, while drawing parallels with other pieces not described in detail.

To complement the main musical discussion, the thesis also contains an introductory biographical chapter, a timeline showing the more significant events in the composer’s career, a family tree, and a fully comprehensive catalogue of works. These sections all draw on a large number of unpublished primary sources held in public and private collections in the United Kingdom and abroad to give as full a picture of Mackenzie’s career as possible.
A Critical Study

Duncan James Barker

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Music Department
University of Durham

1999

Volume 1 of 2

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Contents

Volume 1

Declaration ii
Statement of Copyright ii
Acknowledgements iii
Portrait v

Foreword 1
Chapter 1: Biography 5
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music 26
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas 49
Chapter 4: The Choral Music 103
Chapter 5: The Later Operas 151
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music 173
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music 211

Volume 2

Appendix 1: Biographical Timeline 246
Appendix 2: The Mackenzie Family Tree 257
Appendix 3: A Catalogue of Works 260
by Alexander Campbell Mackenzie

List of Manuscript Sources 396
Bibliography 399
Declaration

I confirm that no part of the material offered has previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or in any other University. If material has been generated through joint work, my independent contribution has been clearly indicated. In all other cases material from the work of others has been acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases suitably indicated.

Statement of Copyright

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the University of Durham and the Department of Music in particular for enabling me to undertake this research with the financial support of a three-year Postgraduate Studentship (1994–97) and the supplementary help offered by the Music Department’s Postgraduate Travel Fund and the Faculty of Arts Dean’s Fund during my time in Durham. I would also like to thank the Trustees of *Musica Britannica* for awarding me the Louise Dyer Bursary in 1996 to help with the filming of Mackenzie’s manuscript scores held in the British Library.

Much of this thesis could not have been achieved without the kind help and support of librarians and other staff at various institutions around the country. It would be impossible to name everyone individually, but I would like to give particular thanks to following: the staff of the Palace Green section and the Interlibrary Loans desk of Durham University Library; Janet Snowman, Bridget Palmer and their colleagues in the Library at the Royal Academy of Music; Oliver Davies and Paul Collen of the Royal College of Music Portraits Department; and Chris Banks, the Curator of Music Manuscripts in the British Library. I am indebted, however, to all those who have answered my queries about Mackenzie.

For their unfailing help and support during my postgraduate study I would like to thank the staff of Durham University Music Department: I cannot think of a more beautiful setting or friendly environment in which to undertake research. Thanks must also go to Hyperion Records for their continuing championship of nineteenth-century British music, particularly their Mackenzie recordings which have provided a great stimulus to my research into the composer. I was particularly pleased to contribute the sleeve notes for their premiere recording of the Violin Concerto and the *Pibroch* with Malcolm Stewart and the RSNO.

Many people have been generous enough to offer access to their personal research or collections, and I must thank Christopher Fifield, Stephen Lloyd and Oliver Davies in respect of the former, and Mrs Alison Selford, Dr Ian Barclay and Dr Norman Macleod, Mackenzie’s descendants, in respective of the latter. Moreover, I am deeply indebted to Dr John Purser for his early guidance on the subject of both Scottish music in...
general and Mackenzie in particular, and also for allowing me to make extensive use of manuscripts related to the composer in his personal collection.

Thanks must also go to my friends from both Oxford and Durham Universities who have listened to me speak endlessly on the subject of Mackenzie without complaint and have often offered help with various aspects of my work: I should name Julie, Jörg, Howard, David and Stefan in this respect. In addition I should record here how much I enjoyed singing with and conducting friends in various Durham choirs, especially the Durham University Chamber Choir, Hatfield College Chapel Choir and the Durham Consort of Voices.

My largest debt is to my supervisor Dr Jeremy Dibble. Without his extensive knowledge of nineteenth-century music, his enthusiasm and keen interest in my work none of the following would have been possible. I can never remember a supervision when I did not leave knowing more than I had beforehand and wanting to share his enthusiasm with others through my own work.

These acknowledgements would not be complete, however, without thanking my parents, who have unstintingly supported me over the years and never once refused to help or listen whenever I needed them.
To my parents.

DJB.

‘... a lifetime spent, boy and man, in the service of British music. Whether the story be worth the telling must be left for others to decide.’

Foreword

Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie died yesterday at his home in London at the age of 87. He was one of the group of talented composers and able musicians whose careers initiated that renaissance of British music which dates from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Parry, Stanford and Mackenzie were its representative trio; the first an Englishman of Welsh descent, the second Anglo-Irish, the third wholly Scottish, together they necessitated the coining of the new phrase “British Music”.¹

So wrote the obituarist in *The Times* the day after the death of Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (1847–1935), composer, educator, conductor and long-time Principal of the Royal Academy of Music. Since his death in 1935 little has been written about this man whose career spanned one of the most important periods in the development of music in Great Britain and, as we near the end of the twentieth century, little has been remembered. While the names of Parry and Stanford are forever linked with those of their famous pupils in the next generation, most prominently Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, Mackenzie’s name is frequently relegated to the more obscure references in the footnotes of Victorian musical history. Yet, with a more contemporary eye than can be afforded to writers at the end of the twentieth century, the journalist of *The Times* rated Mackenzie as an equal partner with Parry and Stanford in the ‘renaissance of British music which dates from the last quarter of the nineteenth century’. How is it that a man so integral to laying and strengthening the foundations of professional music making in this country should have fallen by the wayside of British musical history and musicological research. Not only was Mackenzie an important composer and conductor, whose musical output and writings demonstrate a notably different set of generic interests from those of Parry and Stanford, but he was also an important educator and administrator, a role which in the Victorian period held none of the negative associations that it often does in today’s society.

Through an examination of his music, this thesis aims to examine Mackenzie’s compositional tendencies and preoccupations, to isolate, where necessary, stylistic precedents from other nineteenth-century composers, and to set each of his works in an historical context which takes account not only of British musical life, but also of Continental activities. It also aims to provide, in the first chapter, a more comprehensive

and factually accurate account of Mackenzie’s life. Since he wrote his autobiography, *A Musician’s Narrative*, in the late 1920s, there has been little historical or musicological research on the composer’s career. Various writers have alluded to incidents in Mackenzie’s life and comments that he made, yet, for the most part, this has only been in passing and always connected with the activities of other musicians whose lives are already well documented. However, during the course of the research for this thesis, many new letters and manuscripts have come to light which document Mackenzie’s relationships with his contemporaries, as well as providing a more personal picture of the man himself. These go a long way to corroborating the musical and professional anecdotes of the published *Narrative*, whilst providing a fuller picture of his daily routine and private life, subjects hardly touched on in the autobiography. The first chapter of this work, therefore, is heavily based on *A Musician’s Narrative* together with the early and somewhat biased accounts of his family life in Edinburgh taken from *Family Memories*, the autobiography of Mackenzie’s niece, the novelist Dame Rebecca West (Cicely Fairfield, 1892–1983). Unfortunately, it has not been possible to include more than a little of the huge amount of biographical material collated by the author, and certain incidents in Mackenzie’s life are therefore omitted. Further biographical material is to be found in the later chapters, but only where it is warranted as part of the contextual discussion of each composition.

In the main body of the thesis, Mackenzie’s music is discussed in separate chapters which each deal with a different genre of his output. Rather than producing a chronological survey of his compositions, a generic approach to the music was felt to be preferable in order to allow parallels to be drawn between similarly constructed works. However, with the possible exception of the final section on the orchestral music, which spans the whole of Mackenzie’s career, these chapters are arranged so that a loose chronological sequence is maintained. The early part of Mackenzie’s output is covered in a chapter on the instrumental chamber music and this is followed by three chapters concentrating on studies of his larger vocal works (the lyrical dramas, oratorios and cantatas, and the later operas). To complete the survey of his instrumental music, two chapters covering the concerted and orchestral music are included. Of course, a study of

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2 Published by Cassell (London, 1927). In subsequent footnotes this work will be referred to by the abbreviation, *MN*.

3 For example, he mentions his wife and daughter less than half a dozen times in the whole book.
this size cannot be generically exhaustive, and other chapters on Mackenzie’s piano
music, songs, and solo violin music, plus a fuller account of his incidental scores and
relationship with the stage might also have constructively been included. However,
although these subjects do not have individual treatment within the body of the text, they
are often mentioned in connection with other comparable works where applicable, and
this method of treatment should enable the reader to draw as full a picture as possible of
Mackenzie’s compositional work.

In discussing each genre, the author has necessarily concentrated on a small
number of representative works from the composer’s output. For example, Mackenzie
composed over ten complete choral scores and so a comprehensive account of the
historical context and musical idiosyncrasies of each work would be extremely laboured.
Therefore, three representative choral works, The Rose of Sharon (1884), Veni, Creator
Spiritus (1891) and The Dream of Jubal (1888) are discussed in detail with features from
the other cantatas and oratorios alluded to as necessary. Conversely, in the chapters on
the lyrical dramas and concerted music, since Mackenzie wrote somewhat fewer scores,
each of these is examined in much greater detail, though without apportioning them
greater significance in the composer’s output as a whole. Since this is the first academic
study of Mackenzie and his music, purely analytical discussion of his music has been
avoided because the scores will, in general, be unknown to the majority of musicologists.
However, detailed musical analysis does appear in the discussion where the author has
felt it necessary to isolate precedents for Mackenzie’s musical style.

In general, prominence has been given to works composed by Mackenzie during
the period 1880–1900 and there are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, this is the
period in which Mackenzie’s compositional career was decidedly in the ascendant,
starting with his orchestral successes at Manns’ Crystal Palace concerts at the end of the
1870s and in the early 1880s, and the receipt of his first operatic commission in January
1882. Secondly, with the notable exception of some of his later orchestral overtures and
the operas, The Cricket on the Hearth (1902, produced in 1914) and The Eve of St John
(1924), most of Mackenzie’s major works also date from this period. Lastly, Mackenzie
was elected Principal of the Royal Academy of Music in February 1888, a post which
had a considerable effect on his professional development. The administrative workload
which accompanied this appointment, combined with a greater commitment to his
conducting engagements at the Philharmonic Society and elsewhere, resulted in a marked decrease in the amount of time he could feasibly devote to composition.

Three appendices appear at the end of the thesis and serve to complement the main musical discussion. The first of these is a timeline listing the main events of Mackenzie’s professional and compositional career, providing a brief factual summary of the biographical chapter at the start of the thesis. This is accompanied by Mackenzie’s family tree showing his relatives on both the Mackenzie and the Campbell sides. The most important appendix to the thesis is the full catalogue of Mackenzie’s works. This comprehensive listing of his compositions is an amalgam of several published and manuscript bibliographical sources, including the *Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library*, the manuscript catalogue made by Walter Stock, a former librarian of the RAM, several publishers’ catalogues, and the online and card catalogues of the Library of the Royal Academy of Music. This appendix also comprises a great deal of information on the hitherto uncatalogued Mackenzie bequest to the RAM of the composer’s manuscript scores. During 1996, it was the author’s special privilege to be able to identify these manuscripts for the library staff at the RAM and it is hoped that the catalogue in this thesis will form an up-to-date companion to this important collection of manuscripts and other published scores by Mackenzie held by the RAM. Finally, a comprehensive bibliography draws together many of the contemporary and subsequent references to Mackenzie’s music and career.

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4 This is a fuller version of the family tree shown to the author by the composer’s great niece, Mrs Alison Selford.

Chapter 1: Biography

Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (1847–1935) was the first-born child of a musical Edinburgh family (see Appendix 2). It is possible to trace his musical lineage back at least two generations through his grandfather, John Mackenzie (1797–1852), and his father, Alexander Mackenzie (1819–57). Both violinists of repute, the former was born in Durham and played with the band of the Theatre Royal in Aberdeen before moving to Edinburgh to play with the corresponding orchestra in the Scottish capital. The latter naturally followed in his father’s footsteps and he soon took his place as a violinist in the pit at the Theatre Royal, eventually becoming leader of the orchestra in 1845 and succeeding James Dewar (1783–1846), who had originally invited his father to join the group and settle in Edinburgh. Alexander Mackenzie’s musical credentials for this prestigious position were more than impressive. As a young man he had studied the violin with Karol Jozef Lipinski (1790–1861) in Dresden and also with Prosper Sainton (1813–90) in London, and he was the first Scot to receive his musical education on the Continent, although a number of Englishmen had already undertaken similar periods of study. Alexander Mackenzie was also well known as both an arranger of traditional music and an original composer; one of his most famous melodies was entitled The Nameless Lassie, written to words by his long-time poet collaborator James Ballantine and later arranged and published by his son. He also completed an operetta in 1852 entitled The Provost’s Daughter.

On 6 June 1846, Alexander Mackenzie married Jessie Campbell (b. 1822), the daughter of Alexander Campbell, an Edinburgh lace merchant, and his wife Jessie (née [This building stood where the Edinburgh Post Office now stands, on the Princes Street end of the North Bridge over Waverley station.])

Polish violinist, conductor, composer and teacher who was appointed the Royal Konzertmeister at Dresden in 1839.

Frenchman and professor of the violin at the Royal Academy of Music (1845–90).

Sterndale Bennett had visited Leipzig in 1837 and 1841, and John Francis Barnett, Arthur Sullivan, and Franklin Taylor had all studied in Germany during the period 1857–61.

Novello, 1889. James Ballantine (1808–77) was not only famous as a poet, but also as a painter who revived the art of glass-painting. He was responsible for the stained-glass windows at the House of Lords in London.

Alexander Mackenzie’s composition scrapbook (RAM MS 1140) is preserved in the Mackenzie bequest at the Royal Academy of Music and it contains a large number of dances scored for dance band in four parts, as well as music to Henry VIII and a pantomime. Some of his son’s early musical sketches, particularly unfinished movements of chamber music, are also included in this volume.
Chapter 1: Biography

Janet Watson). Unfortunately the marriage did not receive the Campbells’ blessing because they thought their daughter had married beneath her social status in taking a musician as a husband. Musicians did not happily conform to the strict social strata of mid-nineteenth century Britain: although they were considered to emanate from the working class, much of their professional time would be spent socialising with the middle- and upper-middle classes during the course of their work in the provision of entertainments in theatres and patrons’ homes. Alexander Mackenzie was sufficiently recognised in the city’s artistic community to merit considerable social fame, but evidently his wife’s parents did not acknowledge such status. Despite this lack of emotional support, the young couple appear to have been financially secure, enough to enable them to live in the spacious New Town district of Edinburgh to the north of and including Princes Street, rather than in the southern Old Town with its overcrowded tenements and slums. By the late 1840s Alexander Mackenzie and his wife had taken a flat at 22 Nelson Street close to the family’s residence in nearby King Street, and it was in the couple’s new home that their first child Alexander Campbell Mackenzie was born on 22 August 1847.

The eldest of six children (four boys and two girls), Alexander, or ‘Alick’ as he was more familiarly known, was soon initiated into the mysteries of music, especially when the family moved to larger accommodation at 41 Heriot Row, where his parents played host to a succession of musicians and theatrical people. Among these was the young repertory actor Henry Irving who had worked with Alexander Mackenzie at the Theatre Royal, and with whom Alick was later to collaborate on music for the actor’s Lyceum productions in the 1890s. As a boy Alick was allowed to watch dramatic and musical productions at the Theatre Royal from the safety of his father’s side in the orchestra pit, and it is to these experiences that he later assigned his feeling for drama in

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7 A portrait of Janet (Jessie) Campbell was painted by Sir Watson Gordon of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1819 and is reproduced as the frontispiece in Mackenzie, MN.
8 Information on residences, residents and their professions can be found in contemporary City Censuses and Post Office Directories held in the Edinburgh City Library.
9 In the 1940s the city of Edinburgh arranged for a plaque commemorating Mackenzie’s birthplace to be placed on the front of the house in Nelson Street. The opening ceremony was attended by the author and niece of the composer Dame Rebecca West (Cicely Fairfield). See cuttings in the NLS, MS 21617, ff. 7–8.
10 This period of Mackenzie’s life, both before his studies in Germany and his return to Edinburgh in the 1870s, is best described in Rebecca West, Family Memories (London, 1987), 17–94. These chapters, entitled ‘The Campbell Mackenzies’, describe family life in Edinburgh during the 1860s and 1870s. However, West is biased in her assessment of Alick’s character due to the influence of her mother, who never forgave him for not visiting their mother on her death bed (information from Mrs Alison Selford).
his own mature compositions such as the Rosa operas and his orchestral works. Although Alick received a general education at Hunter’s School in Edinburgh, his father wished to make provision for his son’s musical education abroad and sought the advice of his colleagues on what would be the best course. The necessity for a speedy decision about Alick’s future was exacerbated by the gradual deterioration of Alexander Mackenzie’s health in July 1857. He eventually decided to send Alick to study in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, a small town thirty-six miles from Weimar, where he could lodge with August Bartel (1800–76), the father of Günther Bartel (1833–?), a cellist in the Theatre Royal orchestra and close friend of the family.11

Though his health had not improved, Mackenzie accompanied Alick on the long sea voyage from Edinburgh to Hamburg, taking the train and then the Schnellpost to reach Sondershausen. With his son safely in the care of August Bartel, Mackenzie made his way home via Alexis Bad where he stopped for treatment. However, the onset of his illness only allowed him a few weeks’ respite, and within three days of his return to Edinburgh, Alexander Mackenzie tragically died aged only 37. This was a severe blow not only to his young wife and children in Edinburgh, but also to Alick whose first letter from home contained this sad news.

With Stadtmusikus12 Bartel as his mentor and surrogate German father, Alick attended the local Realschule and received music lessons from Eduard Stein and Wilhelm Uhlrich. A close friend of both Wagner and Liszt and a former pupil of Weinlig and Mendelssohn, Kapellmeister Stein (1818–64) taught the young Scot theory and composition, whereas his violin studies were entrusted to the watchful eye of Uhlrich, who had once shared the first desk with Ferdinand David in the Gewandhaus concerts. It was not long before Mackenzie took his place as a violinist in the ducal orchestra, which had performed under the direction of Stein since 1853. Playing many contemporary works before they were heard elsewhere in Germany, Mackenzie ‘drank deeply from the well-springs of “advanced” music’ and performed in such works as the Prelude to Tristan (before the opera was produced in its entirety) and Liszt’s Faust Symphony, which was read from proof sheets. Stein’s connection with Liszt meant that there was a

11 Günther Bartel had been a member of the touring orchestra conducted by Johann Gungl (1828–83). Having visited Edinburgh on a tour of Great Britain in 1855, Bartel decided to remain in the city until 1860 when he returned to Düsseldorf in Germany.

12 A Stadtmusikus was the descendant of the medieval Meistersinger and was charged with the training and lodging of a number of apprentices who would eventually contribute to the provision of music in the town.
close relationship between the small town of Sondershausen and the city of Weimar where the composer resided. Liszt often attended the open-air Sunday orchestral concerts at the Loh in Sondershausen and in his Narrative Mackenzie remembered his first sight of the great man, writing that his ‘slim, upright figure made him appear taller than he was. The thin lips, ascetic, colourless face, and thick mane (already quite grey) covered by a hat which seemed too small for his head, fascinated me.’ 13

Alick maintained contact with his family in Edinburgh during his five years of study in Germany and visited them during the summer months, often taking the opportunity to see European cities such as Rotterdam and Brussels on his travels to and from Scotland. He was exposed to a great deal of new music from an early age, including works which had yet to surface in the concert programmes of his conservative homeland which was still under the spell of Mendelssohn and the mid-century composers. Under Stein’s direction the ducal orchestra in Sondershausen not only promoted the works of German composers contemporary and otherwise, but also instigated performances of modern French composers, particularly Berlioz. In this way, young Alick’s musical education was more extensive and rounded than would have been possible had he remained in Great Britain and his exposure to varied musical styles bore creative fruit in the fusion of these modern styles with his own in his later compositions. Before he left Sondershausen in 1862 the orchestra performed Mackenzie’s Festmarsch, an early effort in composition which had been scored with the help of Stein. 14

On his arrival in Edinburgh from Germany, such was the influence of his foreign sojourn that Mackenzie found that he had forgotten most of his native tongue and had to ‘relearn’ English once more. Having been home no more than a few months, he soon journeyed to London with the intention of becoming a violin pupil of his father’s former tutor Prosper Sainton. As a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, Sainton found that he was initially too busy to offer Mackenzie lessons and so advised him to enrol at the institution where he would have to teach the young man as a matter of course. In order to support himself in London, Mackenzie entered for the prestigious King’s Scholarship on Sainton’s advice, and together with Agnes Zimmermann was duly elected

13 MN, 37-8.
14 RAM MS 1238. Mackenzie later noted on the manuscript, ‘Scored by Eduard Stein in Sondershausen, 1862 — and performed there before I left in that year.’
Chapter 1: Biography

to the scholarship on 23 December 1862. As well as receiving violin tuition from Sainton, Mackenzie also took lessons in piano from Frederick Bowen Jewson and in theory from Charles Lucas, a cellist and then Principal of the RAM. Lucas had an overwhelming love of counterpoint which he tried hard to instil into his young pupil. On the examination of a newly composed score by Mackenzie, Lucas would point at certain startling sections, remarking with a pinch of snuff, 'That is all very well for young Scotland (pinch), but it won't do; take it out, sir.' Not all of Alick’s compositions were thus criticised; his short opera/cantata A fragment from Moore’s Lalla Rookh and a Sonata in C minor for violin and piano successfully found places in the programmes of the RAM’s concerts. In deep contrast to his Academy studies, the young composer’s musical experiences were further enriched by playing in various London theatre pit orchestras in order to support himself. Mackenzie shared a desk with the violinist Berthold Tours and would often find himself accompanying all manner of musical masterpieces such as Champagne Charlie and Slap, bang, here we are again. Although this work did not compare with the quality of music he had experienced in Germany, it nonetheless taught him valuable lessons in practical orchestration, musicianship and popular stylistic tendencies.

When his studies at the Academy came to an end in 1865 Mackenzie returned to his native Edinburgh to embark on a career of teaching. Although he had initially intended to follow in his father’s and grandfather’s footsteps and join the band of the Theatre Royal, he was advised against this on account of his youth by his father’s former colleague R. H. Wyndham, and he thus broke the family’s association with the Edinburgh stage. Instead he threw his energy into performing and teaching activities. He retained the link he had established with professional musicians in London and took his place in Costa’s orchestra four times at the triennial Birmingham Festival (1865–74) and also at the Handel Festival of 1865 at the Crystal Palace. Accounts of this period by Mackenzie and his niece, the novelist Rebecca West, whose mother Isabella was the composer’s sister, describe the numerous artistic and musical parties thrown at the Mackenzie household under Alick’s direction as head of the household. He soon increased his

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15 Zimmermann and Mackenzie were among the last of the King’s Scholars. The finances set aside for the scholarships at the foundation of the Academy in 1822 had almost been exhausted and only two further scholars were elected.
16 MT, 1 June 1898, 370.
17 RAM MSS 1201–2 & 1223, and MS 1298 respectively.
orchestral playing and came into contact with highly-regarded professionals such as Clara Schumann, Anton Rubinstein, Hans von Bülow\(^{18}\) and August Manns\(^{19}\) who visited Edinburgh on recital tours.

Mackenzie played in various ensembles in both Edinburgh and Glasgow, notably in the orchestras of the Choral Unions and he also formed a string quartet to play at the newly instigated Edinburgh Classical Chamber Concerts, which he had established with William Adlington and the support of Paterson and Sons, the city's music publisher. Adolf Küchler and Mackenzie took turns in playing the different violin parts and the cello line was taken by Hugo Daubert. On the recommendation of a friend Mackenzie succeeded in securing the services of Friedrich Niecks, whom he had previously met on a summer trip to Düsseldorf with friends, as a violist. With his quartet in mind Mackenzie helped Niecks to leave Germany for Scotland by finding him a vacancy in Dumfries as an organist and teacher, thus completing the chamber ensemble in the process.\(^{20}\) Chamber music of any kind was a rarity in Scotland during this period and public performance even more so. The quartet introduced first performances of Schumann’s Piano Quartet and Quintet in Scotland and premiered Mackenzie’s own chamber works including the Piano Quartet in E flat and the String Quartet in G. Alick also appeared with Arthur Chappell’s quartet as second violinist in the Monday Pop concerts given in Edinburgh, playing alongside such renowned musicians as Joachim, Ludwig Straus, Wilma Norman-Neruda (Lady Hallé) and Piatti.

Among his many teaching and other official posts, Mackenzie gave piano lessons at The Ladies’ College in Queen Street (one of the Merchants’ schools in the city) and at the Church of Scotland Normal School Training College. He employed an innovative technique of teaching eight pupils simultaneously for four hours every morning, which was later praised by the educationalist John Hullah. Mackenzie conducted a choral society in Edinburgh for one season which employed Hullah’s system of tonic sol-fa, but soon relinquished the post after being informed that he was required to take a qualifying

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\(^{18}\) Bülow was asked to conduct the Glasgow Choral Union concerts for a period.

\(^{19}\) Manns had been appointed by Professor Herbert Oakeley to conduct the annual Reid Concerts which were instigated at the same time as the professorship at Edinburgh University. Until 1865 these concerts had been a source of amusement rather than the appreciation of serious performance and it was only with Manns’ accession to the post of director that these concerts were improved to the benefit of all.

\(^{20}\) Robin H. Legge/Duncan Barker, ‘Niecks, Friedrich [Frederick]’, *Grove* 7 (forthcoming). Niecks later became Reid Professor of music at the University of Edinburgh and wrote a pioneering study of Schumann to which Mackenzie contributed the preface.
examination in the system. At the beginning of October 1870 Mackenzie was appointed to the position of Precentor at St George's, Charlotte Square, where he was in charge of the provision of music for church services with a choir of 25–30 voices. Though he never wrote as extensively in the genre of sacred choral music as did his later contemporaries, Mackenzie enjoyed the challenge of this post and raised the standards of singing so much that after his ten years' service the church authorities were very reluctant to let him go. Mackenzie took charge of another larger choir, the Scottish Vocal Society, three years after his St George's appointment, and with them introduced a great deal of mid-century and contemporary European music to the city.

Mackenzie's dedication to his work left him little time for a private life. However, this was to change when his mother began to employ a young girl called Mary Burnside in her George Street lace shop. From the working class, the girl had been recommended to Mrs Mackenzie by a valued client and, soon after commencing employment at the lace shop, Mary Burnside joined the choir under Alick at St George's. Within months she had begun spending a great deal of time in Alick's company at the flat in Heriot Row. Later demonised in Rebecca West's autobiography, Miss Burnside — renamed in the book as Mary Ironside — is given as the reason for the disintegration of the Mackenzie family unit. One evening the residents of the flat in Heriot Row were about to begin their evening meal when a maid announced that Mary had called and was waiting to speak to Alick. As head of the house Alick told the maid to show the visitor into the drawing room, which immediately raised an objection from one of his brothers, who, in Rebecca West's account,

stood up and cried out, pointing at Alick, "What is going on? That girl should wait in the kitchen." It was unpardonable. He shouted as if he were the older of the two. Alick rose from the table and said to the centre of the table, meeting nobody's eyes, but speaking firmly, as if he were meeting everybody's eyes, "What is going on is that I am going to marry that girl." He walked out of the room and banged the door, and the Mackenzie family ceased to be. The knot of human beings that were created when my grandfather married my grandmother dissolved into its parts which were much less that its whole.22

Despite this somewhat overdramatic evocation, which has obviously suffered from the bias of Isabella Mackenzie and her daughter, Mackenzie kept his promise and married Mary Malina Burnside on 28 July 1874. They settled in a flat extremely near to Heriot

21 See ‘Scottish Composers and Musicians: II. A.C. Mackenzie,' *The Scottish Musical Monthly*, i, 6 (1894), 82–4, which includes the reminiscences of Mr P. Glencourse, a chorister under Mackenzie at St George's.

22 West, *op. cit.*, 48.
Row at 2 Darnaway Street, and Mackenzie is reputed to have paid very few visits to his mother despite the proximity of their houses. Like his father before him and to the discontent of his family, Mackenzie had married beneath himself socially and this social conditioning provides an explanation for his brother's behaviour at the family dinner. Another reason for the estrangement was the birth of his daughter Mary, nicknamed 'Maimie', before the end of 1874, although it was not uncommon for children to be conceived out of wedlock in Edinburgh at this period.  

By the end of the 1870s the pressure of teaching and performing in Edinburgh had exhausted Mackenzie in a similar way to his father, and his doctors ordered him to take six months' rest from his work to recuperate. Almost immediately before this period of enforced recuperation, Mackenzie's name had been floated as the possible director of a proposed Scottish Academy of Music. However, there was opposition from Herbert Oakeley, the Reid Professor of Music at the university, who refused to be associated with the scheme, probably because he would not be made head of the new institution. Also, for the past few years Mackenzie had been very badly treated by the music critic of *The Scotsman*, who, in Donaldson's words, 'had taken a personal dislike to him, [and] never wrote a favourable notice of any of his works'. This unsolicited and public aggravation told heavily on Mackenzie and was one of the main reasons for his physical and mental exhaustion. Even though Mackenzie's health was in gradual decline during these years, his compositions had gained recognition both in Scotland and at the Crystal Palace in London, where his *Rhapsodie Écossaise* had recently been performed, through the support of colleagues such as Bülow and Manns respectively. This growing reputation as a composer and the disillusionment with the demands of a teaching career caused Mackenzie to follow his doctors' advice and travel abroad. Undecided between a voyage to Australia and a trip to Italy, Mackenzie was advised by Bülow to take his family to visit Florence where there were several acquaintances of the German conductor to whom he could recommend the young Scot. Relinquishing all his teaching duties and conducting positions, Mackenzie left with his wife and child for Florence in the summer of 1879 for eight months in order to recover from the effects of his illness.

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23 Information from the composer's great-niece, Mrs Alison Seldford (née Macleod).
Living first in an apartment in the Via della Pergola, near to the Teatro della Pergola, Mackenzie became acquainted with Bülow’s pupils Giuseppe Buonamici and George F. Hatton and soon moved to an apartment on the mezzanino on the Via de Tornabuoni at the end of the Lung’Arno Nuovo. Living in the same building as the well-connected Hillebrands, Mackenzie became acquainted with the cosmopolitan musical circles in Florence and Madame Jessie Hillebrand\textsuperscript{26} showed the composer and his family a hospitality similar to that given to Walter Bache when he was studying with Liszt.\textsuperscript{27} At dinner one evening with the Hillebrands, Mackenzie was finally introduced to the great Hungarian composer whose works he had first played in as a teenager at Sondershausen. As a result of a misunderstanding which Mackenzie later recounted in his lectures on Liszt at the Royal Institution, the two men became great friends until the latter’s death in 1886.\textsuperscript{28}

Mackenzie’s Florentine period was one of his most active compositionally. Having broken his ties with Edinburgh after his period of recuperation was complete, Mackenzie set up residence in Italy on a permanent basis, punctuating the year with trips back to Britain in order to be present at the premieres of his compositions. Among his orchestral works produced at this time were *Burns*: Second Scotch Rhapsody, the ballad *La belle dame sans merci* commissioned by the Philharmonic Society for their 1883 season, and the important Violin Concerto given at the Birmingham Festival of 1885 with Sarasate as soloist. His output also included the larger choral compositions *The Bride* (Worcester, 1881), *Jason* (Bristol, 1882), and his masterpiece in the genre *The Rose of Sharon* (Norwich, 1884). But his greatest achievement of this period was his operatic collaboration with the music critic Francis Hueffer to produce the lyrical drama *Colomba* which was commissioned by the Carl Rosa Opera Company for production in their 1883 season at Drury Lane. This was written while the composer and his family were resident at the castle of Borgo alla Collina near Casentino, where he also worked on *The Rose of Sharon* and the Violin Concerto.\textsuperscript{29} The opera was his first major success to capture the public’s attention, not only in London but also on the Continent where it

\textsuperscript{26} Formerly Jessie Taylor, a close friend of Wagner, she was the dedicatee of Mackenzie’s *Burns*: Second Scotch Rhapsody.


\textsuperscript{28} Accounts of these lectures appear in the *MT*, 1 April 1912, 248.

was given a command performance at the court of Hesse-Darmstadt. The faith which had been invested in Mackenzie's compositional career by his colleagues had been confirmed.

In 1885 the firm of Novello, under the direction of the Littleton family, decided to reinstate the Novello Oratorio Concerts which had previously run from 1869–75. As a close friend of Alfred Littleton, the publishing director of Novello, Mackenzie was approached to conduct these concerts and he duly accepted, necessitating a move back to London. He chose to live in Sydenham near the Crystal Palace, a suburb which housed many prominent musicians such as Sir George Grove and the Littletons, at whose house Mackenzie had previously stayed whenever he visited Britain from Italy. The involvement of Mackenzie and the Littletons in the Novello Oratorio Concerts resulted in Liszt visiting London in April 1886 to hear a performance of his *St Elizabeth* only a few months before his death.\(^\text{30}\) Initially the composer had declined the invitation, but he changed his mind when he heard that Mackenzie was to conduct and stayed for two weeks at Westwood House, the home of the Littletons. Liszt and Mackenzie spent several evenings together reminiscing and the older man later said that this was one of the happiest times of his life.\(^\text{31}\)

By 1887 Mackenzie had tired of his life in London and returned to Florence, leaving the Novello Oratorio Concerts in the care of Alberto Randegger. After spending the summer months in France at Ver sur Mer in Calvados, Mackenzie had hardly set foot on Italian soil when he heard the sad news of the death of Sir George Macfarren, Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, on 31 October 1887. The Principal's duties were initially given over to three of the professors, Walter Macfarren, Prosper Sainton, and Charles Steggall, the first of whom Mackenzie expected officially to be appointed to the post in due course. However, the committee were also considering an application from Joseph Barnby and it was a little while before Mackenzie also allowed his name to go forward for the post. A little over three months after Macfarren's death Mackenzie was elected Principal of the Royal Academy on 22 February 1888. This was one of the most important events of Mackenzie's life.

From the very beginning of his time as Principal of the RAM Mackenzie firmly asserted his authority as head of this institution and its members. Despite the work of

\(^\text{30}\) However, Liszt was at such an advanced age and had been kept so busy during his stay that he was found asleep during the performance of the oratorio.

Chapter 1: Biography

Macfarren, who had also been Professor of Music at Cambridge, the Academy still continued to be a ‘professor’s club’ where the teaching staff would meddle in the affairs of the school, rather than restrict themselves to their allotted pedagogic tasks. On his first day in office Mackenzie asked to be shown to the Principal’s Room and was informed that there was no such place, nor would there be any need for one, since there was little with which the Principal should concern himself. Astounded by this situation, Mackenzie directly chose a room leading off the Secretary’s office, thereby placing himself at the centre of the institution’s affairs. He soon overcame some of the more arcane rituals in general practice, such as the segregation of the male and female students on all occasions unless they were engaged in ensemble playing, deservedly winning the approbation of his students for this move. To aid him in the reform of the RAM Mackenzie relied on the support of some of the younger professors such as Thomas Threlfall, the Chairman of the Committee of Management. The courses were also reorganised under Mackenzie’s direction, with the help of Oscar Beringer, Tobias Matthay (still considered a pioneer in the field of the psychology of performance practice), Emile Sauret and Hans Wessely. One innovatory step for which Mackenzie was given much detrimental media attention, was the appointment of Frederick Corder as Curator. This post, essentially personal assistant to the Principal, relieved the latter of many of the more mundane matters which had previously occupied his precious time. Mackenzie himself reports in his Narrative that this move was seen as a sign of personal weakness in his leadership and, according to a report given in The London Figaro, was linked to the fact that he ‘had discovered his duties at the RAM were of a far more onerous character than he expected when he competed for the appointment’. The report continued with the insinuation that ‘There has accordingly been talk of resignation’. In the event The Musical Times ran a report in its subsequent issue which scotched all rumours of Mackenzie’s departure and a public announcement was also made to the same effect. Mackenzie and Corder worked professionally alongside each other for a number of years, justifying the latter’s appointment, and they even collaborated on an unfinished opera in the mid-1890s.

One situation which Mackenzie took it upon himself to rectify was the system of local examinations which the Academy administered in both London and the provinces.

32 MN, 164–6.
33 The Cornish Opera, see Appendix 3, Section C: Opera.
Feeling that it would be beneficial for both the RAM and its rival the Royal College of Music to share a standard system of examinations, Mackenzie suggested to Sir George Grove, his counterpart at the RCM, that they should join forces in the management of such a system. The RAM had previously viewed its younger royal rival with disdain and not a small amount of jealousy, and the staff of the older institution attempted to persuade its Principal against such an ‘unholy alliance’. However, Mackenzie would not be dissuaded from his intentions for modernisation and with the support of Thomas Threlfall from his own staff and Grove and Parry from the RCM, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music was founded less than a year after the new Principal had taken office. The Board was given the task of setting the standards for achievement in music across the country with the added benefit that any examinations passed under its system would be validated by both the Academy and the College. One of the major results of the Associated Board’s work was the standardisation of musical tuition and it is a testament to its founders’ farsightedness that the examinations system has now lasted for over a century. In this one joint venture Mackenzie and Grove had reconciled the professional rift between the two schools and replaced it with a friendly and healthy rivalry.

Although in his work at the Academy Mackenzie had exempted himself from the day-to-day instrumental or compositional teaching for which he was amply qualified, he maintained an artistic link with his students by taking over the conductorship of the RAM orchestra. This aspect of the Academy’s work had long been a point of conflict within the professorial circle and often disagreements between staff concerning the technical interpretation of concertos and other artistic matters rankled for years after the performance had been long forgotten. The sheer number of opinions voiced over the direction of the orchestra made it imperative in Mackenzie’s view for the ensemble to be directed by one man alone. Amply qualified for the post of conductor through his experience in directing the Novello Choir prior to his RAM election, Mackenzie was pleased to define his new position as Principal by the active role he could take in his students’ development. Almost all of the instrumental students played under Mackenzie in the orchestra, and some of the more famous among the institution’s alumni have left interesting and humorous accounts of their Principal’s attitude to music. Perhaps the
most detailed was written by Eric Coates, a pupil of the violist Lionel Tertis, who spent many a Tuesday and Friday afternoon in the viola section at Mackenzie’s rehearsals.

I found these rehearsals instructive on the whole, though I fear I derived more fun from them than anything ... The Principal was in his element at the head of an orchestra, and when he was not raging at some wretched singer or harpist who, through sheer nervousness, would keep making an entry before the beat, he would entertain the company with every conceivable kind of joke, very often at the expense of some unfortunate member of the ensemble. ...

The Principal of the RAM was not an inspiring conductor, for, like most composers, his tempi were very much on the slow side; in fact, so slow would they sometimes become that it was difficult, if you entered the Concert Hall during the performance of a symphony or some such work, to come to any definite conclusion as to what movement was being played.34

Coates’ delightful evocation of Mackenzie’s conducting highlights the Principal’s approach to the orchestra and underlines the vital impression he made on the young minds of his students. The extensive description given by Coates subsequently warms to the theme of Mackenzie’s pet hatred for harpists and singers about whom he would rant with unerring conviction whenever they presented themselves at his rehearsals.

One of the most concrete and visible achievements of Mackenzie’s term of office at the RAM is the implementation of the institution’s move from its original premises in Tenterden Street, just south of Oxford Street, to the more spacious new buildings it still occupies on the Marylebone Road. Almost every musician of Mackenzie’s generation and after fondly recollects the rabbit warren of rooms and passages that made up the Tenterden Street buildings of the old RAM. Initially a town house of the Caernarfon family, the premises were supplemented by the addition of adjoining houses in both Tenterden Street and Dering Street to the north, producing a labyrinth which would mystify each new student for several weeks until an instinctive sense of direction could be developed. This situation had been endured for a number of years and was accepted by all until there were concerns about the impending termination of the lease. A Buildings Fund was set up and various options considered including a site in St John’s Wood which was thought too far from the centre of town. Towards the end of the first decade of this century a site was chosen on the Marylebone Road on which stood an old orphanage. This was soon pulled down and the ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone took place on 14 July 1910. Within fifteen months staff and students were able to move into the new building at the end of September 1911, and a year later on the 22

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June the official opening ceremony took place. Years of planning by Mackenzie and his building committee had been realised, providing a home for the RAM suited to its position as one of the leading music schools in Europe.

Although Mackenzie was very busy with his work at the Academy during his period in office, he did make time for his other career as a conductor. During the 1890s he renewed his acquaintance with the Philharmonic Society, for whom he had written the orchestral ballad *La belle dame sans merci* in 1883. Taking the baton from Frederic Cowen whose contract with the Society had been ended due to differences with the orchestral personnel, Mackenzie became conductor of the Philharmonic orchestra for seven of its concert seasons beginning in 1893. Each season consisted of seven long orchestral concerts with the first in late February or early March and the last in June. Under Mackenzie’s direction almost every concert programme included some work by a native composer among which numbered some of his own compositions. The most famous of these was the *Scottish Concerto* for piano and orchestra commissioned by the Philharmonic Society for performance by Paderewski in its 1897 series. The Continental repertoire was not neglected and, in his first season as conductor, Mackenzie was fortunate enough to delegate some of his conducting duties to the succession of musical dignitaries who were passing through London to receive honorary doctorates at the Cambridge University Musical Society’s Fiftieth-Anniversary Jubilee celebrations in 1893. However, in subsequent seasons Mackenzie personally conducted the notable British premiere of Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique* Symphony as well as other works. In his recent book Cyril Ehrlich points out that during his time as conductor Mackenzie was meticulous in his planning of programmes for the orchestra: ‘His efforts on behalf of the Philharmonic had been prodigious and unceasing. He read a wide range of scores, and reported on them with zest.’ As chief music adviser to the Board of Directors, Mackenzie had to deal with the large number of compositions submitted to the Society for possible inclusion in the programmes. Continuing his appraisal of the conductor’s work, Ehrlich states, ‘Mackenzie’s adjudications ... were generally enlightened and stimulating. His advocacy of new music was often accompanied by a scepticism towards past masters.’ By 1898 Mackenzie had found that, combined with his work at the

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Chapter 1: Biography

RAM, the Philharmonic was taking up too much of his time and he wished to resign his position as conductor. The Directors would not hear of Mackenzie’s resignation and elected him to continue for one further season before his decision was finally accepted and Frederic Cowen resumed control of the orchestra after having regretted his hasty actions some seven years earlier. Alongside his conducting obligations to the Philharmonic Society, Mackenzie also accepted engagements in the provinces. He became a regular visitor to Bournemouth, conducting the municipal orchestra at the request of his colleague and friend Sir Dan Godfrey.

In 1903, at the age of 56, Mackenzie visited Canada for over a month to conduct the Cycle of Musical Festivals in the Dominion, organised by the musical impresario Charles A. E. Harriss (1862–1939). Born in Britain, Harriss received his musical training under Sir Frederick Ouseley at St Michael’s College, Tenbury, and it was on his teacher’s recommendation that he won an organist’s post in Ottawa and, when he subsequently moved to another position in Montreal, made Canada his adopted home for the rest of his career. He was indefatigable as a promoter of musical activity within Canada and initiated various exchange projects between different parts of the British Empire. In 1896 he arranged Albani’s tour of Canada and also brought over Dan Godfrey’s band who performed eighty concerts throughout North America in 1899. However, his largest project was the Cycle of Musical Festivals which took him two years to plan and involved concerts in fifteen regional centres across the country from Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the East coast to Vancouver, the capital of British Columbia, in the West. At Mackenzie’s insistence the orchestral and choral repertoire performed in the concerts was entirely British except for a specially requested performance and regional premiere of Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* in Winnipeg. The entire scheme resulted in the employment of three professional or semi-professional orchestras and the creation of fourteen new choirs where none had previously existed, many of which continued to exist for years after the Cycle. Logistically complex yet financially successful, the tour

38 ‘Dr Charles Harriss’, *MT*, 1 April 1909, 225–29 [and photo].
40 Apart from Mackenzie himself, other composers represented in the programmes were W. S. Bennett, J. G. Bennett, Cliffe, Coleridge-Taylor, Corder, Cowen, Elgar, German, Goring Thomas, Harriss, MacCunn, Parry, Stanford, Sullivan and Wallace. All of these would have given the audiences a complete range of contemporary music from the British Isles.
was originally planned as the first of an annual cycle of festivals, but unfortunately it was
the only one to take place.

As head of an academic institution such as the RAM, Mackenzie was often called
on to deliver various musical lectures both within the Academy itself and also at the
Royal Institution. From the many series of lectures given by Mackenzie, two sets stand
out as being particularly noteworthy; those on Verdi’s *Falstaff* in 1893 and those on the
music of Sullivan in 1901, both being given at the Royal Institution. The former series of
three lectures was delivered within months of the premiere of the opera in Britain and the
publication of the score. Mackenzie was aided by Alberto Randegger in his preparation
and selection of musical examples from the opera which, as with excerpts in most of his
subsequent lectures, were performed by students from the RAM. Although Verdi himself
did not attend the lectures, he later read the Italian translation of them published by
Ricordi and given to him by his librettist Boito. Mackenzie records in his memoirs how
Verdi sent him a signed photograph expressing thanks for his comments. The
prestigious lectures given almost a decade later on Sullivan also found their way into
print in the *Journal of the International Music Society*, and were extremely well attended
by all of Sullivan’s colleagues in the music profession.

During the period 1908–12 Mackenzie acted as General President of the
International Music Society and oversaw two of its congresses in 1909 and 1911.
 Founded in 1899 and disbanded at the start of the First World War, the Society was the
short-lived forerunner of the present International Musicological Society and served to
promote research in music. Its Third Congress was held in Vienna in order to combine
the conference with the celebrations on the centenary of Haydn’s death. As President
Mackenzie was present at many of the sessions at which papers were given and also
delivered his own paper on Mendelssohn in German. Mixing with representatives of
many European and other countries, Mackenzie made and renewed many acquaintances
during the five days of the Congress. It was decided to hold the Fourth Congress in
London during 1911, where the delegates would be guests of the Royal College of Music

\[41\] Listed in appendix. Most of the lectures which Mackenzie delivered were reported in the musical press or in the
*RAM Club Magazine* [RAM Library].

\[42\] Mackenzie, MN, 251. Mackenzie, *Tre Letture sopra il Falstaff di Giuseppe Verdi fatte alla Royal Institution of
Great Britain* (Milano, 1893).

\[43\] Mackenzie, ‘The Life-work of Arthur Sullivan,’ *Sammlbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, iii (1901–
1902), 539–64.


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and its sister institutions in South Kensington. This was a particularly busy period in Mackenzie's life for not only did he oversee the organisation of the IMS Congress in collaboration with the secretary Charles Maclean, but he also arranged for a performance of his cantata *The Sun God's Return* in Vienna in January, and managed the relocation of the RAM to its new buildings on the Marylebone Road.\(^{45}\) Moreover, he was also engaged to provide music for the Congress itself (*Tam o' Shanter*, Third Scottish Rhapsody, Op. 74), for the centenary of the Philharmonic Society (*Invocation*, Op. 76) and for the Coronation of King George V (*An English Joy-Peal*, Op. 75).

With the outbreak of war in 1914, Mackenzie's life became less busy and, since many musicians were required to assist in the war effort, the RAM became not much more than a girls' school, bereft of all the male students and younger professors. Of this difficult time Mackenzie later wrote, 'One would rather forget than remember the trials of those days, but who can refrain from acknowledging the support and confidence which that splendidly-resolute spirit — prevailing among all and in every corner of our land — inspired in those in authority?'\(^{46}\) The resolute spirit of this period was also the source of both happiness and sorrow in the composer's personal life. In 1917 Mackenzie's daughter Maimie, aged 43, became the wife of Marcel Mitzakis, a Greek soldier, and in the following year the composer lost one of his closest professional friends, Hubert Parry, Director of the RCM, who died a few months before the armistice was called. 'The grievous personal loss caused by the passing of Hubert Parry affected me deeply', Mackenzie later explained, and he attempted 'to do justice to his worth' in a lecture given at the Royal Institution in 1919 shortly after his colleague's death.\(^{47}\)

Another sad duty was performed at a Memorial Service organised by the Incorporated Society of Musicians and held at Southwark Cathedral in early 1919, when Mackenzie read out the list of musicians who had fallen in the War. A similar service was held for the lost students of the RAM and RCM in the Temple Church at which his *Postlude: In Memoriam* was played by violinists from the Academy.\(^{48}\)

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\(^{45}\) Although lessons began in the new accommodation from the Autumn term of 1911, the buildings were not officially opened until June 1912 with the completion of the Duke's Hall.

\(^{46}\) *MN*, 247.


\(^{48}\) Also performed were an *Elegy* by Corder and the motet 'There is an old belief' (J. G. Lockhart) from Parry's *Songs of Farewell*. A similar service was held for the lost students of the RAM and RCM in the Temple Church at which his *Postlude: In Memoriam* was played by violinists from the Academy.
Chapter I: Biography

Within a few years life at the Academy had almost reverted to its former normality and, despite the flood of decommissioned service men returning to their former studies or seeking a change of career, the institution's high standards were maintained. Much to the distress of the teaching staff many familiar young faces from among the pre-war students were not seen again. Three years passed before the arrival of the centenary celebrations of the foundation of the RAM, Britain's oldest musical conservatory. In his own words Mackenzie described the events of the centenary year as being the last public occasion in which he took 'a conspicuous part'. Twelve chamber and three orchestral concerts, six operatic and two dramatic performances took place during the fortnight's rejoicings, which began with one of the most impressive Thanksgiving Services ever heard in St Paul's, and ended with a brilliant Pageant and Masque written for the occasion by the popular dramatist Louis N. Parker, a former student. The music performed was all British, and, along with contributions from composers such as York Bowen, Adam Carse and Edward German, Mackenzie himself provided the Overture: *Youth, Sport and Loyalty* to capture the spirit of the students in his charge. In recognition of the Principal's work in bringing the institution to such a celebration and also of the musical profession in general, the King conferred the honour of Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (KCVO) on Mackenzie, who had already been knighted by Queen Victoria in 1895.

In 1924, after thirty-six years in office, Mackenzie resigned his position as head of the RAM. During this period he had seen the institution grow from a mid-Victorian professors' club to become an international school of musical excellence, moving from the cramped accommodation of Tenterden Street into the specially-designed buildings in Marylebone. Under his direction new ideas of education had been embraced and modern curricula introduced at all levels of the Academy's work. Following the announcement of his resignation, an article printed in *The Musical Times* captured Mackenzie's views on education, the RAM and music in general. In order to avoid the speculation in the press and the partisan elections which he had suffered when chosen as Principal, Mackenzie...

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49 *MN*, 253. The specially commissioned Masque was entitled *A Wreath of a Hundred Roses*, and within its dialogue between the personifications of 1822 and 1922 contained numerous references to events and personnel in the history of the RAM.

50 He described this latest honour to a friend as 'a double knighthood!' Letter to Angelo Eisner-Eisenhof, 6 May 1929 (Music Library of Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois).

51 'A Talk with Sir Alexander Mackenzie', *MT*, 1 March 1924, 209–11.
took care to name his successor, a fellow Scot John Blackwood McEwen, at the same
time as his resignation.

At his already advanced age the final decade of Mackenzie's life was removed
from the public gaze and therefore it is difficult to know exactly what occupied him in his
retirement. One major activity undertaken by the composer at this time was to put his
musical manuscripts in order. Many of these documents, now in the care of the RAM
Library, have comments on them made by Mackenzie's editorial blue pencil which give
exact or half-remembered details of the works' performances and geneses. Mackenzie
also used the time directly after his retirement to write and publish his autobiography, A
Musician's Narrative (London, 1927). This literary work is more akin to a series of
reminiscences suitable for light reading than a serious evaluation of his life and career,
yet it is the only major biographical source for his life that exists. Many of the chapters
have their origins in earlier writings for other books and journals, as an examination of
the reports of his activities in The Musical Times will testify. However, in writing his
biography Mackenzie is guarded concerning details of his private life, and he only
mentions his wife and daughter less than half a dozen times, preferring to concentrate
on his professional relationships with musical celebrities.

To gain an insight into Mackenzie's private life it is necessary to examine other
documentary evidence. One such document is a letter written in reply to a message from
his Viennese colleague, Angelo Eisner-Eisenhof. Having met at the Third Congress of
the IMS in Vienna, the two men also arranged a performance of The Sun God's Return
in Vienna, but their correspondence had lapsed after the outbreak of war and for some
years afterwards. Breaking the silence of these years, Mackenzie's letter of 1929 records
'in a few telegraphese words' the main events of his life over the past decade, relating the
mixture of sad and happy news with a telling brevity.

My poor wife died in 1925, after several years of gradually increasing
weakness. And I gathered from your young friend that you also have suffered. Maimie,
my daughter, married in 1917 and divorced her husband last year. "Schaum darüber"!
She has been living with me long before she took the action which resulted in
changing her name back again to "Mrs Mary Campbell Mackenzie" by which she is
now known. I retired from the Principalship of the Academy of Music (after 36 years
of Office) at the end of July 1924: On a pension, which although I say it myself, I very
much deserve! ... Since then I have been working privately and occupying myself with
literary and other matters quite well — in spite of my age. But a little more than 9

52 Mackenzie never names his wife and daughter in MN. The closest he comes is when he reveals his wife's
maiden-name (Burnside) as the same as that of a railway station at which he stops momentarily on his tour of
Canada (MN, 212n).
months ago a very serious accident happened to me. I was going to my Club one afternoon and had only proceeded 4 or 5 doors from my house when a taxi-cab mounted the pavement and got me underneath it before I could get out of its way. Only by a perfect miracle did I escape instant death, because another inch further would have crushed my head. The driver was going at 25 miles per hour, but just managed to pull up in time to be saved from murder! I was taken at once to a Hospital; then night and day nurses at home for 9 weeks etc. etc. The wonderful part is that not a single bone was broken. But some bruises and very bad shock to the nervous system has lasted until quite lately; and I am still suffering from great weakness in the legs.  \[53\]

The accident which Mackenzie described happened near his new residence in Taviton Street, Bloomsbury, where he and his daughter had moved from Camden after his wife’s death. In the same way that his daughter had helped to nurse her mother through the final stages of her illness, now she acted as an unpaid nurse to her father. According to the composer’s great-niece, Mrs Alison Selford, these matters had considerable influence in bringing Maimie’s marriage to an end, since she was never able to move away from her parents with her husband.  \[54\]

Now an invalid, Mackenzie made very few appearances in public because he could not manage to be far from home. He did receive visitors and one of these was his pupil the violinist and composer Eric Coates. In a touching description of one such visit, Coates recalled,

> It was about ten years since he had retired from the position of Principal at the Royal Academy of Music, a post which he had held for thirty-six years. As we talked, I could see that the years had not diminished his affection for the place where, for so long a time, he had shaped the destinies of many hundreds of future musicians, and where he had been loved by so many, so feared by some, but respected by all. [...]

> He rippled on in that fascinating Scottish accent which had attracted me so greatly the first time I met him, thirty years before, upstairs in his room in Tenterden Street. He was still just the same, only looking a great deal older, and his eyes troubled him. [...] He came to the front door and watched me down the stone steps, looking a little wistful as I stepped into the car, as if he were thinking he would wish he were coming with me, even in his alpaca coat and his carpet slippers. I called out to him [...] started the engine, let in the clutch, and moved off. I looked back — the bent figure was still in the doorway. I waved, and drove on.  \[55\]

During his visits, Coates often brought his wireless to enable Mackenzie to hear the occasional broadcasts of his works by the BBC, and in particular a performance of the *Scottish Concerto* from Bournemouth.  \[56\]

As I watched my old friend, sitting on the settee, his head on one side,

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53 Letter to Angelo Eisner-Eisenhof, 6 May 1929 (Music Library of Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois).
54 Author’s correspondence with Mrs Selford.
56 Although Coates does not give a precise date, it is probable that the performance was given by Dan Godfrey with Cyril Smith in November 1933. The Violin Concerto was also given in the same week by Winifred Small. See Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey: Champion of British Composers* (London, 1995), 197.
listening intently to the performance coming to us over the radio, I pictured him thinking of the dozens of times he had led the Royal Academy of Music Orchestra, plus a struggling piano student, through this lovely work, and wondered what were his emotions on hearing, probably for the first time for many years, both the orchestral and solo passages being executed with such brilliance. The old man was obviously moved. A tear ran down his cheek. The music ceased. I left the switch on for him to hear the enthusiastic reception which followed.57

Mackenzie passed away on 28 April 1935, aged 87 years. His funeral was held on Thursday 2 May at the Parish Church of St Marylebone, near to the new buildings of his beloved RAM, and he was buried in Golders Green cemetery.58 A large gathering of dignitaries connected with the RAM, professors, staff and students accompanied the family mourners who were headed by Maimie Mackenzie. The simple service included only two pieces of music, these being the Postlude: In Memoriam and the Funeral March from Mackenzie’s music to Coriolanus, which had also been played at the funeral of his friend Sir Henry Irving some thirty years earlier. A larger Memorial Service was held a week later on 9 May at St Paul’s Cathedral, which a greater number of people were able to attend. The music was the same as at the funeral with the addition of Croft’s setting of the Funeral Sentences, Mackenzie’s Benedictus played by Stanley Marchant and Marjorie Hayward, the twenty-third psalm to a chant by the composer and the hymn ‘Praise to the Holiest’. The service ended as before with the Coriolanus Funeral March.

58 MT, 1 June 1935, Obituary and Appreciation, 497–503; 541. The Times, Obituary, 29 April 1935.
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

During his apprenticeship as a musician and composer under the tutelage of Stein and Lucas, at Sondershausen and the Royal Academy of Music respectively, Mackenzie produced a number of youthful compositions which have been preserved in the composer's bequest to the Library of the RAM. Although this study of Mackenzie's music does not concern itself with these works, it is interesting to note the variety in genre and inspiration among even this small section of the composer's oeuvre. Amongst this juvenilia there is a bias towards chamber music and this is probably due to the fact that Mackenzie was more likely to hear or perform works scored for smaller instrumental resources. Even though he had taken lessons in composition, Mackenzie primarily thought of himself as a professional player and teacher rather than a composer, and, until he had experimented with further original work, he would not have been able to envisage the performances of larger works written for choral or orchestral forces. It is no surprise therefore that Mackenzie's first mature compositions, completed while he was a teacher and conductor in Edinburgh, were three works for traditional chamber ensembles; the Piano Trio in B flat (1867), String Quartet in G (1868) and Piano Quartet in E flat (1873–4). Though inevitably influenced by the mid-century German Romantic composers such as Schumann and Mendelssohn, it is in these works that Mackenzie's individual musical style first comes to the fore. Even over the course of the six years between the completion of the Piano Trio and the Piano Quartet, there is a noticeable difference in Mackenzie's handling of form and instrumentation in these two works alone, and, although the String Quartet is not as easily compared with the other chamber music, this too exhibits musical developments not discernible in the earlier Piano Trio. After the composition of the Piano Quartet in the early 1870s, Mackenzie never again wrote for such combinations of three or four instruments and his later output includes many beautiful and interesting sets of pieces for violin and piano, but little music for more than two players.

\[\text{A movement for piano trio in A major also exists (RAM MS 1197) and may be part of the Piano Trio in D Major which is included in lists of Mackenzie's compositions in early editions of }\text{Grove. There are also a small number of sketched movements for chamber forces in the musical notebook of Mackenzie's father (RAM MS 1140).}\]

\[\text{2 The only exceptions are the two }\text{Ancient Scots Tunes written for string orchestra or string quartet in 1915.}\]
Written for purely practical reasons, Mackenzie’s three chamber works were designed for performance by himself and his fellow Edinburgh musicians in a series of concerts in the city. The Scottish capital was not as well provided for as its English counterpart in the field of live music, and chamber music, although logistically more accessible to amateur performers, was paradoxically seldom, if ever, heard publicly in the city. London was no exception to this dearth of chamber music, although the Monday Popular Concerts held in St James’s Hall and organised by Chappell & Co. featured the more popular Continental works in the genre and had begun as early as 1859. Occasionally players in this concert series retired from the English capital and made the journey north to perform in Edinburgh after the winter season had ended. Writing about this period, Mackenzie later recorded that the ‘Monday Pop’ Quartet would appear at the annual concert of the Philosophical Institution in Edinburgh, bringing the young man into contact with such great artists as Wilma Norman-Neruda (later Lady Hallé), Joachim, Straus, Wilhelmj, Piatti, Hallé, Pauer, Edward Dannreuther and Walter Bache.3 Chappell even allowed Mackenzie to take the second violin parts in some of the performances alongside these great Continental musicians. ‘My Joseph Guarnerius was an object of much interest to the great ‘cellist [Piatti],’ remembered Mackenzie, ‘who had a keen eye for a fine instrument and never omitted to inquire after the health of my violin before questioning me about my own well-being.’4 These brief glimpses of the chamber repertoire in the company of such well-known practitioners allowed Mackenzie to forge many of the professional links which guided his later creative and professional life. Many of them were recalled by the young composer in the dedications of his earlier works, particularly Charles Hallé who, for his skills as a pianist rather than as a conductor, received the dedication of Mackenzie’s Piano Quartet.5

However, the occasional visits from London of the Continent’s musical dignitaries were not sufficient for Mackenzie and his fellow Edinburgh-based musicians. Together with the pianist William Adlington, Mackenzie soon followed Chappell’s example and, out of necessity, added the role of impresario to his other professions of

3 See MN, 72.
4 Ibid., 72–73.
5 In the same way, Dannreuther received the dedication of the Scenes in the Scottish Highlands for piano (1880) and Bache that of the Trois Morceaux pour Piano (1877). Lady Hallé was later named as the dedicatee of the Six Pieces for Violin (1888), from which the famous Benedictus was taken and arranged by the composer for small orchestra.
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

teacher and performer. ‘A series of Chamber Concerts was successfully begun,’ wrote the composer, ‘and afterwards continued (under the management of Messrs. Paterson and Sons) for several years. The arrival of a talented young violinist (Adolf Küchler), with whom I alternated as leader, and the engagement of an exceptionally good ’cellist (Hugo Daubert) enabled us to form a well-rehearsed string-quartet.’ On his occasional visits to Edinburgh, Walter Bache was persuaded to joint the local ensemble, and together they ‘endeavoured to reveal the beauty of Schumann’s Piano Quartet and Quintet, and of many other masterpieces, for the first time to interested if limited audiences.’ One of the works programmed into the first season of concerts was probably Mackenzie’s Piano Trio in B flat which he completed in December 1867. Although the work was never published, the composer noted on the manuscript score that it was played by Adlington, Daubert and himself, and it is probable that the premiere took place not long after the work’s completion.

A violist and regular fourth member of the quartet was more difficult to procure and Mackenzie admitted, ‘I sometimes had to take up that instrument myself, in order to bridge over a difficulty, until the problem was unexpectedly solved.’

During a summer visit to Düsseldorf [to see his old friend, Günther Bartel], a pupil of Leopold Auer and Hiller was warmly recommended to me as one highly deserving of such consideration and assistance as might perchance come within my ken. I had hardly returned when the Sheriff, D. B. Hope, a firm supporter of our scheme, informed me of a vacancy for an organist and teacher in Dumfries, of which the selection had been left in his hands. Here were two interests which might be served to mutual advantage, and Frederick [sic] Niecks was immediately communicated with. Thus Dumfries secured its organist, we our viola player, and the University of Edinburgh a future and very eminent occupant of the Chair of Music.

Niecks left Germany for Scotland in November or December 1868 and settled in Dumfries where he became a teacher and took up the position of organist of St Mary’s Presbyterian Church as suggested by Sheriff Hope. However, it was not long before Niecks appeared with Mackenzie’s Edinburgh quartet and the violist later recalled that his first of many engagements was on 21 December 1868. Having established a regular quartet of performers, Mackenzie soon arranged for his own String Quartet in G to be premiered on 15 March 1869. The work had been completed in June 1868, some nine

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6 Ibid., 73.
7 RAM MS 1294.
8 Ibid. See also [F. G. Edwards], ‘Frederick Niecks’, MT, 1 September 1899, 585–93; 589. This article also includes an appreciation of Niecks by Mackenzie.
9 The date of this premiere is taken from Edwards’ interview with Niecks. See Edwards, op. cit., 590.
months before its first performance, and, so it would seem, soon became a regular feature of the chamber concerts' repertoire.\textsuperscript{10}

According to Edwards' interview with Niecks, he was a member of the Edinburgh quartet until 1872, the year in which he moved from Dumfries to the Scottish capital itself, although it is unclear whether the Classical Chamber Concerts continued after this date. However, it is probable that the concerts survived, even if the string quartet itself had disbanded, since Mackenzie composed his Piano Quartet in 1873 or early 1874. Dedicated to Charles Hallé and the last of his three early works, the Piano Quartet in E flat is Mackenzie's finest essay in the genre of chamber music, showing the greatest compositional assurance and maturity. The young composer himself thought well enough of this piece to take the not inconsiderable financial risk of having it published at his own expense in Leipzig, approaching a foreign company rather than one closer to home because British publishing houses would not contemplate including native chamber works in their catalogues. It is in connection with the publication of the quartet that Mackenzie first came to the notice of Hans von Bülow. One of the best-known musicians in Europe, Bülow, together with Manns and Hallé, was one of the three musical German mentors who guided Mackenzie's early career as a composer.

Our acquaintance was of his own making. After an inquiry anent local musicians, he sent for me, saying that he knew me already. A greater surprise was mine when he told me that, before leaving Germany, he had been looking at new publications in Leipzig and, seeing a Pianoforte Quartet bearing my name, he had brought it with him to London; the fact being that up to the moment of our meeting I had not received copies of that then recently-written work which proved so welcome and helpful a stepping-stone to its composer.

Great was his rage when, later on, he knew that I had paid twenty-five pounds for the privilege of appearing in print. I had no cause to regret it.

"Schreiben Sie Ihn einen geharnischten Brief, und kaufen Sie es gleich zurück. Ich habe gerade das Geld und Sie sollen's haben," he snapped. (Write him an armoured letter and buy it back at once. I have the money just now; you shall have it.)\textsuperscript{11}

The Piano Quartet was an instant success due to its sympathetic and stylistic blend of Schumann and Mendelssohn, combined with the composer's own distinctive affinity for string and piano writing. Having been premiered in Edinburgh soon after its composition, it was not long before the work was introduced to London where, in March 1875, it was performed at a concert in St George's Hall with William Coenen at the piano. This performance prompted J. W. Davison, the music critic of \textit{The Times}, to write to Coenen

\textsuperscript{10} RAM MSS 1129 (full score) and 1130 (parts).
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{MN}, 89–90.
on 4 March expressing his thanks for the concert, ‘and especially for Mackenzie’s Quartet.’ A turning point in the composer’s career, Mackenzie later wrote that ‘From this performance, and the publication of a successful humorous part-song [A Franklymne’s Dogge, Op. 8, No. 6], I date the subsequent attention to my early efforts as a composer.’

Like the rewritten lyrical drama Colomba and the revised oratorio The Rose of Sharon, the Piano Quartet was one of the few works by Mackenzie which went through more than one published edition. A probable reason for the 1931 reprint of the Piano Quartet was the efforts on behalf of chamber music by Walter Cobbett (1847–1937), whose Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music, the culmination of his life’s interest in the subject, was published by Oxford University Press in the previous year. It contains a brief entry on Mackenzie’s contribution to the genre written by Frederick Corder, in which he concentrates on a sympathetic, Toveyan reading of the Piano Quartet alone, since the unpublished scores of the Piano Trio and String Quartet were not readily available or generally known. It is presumably this account of Mackenzie’s Piano Quartet that persuaded the Music Department of OUP to arrange a reprint of the work in 1931, and it was reproduced from the same plates used by C. F. Kahnt in 1875 that Bülow had seen at the publisher’s offices in Leipzig. In a copy of the reprinted version now held in the library of the RAM, which he gave to his fellow Scot, the composer William Wallace, Mackenzie drew attention to the fact that 56 years had passed since the work’s initial publication. This made the quartet the first of his compositions to be published and also, although merely a reprint, the last. Due to the quality and accessibility of the writing in the Piano Quartet, it has remained in the repertoire much longer than Mackenzie’s other popular works, such as the Violin Concerto and the Scottish Concerto, even attracting possibly the first academic criticism of his music since the composer’s death.

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12 MQN, 90.
13 Ibid.
15 C. F. Kahnt also published the full score and associated parts of the later Scottish Concerto, Op. 55, in 1899.
16 Stephen Banfield, ‘British Chamber Music at the Turn of the Century,’ The Musical Times, cxv (1974), 211. This interesting, but brief, introduction to Mackenzie’s Piano Quartet is combined with discussions of Parry’s Piano Quartet in A flat (1879) and Stanford’s Piano Trio No. 3 (1918). All three of these works were performed at the Centenary Concert of the Royal Musical Association on Friday, 5 April 1974. However, in the light of some of the information contained in this present study of Mackenzie, much of Professor Banfield’s comments and factual information are now more than a little wide of the mark.
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

It is perhaps not surprising that Mackenzie did not write any further chamber music as his career progressed. While the Piano Quartet was enjoying considerable success in London in the late 1870s, as evidenced by Davison's praise, the young composer's mind turned to writing in the larger musical genres and a string of orchestral works followed over the next few years, including the overture *Cervantes* (1876), the Scherzo for orchestra (1878) and the *Rhapsodie Écossaise* (1879). From these works Mackenzie secured enough of a reputation to devote himself fully to the composition of choral and operatic music during the 1880s. In hindsight it is possible to see that Mackenzie's musical development was in many ways similar to that of his later contemporaries, Parry and Stanford. Both of these composers began to produce chamber works during the same period as Mackenzie's activity in the genre and Stanford continued to do so throughout his professional life. However, Parry's chamber output, like that of Mackenzie, was limited for the most part to the same period and he had produced most of his major essays in the genre by the time he was appointed to the staff of the Royal College of Music at its opening in 1883. Like the works of his Edinburgh counterpart, Parry's chamber music was also conceived with specific performance opportunities in mind and, for the most part, it was premiered in private concerts held by the composer's mentor, Edward Dannreuther, at his home in Orme Square, Bayswater. In his article, Banfield notes that the possibilities for performance or publication of native chamber music were negligible until early this century. The combination of Stanford's teaching as Professor of Composition at the RCM and Cobbett's instigation of his 'phantasy' competitions in 1905 together with the subsequent publication of the *Cyclopedia* in 1931 raised the much neglected profile of chamber music in this country.

One of the last entries in Cobbett's *Cyclopedia* is an article on the 'value of chamber music', for which the editor canvassed a large array of musicians by means of a questionnaire. Although he stated that the same ideas on the subject occurred to the majority of respondents, pronouncing chamber music 'the highest and purest form of music', Cobbett also included four detailed replies from Sir Henry Hadow (who had supplied the foreword to the *Cyclopedia*), Mackenzie, Rutland Boughton and Adrian

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18 Banfield, *op. cit.*, 212.
Boult to illustrate different approaches to the genre by practising and academic musicians. Unsurprisingly, Mackenzie's contribution to the article is extremely interesting for a number of reasons. By the time his reply was written, the composer's relationship to chamber music was, at the very least, far removed, having produced his own works in the genre over half a century earlier. Also as long-time Principal of the RAM and the generally-acknowledged 'Grand Old Man' of British music, Mackenzie was in prime position to comment on the changes in attitude to the teaching and reception of chamber music from mid-Victorian times to the 1920s. In his response, published by Cobbett, Mackenzie noted,

Chamber music is both the simplest and most difficult of utterance a composer can choose and the severest test that his gifts can be subjected to. There is no wealth of colour to hide defective drawing; no over-powering sonority to cover weak part writing; nor does mere virtuosity take any but an undesirable place. There can be no 'predominant partner', since the distribution of parts, as opposed to mere accompaniment, must be equally liberal in individual interest.

Mackenzie's comments concerning the relative lack of instrumental colour available to the composer through the chamber music ensemble is reflected in his own move away from the genre in his early years. As subsequent chapters of this study will show, Mackenzie's musical success lay in his ability to employ orchestral or choral colour in the description of dramatic, or in the case of his orchestral ballads, programmatic scenes. In this light, his own admission that chamber music does not offer the same range of timbre available in other musical forms is telling, all the more so because he himself was lured away from the genre as a result of this. 'Side by side with the gradually increasing popularity of the modern orchestra and the fascinating spell of its glowing colours,' he mused, 'a corresponding indifference to the less exciting charms of chamber music had set in.'

Repeating the claims of his fellow respondents, Mackenzie concurred that chamber music is the purest form of composition. 'Restricted as the medium may appear to be,' he wrote, 'with but few exceptions, all the famous composers have been content to view it as an all-sufficient mould wherein to pour their most inspired thoughts. For instance, a single string quartet, judiciously selected from the maturest [sic] period of each of the great masters, might serve — without further comment or explanation — as a very clear exposition of musical development from Haydn to Ravel.' He praised the efforts of Cobbett in his promotion of both chamber music composition and general
interest in the genre, though he bemoaned the fact that ‘the chances of public
performance are still too few and far between to satisfy the real student-lover of an
intellectually delightful genre of composition which can influence our musical future only
in a most beneficial manner’. The composer concluded his comments on chamber music
with the hope that its ‘priceless legacies should oftener be before our eyes and in our
ears’.

Of all his compositions, it is the chamber music which most overtly displays the
results of Mackenzie’s primarily German musical education. Even his three years at the
Academy did nothing to dispel the influence of Mendelssohn and Schumann on the
composer’s early compositional style and approach to form. However, this is hardly
surprising considering the British musical establishment’s pro-Teutonic approach to
harmony and counterpoint. As was the case with many other British musicians of his
generation, Mackenzie took a while to find his own compositional voice. It is no
denigration of his work as a composer to point out that for inspiration in his early mature
chamber works he turned to those examples of German instrumental music played so
often by himself and his colleagues in the Edinburgh quartet. Indeed, it would be more
surprising, given his musical upbringing, if Mackenzie had followed any other stylistic
tradition in this music and, since there was little in the way of French stylistic models in
the genre, mid-century German Romanticism did more than suffice. However, unlike his
later colleagues Hubert Parry and, to a lesser extent, Charles Stanford, as the oldest of
the three and the one who had received Continental training at an early stage, Mackenzie
chose to accept the musical lineage of Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann, rather than
the more intense, academic approach of Brahms and his circle, which would have rested
less easily on the practical nature of the Scotsman’s music.

The first and final movements of all three of Mackenzie’s chamber works, the
Piano Trio, the String Quartet and the Piano Quartet, are set in mid-nineteenth century,
Germanic sonata form structures, well-worn and well-used by composers such as
Mendelssohn and Schumann. After these early essays, the first movement sonata form
was a musical structure that Mackenzie preferred to modify in his later music. For
example, the apparent clarity of structural principles within the first movement of the Piano Quartet is in some ways antithetical to the structural formula used in a work such as the *Scottish Concerto* written some twenty-five years later, a disparity that can be vividly observed in the thoroughly unconventional handling of sonata principles (see Chapter 6). Discussion of Mackenzie's later music in subsequent chapters will detail how his dramatic and lyric gifts as a composer often outweighed structural and developmental considerations in his music, leading to the idiosyncrasy of the musical architecture at work in the *Scottish Concerto*. As a glance at the first and last movements of the three chamber works will show, Mackenzie was not incapable of thematic development in a structural context; but he preferred to obtain his compositional effects by other means, normally dependent on orchestration or the dramatic context. However, in the intimate textures of the two quartets and the trio, Mackenzie has ably shown himself capable of pure instrumental music with no reference to extra-musical inspiration. In fact, a comparison of the movements in each of the three works shows how Mackenzie refined and developed his handling of instrumental texture and themes over the course of the six or seven years between the composition of the first and last chamber works (Figure 1, below, lists the variety of tempo descriptions of the movements in Mackenzie's three complete chamber works).

*Figure 1: The tempo descriptions and principal key areas of the movements in Mackenzie's mature chamber works.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piano Trio (1867)</th>
<th>Allegro moderato (B flat major)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scherzo: Allegretto (G minor/B flat major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duetto: Adagio, ma non troppo (E flat)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegro assai (B flat)</td>
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<tr>
<th>String Quartet (1868)</th>
<th>Allegro con grazia (G major)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scherzo: Molto Vivace (E minor/E major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andante con moto, ma non troppo (G major/G minor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finale: Presto molto (G major)</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piano Quartet (1873/4)</th>
<th>Allegro, ma moderato e tranquillo (E flat major)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scherzo: Allegro Vivace (G major/E flat major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canzonetta con Variazioni: Adagio cantabile e semplice (C minor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegro molto e con brio (E flat)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the genre of chamber music, much is dependent not only on the thematic material, but also on how it is presented. The texture at the beginning of the initial *Allegro moderato* of the Piano Trio in B flat leaves one in no doubt that the piano is acting as an accompaniment to the violin and subsequently the cello. The start to this
movement is unusual in that it appears to lack an anacrucis to the violin’s melody, which seemingly starts after the beginning of the phrase. One should also note the oblique opening on the first inversion of the tonic and the phrase to V of II. Mackenzie’s harmonic strategy at the start of this movement allows the listener to feel as though they have been gently enticed into the music. A different style of writing, based on instrumentation rather than harmony, is used to catch the listener’s attention in the Allegro, ma moderato e tranquillo which begins the Piano Quartet. Starting on the tonic note of E flat relatively low in the piano’s tessitura, the main thematic idea of the movement is carried forward in understated octaves for seven bars before the entry of the first string instrument. The idea is immediately repeated and developed, blossoming in the fuller texture afforded by the addition of the strings and the harmonic accompaniment of the piano. This delicate handling of the initial material in the Piano Quartet enables the listener from the outset to come to terms with both the ensemble and also the thematic material on which the movement is based. The difference of approach used by Mackenzie to introduce his ensemble in each case highlights the maturity and greater sophistication of the later work, where he is better able to control the dramatic, as well as technical, facets of the instruments to the advantage of the music as a whole.

In terms of the thematic development used in these first movements, the Piano Quartet is also the more refined. In this work, the Schumannesque first subject of the initial movement, shown in Music example 1, below, has a concision and clarity which are heightened by its initial presentation on the piano, and is typical of the long-breathed melodies beloved of the mid-century German school. It contains a mixture of conjunct motion employing melodic turns with two important rising leaps of a seventh and then a fifth (implying the development of the first interval into a leap of a ninth), which form the basis of a great deal of sequential and developmental work during the course of the movement. At the point of transition from the development to the recapitulation (bb. 125–142), not only do the strings reiterate the seventh leap sequentially, they also embark on repetitions of the elegant turn played through increasingly diminished rhythms from crotchets to triplet quavers in a high and tightly scored tessitura. The fortissimo entry of the piano with a last inversion dominant seventh chord heralds the recapitulation of the first subject halfway through its course and after the position where the leap of a seventh should have occurred. However, the thematic absence of the seventh leap in this
instance is more than compensated for at the end of the movement (bb. 220–224), where, after the momentum of the movement seems to have died in what appears to be the final tonic cadence, the strings repeat the interval with greater urgency to propel the music to the final six bars of ethereal largamente tonic chords (bb. 225–230).

Music example 1: The first subject of the Allegro, ma moderato e tranquillo, Piano Quartet.

In comparison with the lyricism of the first subject in the tonic key, the second theme of the Allegro, ma moderato e tranquillo in the dominant is purely contrapuntal (b. 44ff., see Music example 2). Given to the piano, the only instrument in the ensemble capable of such independent polyphony, this theme is completely reliant on its presentation and during the course of the movement is not as susceptible to development as the motives associated with the first theme. When the second subject is initially presented and then repeated, the strings can do little but comment with the necessary accompaniment of the piano, whose dotted-quaver bass line is integral to the melodic line. The music soon reaches the dominant chord of B flat (b. 63) which is held on a general pause before the a tempo of the following bar reinstates the momentum. The second part of the second subject group is characterised by chromatic appoggiaturas in
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

the strings and rising quaver chromatic scales in the piano. Due to their fragmentary nature, it is these motives which form the majority of the dialogue in the development section of the movement (bb. 87–141), though with a somewhat sparser scoring than at their first presentation and a more sequential nature. Before the repeat of the exposition the melodic lines are dominated by downward intervallic leaps, as if to counteract the optimism engendered by the rising seventh and fifth of the first subject. As Corder states in his brief analysis for Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey, ‘The passage-work rounding this off is remarkably graceful and spontaneous, and the whole movement, though concise, is vigorous and unconventional.’

Music example 2: The second subject of the Allegro, ma moderato e tranquillo, Piano Quartet.

Whereas Corder believed the first movement of the Piano Quartet to be ‘unconventional’, he might well have classified the opening movement of the Piano Trio as conventional. Working along similar lines, though less developed than the later work, as stated above, the Allegro moderato of the Piano Trio is a more integrated movement in terms of its scoring. The piano is more subservient to the two string parts, often happy just to provide a textural accompaniment to the melody, although this is markedly different to the role the instrument assumes in the Piano Quartet. However, there are certain passages in the Trio that are purely pianistic and compare well with the second subject found in the first movement of the Quartet. A couple of good examples are to be found at the striking key change to B flat minor in the development section (b. 90ff., see Music example 3), and the recapitulation of the second subject towards the end of the movement (b. 197, see Music example 4). In the latter case the piano is allowed full reign in the presentation of a pianistic theme, in which it formerly played the part of

20 Corder, op. cit.
accompanist to the strings. This change in scoring highlights the difference in key between the first appearance of this theme in the dominant key of F, and the second appearance in the tonic. The triplet accompaniment, fielded solely by the pianist’s left hand in the recapitulation, is representative of the full texture which Mackenzie employs throughout the movements of the Piano Trio, making it a much more luxuriant and richly scored work than the later Quartet. However, this is not to say that the composer does not manage to vary the instrumental texture in the initial movement of the Trio, and the cadential passage of the exposition (b. 70ff.) demonstrates the use of staccato and spiccato which contrasts well with the smooth melodic lines of both first and second subjects. Again, as in the Quartet, the development section (bb. 83–151) is truncated compared with more extended German models in the genre, and it concentrates on dialogue arising from the second subject group of the exposition peppered with brief, though pointed, references to the arpeggiated start of the first subject. The section in B flat minor mentioned above adds considerable intensity to the beginning of the development section and concentrates on the brooding G minor subject from the first group (see Music example 3).

_Music example 3: The start of the developmental B flat minor section, Allegro moderato (b. 90ff.), Piano Trio._

\[\text{Music}\ 3\]
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

Music example 4: The recapitulation of the second subject, Allegro moderato (b. 197), Piano Trio.

The initial Allegro con grazia of the String Quartet is as conventional (if not more so) as the first movement of the Piano Trio, and, compared with the corresponding movements of both chamber works for piano and strings, it shows little of immediate musical distinction. Throughout this movement and the work as a whole, Mackenzie employs thick ensemble textures, and, where dialogue occurs between instruments, it is more than often in the form of exchanges between the first violin and the cello, as characterised in the second subject. In some sections of the movement, the bottom three players of the quartet are used to provide sustained chords in a way that would not be possible in an ensemble which used the piano. However, some hearty, forzando string-writing is used to emphasise important cadences within the movement and energetic octave semiquavers are used to effect the transition to the second subject area from the first (b. 28 and b. 151). Like those instances in the Piano Trio and the Quartet, the development section of this work is succinct and concise, and the composer chooses not to elaborate his material in the recapitulation, although a coda is added to allow the momentum of the piece to subside. This coda does not attain the mastery of the ethereal section used at the end of the Piano Quartet, but it does root the piece back in the tonic key before the contrasting minor tonality of the scherzo which follows.

The Finale: Presto molto which ends the String Quartet is also cast in a sonata form structure, although the development section is even more succinct than that of the initial movement. The alla breve thematic material is played for the most part by the first violin and is often echoed in another part, particularly the cello, giving the movement a sprightly momentum, even though the alla breve feeling of the thematic writing is not reflected in the common time signature. It is perhaps no surprise, given Schumann's
Influence on Mackenzie’s chamber works, that both the Piano Trio and the Piano Quartet also employ an element of imitative writing in their finales. However, in these movements, the composer opts for a more formal handling of this element and chooses to incorporate actual fugato into the sonata form structure. The finale, Allegro assai, of the Piano Trio makes use of the former strategy as part of the first subject group. The fugato theme is grandly announced by the piano to an accompaniment of running semiquavers on the violin (see Music example 5), and these lines of invertible counterpoint are soon passed around the ensemble. For example, at the cello’s entry in b. 33, it shadows the theme in the left hand of the piano part at the interval of a third, while the right hand is given the running semiquaver pattern. This superficial fugato is soon interrupted as the music moves towards the introduction of the second subject group and, apart from its inevitable repetition in the recapitulation at the end of the movement, the motives derived from this passage are used during the short development section, beginning around bar 116.

Music example 5: The fugato in the first subject group of the Finale: Allegro assai (b. 29), Piano Trio.

The Allegro molto e con brio which concludes the Piano Quartet is, in Corder’s words, not without ‘a Mendelssohnian dash and energy’, and this is heightened by the
inclusion of a complete fugal exposition at the centre of the movement, rather than a development of the exposition material, rendering the movement ‘refreshingly original and agreeable’.21 After the music has modulated into the dominant key at the end of the exposition, Mackenzie develops the staccato scalar figure to arrive at a cadence in B flat minor at bb. 159–160. It is here that the cello enters with the fugal subject, followed by a real answer in the viola (see Music example 6). The violin and then the piano enter, while the countersubject, composed of detached quavers on each crotchet beat of the bar, is heard continuously in one of the other parts. After a freely developed episode in which fragments of the subject are heard in each instrumental line and the harmony moves through the submediant of B flat minor to chords on the flattened supertonic, the main subject of the finale is integrated into the texture against sustained chords. However, the return of the main theme is only momentary and the piano soon launches into a solo presentation of the lyrical second subject from the exposition. Mackenzie’s handling of a fugal exposition within the development section of this sonata form movement shows that he was more than able to exhibit a technical mastery of instrumental forms and processes, even though these are not always to be found in his later mature works. However, it must be said that structural processes adapted from conventional sonata form invariably underpin the musical architecture of his orchestral works, though this is not always apparent from the surface of the music.

21 Ibid.
As has been mentioned, the influence of both Schumann and Mendelssohn is never far from the surface of the music in Mackenzie’s chamber works, and this is most evident in the finales of the Piano Trio and the Piano Quartet. In its first subject and after the brief introductory bars, the finale of the Trio exhibits Mackenzie’s novel use of syncopation in the placing of the accompanimental chords given to the strings (see Music example 7). These seem designed to throw the pianist out of kilter in what is already difficult and extremely idiomatic material. Compared with the subservient role the piano undertakes in the first movement of the Trio, Mackenzie allows the pianist full reign in this final movement and both the players and the listener are rewarded with a quick-witted movement in which the parts interact with each other as a result of the thematic material they are given. Similarly, the finale of the Piano Quartet is centred around the pianist in both the first and the second subject groups of the exposition. It is in this movement that parallels with Schumann’s work in the genre are most evident, and Mackenzie’s finale shares a great deal of stylistic common ground with the finale of Schumann’s essay for the same ensemble.\(^{22}\) It is also probably no coincidence that

\(^{22}\) It would appear that the published finale of the Piano Quartet was at some point divorced from the rest of the manuscript and is no longer extant. Mackenzie has noted on the manuscript of the work (MS 1292) that ‘The Finale is not here. Probably Walter Bache played from this copy at its production.’ An alternative finale to the Quartet (MS 1292B) exists as part of the Mackenzie bequest in the library of the RAM.
Mackenzie’s work also employs the same tonality as Schumann’s earlier Quartet written in 1842. In both works, the finales have wide-ranging and pianistic initial themes, which Schumann treats fugally from the outset, whereas Mackenzie delays his use of this technique to provide greater interest with new thematic material in the development section (see discussion above). The lyrical second subject of Mackenzie’s finale is also extremely Schumannesque, yet it retains a certain originality partly due to its first appearance in the unexpected, flattened submediant key of D flat major. Having come to rest on the dominant chord of the dominant key (i.e. B flat) by bar 68, a root position F major chord (V of V) is transformed chromatically into a first inversion D flat major chord to allow for the entry of the expressive second subject (see Music example 8). The conventional dominant tonality demanded by the principles of sonata form at this point is soon reinstated, and the subject is repeated in B flat major with the violin taking the melodic lead. In general, the liveliness, wit, and joie de vivre of the finales in both of the piano chamber works reflect an aspect of Mackenzie’s character that he was to develop later in his orchestral studies, Britannia (1894) and Youth, Sport and Loyalty (1922), as well as in the later operatic music, particularly The Cricket on the Hearth (1901).

Music example 7: The first subject of the Allegro assai (bb. 5–10), Piano Trio.
Although some of the more serious elements in Mackenzie’s chamber music style are to be found in the first and last movements of each work, the central scherzos and slow movements also show great creativity. All three scherzos appear as second movements and are in conventional ternary form with a contrasting central trio section. However, there is a variety in the style of music used as the basis for each movement. The scherzo in the Piano Trio is Schumannesque, with its urgent, dotted rhythms in G minor and use of hemiola in the B flat trio section. The second movement of the Piano Quartet employs the rhythms of a mazurka in the mediant key of G major, combined with a more fluid central section in E flat. Perhaps the most attractive of the three movements, however, is the Scherzo: *Molto vivace* of the String Quartet. In this cleverly integrated movement, Mackenzie creates no small amount of intensity by pitting the insistently sinister, *pesante* E minor melody played in octaves by the viola and cello (bb. 1–4) against the seamless E major *piacevole* [sic] *e legato* line of the violins heard in the trio (bb. 45–49), which is derived from a motive heard in the first part of the movement (see Music example 9).²³ At the end of the trio, the composer carefully creates a transitional

²³ The E minor theme of this movement is particularly distinctive and, unconsciously and only in retrospect, shares a great deal with the movement attributed to the elephants in Saint-Saëns’ *Carnaval des Animaux* of 1886.
period to ease the return to the initial material by imposing a minor version of the legato theme above the cello's recapitulation of the E minor melody. The *legato* theme also returns towards the end of the movement, this time in C major, before it is triumphantly routed by the sinister minor theme played by all four instruments across three octaves in diminished quaver rhythm (bb. 132–134). Mackenzie later repeated this technique of overlapping sections of music in the scherzo of the Piano Quartet, but the best example remains the earlier movement in the String Quartet.

*Musical example 9: The two themes of the Scherzo: Molto vivace (bb. 1–4 and 45–49), String Quartet.*

Mackenzie makes recourse to ternary form in the slow movement of the String Quartet, in which the initial material is elaborated at its reappearance. The corresponding lyrical movement of the Piano Trio is cast in a bipartite structure in the warm key of E flat major, with little thematic development and in which the pianist assumes a purely accompanimental role. This allows the music to boast a luxuriant quality which matches the long-breathed melodic lines of the strings. Although written for an ensemble of three instruments, the movement is entitled ‘Duetto’, which aptly describes the interaction of the violin and cello melodies rising above one another in yearning suspensions. Though the movement has simple, slow-moving harmonies it is extremely effective and provides an apt contrast to the military dotted rhythms in the G minor scherzo and the vigour of the finale.

Perhaps the most classically-influenced movement in the three chamber works is the C minor Canzonetta con Variazioni of the Piano Quartet. The variation form is one which Mackenzie used sparingly throughout his creative life, and most often when he
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

wanted to show off virtuosity or lyricism in his music.\textsuperscript{24} Later chapters will discuss the variations in the second movement of the \textit{Pibroch} Suite and the innovation of the chaconne which underpins the first movement of the Suite: \textit{London, Day by Day}. However, in the Piano Quartet Mackenzie employs variations that only vary the surface detail of the music, rather than using the thematic material as a springboard for motivic development. Indeed, a variation strategy with less inherent development is more suited to a slow movement of a work of this type and it recalls the sets of variations from the late eighteenth-century repertory by composers such as Mozart and Haydn. The canzonetta itself is simply constructed in binary form, modulating to the relative major key of E flat at the central double bar and moving back to the tonic at the end of the next section, with the thematic material being built up of short phrases with regular periodicity (see Music example 10). The variations follow this harmonic structure exactly, and Table 1, below, outlines the different sections, giving a brief description of how the canzonetta is treated in each case. In the autograph manuscript of this movement, there is an extra dotted semiquaver variation led by the viola which was omitted in the published version of the Quartet (see Music example 11). It is not clear why Mackenzie chose not to include this in the final set of variations, but he may have felt that there were already enough sections to constitute a balanced movement. Despite the inherent repetition in the theme of the Canzonetta, the variations which follow are, according to Corder, 'remarkable for their rhythmical variety'.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{24} One of the last group of works Mackenzie wrote for solo piano is the \textit{Variations on an English Air} (1915). This set is more developmental than those found in the Piano Quartet.

\textsuperscript{25} Corder, \textit{op. cit.}
Table 1: A plan of the Canzonetta con Variazioni: Adagio cantabile e semplice, Piano Quartet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme (Canzonetta)</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Pianoforte is the dominant instrument with asides from the strings at the ends of phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation I</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Triplet semiquavers in the piano; pizzicato chords in the strings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation II</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Fugato variation; strings only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation III</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Con fuoco; virtuosic piano writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Variation IIIa]</td>
<td>[C minor]</td>
<td>[Dotted semiquaver variation, led by the viola.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IV</td>
<td>C major</td>
<td>'Maggiore' variation; more dialogue between instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation V</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Demisemiquavers in the violin and cello accompanied by the piano (no viola).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat of the Canzonetta</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Prefaced by transitional episode; the canzonetta is scored differently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>C minor</td>
<td>Short with a high tessitura for the piano part.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Music example 10: The theme of the Canzonetta con Variazioni, Piano Quartet.

Canzonetta con Variazioni.

Adagio cantabile e semplice.
Chapter 2: The Chamber Music

There is little doubt that Mackenzie’s development as a young composer can be traced through the three chamber works. His use of conventional Classical and mid-Romantic instrumental structures in his compositions was never repeated to the same extent in his later output and with the creation of these small-scale works, he must have felt that his apprenticeship, begun in Sondershausen in 1857 and continued at the Royal Academy of Music, was at last over. Ever the practical musician, with the cessation of his involvement in the Edinburgh Classical Chamber Concerts, he turned away from the genre of chamber music, choosing to write in the larger instrumental forms afforded by the orchestra, producing such works as the Scherzo, the overture *Cervantes* and the two Scotch Rhapsodies under the watchful eyes of Bülow in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and Manns at the Crystal Palace in London. However, it was with the publication of the Piano Quartet that Mackenzie made his mark as an up-and-coming composer and he was then able to tackle the genres which preoccupied him for the majority of his creative life: opera and choral music.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

One of the most important areas of Mackenzie's output is his operatic work which, beginning in the early 1880s, occupied his middle and late periods as a composer. The previous chapter explored his creative development in the genre of chamber music during his career as a teacher in Edinburgh and, if a strict chronology of compositions were to be observed, such a discussion should be followed by an exploration of his orchestral or choral works. However, even though these two genres are important in terms of his growing reputation as a composer in Britain, it is really Mackenzie's work on his two lyrical dramas, *Colomba* and *The Troubadour*, which characterises his Tuscan period and informs the approach he took to his other music. These two works transcend the limitations of choral music because they were written in a more cosmopolitan style than would have been possible if the works were intended for marketing within the musically more conservative world of the British choral societies. Moreover, choral music necessarily had a limited appeal in European countries other than Britain and, despite his training in Germany, Mackenzie's musical and dramatic affinities lay very much with the French and Italian schools of composition which valued opera rather than oratorio. The production of an opera on the Continent conferred a certain status on a composer which a similar production in Britain would never support. Although Mackenzie's two lyrical dramas received their premieres in London in the name of English opera under the aegis of the Carl Rosa Opera Company, it is an indication of Mackenzie's more cosmopolitan tendencies that *Colomba* proved very popular in Europe and especially Germany where it received several performances by touring companies in regional and court theatres. Equally successful in Europe had been the two Scotch Rhapsodies which Mackenzie composed before his relocation to Florence. Mackenzie gave up his various teaching duties in order to devote his time to composition and had received excellent critical support for his choral works *The Bride* and *Jason*. In the light of this, he chose to devote his uninterrupted time to the production of large-scale projects such as opera rather than orchestral works and, apart from the orchestral ballad *La belle dame sans merci* written in 1883, Mackenzie did not write again specifically for the orchestra until the *Overture to Twelfth Night* in 1888.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

During the course of his life Mackenzie wrote a total of ten operas, a considerable amount of work in this genre for a British musician, and among his contemporaries only the prolific Stanford and Ethel Smyth produced comparable numbers of works. A list of Mackenzie's operatic projects is shown in Table 1, below.

Table 1: A list of Mackenzie's operatic projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LIBRETTIST(S)</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td><em>Colomba</em>, Op. 28</td>
<td>Francis Hueffer</td>
<td>9 April 1883, Carl Rosa Opera Company, Drury Lane.</td>
<td>Revised 1911–12, Claude Aveling &amp; Mackenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td><em>The Troubadour</em>, Op. 33</td>
<td>Francis Hueffer</td>
<td>8 June 1886, Carl Rosa Opera Company, Drury Lane.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?c.1890</td>
<td><em>The Duke of Alva and the Netherlands</em></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>No production.</td>
<td>Largely sketched then abandoned. MS lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1894</td>
<td><em>Le Luthier de Crémone</em></td>
<td>Sutherland Edwards, after F. Coppée</td>
<td>No production.</td>
<td>Sketched vocal score in MS; unpublished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1896</td>
<td>The Cornish Opera</td>
<td>Frederick Corder</td>
<td>No production.</td>
<td>Sketched vocal score in MS; unpublished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td><em>His Majesty, or the Court of Vingolia</em></td>
<td>F. C. Burnand and R. C. Lehmann; additional lyrics A. Ross.</td>
<td>20 February 1897, Savoy Theatre.</td>
<td>MS full score and parts now lost. Vocal score published after slight revisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although this table presents a substantial list of operatic endeavour, it should be noted that not all of the projects with which Mackenzie became involved ended in theatrical productions. Following the premieres of his two largest operas in the 1880s commissioned by Carl Rosa, Mackenzie seems to have been unsuccessful in securing support for productions in the 1890s and his sketches from this period came to nothing.

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1 However, Table 1 does provide a more comprehensive list of Mackenzie's operatic projects than has hitherto appeared in any edition of *Grove's Dictionary* or any other publications. See work-list attached to Duncan Barker, 'Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (1847-1935)' in *Grove7* (forthcoming).
It is difficult to ascertain whether this was due to his administrative work at the RAM and conducting at the Philharmonic Society, both of which would have monopolised his time to the exclusion of his musical projects. Alternatively, theatrical managers and impresarios may have lost faith in him after *The Troubadour*, which, although it contains much good music, failed to enjoy a trouble-free production and critical reception. The actual reason was probably due to a combination of these and other circumstances, notably the increased number of operatic productions by composers from both sides of the English Channel in Britain towards the end of the 1880s. Writing about National Opera in Britain in an article published not long before his death in *Murray’s Magazine*, Rosa opined that ‘I do not admit National Opera to mean opera by British composers alone. No country in the world carries out this theory.’\(^2\) Despite his efforts for native British opera, Rosa forwarded the cause of French, Italian and German works wherever possible, but his primary concern was for operatic performances in the English language. As a result of Rosa’s death in 1889 British music lost an operatic visionary who was unafraid to invest in the future efforts of untried and untested composers. The last decade of the nineteenth century failed to produce an heir to Rosa’s ideals and opportunities for operatic productions became less readily available.

It is interesting to note that, apart from the lost and unfinished grand opera, *The Duke of Alva*, with its proposed four acts ‘on a Meyerbeerian scale’,\(^3\) Mackenzie’s projects of the 1890s are relatively small-scale conceptions, normally in one act and with a small cast of characters. This approach was symptomatic of Mackenzie’s changing views of the art-form and it is fortunate that he recorded his operatic opinions in an interview for *The Musical Times* published in 1894.\(^4\) The enquiries of the interviewer in this article were ‘prepared beforehand’ and Mackenzie delivered his answers ‘from a cosy arm-chair, under the soothing influence of tobacco’.\(^5\) Like Rosa’s earlier article which outlined the correct foundations on which English, or rather National, opera may be built, Mackenzie’s responses read almost like the manifesto outlining the approach of an ideal composer of English opera. His opinions reveal his extensive schooling in the

\(^2\) Carl Rosa, ‘English Opera,’ *Murray’s Magazine*, i (1887), 460–70; 465.

\(^3\) The only evidence for the existence of this opera is given by the composer himself in *MN* under the list of his ‘might-have-beens’ (*MN*, 243).


\(^5\) *Loc. cit.*, 11.
genre from his early youth in Germany and his student years in London and they also chart how his views had altered since his experiences in the 1880s with Carl Rosa and Francis Hueffer. Coming at the mid-point of his operatic career, many of the points raised by Mackenzie in the article concerning the ideal approach to the composition of opera will inform the discussion of his two lyrical dramas in this chapter and of his later operas in Chapter 5.

* * * * *

Mackenzie's work as a composer had been gaining recognition in professional musical circles for several years prior to his move to Italy. The Piano Quartet and the orchestral works of the late 1870s had been championed by men like Dannreuther, Manns and Bülow in their concert programmes given at the Crystal Palace and elsewhere. His small cantata The Bride (1881) was produced at the Worcester Festival to good critical acclaim and Mackenzie had been working on his second cantata, Jason, written to a libretto provided by William Grist, for the Bristol Festival of 1882 before he had even embarked on The Bride. The composer's plans for the production of this work must have been common knowledge within British musical circles because Mackenzie wrote to Alfred Littleton of Novello in December 1881 asking him to send a copy of the cantata to 'Dr Hueffer, who you remember expressed a desire to see it when complete.' It is probable that, as music critic of The Times, Hueffer had observed Mackenzie's previous work and was almost certainly present at productions of his orchestral works at the Crystal Palace and may have attended the Worcester Festival some months earlier when The Bride was performed.

After this initial contact between composer and librettist the commission to collaborate on an opera was not long in coming and Mackenzie's copy of the agreement between Rosa and himself for the opera, dated 12 January 1882 and accompanied by what the composer later referred to as 'a startling letter', is preserved in the correspondence of the Novello-Littleton Collection. Among other stipulations, the agreement required that the commissioned work be written 'to the libretto of the opera

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6 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 19 December 1881 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
7 MN, 110.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

Colomba words by F. Hueffer. The story of Colomba had already been suggested to Hueffer as a possible subject for a libretto by Frederic Cowen, as he later remembered in his memoirs: 'I lent him my copy of Mérimée's “Colomba” to look at, telling him I was thinking of having it dramatized, and the next thing I heard about it was that he had taken it himself as the subject for Mackenzie's earlier opera. Before settling on Mackenzie as a suitable composer, Hueffer had also approached another musician with the libretto. 'I believe,' Mackenzie later recalled, 'that the modest Arthur Goring Thomas, with an unnecessary mistrust of his gifts, or perhaps for some better reason, had previously declined the offer. A more likely reason for Thomas's rejection of the libretto is that he had agreed to supply Rosa Esmeralda, an opera based on Hugo's Notre Dame de Paris, also for the company's 1883 season. Over a decade later, it was suggested by his friend Paul Müller that Hugo Wolf compose an opera based on Colomba, to which the composer replied, 'I read it fifteen years ago. It is uncomposable; blood-revenge is not an adequate theme for us Hyperboreans.'

In consideration of the large scale of the project, Rosa's agreement stipulated that Mackenzie was to adhere to a strict timetable in his delivery of the composition, completing the first two acts not later than 15 October 1882 and the remainder by 15 November of the same year. Although the manuscript full score of the opera only reveals the completion dates of the later revision of Colomba, Mackenzie was presumably successful in working to these deadlines. This schedule was a very tall order for any composer, especially one who had never before written for the operatic stage, and Rosa himself made this point in the article referred to above. 'In gauging the artistic result of works by English composers correctly,' he argued, 'one important point has been perhaps overlooked by the public and even by the critics. With one or two exceptions, the English works produced by me were the maiden efforts of their respective composers.' His comparison of the climate for opera in English with opera in other European countries centres on the fact that 'on the Continent two or three operas

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8 Frederic Cowen, My Art and My Friends (London, 1913), 134.
9 A1N, 110.
10 To a libretto by T. Marzials and A. Randegger.
11 Ernest Newman, Hugo Wolf (London, 1907), 137-138 (footnote). Wolf also expressed his familiarity with Mackenzie's setting of the nouvelle, 'dreadful, dry stuff'.
12 RAM MS 1106. The revision of the opera was undertaken by the composer and Claude Aveling for the production by Stanford's RCM opera class in 1912. See below, p. 101.
13 Rosa, op. cit., 465.
generally go into the waste-paper basket, [...] before a presentable composition is achieved. I could not afford to wait for this long process of a second or third work.”¹⁴ Mackenzie was extremely fortunate in securing a second commission from Rosa after the composition of Colomba, which resulted in The Troubadour (1886) and, following the success of the 1883 season, only he and Goring Thomas produced more than one opera under Rosa’s patronage.

From its first season in 1875 the Carl Rosa Opera Company was instrumental in promoting British performers on the operatic stage and, in subsequent seasons, allowing British composers the opportunity to write operas which would be included in the company’s repertory. Before Rosa’s death in 1889, he and the company produced seven operas which had been specially commissioned from five contemporary British composers: Cowen’s Pauline (1876), Goring Thomas’s Esmeralda and Mackenzie’s Colomba (1883), Stanford’s The Canterbury Pilgrims (1884), Goring Thomas’s Nadeshda (1885), Mackenzie’s The Troubadour (1886) and Corder’s Nordisa (1887). Although not commissioned to do so, in June 1886 Hubert Parry also presented Rosa with his opera, Guenever, on which he had worked with Una Taylor.¹⁵ Unfortunately Rosa found the libretto badly written and lacking in drama and he refused to produce the work with his company. To a somewhat lesser extent than under Rosa’s direction, the company continued to commission new British works in the 1890s and produced Cowen’s Thorgrim in 1890 and MacCunn’s hugely successful Jeanie Deans, based on Scott’s Heart of Midlothian, and Diarmid in 1894 and 1897 respectively. Despite this heavy and unparalleled investment in native musical talent, Rosa and his successors, such as Augustus Harris, filled the majority of their seasons with Continental works which enjoyed truly English premières either in translation or location. These included operas by Bizet, Puccini and most of the early works by Wagner, the exception being Siegfried (produced in 1898). Combined with the emphasis on operatic productions sung in the vernacular, the company was equally active in its commitment to perform opera in the provinces and made its name as a touring company. Indeed, many of its more momentous productions occurred outside London, the première of Jeanie Deans in

¹⁴ Rosa, loc. cit.
¹⁵ Jeremy Dibble, C. Hubert H. Parry — His Life and Music (Oxford, 1992), 236–43. Despite much later revision to the work it remained unperformed and, in Dibble’s view, the whole episode dissuaded Parry from writing any further operas.
Edinburgh being most noteworthy. In later years the company turned to seasons programmed around the more popular nineteenth-century works in an attempt to compete with other companies, but the foundation on which its success rested in later decades was built from Rosa's commissions during the period 1876–89.

As mentioned in the contract of 1882 quoted above, Mackenzie’s collaborator in his first operatic venture was Francis Hueffer, chief music critic of The Times from 1879. Born and educated in Germany, Hueffer (1845–89) came to England after taking his doctorate at Göttingen16 and pursued a career as a music journalist, working in his early years for the *Academy, New Quarterly Magazine*, and the *Musical World*. In his musical sympathies he was a declared Wagnerite and published, among others, a book on *Richard Wagner and the Music of the Future* (1874). Even taking into account his profession, Hueffer was not well liked among musicians, who often saw him as overbearing and over-opinionated. In his diary of 1885, the usually even-tempered Hubert Parry was outraged at the pressure Hueffer exerted ‘on singers to perform his wretched productions [i.e. his songs] under pain of being suppressed by the Times’.17 However, for many composers, such as Mackenzie and Cowen, who collaborated with either Hueffer, Joseph Bennett of the *Daily Telegraph* or any other journalists acting as librettists, their choice of artistic partner in such ventures resulted in often insurmountable problems. Discussing his cantata *The Sleeping Beauty* (1885), for which Hueffer provided the libretto, Cowen later mused that since Hueffer and Bennett were ‘the critics of the two most important newspapers, it was a delicate matter to object to collaborate with them, or to suggest alterations to the book once they had delivered it. But,’ he lamented, ‘with the dearth of really good librettists, it was Hobson’s choice, and a composer, if he were not able to write or compile his own libretto [...] was glad to find something that at least bore a resemblance to poetry fitted for musical treatment.’18 Even when his work as an author was complete, Hueffer ensured that his artistic views on the production of the opera were heard. ‘At that time there was no gainsaying the dictum of the critic of the “Times”,’ Klein later recalled, ‘particularly when he trudged about the stage at rehearsal, umbrella in hand, now communicating his ideas to the performers,

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16 Having studied philology and music, Hueffer’s doctoral thesis was on the music and poetry of the Troubadours of Southern France, see discussion below, p. 62.
17 Diary of Hubert Parry, 24 February 1885. See Dibble, *op. cit.*, 232.
18 Cowen, *op. cit.*, 133.
now "laying down the law" across the footlights to the poor composer, who sat in his place in the orchestra patiently awaiting the pleasure of his autocratic collaborator."

A few months after the première of *Colomba*, it appears that Mackenzie had already — against his better judgement, as he later confessed — committed himself to produce a second collaboration with Hueffer. Writing to Littleton about the matter Mackenzie exclaimed, 'Of course, I haven't heard anything from him and don't want to write, indeed don't want just now to think of him. Should I be permitted to live and write Opera III it won't likely be with him, I assure you!'

Throughout their professional relationship Mackenzie found Hueffer an extremely difficult man to deal with and often despaired of receiving sections of the opera librettos in sufficient time. However, Mackenzie's outburst to Littleton was prompted by Hueffer's reaction to the composer's announced collaboration with Bennett for *The Rose of Sharon* (Norwich Festival, 1884), which the critic resented deeply. This is ironic considering that, while Mackenzie and Hueffer worked on *The Troubadour*, the author also collaborated with Cowen on his cantata, *The Sleeping Beauty*, for the Birmingham Festival of 1885. So smitten was Hueffer with a love-duet he wrote for this work that he used the same text again verbatim in Act III of *The Troubadour*. 'When I discovered this, and mildly remonstrated with him, pointing out that the copyright of these verses belonged to me,' wrote Cowen, clearly unimpressed at Hueffer's actions, 'he replied that he knew all about it, but thought I would not mind, and he was anxious to see what Mackenzie would make of them.' Unfortunately, incidents like this did nothing to ease the tensions which grew up between Hueffer and his musical collaborators and, although Mackenzie found Bennett to be a less antagonistic literary partner than Hueffer ever was, their working relationship also deteriorated over the course of several choral works through Bennett’s inability to deliver his librettos on time (see Chapter 4).

In his approach to writing librettos Hueffer was as equally opinionated as he was in his music criticism. To accompany the production of *Colomba*, Hueffer arranged for a separate publication of his libretto to which he added an extensive preface setting out his

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20 *MN*, 142. In chapter XVII, subtitled 'An Unfortunate Opera', Mackenzie admitted that 'feelings of grateful sympathy with the author who had given me my first chance induced me to disregard promptings of caution and advice and turn again to him for a book.'
21 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 20 October 1883 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
artistic intentions. In this poetic manifesto Hueffer pleaded guilty to ‘a purpose’, namely to distance the poetry of librettos from the ‘diction’ of the lyrical drama as exemplified by Tennyson, Browning and Rossetti. ‘In a literature more developed and more varied than that of any other nation,’ Hueffer expatiated, ‘the art of writing words for music has been strangely neglected. [...] It is here attempted to show that the language fitted to musical purposes is not essentially different from that of general common sense and literary taste.’

Directing the reader to the Corsican Love-Song of Act III, scene I, Hueffer cites this as an example of how English lyrics should be written for musical treatment and draws attention to his avoidance of ‘the objectionable present participle’ as a double or triple rhyme. However, a fellow critic from The Athenaeum is less than complimentary in his assessment of the passage, calling the language ‘rather commonplace in thought and clumsy in expression’.

In fact, Hueffer was criticised on the very points of poetry he sought to correct with his literary style. ‘The ordinary rules of English prosody are here, as in other passages in the libretto, set at defiance.’ Despite this, The Athenaeum’s critic, with a typical British sense of irony, was sporting enough to observe that ‘Dr Hueffer, it may at once be admitted, writes remarkably good English for a German; but between writing grammatically and writing poetically there is a wide difference.’ Such comments are representative of the reception which awaited the librettos of both Colomba and The Troubadour in the press. Mackenzie later commented that Hueffer brooked resentment as a result of his ‘ill-judged preface’ and consequently ‘his share of the work had to stand the fire of much unpalatable and frankly derisive reflections on its poetic merits. I thought the libretto offered many admirable opportunities to the musician, and was more than content.’

This last comment reveals Mackenzie’s preoccupation with dramatic structure rather than literary appreciation, a quality for which he is often criticised by later writers in comparison with his contemporaries, Parry and Stanford.

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23 Hueffer, Colomba (London, 1883).
24 Ibid.
25 Orso: ‘Will she come from the hill, will she come from the valley’.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 MN, 111.
Despite the harsh review in *The Athenaeum* concerning Hueffer's use of the English language, the critic was more lenient towards his colleague's treatment and structuring of the drama of *Colomba* itself. 'The developments are clear and simple, and [...] well adapted for musical purposes.' In his interview, Mackenzie makes several observations on how the ideal libretto should be constructed. Among other points, he notes that the action of an opera is necessarily slower and less complex than that of a play; 'a sentiment takes much longer to express in words that are sung than in words that are spoken.'\(^{30}\) Hueffer's carefully-paced libretto for *Colomba* is divided into four acts with two or three dramatic occurrences spread over, on average, four scenes per act. Later, in reply to a question about the ideal number of acts in a musical drama, Mackenzie expresses a preference for 'three acts — not more'. It is likely that the composer came to this conclusion as a result of his experience with the lyrical dramas, both of which adopted the contemporary fashion for four acts. His reasoning is that four acts 'do not group well. The thickest part of a plot should be in the middle, and it is very difficult to spread this central interest over two acts, to say nothing of the fact that unless the third be more effective than the second it will have all the effect of an anti-climax.' This argument is extremely valid, although it must be said that Hueffer's handling of the drama over four acts in *Colomba*, though not *The Troubadour*, is first-rate. There are never any lulls in the action, nor is there too much happening at any one time. Hueffer's downfall is in the style of language used rather than the drama and, in the opinion of his critic, 'had the execution been at all equal to the conception, we should have been able to pronounce the libretto of 'Colomba' a masterpiece. A good opportunity has been missed simply through Dr Hueffer's inability to write good verse.'\(^{31}\)

Apart from the undisputed literary merits of Merimee's *nouvelle*, the choice of *Colomba* as the basis for an opera must have been influenced by the recent success of Bizet's *Carmen*, based on another short-story by the author. After its Parisian premiere in 1875, Bizet's opera quickly transferred to the British stage in an Italian translation at Her Majesty's under Mapleson in 1878 and it was produced in English by Rosa the following year. Written on relatively small scales and with clearly-defined narratives, both *Colomba* (1840) and *Carmen* (1845) present the librettist with a near-perfect series

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\(^{30}\) *ACM Opera*. The subsequent quotations of Mackenzie's views in this paragraph are taken from this same source.

\(^{31}\) *The Athenaeum, loc. cit.*
of dramatic events eminently suitable for translation to the stage. Such attractive scenarios for operatic treatment meant that *Colomba* was set to music more than once.\(^{32}\) In fact, Mackenzie and Hueffer’s collaboration was not the first setting of the *nouvelle*; that honour belonged to the composer Grandjean whose opera of the same name was produced in Copenhagen on 15 October 1882, some six months earlier than Mackenzie’s.\(^{33}\) Another setting of the story by Radeglia was premiered in Milan in June 1887.

The story of *Colomba* is set on the island of Corsica at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Although the island was under French rule, the inhabitants were fiercely protective of their local customs and traditions, one of which was the ‘vendetta’ or revenge. Set against the exotic Mediterranean landscape of Corsica, Mérimée’s narrative centres on one of these vendettas, which drives the drama of the *nouvelle* to its climax. Before the story commences, we are told that the father of Orso and Colomba della Rebbia has been killed in suspicious circumstances and, although an inquiry pronounced that he was murdered by outlaws, Colomba and others suspect members of the Barricini family, ancient rivals of the della Rebbias.\(^{34}\) At her father’s funeral Colomba performs a traditional *vocero*, a form of improvised poetry and song, in which her faintly-veiled eagle metaphors firmly assert that the murder will be avenged before long. The story proper begins with the arrival home of Orso della Rebbia, accompanied by the English Colonel Sir Thomas Nevil and his daughter Lydia who are visiting the island.\(^{35}\) Although Colomba and her brother have not met for many years, she immediately appeals to his sense of family honour to bring the vendetta to its rightful conclusion. At first Orso civilly attempts to make peace with the Barricini, but these plans are thwarted by Colomba’s interference, who, in the novel, attacks Orso’s horse and blames the incident on their enemies. The Barricini challenge Orso to a duel in the macchia but he declines, considering it savage in comparison with modern French behaviour.\(^{36}\) However, when Orso is riding on a lonely road to meet with Lydia, the Barricini ambush him and luckily, as a trained soldier, he manages to shoot both of them in a *coup-double*,\(^{37}\)

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\(^{32}\) The success of Bizet’s *Carmen* understandably precluded any further operatic settings.


\(^{34}\) In the libretto of Colomba Hueffer uses the form ‘Barracini’ rather than ‘Barricini’.

\(^{35}\) In Hueffer’s libretto Colonel Nevil becomes the Count de Nevers.

\(^{36}\) ‘Taking to the “macchia,” the brush, means turning brigand, generally in consequence of an act of vendetta.’ [Hueffer’s note to the libretto, *Colomba*, vocal score, xi.]

\(^{37}\) i.e. shots made quickly to the left and the right with one arm.
although he is himself seriously wounded. Now an outlaw, Orso retreats to the macchia with the help of his sister and is finally cleared of manslaughter when the truth concerning his father's death, as suspected by Colomba and her supporters, comes to light. The final tableau of Mérimée's *nouvelle* presents the happily-married Orso and Lydia in Italy accompanied by Colomba. She hears of a local Corsican resident and goes to pay her respects, finding that he is, in fact, the old and emotionally-broken mayor Barricini, who lost his two sons as a result of her vendetta.

Hueffer's version of events differs but little from the synopsis given above. He omitted the somewhat gory episode of the horse-maiming and other less significant incidents. In addition, he changed a few of the character details such as the background of the Count and his daughter and the number of Barracini from three characters to two. One alteration which caused a great deal of consternation among those who knew Mérimée's original text was the fact that Hueffer's stage heroine suffers a somewhat different fate than her literary counterpart. In his preface to the libretto, Hueffer noted that Mérimée's Colomba 'lives happy ever after, with every prospect of becoming a happy wife: or, at least an excellent aunt of future Orsos and Lydias. This dénouement would have been obviously impossible in a drama,' he explained, 'and poor Colomba has to comply with the demands of poetic justice and to die.' Consequently, the operatic Colomba is shot off-stage as she causes a diversion so that her brother and Lydia can escape from their pursuers and, whether one finds this conclusion of the drama viable or not, her reappearance and subsequent death on stage in the arms of Chilina remains one of the most touching moments of the whole work.

The largest problem he faced in dramatising the story was that he had to dispense with the narrative element inherent in the literary *nouvelle*. Closely linked to the structurally less complex *conte* and pioneered as a literary form by Mérimée, the *nouvelle* was preoccupied with narrative style; as Cogman concludes in his study of *Carmen* and *Colomba*, 'Whereas the nineteenth-century novel, most explicit in Balzac and Zola, sought to explain man, the *nouvelle*, with less space available is less interested in causes than effect.' The reliance on narrative in *Colomba* produces, in Mackenzie's opinion, one of the chief defects in Hueffer's libretto. Explaining how music does not lend itself to

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'intellectual complications', he observed that, in the opera, ‘The story turns upon an event which happens before the curtain is raised, and which, consequently, has to be told and re-told by various personages during the progress of the opera.' This objection cannot only be raised about his own Colomba, said the composer, but also some of the later Wagner operas such as Tristan, where explanation is necessary to allow comprehension of the events on stage.

Both Carmen and Colomba by Mérimée have several themes in common; a strong central female protagonist (Carmen as the femme fatale and Colomba as a dutiful daughter and instrument of revenge), murder, and exoticism versus domesticity. For the first aspect, Mérimée found real-life inspiration for the character of Colomba and the vendetta in Colomba Bartoli (née Carabelli). In the early 1830s she had been at the centre of a vendetta between two families in the village of Fozzano which included several deaths and an ambush in which her son had been killed. Although a peace-treaty was produced in 1834 to quell the violence, Bartoli’s reputation was such that Mérimée himself paid her a visit in 1839. An older model for the character of Colomba is found in the Greek figure of Electra. The orphan of her murdered father Agamemnon, she too urges her brother Orestes to appease their family honour and take revenge on their mother Clytemnestra and step-father Ἐgisthus. Another incident in the plot with an historical precedent is the coup-double fired by Orso during his ambush, which was based on the personal account of Jérôme Roccasera who was merely wounded on the arm when he fired two shots in similar circumstances. Mérimée’s use of real-life events set against the background of the exotic and slightly barbaric island of Corsica tapped into one of the chief fascinations of nineteenth-century readers and, by extension, opera audiences. During his time away fighting in the Napoleonic wars, Orso has become the model of a French gentleman, yet he is soon drawn into the Corsican world and the vendetta however much it clashes with his sense of European civilisation. Corsica, as the birthplace of the great Napoleon, was close enough to mainstream Europe to be instantly recognisable but, at the same time, exotic enough to excite interest. In the same way,

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AM Opera, 12. Mackenzie is referring to the Sergeant of Marine’s explanation of the source of the vendetta on the quayside at Ajaccio in the first scene of Colomba.

41 These stories and examples of ballate similar to the Vocero by Colomba are recorded in Mérimée’s Notes d’un voyage en Corse (1839). Mackenzie also attempted to visit Corsica once he started on the composition of the opera, but ended up on Elba instead. MN, 110-11.

Mérimée toyed with the exoticism of the gypsy Carmen in his later *nouvelle* and focused on her enticement of Don José away from his accustomed environment.

Another fascination of the nineteenth century was the middle ages and, on the Continent, operas and other music took inspiration from this period resulting in the treatment of subjects as varied as *Rigoletto, Faust, Lohengrin, Tannhäuser, Die Meistersinger,* and *Tristan und Isolde.* In Britain itself the art of the Pre-Raphaelites, Victorian gothic architecture and historical studies of the period were all at the height of popularity in the 1870s and 1880s. Even among British operas commissioned by Carl Rosa and others there was a fashion for settings of medieval stories: Goring Thomas's *Esmeralda* (1883), Stanford's *The Canterbury Pilgrims* (1884) and *Savonarola* (1884), Parry's *Guenever* (1885–6) and Mackenzie's *The Troubadour* (1886). As the author of a widely-read study of medieval life and poetry in the *langue d'oc,* it was natural that Hueffer should turn to this area for inspiration when planning his second libretto. Having researched the poetry of the medieval French troubadours for his doctorate at Göttingen, Hueffer later published his thesis as *The Troubadours, A history of Provençal life and literature in the Middle Ages* (London, 1878). Within this study Hueffer discussed the lives and works of a number of Southern French troubadours, accounts of whose lives had been left in various contemporary manuscripts. Chief among these *vidas* (cf. Latin *vita,* meaning ‘life’) is the vivid account of Guillem de Cabestanh, which he took as the basis for his second collaboration with Mackenzie.

Although there are several versions of Cabestanh's biography, the general structure of his story remains the same in each one. Living in the protection of a courtly patron, Guillem spent a great deal of time with his benefactor's wife and eventually they fell in love. Discovering the affair, the patron had Cabestanh killed and then served his wife with the poet's heart at dinner. In chapter XV of his book, Hueffer revealed his

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43 Hueffer was closely linked with the literary circle of the Pre-Raphaelite painters, having married into the Rossetti family. Hueffer's son, the author Ford Madox Ford (originally named Ford Hermann Hueffer, 1873–1939), more widely known for his novels *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End,* later produced a biography of Rossetti in 1902.


45 Having read Hueffer's dissertation on the troubadours, Parry was also inspired by the story of Cabestanh and composed an orchestral overture on this theme, entitled *Guillem de Cabestanh.* It was premiered by Manns at the Crystal Palace on 15 March 1879. See Dibble, *op. cit. *, 166–67 and 171–74.
source for the story to be a Provençal manuscript in the Laurentian Library, Florence. The story seized contemporary imagination on account of its savagery and did not remain only in manuscript but was reproduced in their work by two writers of the period. A passing reference to the tale is found in the fourth chapter of Petrarch’s *Trionfo d’Amore*, which, when speaking of the love-poets of different nations, mentions, ‘Guglielmo, Che per cantar ha’l fior dei suoi di scemo!’ (William, who, by his song, shortened the flower of his days.) Another, more extensive account is given by Boccaccio as the ninth story on the third day in his compendium of medieval narrative, *The Decameron.* The tale of Cabestanh would have historical resonances for Mackenzie as a native of Edinburgh in the death of the Italian poet-musician David Rizzio, the favourite of Mary Stuart, who was assassinated by her husband Lord Darnley on the suspicion of an extramarital affair with the Scottish queen.

In his dramatization of the story Hueffer was sensible of the horrific effect on a Victorian audience of portraying the death of Cabestanh and the subsequent consumption of his heart on stage. Consequently he substituted the heart for a claret called ‘Sanh del Trobador’ (blood of the poet) in the final climactic scene of the opera. ‘Whether the jealous husband has mixed a few drops of the real blood of the poet with the wine, or whether he also merely speaks in a symbolic sense,’ explained Hueffer in a programme note to the production, ‘the spectator may decide for himself in accordance with his realistic or idealistic tendencies.’ In order to introduce this ambivalence to the finale, Hueffer included a Masque in the first act of the drama which celebrates the year’s vintage of the ‘Sanh del Trobador’. Humbly confessing himself ‘indebted to very great models indeed’ in the libretto, Hueffer drew upon the masque in the fifth act of Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* for his own representation. Whereas the former is based on Greek myth (Pyramus and Thisbe), the latter by Hueffer presents a mixture of ‘Christian and antique legends, gods and saints, after the manner of the middle ages’. Shakespeare’s influence on this scene remains merely a suggestion and within *The Troubadour* the Masque seems to be an overly-long and protracted explanation of

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46 The story is similar to an account of the death and eating of the heart of a trouvère from Northern France virtually contemporary with Cabestanh named Châtelain de Courcy.
49 Hueffer, Programme note to the production of *The Troubadour* (1886).
51 Hueffer, *loc. cit.*
the background to the symbolism of the final scene. However, as touches of local colour and representations of medieval tradition, this colourful sequence and its later counterpart, the *Jeu de Paume* in Act III, provide interesting entertainments within the drama, similar to the Renaissance *intermedii*.

The other episode of Hueffer's drama with literary precedents is the scene at the start of Act II in which Cabestanh reads the story of Launcelot and Guinevere to Margarita. Admitting this to be 'an accurate reproduction of the love-scene between Francesca da Rimini and Paolo Malatesta in Dante's *Inferno*', Hueffer expressed the opinion that this scene 'has never yet found its adequate musical embodiment'. The famous version of the Arthurian legend which the lovers read in both instances was composed by the troubadour Arnaut Daniel and in both cases it proved to be a fatal text for all concerned. Through this literary allusion Hueffer created a link between four sets of medieval literary lovers: Launcelot and Guinevere, Paolo and Francesca, Abelard and Eloise, and Guillem and Margarita.

One other famous pair of medieval lovers, more closely linked to Launcelot and Guinevere, is Tristan and Isolde, the protagonists of Wagner's music drama. Hueffer acknowledged the influence of Wagner on the duet of Margarita and Guillem in Act III of *The Troubadour*, 'which to the superficial observer, will appear to be taken from the great love duet in *Tristan and Isolde*. Furthermore, when the two lovers in Hueffer's drama fall asleep they are guarded from discovery by Margarita's sister Azalais in the same way that Brangane protects Wagner's lovers in his music drama. Defending himself from the possible charge of plagiarism, Hueffer asserted that 'The likeness is attributable merely to the fact that both incidents are derived from the same source. The situation of a friend, male or female, watching over the safety of two lovers is so common in mediaeval literature that a special kind of song with a special kind of name was invented for the purpose.' Highlighting the disparity between the French and German medieval literary traditions in both dramas, Hueffer described Brangane's song in *Tristan* as 'an excellent imitation of a Wächterlied' and identified Azalais's aria as, 'with the

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53 Ibid.
54 'Night, within the ample folds of thy darkness / Hide us, encompass us!', *The Troubadour*, Act III; and 'O sink' hernieder, Nacht der Liebe / giib Vergessen daß ich lebe' [O sink upon us, night of love, let me now forget I live], *Tristan und Isolde*, Act II, scene ii.
55 Hueffer, *loc. cit.*
56 'Einsam wachend in der Nacht' (Brangâne), *Tristan*, Act II, scene ii.
exception of the last stanza, a literal translation of a Provençal Alba’. 57 It was not possible for the medieval authenticity and scholarship in the libretto to be mirrored by the composer, whose musical setting of the alba is, quite understandably, stylistically consistent with the rest of the opera. However, Mackenzie did make some attempt to research the music of the period and, when in Paris in May 1884, he visited the Bibliothèque Nationale. ‘A few rhythms out of “Adam de la Halle” and one or two songs of his which being all in the same time of 3/4 are not of much use,’ he complained in a letter to Littleton. 58 ‘As to Hunting-songs I ransacked with the help of the Librarians the whole place and found not a scrap of music, therefore there is not[thing] left but to draw upon my own resources after all.’

Rosa’s commission for The Troubadour was made in the autumn of 1883 following the success of his company’s production of Colomba in Britain. The working relationship between Mackenzie and Hueffer was more than usually strained and a great deal of this was due to the composer’s collaboration with Joseph Bennett on The Rose of Sharon. 59 The composition of the oratorio preoccupied Mackenzie for most of the latter half of 1883 and he finally completed the work in the middle of March 1884. 60 A few days later he wrote to Littleton to say that he had received the libretto of the first two acts of the opera from Hueffer. 61 Littleton had attempted to persuade a dubious Mackenzie to come out of his seclusion in Tuscany and move to London, where he could attempt to find a conductor’s position and still continue with his composition. ‘I am quite sure that I couldn’t combine the two things with success,’ he replied. ‘The new opera would suffer very much if I can’t do it as I did the other in quietness and without other occupation. That it is important that I should be looking after my work I don’t deny, still less that I must produce for the first time a new work myself.’ 62 Mackenzie’s commitment to his composition work stood him in good stead later in his career and, furthermore, apart from the work on the second opera, he had already promised to compose his Violin Concerto for the prestigious Birmingham Festival in lieu of the choral

58 Letter to Alfred Littleton, [May 1884] (Novello—Littleton Collection).
59 See quotation above, p. 56.
60 The Rose of Sharon, RAM MS 1114, is dated 11 March 1884.
61 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 14 March 1884 (Novello—Littleton Collection).
62 Ibid. Mackenzie and his family did move to London in 1885 for a year in order for him to take up the conductorship of the reinstated Novello Choir.
work they had initially requested. Under the working title of ‘The Minstrel’, Mackenzie took a further two years to complete the opera, dating the full score ‘Fine Jan 20th 1886. The Limes, Lower Sydenham’, some six months before it was produced. During this period the relationship between author and composer deteriorated and it is wittily illustrated in Mackenzie’s continuing correspondence with Littleton; he renamed the opera ‘Billy of the Cabstand’, an epithet taken up by the less serious reporters in the press, and, in one notable letter, sarcastically parodied Hueffer’s archaic literary style.

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To a great extent, Mackenzie’s comprehensive operatic education was as practical as his orchestral training and during his time at Sondershausen he heard or played a great number of modern Continental operas, ‘some of them, more’s the pity, hardly to be revived again. [...] The singing may not have been of the highest excellence (while it compared favourably with that to be heard on many of the more celebrated operatic stages),’ he later reflected, ‘but ensemble and orchestra playing were as perfect as the artistic conscience could achieve.’ In this way Mackenzie heard a wide cross-section of late-eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century works by Mozart (Die Zauberflöte, Figaro, Die Entführung), Beethoven (Fidelio), Weber (Der Freischütz), Boieldieu (Jean de Paris, La Dame Blanche), Hérold (Zampa), Auber (Masaniello, Fra Diavolo), Wagner (Tannhäuser, Lohengrin), Gounod (Faust), Offenbach (Orpheus), Halévy (La Juive), Meyerbeer (Robert le Diable, Les Huguenots, Dinorah), and Rossini (Il Barbiere, Guillaume Tell). Many of these, especially Wagner’s two operas, had not yet been produced in London and Mackenzie recalled that the German master’s musical idiom caused little sensation in the advanced musical community of Sondershausen which noticed few extravagances ‘to justify the carping criticisms and objections raised.’ A few years later, whilst a pupil at the Academy in London, Mackenzie received his

63 RAM MS 1107. Fortunately the draft vocal score of ‘The Minstrel’ exists in the Mackenzie collection (MS 1107) and this gives some slight idea of the pace of work on the opera. The draft of the first act is dated August 1884.
64 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 7 March 1885 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
65 MN, 34. In connection with the operatic performances in Sondershausen, Mackenzie remembered that the Fürst (Prince) had ‘a carriage which conveyed him each evening directly from the dining-room to his box in the [private] theatre.’
66 MN, 36. The advanced musical tastes of the court in Sondershausen meant that Wagner was anxious about the reception of Lohengrin there, since many influential critics attended the premiere.
schooling in British opera by accepting 'a short engagement as leader with George Cooper’s Opera Company at Birmingham.' Unusually for a Briton, Mackenzie had only really heard Continental operas in performance and soon made up for this national deficit in his musical knowledge. 'The experience gained in playing a pair of operas nightly practically at sight (after short rehearsal), was varied and valuable.' Mackenzie gained further insight into the traditions of French opera during a visit to Paris in the late 1860s and completed his cosmopolitan operatic education when he and his family moved to an apartment in the Via della Pergola, Florence, a few yards away from the famous Teatro della Pergola, having attended native Italian productions of Boito’s Mefistofele at Turin and Verdi’s Aida at Pisa en route.

Through these musical experiences Mackenzie had been exposed to the various approaches taken by composers of different national schools to the composition of opera. Influences from Germany, Italy and France proved instrumental in the formation of his own compositional voice in a genre which had developed with marked differences in terms of music and structure in each country. In a review of the revised version of Colomba which acknowledges the diverse musical influences on the composer’s style, Mackenzie is reported as saying that ‘he apparently wrote down what came naturally to him.’ However, it would be somewhat naïve to believe that Mackenzie had formed his operatic style independent of the Continental mainstream, especially since there were few modern precedents on which he could base a British style in the genre. The lyrical dramas exhibit facets of German style in the orchestral accompaniment and the methodological interpretation of the ‘representative theme’, French style in the orchestral episodes, imagery and use of balletic tableaux, and Italian style in the structural vocal forms, such as the aria, the ensemble finale and the scena, underpinning the continuous music. Interestingly, when asked by the MT interviewer to name the work, which, in his opinion, was ‘the greatest opera hitherto written’, Mackenzie diplomatically evaded giving an answer to the question and, in consequence, the inevitable decision between the French and the German schools of opera. 'I have an admiration for too many different

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67 MN, 50.
68 Ibid. Mackenzie also played in the Birmingham Festivals under the direction of Costa during his RAM vacations and returned there periodically until the mid-1870s.
69 MN, 66–67.
70 MN, 99.
71 ‘Royal College of Music, Performance of Mackenzie’s ‘Colomba’’, MT, 1 January 1913, 18. For a discussion of the revised version of Colomba see p. 101ff. below.
styles to answer that question. I can hear the ‘Magic Flute’ or ‘Carmen,’ ‘Faust’ or ‘Die Meistersinger,’ each with the greatest delight.”\footnote{ACM Opera, 13.} However, the whole interview in The Musical Times leaves the reader in no doubt that Mackenzie’s operatic inclination was to the French school, as exemplified in Faust and especially Carmen, a work so close in many respects to his own Colomba.

Another enlightening question asked of Mackenzie in his 1894 interview concerned the special gifts he considered most important in a composer of opera. In his answer, Mackenzie attempted to fictionalise the widely-held myth that a composer might lack sufficient dramatic instinct in the composition of opera, ascribing such musical failures ‘rather to his inability to express himself in the operatic idiom’.

Composers who have ‘musical form’ at their fingers’ ends, so to speak, are generally the least successful in opera, because their training — I had almost said their symphonic training — induces them to follow out the development of their thematic material logically to the bitter end. Their habit of thinking in the symmetrical forms of instrumental music appears to destroy their power of breaking off a subject at the proper moment.

Mackenzie explained that the production of a ‘patchwork’ score is not the same as following the changing sentiments of a dramatic scene in the music: ‘the art of being incoherent is easily acquired.’ However, he did feel that this gift of musical expression is denied to many composers who otherwise excel in the more abstract genres of instrumental music. ‘Is it not significant,’ he postulated, ‘that, with few exceptions, the successful opera writers are just those who are not symphonists?’ Essentially a dramatic composer, Mackenzie, with the exception of his early chamber works and possibly the two concertos, avoided the composition of music in abstract genres and his own purely orchestral music was invariably inspired by a literary or occasional stimulus.\footnote{He did make an abortive attempt in 1887 whilst on holiday at Ver sur Mer in France to compose a symphony which was never completed.} Finally, talking after his experiences of collaboration on librettos for the lyrical dramas with Hueffer, Mackenzie deplored the lack of competent English librettists, men who are equally important in the production of opera and need to be fostered in the same way as native compositional talent. He suggested that playwrights might collaborate with poets ‘in French fashion’ in order to produce librettos of sufficient quality for operatic treatment.
In planning the structure of the two lyrical dramas, a great deal of the music necessarily took its form and direction from the shape of the libretto provided by Hueffer. Although this method of large-scale composition was fraught with difficulties for the composer when he did not always have the entire text before him, Mackenzie seems to have produced remarkably musically-coherent scenes, planned with great precision to highlight the dramatic situation. An analysis of the key areas employed in the scenes and acts of *Colomba* and *The Troubadour* shows that Mackenzie was extremely sensitive to the staging possibilities in the future production and their effect on the audience. Figure 1, below, is a basic linear diagram of the key areas employed in *Colomba*, with parallel relationships such as modal key changes and dominant-tonic progressions marked below the keys. With the aid of this diagram it is possible to see how Mackenzie organised his music in order to draw attention to the main musical and dramatic events of each act. The first three acts are made harmonically coherent by beginning and ending in the same key area, F, E, and G respectively. Only the fourth act differs from this precedent and makes a long-term move from D minor to E flat major, which in itself mirrors the local tonal articulation at the beginning and the end of the act.

In the first instance, this articulation accompanies the discovery of Orso on stage by Colomba and Lydia as they search through the macchia, prompting the opera's love-motif in E flat major played by the orchestra.74 At the end of the act, Chilina helps Colomba onto the stage and in a restless D minor recitative she explains how Colomba was hurt. Coming round from her unconsciousness, Colomba is woken by a phrase of the E flat major *Vocero* in the orchestra and, between repetitions of this motive, she begs for remembrance by Orso and Lydia when she has passed away. The final prayer for the soul of the heroine is also set in E flat major, ending the opera in the key of the important *Vocero* and reflecting the Prelude of the opera which also finishes with an orchestral rendition of the prayer.

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74 Colomba, 1883 vocal score, p. 192.
Figure 1: A diagram of the key areas employed in Colomba (1983 version) showing tonal links and relationships.
The tonal plans employed by Mackenzie in *Colomba* often encompass an entire act and in this way they emphasise the composer's expert long-term control over the operatic medium. Rather than presenting the 'art of being incoherent' described in his interview, Mackenzie is careful to provide enough common tonal areas and musical material within the opera to underpin the sense of a coherent yet individual musical world for the drama. In general, the movement between key areas is teleologically based in order to sustain the momentum of the drama within the span of each act. This is not the case in the tonal construction of *The Troubadour* which presents a succession of closely-related keys within each scene, but with little coherence over the course of each act in comparison with *Colomba*. A good example of a closely-written scene in *The Troubadour* is the second of Act I. In the portrayal of the Masque celebrating the vintage of the 'Sanh del Trobador', Mackenzie alternates G major, used for recitative and explanation, with the areas of G minor and E flat major, used for the musical numbers. This strategy is repeated in Act III, scene II, for the portrayal of the medieval *Jeu de Paume*, which uses the tonal area of A major/minor as the basis for the scene. As discussed above, Mackenzie did not have the entire libretto of *The Troubadour* before him until he was near to completing the whole work and, although Hueffer may have provided him with a synopsis of the drama, it would have been more difficult for the composer to map out long-term tonal relationships similar to those over which he obviously took a great deal of care in *Colomba*. Notwithstanding these practical difficulties, Mackenzie attempted to produce continuous music for each act in both lyrical dramas. However, a comparison of Figures 1 and 2 highlights the differences in tonal planning as evidenced by the contrasting methods of composition in each case.75

75 Later reports of the composition of *The Troubadour* always make it clear that Mackenzie was under greater pressure to recapture the success and style of *Colomba* in his second lyrical drama. This strain may have had a detrimental effect on the coherency of his composition.
Figure 2: A diagram of the key areas employed in The Troubadour showing tonal links and relationships.

**Act I ‘The Vintage’**

Overture

E → Bflat → Dflat → A → Dflat → Bflat

Chorus → Ensemble → Guilem → Ensemble → Dialogue

The Masque

G → Gmin → G → Gmin → Eflat → G → Eflat → G


E → A

Finale

Bflat → [Guilem’s Entrance] → Song

V → I

**Act II ‘The Hunt’**

E → C → Amin → F → Dflat → F → Fmin → Aflat

Chorus → Recit. → Cantabile → Caballete

Dmin → Amin → F → Dmin → D → Dmin → D

Chorus → Duet → Dialogue → Aria → Dialogue → Quartet

Dial./Trio → Chorus-Aria-Chorus

**Act III ‘The Feast’**

Prelude

Bflat → D → Bflat → Fmin → C → Aflat → C/Amin → Emin → E → Fmin

Dialogue → Dialogue → Love Duet → Dialogue → Love Duet

Alba & Trio

Amin → E → Amin → A/F#min → A

Players → reprise → Chorus → Dialogue

**Jeu de Paume**

Finale

Bflat → Eflat → Dialogue → Trio/Dialogue

V → I

**Act IV ‘Sanh del Trobador’**

F → Bflat

Prelude, Trio & Dialogue → Reprise ‘Sun-ray’ → Recit

D → Gmin → G

Dialogue → Wine Song & Trio → Dialogue → Solo

E → A → Solo → Solo

V → I
In addition to the coherent tonal planning characteristic of the opera, the first act of *Colomba* is very cleverly held together both musically and dramatically by the suspense created as a result of the interruption of the *Vocero*, initially sung by Chilina and completed by Colomba before the Finale of the act. With this expert dramatic device, Hueffer catches the attention of the audience by presenting the story of the murder of Colonel della Rebbia, then retaining Colomba’s prophecy of vengeance until she sings it in person at the end of the act. Rising to the dramatic challenge that the *Vocero* presented, Mackenzie makes the song one of the central musical portions of the entire opera (see Music example 1, below). In Mérimée’s story the *Vocero* is significant because it was improvised over the Colonel’s body by Colomba in a state of deep sorrow and vengeance. However, Hueffer based his version on a *serenata*, ‘The Maiden and the Wood-Pigeon’, improvised by Colomba at Orso’s request for Miss Lydia when she visited the della Rebbia house at Pietranera. Changing the wood-pigeon into a ‘gentle dove’, Hueffer alluded to the English translation of Colomba’s name and made the veiled metaphors of Mérimée’s poem more explicit and direct for the operatic stage. After all, Mackenzie noted that ‘A sentiment takes much longer to express in words that are sung than in words that are spoken’, and, as a driving-force behind the drama, the *Vocero* was required to be instantly recognisable and intelligible.

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76 *Colomba*, 30–33 and 64–66 respectively.
77 Prosper Mérimée, *Carmen and other stories* (Oxford, 1989), 188. In the *nouvelle* Colomba is noted as being a *voceratrice*, the Corsican equivalent of a professional mourner who improvises laments over the recent dead. (Mérimée himself gives an explanation of this, *op. cit.*, 174.)
78 *ACM Opera*, 11.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

Music example 1: An excerpt from the Vocero from Colomba as sung by Chilina (1883 vocal score, p. 30).

VOGERO.
(The people gather round Chilina in a circle; some stand at a distance, looking out for the gendarmes.)

Andantino. \( \text{\textcopyright 92.} \)

Hear thee mourning night and day...

What is all... thy grievance, say?

A. C. MacKenzie's "Colomba."—Novello, Ewer and Co.'s Octavo Edition.—(30.)
When Colomba completes the unfinished *Vocero* towards the end of Act I, Mackenzie carefully alters the accompanimental pattern for greater dramatic effect from the one used when Chilina initially sang the lament. Having been first presented over a simple chordal accompaniment, the final verse sung by Colomba is more florid and even develops the thematic material in the final stages leading to the impassioned cries of ‘Vendetta’. This thematic development serves to heighten the drama of the situation since the *Vocero* originally appeared in a simple song form with alternating musical strophes and the expansion of this basic structure conveys Colomba’s loss of emotional control when giving the *rimbecco* to her brother. The temporary madness of familial duty which overcomes Colomba during the opera revisits her once again at the end of the third act following the shooting of the Barracini by Orso. On the road from Pietranera, Colomba, the Count and the villagers come upon the bodies of the dead men and amidst much commotion the villagers sing a Requiem chant in unison against the agitated orchestral accompaniment. Once the improvised cortège has left sight Colomba mocks the grief of the off-stage villagers (‘Ha! sing your chants and sound your knells’) and breaks into a reprise of the *Vocero* before the scene ends with the final phrase of the Requiem chant. After this final dramatic exclamation of her vicariously fulfilled vengeance, in the final act of the opera Colomba discards her role as an instrument of revenge and assumes her true nature as devoted sister to Orso, helping Lydia to find his retreat in the macchia. In the final act Mackenzie does not make explicit use of the *Vocero* as an aria and only uses brief motivic references to the melody in the orchestra to accompany the appearances of Colomba with whom the motive is always associated.

The *Vocero* is not the only example of a song employed as part of the plot in Mackenzie’s lyrical dramas. From the beginning of the Act I Finale of *The Troubadour*, Guillem’s song, ‘The Sun-ray’s shine’ (see Music example 2), is also dramatically important because it simultaneously establishes amorous links between the poet and Margarida and arouses suspicion in the mind of her husband, both of which provide the

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79 *Colomba*, 65–66.
80 The *rimbecco* is a call for vengeance to a man who has not purged his family’s honour of the insult of murder, even though he may have to commit the same crime to do so.
81 *Colomba* (1883), 179.
82 Guillem makes covert reference to his love for Margarida in the text of the song by singing of ‘sparkling pearls’, the word ‘pearl’ being the Provençal translation of her name (see note to Hueffer’s libretto in *The Troubadour*, vocal score, vii).
basis for the subsequent drama. Many of the contemporary reviews of the opera believed that Mackenzie based this song on the *Preislied* from *Die Meistersinger*, isolating, together with *Tristan*, yet another Wagnerian precedent for Mackenzie and Hueffer’s work. In the final scene of the drama, the troubadour’s song is sarcastically parodied by Raimon as he pours his wife a goblet of wine from the ‘Sanh del Trobador’ vintage and, although his vocal line does not carry the entire excerpt of ‘The Sun-ray’s shine’, the remainder is provided by the orchestral accompaniment (see Music example 3). Coming at the dramatic crux of the entire opera, this quotation of earlier material is essential to the direction of events signalled by Margarida’s climactic scena and the ‘shock’ ending of the work. The combination of the wine and the musical reminiscence of Guillem’s song unveils to the audience the metaphor of the poet’s death, delivering the librettist from a literal dramatisation of the medieval legend which would have required the presentation of the troubadour’s heart on stage. However effective this would have been in production is debatable, but from a reading of the vocal score the situation fails to capture the attention in quite the same way as Colomba’s song of vengeance. It was noted above that Mackenzie seemed unable to plan the music of *The Troubadour* with the same care as he did in *Colomba* and, apart from this single yet vital reminiscence of Guillem’s song, the opera is not saturated with any melodic idea in the same way as the *Vocero* dominates the music of *Colomba*.

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84 See p. 64 above for discussion concerning the influence of Tristan on Hueffer’s libretto. Mackenzie’s later and unfinished opera, *Le Luthier de Crémon*, based on the drama by François Coppée uses a remarkably similar premise to the plot of *Die Meistersinger* (see Chapter 5).
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

*Music example 2: 'The Sun-ray's shine' (Guillem), Act I Finale of The Troubadour (vocal score, p. 47).*
Although the Vocero and 'The Sun-Ray's shine' have the dual purposes of acting as both engaging songs or concert arias and significant dramatic devices, in the lyrical dramas there are several examples of other songs used by Mackenzie merely to provide entertainment with no major dramatic purpose. The 'Old Corsican Ballad', 'Corsican Love-Song', Azalais's alba 'Beneath a hawthorn on a blooming lawn' and Raimon's drinking song 'Pour forth, noble wine!' are all employed to afford some relief from the dramatic events while remaining apt to the particular situation in which they are sung. Furthermore, Mackenzie often attempts to integrate them into the dramatic flow of the opera by combining their beginnings or ends with dialogue between the singer and the listener. Singing her alba over Margarida and Guillem in The Troubadour, Azalais watches over the lovers to keep them from danger as they sleep and, when they wake with the dawn, the song becomes the basis of the brief ensuing trio in which the lovers bid each other farewell between snatches of the alba.85 Similarly, in Act III of Colomba, having sung the Corsican Love-Song to himself on the road from Pietranera, Orso hears the melody of an Old Corsican Ballad sung by Chilina hidden out of sight.86 With this

85 'Beneath a hawthorn on a blooming lawn' (Azalais), 138-41; trio 'Ah, me! the dawn' (Margarida, Guillem, Azalais), 141-43.
86 Corsican Love Song, 'Will she come from the hill?', 153-56; Old Corsican Ballad, 'So he thought of his love', 156-59.
song Chilina, the daughter of a brigand and well-used to the ways of the macchia, attempts to warn Orso of the ambush lying in wait for him: ‘Lovers beware, though your hearts be true, Powder and ball are stronger than you.’ Set to a hauntingly chromatic and strophic melody in F sharp minor, the song is given a suitable rustic accompaniment and is mostly harmonised over a strong tonic pedal (see Music example 4). After the second verse Orso recognises Chilina’s voice and, between the phrases of her final repetition of the chorus, he replies, ‘I know the meaning of your song, but what is danger to one who thinks of Lydia and of love?’ In this way the song is integrated into the final part of Orso’s scena which occupies the beginning of the third act.

Music example 4: The Old Corsican Ballad as sung by Chilina in Act III, Scene I, of Colomba (1883 vocal score, 156-59).

Mackenzie used these song-arias as additions of 'local colour' to the lyrical dramas and, as demonstrated by his trip to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris to search for suitable medieval melodies for use in The Troubadour,\textsuperscript{87} he often took care to research the historical and musical contexts of the songs. During the composition of Colomba, Mackenzie attempted to visit Corsica from his residence in Tuscany, but at the last minute crossed over to Elba instead. ‘I saw Corsica — from a distance,’ he later remembered.\textsuperscript{88} In his interview on opera Mackenzie was asked whether he liked the inclusion of local colour in dramatic scores and he pronounced that ‘Yes; if used with discretion I decidedly like it. But only a few composers seem able to adapt themselves successfully to other nationalities than their own.’\textsuperscript{89} However, having written Colomba a few years after the première of Bizet’s Carmen which includes, among others, the marvellously memorable Habanera, itself an adaptation of a popular song by the Spanish composer Yradier, Mackenzie was left with little choice but to incorporate the Vocero and the two Corsican songs into his score as examples of exotic Mediterranean culture.\textsuperscript{90} Moreover, these songs often became the selling-points of the operas, being published separately from the fuller vocal scores, and were associated with the singers who premiered them for many years.

Although the songs temporarily interrupt the dramatic flow of the operas, Mackenzie was very much in favour of scores written with ‘continuous music’. Loading his question with a reference to the continuous music in the dramas of Wagner, the interviewer elicited the following response from Mackenzie: ‘The division into separate numbers is no longer acceptable to musical thinkers. I do not, of course, wish you to understand by this that an act of an opera should be one long unresolved suspension,’ explained Mackenzie, qualifying his earlier statement, ‘or that lyrical moments and soliloquies should not find their full expression in a final cadence; but only that the conventional ‘numbers’ — aria, cavatina, &c. — are decidedly of the past.’\textsuperscript{91} However, Mackenzie’s scores do show evidence that he relied on the mainstays of the Italian

\textsuperscript{87} See above, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{88} ACM Opera, 110–11.
\textsuperscript{89} ACM Opera, 12–13. Citing an example of a composer’s masterly use of local colour, Mackenzie opts for the lesser known French composer Méhul and his opera Uthal, in which he captures the dark sound of Celtic and Ossianic mythology.
\textsuperscript{90} Bizet’s habanera, ‘L’Amour est un oiseau rebelle’, was based on Yradier’s El Arreglieto: chanson havanaise.
\textsuperscript{91} ACM Opera, 12.
operatic tradition, the scena and the ensemble finale, for the musical construction of his lyrical dramas.

Both Margarida and Colomba are allotted important scenas to explore their inner feelings at the beginning of the second act in each drama and, although the music is 'decidedly continuous', the divisions of the scene into recitative, cantabile and cabaletta are obvious. Set against the background of the hunt, Margarida’s scena explores her inner sorrow at being friendless and without someone in whom to confide her feelings. In her recitative, ‘At last I am alone!’ (vocal score, pp. 70–71), she asks to be left alone to die in the forest and gives the reasons for her unhappiness in the following slow cantabile section (Lento: ‘Vainest regretting, aimless strife’, pp. 71–74). Beginning in F major, the cantabile is set in the typical aria form of ABA with the contrasting central section in the key of D flat major. Following the rhythm of a sarabande, the vocal line stresses the second beat of each bar using a melodic rise and fall to add extra emphasis to this characteristic phrasing. In contrast, the common-time cabaletta (Allegro agitato: ‘And now this sudden passion!’; pp. 75–80) demonstrates Margarida’s resolve to acknowledge her love for Guillem and to accept the consequences. Towards the end of this section the death of the ‘noble hind’ is announced by the hunters and, with numerous implications of hunting horns in the orchestral accompaniment and vocal line, Margarida likens herself to the hapless prey.

Colomba’s scena is less traditional in its construction, having just two sections (recitative and aria) rather than three, but nevertheless it acts as a remarkably similar dramatic device to Margarida’s scena described above. At this point Hueffer’s verse gives the audience greater insight into the complex character of Colomba, highlighting her conflicting feelings of joy at the return of her brother and of his love for Lydia, and the onerous duty she feels in inciting Orso to avenge their father’s murder. The public face of Colomba seen in the first act is contrasted with her private feelings and in the aria which follows the initial recitative she asks, ‘But what am I that I to fiercest combat, / Perhaps to death, should goad the brother who / To me is all in all?’ Not long after the production of Colomba at Drury Lane, Mackenzie made some changes to this scena, replacing the aria with a setting of some new text, ‘Flowers that bloom, blossoms that wither’, presumably provided by Hueffer rather than Ernst Franck, the German translator.
of the libretto. On the manuscript score the new text is accompanied by a German translation and so Mackenzie must have revised this section specifically for the performances at Hanover and Darmstadt in 1884. Based on floral imagery the words emphasise life rather than death, providing a more suitable subject for this part of the libretto, and this change was preserved in the revised three-act version of the opera made by Claude Aveling some thirty years later.

A more effective scena in *Colomba* is given to Orso at the start of Act III of the opera. Coming immediately after the second orchestral Prelude of the work, this scena explores Orso’s feelings about his familial duty to avenge his father’s murder and his love for Lydia which culminates in the Corsican Love Song discussed above. Dramatically this scena is required to show the audience how reticent Orso is to undertake his murderous obligation immediately before the vendetta is accidentally fulfilled as a result of his ambush. By using a soliloquy set musically as a scena, Mackenzie and Hueffer transform Orso, and likewise Colomba and Margarida, into more rounded characters in the drama. It is worth noting that Hueffer does not give Guillem a soliloquy in *The Troubadour* and, as a consequence, his one-dimensional character does not attract the sympathies of the audience in the same way as his fellow protagonists. This oversight of characterisation is one of the chief failings in the libretto of *The Troubadour*.

Further characterisation in Mackenzie’s lyrical dramas is sustained in the ensemble finales of both operas, which take as their precedent the mid-Verdian finale characteristic of such operas as *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*. Such finales occur at the end of Acts I and II of *Colombo* and, to a lesser extent, Act III of *The Troubadour*. In these ensemble pieces each character or group of characters sings a particular text and develops differing melodic ideas within the musical texture independent of the other vocal lines, although sometimes one idea does become predominant towards the end of the section. As dramatic devices, these finales allow the librettist to portray all of the characters’ reactions to the situation at the end of the act simultaneously and the composer to present his view of their characterisation in a contemporaneous musical context. The most successful example of this to be found in Mackenzie’s two operas is

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92 See RAM MS 1106.
93 See below, p. 101.
94 *Colomba*, 148–56.
95 *Colomba*, 67–78 and 129–40; *The Troubadour*, 161–70.
the finale to Act I of *Colomba*. Following the clarion call of Colomba's *Vocero*, Orso wrestles with his conscience at having been given the rimbecco, Savelli and Chilina goad him into revenge, Lydia attempts to persuade him to leave Corsica to keep his honour intact and Colomba, continuing to use the image of 'the royal eagle' from the *Vocero*, leads the crowd in calling for vendetta. Beginning with Orso, each of the main characters enters in turn in the manner of a fugal exposition, and, although they do not use the same melodic idea, each of the lines is distinct within the ensemble. Music example 5, below, shows part of the middle section of the Act I Finale, beginning at the entry of Colomba, and demonstrates the differing vocal lines and groupings within the ensemble. The effectiveness of this type of finale lay in the ability of the producer to orchestrate the singers on stage so that each group or character could be understood by the audience and there is no doubt that Carl Rosa's professional company under the direction of Augustus Harris would have made this finale one of the high-points of the opera.
Music example 5: Part of the Finale to Act I of Colomba (1883 vocal score, 70-71).

Music example 5: (Continued)

Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

A different type of finale to the Italianate ensemble described above can be found in Act III of *Colomba* and Act IV of *The Troubadour*, both of which draw on earlier scenes in their respective dramas and the music associated with them. Rather than concentrating on the musical portrayal of the majority of the cast in a large concerted section of music, these finales offer more personal commentaries on the action from the viewpoint of the leading characters, Colomba and Margarida respectively. The Act III finale of *Colomba* is based around the *Requiem* chant sung by the villagers as they carry the bodies of the Barracini back to Pietranera and interrupted by the culmination of the *Vocero* sung by Colomba. Unfortunately, this extremely effective finale was omitted from the revised 1912 version of the opera, rendered unnecessary by the compression of the libretto into three acts, even though Aveling and Mackenzie preserved the finales of Acts I, II and IV intact. In an almost public soliloquy, where Margarida is oblivious to the presence of Raimon and Azalais, the final scene of *The Troubadour* deals with the heroine’s realisation that Guillem has been murdered and, apart from the reminiscence of Guillem’s song ‘The Sun-ray’s shine’ by Raimon mentioned above, the music draws on Margarida’s scena from the beginning of Act II as well as including many other motivic allusions to the rest of the opera. In this way Mackenzie produces a climax which is heavily integrated into the rest of the score and provides a compositional goal for the music.

While each scene of Mackenzie’s lyrical dramas is subtly structured by the use of Italian operatic models such as the aria, the scena, finale ensembles and so on, continuity in the recitative and other parts of the scores was heavily influenced by the style of German composers such as Mendelssohn, Liszt and Wagner, and in particular their use of recurring melodic motives in the orchestral accompaniment and vocal lines. Such ‘representative themes’, to use the parlance of the British musicians and reviewers of the time, were not unknown in French and Italian operas, but they were predominantly the preserve of German musicians and were developed to their full extent as the organic *leitmotiven* in the music dramas of Wagner. However, British reviewers of the more advanced native dramatic works, especially those of Mackenzie and Goring Thomas, suffered under the misapprehension that the ‘representative theme’ was the same as the Wagnerian *leitmotiv* and therefore lay the charge at the unfortunate composers’ doors of

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96 See above, p. 75.
being too Wagnerian in their music. This incorrect interpretation of Mackenzie’s use of representative themes was inadvertently verified by journals such as *The Musical Times* when they published reviews of *Colomba* and *The Troubadour* in which attention was drawn to the ‘representative themes’ of each opera by quoting the various musical examples they thought vital to an understanding of the score.\(^7\) What the reviews failed to identify in connection with these themes was that, unlike the organically-developed *leitmotiven* of Wagner, the motives show no signs of musical development during the course of each opera. ‘Representative themes’ were used by the composer merely as a device for the reminiscence of a previous musical event and did not comment on the subconscious of the characters on stage as Wagner had intended his *leitmotiven* to do. This is not to say that the motives did not illuminate the listeners’ understanding of the protagonists in the drama, but rather that they failed to articulate any subtext beyond the words that the librettist had provided.

The wholesale application of Wagnerian technique to Mackenzie’s lyrical dramas would have been foreign to the composer’s understanding of operatic composition. Wagnerian style dictated that the orchestra, as symphonic agent, was one of the protagonists in the drama working with and against the visible characters on stage, commenting on the action and often retaining the greatest musical interest as a result. On the other hand, Mackenzie later asserted, ‘Personally, I do not think the musical interest of an opera should be confined to the orchestra. [...] Now-a-days, the orchestral tide threatens to rise high enough to extinguish the footlights.’\(^8\) Essentially a vocal composer, Mackenzie believed that vocal lines should predominate over the orchestra in the opera-house and required ‘to see a little more courtesy extended to the voice’. Therefore the use of representative themes in the orchestra of his operas was to enlighten and to remind rather than to speculate on the direction of the dramatic flow.

Using the reviews in *The Musical Times* as the basis for motivic analyses of *Colomba* and *The Troubadour*, it is possible to see how only a handful of representative themes predominate in the musical texture and have global, rather than local, applications throughout each score. Of these dominant representative themes in *Colomba*, three are heard within the opening pages of the opera in the orchestral Prelude. The music of the

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\(^7\) [*Colomba*] *MT*, 1 April 1883, 215–18; [*The Troubadour*] *MT*, 1 June 1886, 317–22.

\(^8\) *ACM Opera*, 12.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

Vocero in Colombia has already been identified as an example of recurring music within the opera and its associated motive occurs even more frequently, surfacing for the first time in the Prelude even before it has been associated with the aria and its words (see Music example 6). Another motive, signifying the murder of Colonel della Rebbia (the ‘murder’ motive, see Music example 7), is also introduced in the Prelude and pre-empts its verbal exposition in Savelli’s explanatory aria in Act I (‘They never knew of that dreadful night’, vocal score, 24–28). These two motives are combined in the first part of the Prelude with a third representing the love of Lydia and Orso derived from the vocal line of their love duet (‘Ah! well I call to mind your gentle words’, 37–42, see Music example 8). Beginning in F minor with the unison fanfare of the murder motive, the Prelude initially introduces the Vocero motive as a compressed staccato figure in the bass before it is heard in an augmented, two-bar form in the treble parts with the initial diminished version still in the bass beneath. As the musical texture and dynamic increases the metre changes from the compound 9/8 to the simple 3/4 at the L’istesso tempo where the love motive is introduced between fanfares of the murder motive. A period of respite follows this climax before Mackenzie employs the Vocero motive in a quasi-fugato passage leading to the Tempo primo where the extended form of the murder motive is treated. (See Music example 9, below, which shows the first two pages of the Prelude with the motives marked on the score.) Various diminutions of the love motive are heard sequentially over a dominant pedal until the music cadences into F major for a full orchestral rendition of the Count’s prayer from the end of Act IV. The Prelude ends with a tutti based on the end of the Vocero and two final fanfares of the murder theme in the brass beneath the last F major chord.

Music example 6: The representative theme of the Vocero from Colomba.

\[ \text{Music example 6} \]
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

Music example 7: The 'murder' motive from Colomba.

Music example 8: The 'love' motive from Colomba.
Music example 9: The beginning of the Prelude to Colomba showing the representative themes in use.

A. C. Mackenzie's "Colomba."—Novello, Ewer and Co.'s Octavo Edit. m.—(1.)
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

Music example 9: (Continued)

Later commentators have found the music of the Prelude to *Colomba* to be markedly influenced by the music of Gounod in *Faust*, and, bearing in mind that his opera was one of Mackenzie’s favourites, this is not at all surprising.\(^9^9\) However, in the Introduction to *The Troubadour* the influence of Wagner is more prevalent due to the shape and musical style of the handful of representative themes introduced.\(^1^0^0\) Acting in a similar way to its counterpart in *Colomba*, the Introduction is written in a more concise form than the Prelude of the earlier lyrical drama. After a brief snatch of the death motive associated with the huntsmen’s chorus of Act II (see Music example 10), most of the initial part is taken up with the exposition of the broad troubadour motive, a languorous diatonic melody used at regular intervals throughout the rest of the opera (see Music example 11). This is followed at rehearsal letter A by the scalic vision motive over tremolo strings employed later in the finale to Act IV and strongly reminiscent of a *leitmotiv* from Wagner’s Ring Cycle associated with Wotan (see Music example 12). The Introduction ends with a further brief reference to part of the troubadour motive before it ends unobtrusively with a dominant seventh chord in E major. The orchestral writing in the Introduction to *The Troubadour* is less complex than the style employed in the Prelude to *Colomba* and, as a result of its concision, it merely presents the themes rather than combining them as described in connection with the earlier piece. Also, one important theme is missing from the Introduction to *The Troubadour*, namely the distinctive ‘sanh del trobador’ motive based on two tritones in succession and introduced by the peasant at the end of the Masque in Act I (see Music example 13). It is used throughout the opera and especially in the finale to Act IV when Raimon uses the name of the vintage as a metaphor for the actual blood of the poet.\(^1^0^1\)

Music example 10: The ‘death’ motive from *The Troubadour*.

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\(^1^0^0\) Although he did not see *The Troubadour* when he visited England a few months before his death in 1886, Liszt was so impressed with the score of his good friend that he began to compose a fantasia on themes from the opera which he unfortunately did not live to complete. See *MN*, 154.

\(^1^0^1\) See discussion above, p. 63.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

Music example 11: The 'troubadour' motive from The Troubadour.

Music example 12: The 'vision' motive from The Troubadour.

Music example 13: The 'sanh del trobador' motive from The Troubadour.

Apart from the orchestral sections at the beginning, the remainder of the lyrical dramas are scattered liberally with quotations of the representative themes in the orchestral accompaniment and sometimes in the vocal lines. The motives discussed above are used throughout each work according to the situation, but there are many other motives which are used only in specific scenes within the drama and these are easily found by glancing at the vocal scores or by referring to the analyses in *The Musical Times*. However, none of these motives undergoes significant thematic transformation as a result of the drama and, in consequence, they prove largely redundant in a Wagnerian approach to the scores.

Mackenzie's music in *Colomba* and *The Troubadour* represents a fusion of different Continental operatic tendencies and, as such, often seem stylistically heterogeneous when viewed from this standpoint. However, the scores are more coherent than the above discussion might suggest and, despite the more obvious derivative passages, show the composer to have assimilated contemporary styles well enough to have 'written what came naturally' to him without recourse to theoretical and aesthetic justification. When seen as complete works, *The Troubadour* and, to a greater extent, *Colomba* reveal Mackenzie to have had a great deal of talent in the composition
of opera, a fact which justified Rosa's commissions from a relatively unknown and untested man.

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For two operas produced under exceptionally similar circumstances, Mackenzie's lyrical dramas were subjected to markedly different receptions following their respective productions at Drury Lane. The premiere of *Colomba* on Monday 9 June 1883 — originally postponed from Thursday 5 June due to the indisposition of the company's prima donna, Madame Valleria — was eagerly awaited among professional musical circles and it certainly did not disappoint. Indeed, even before the first stage rehearsal of *Colomba* had commenced, the pre-performance anticipation of the opera resulted in Mackenzie's receipt of a commission from Alberto Randegger, the musical director of the Norwich Festival and conductor of the Carl Rosa Company, to compose the oratorio *The Rose of Sharon* for performance at Norwich in October 1884. After its premiere under the baton of the composer, *Colomba* was repeated about half a dozen times on the same programme as another Rosa commission, *Esmeralda* by Goring Thomas, which also received its first production during the company's London season at the Drury Lane Theatre. Both new works nestled alongside other staples of the company's English repertoire such as Gounod's *Faust*, Vincent Wallace's *Maritana* and most notably Bizet's *Carmen*, a particularly apt partner to accompany Mackenzie's *Colomba* on stage. At the initial performance of his work Mackenzie made the acquaintance of fellow composer, future colleague and proponent of English opera, Charles Stanford, who 'offered his congratulations' on the work. According to the commentator, Herman Klein, 'Carl Rosa was delighted with the outcome of his venture. I never saw him looking prouder or happier than when he found that these new English operas were both drawing good houses.'

102 M1N, 113. As a result of the reputation he made from *Colombo*, Mackenzie was also approached by C. L. Dodgson, the author, under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, of *Alice in Wonderland*, to produce music for an opera based on the children's stories. However, because Dodgson insisted on writing the libretto for the opera, the drama was never completed and the plans to which Mackenzie had assented fell through almost directly they had been made. See M1N, 114–15; Morton N. Cohen (ed.), *The Letters of Lewis Carroll* (London, 1979), i, 502; and Roger Lancelyn Green (ed.), *The Diaries of Lewis Carroll* (London, 1953), ii, 419, 425.

103 Reports from the composer (M1N, 111) and *The Musical Times* (1 May 1883, 261–63) differ on the number of performances *Colomba* received, reporting six and five respectively.

104 M1N, 171.
“Fine, fine!” was his exclamation. “It is no joke to fill Drury Lane every night as we are doing. It is simply marvellous. Harris is astonished. I shall ask Goring Thomas and Mackenzie each to write another opera for me.” Which they accordingly did. But, alack, the fate was not to be so helpful the second time as the genial Carl expected.105

One of the most glowing reviews of the opera was written by Mackenzie’s old Edinburgh colleague, Friedrich Niecks, in the *Monthly Musical Record*.106 Praising among many other things the composer’s ‘natural, unrestrained lyrical effusiveness’, Niecks ended his article with the proclamation that, in light of Mackenzie’s new opera, ‘England need not despair of the future of her musical art, nay, more, need not lament its present condition.’ Other critics were less effusive in their assessment of the opera, but all agreed that there were many excellent and effective moments in the score. “‘Colomba’ is the first attempt at a “Lyrical Drama” in the English language,’ reported *The Musical Times*, ‘moulded to a great extent upon the theory of Wagner, but retaining enough of the conventional forms of what may be called the British opera of the past to fit it for the advanced taste of the present.”107 In a separate paragraph evaluating Mackenzie’s musical style in the opera, the reviewer continued in his praise of the composer’s stylistic absorption of the theories of Wagner, but noted that the opera would now serve as the ‘model of an English Lyrical Drama’ and knew of no other such works in a similar style with which to compare it. *The Athenaeum* commented on the melodious character of the vocal lines in *Colomba*, ‘some of them of a nature to haunt the ear, but invariably refined and, even when most lively, free from the slightest tinge of vulgarity.’108 However, the critic of *The Times*, though this was presumably not Hueffer since he was involved in the production, believed that Mackenzie was not at his strongest in the more lyrical sections of the opera. ‘It is, perhaps, a sign of the composer’s power that he becomes weak in the few instances where he seems to forget his high dramatic purpose and has recourse to the forms of the conventional opera.’109 These slight criticisms apart, Mackenzie’s first lyrical drama was hailed as a critical triumph in English Opera and secured the work’s popularity in the 1880s. Even foreign composers considered the work favourably and Bülow, one of Mackenzie’s three German mentors

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106 Friedrich Niecks, ‘Colomba: A Lyrical Drama in four acts’, *MMR*, 1 May 1883, 106–08.
107 ‘Drury Lane Theatre’, *MT*, 1 May 1883, 261–63.
109 ‘Colomba’, *The Times*, Wednesday 11 April 1883, 4. The critic names Colomba’s scena in Act II, scene I, and the finale of the same act as examples of where the dramatic flow is halted by operatic conventions.
in his early career, wrote to a friend naming *Colomba* as ‘la meilleure chose qu’un Anglais ait écrit depuis le commencement du siècle [...] Après *Carmen* c’est ce qu’il y a digne de succès enfait d’Opéra du jour.’

The success of *Colomba* is also manifest in the popularity the work enjoyed during the Carl Rosa Opera Company’s subsequent tour of Great Britain. In the summer and autumn of 1883 the opera was produced in Ireland, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Glasgow where it received excellent reviews from the local press, later summarised in *The Musical Times*. Hueffer’s libretto was soon translated into German by Ernst Franck and *Colomba* was produced at the Stadt Theatre in Hamburg on 27 January 1884 under the direction of Herr Sucher whose wife took the title role. ‘Rumours of projected productions in Hanover, of definite acceptances at Vienna and Zürich, were afloat,’ wrote Mackenzie, ‘and all promised well. Performances at Berlin seem to have been mooted.’

The continuing popularity of the opera was confirmed when *Colomba* received a royal command performance in celebration of a Court Wedding in Darmstadt on 29 April 1884. Mackenzie later remembered that this performance was greeted with a ‘glacial silence’ and several reviewers failed to consider ‘the well-known fact that applause was officially verboten in the presence of the Court [which was also in mourning at the time] [...]’ At the second performance, where no such restriction was imposed, the outbursts of appreciation bestowed upon the vocalists — and just at the least unexpected moments — surprised me by their warmth.

An abortive attempt was made to produce *Colomba* in Italian at Covent Garden under the management of Gye, but, despite an announcement in the prospectus and a suitable translation having been made, the opera was not included in the company’s 1884 season. Mackenzie himself coached the singers in their parts but quickly grew tired of their unprofessional attitudes and as a result his work was not heard in its third language. Similar circumstances surrounded the inclusion of *Colomba* in Rosa’s 1884

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110 Quoted in *MN*, 112.
112 ‘“Colomba” in Germany’, *MT*, 1 February 1884, 78.
113 *MN*, 113. ‘“Colomba” at Darmstadt’, *MT*, 1 June 1884, 350.
114 Willem de Haan, the Court Hofkapellmeister, directed the company in this production.
115 *MN*, 119. Following these performances Mackenzie received the Gold Medal for Art and Science from the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt.
116 Covent Garden was under the management of Ernest Gye, the son of the well-known impresario Frederick Gye who had died in 1878.
117 *MN*, 120.
season. Having been advertised for two nights, the work was insufficiently prepared by
the company and, much to the composer’s relief, it was withdrawn before the second
performance took place.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} On reflection, Mackenzie considered this action somewhat
hasty on his part, but he needed to concentrate his energies on completing \textit{The Rose of
Sharon} for Norwich and so he left London for Italy rather earlier than expected. Rosa
planned to produce the opera once again towards the end of the 1880s and, as
Mackenzie later remembered, ‘only a month before his lamented death (at Paris in 1889)
my friend asked me to rewrite the Finale to Act III in view of an immediate revival of
\textit{Colomba}, which, alas, was not destined to take place.’\footnote{\textit{MN}, 144. Hueffer died on
19 January 1889.} Another stumbling-block to the
revision and revival of the opera was the death of Hueffer in the same year as Rosa,
although according to Mackenzie they had not spoken for almost three years since the
production of \textit{The Troubadour}.

Three years after the premiere of \textit{Colomba, The Troubadour} met with less
enthusiasm than the authors’ first operatic collaboration and this second lyrical drama
only received two performances during Rosa’s 1886 season at Drury Lane, never having
been revived since. As before, Herman Klein was among those who attended the first
performance of the opera and, having noted previously that \textit{Colomba} had been ‘hindered
by the turgid flow of a dull, verbose libretto’, he saw history repeat itself in Hueffer’s
portion of the new work, a libretto which ‘proved to be one of the very worst ever
designed for operatic purposes’. ‘It was solely out of consideration for the interpreters
and for Sir Alexander (then Dr) Mackenzie that the first-night audience [...] refrained
from a hostile demonstration. Anyhow, the opera was a fiasco,’ he later wrote,
concluding his reminiscence.\footnote{\textit{MN}, \textit{op. cit.}, 106–7.} Whereas the Corsican story with its Mediterranean
exoticism by Mérimée seemed to catch the imagination of the opera-going public,
Hueffer’s tragic medieval tale failed to impress almost all who attended the production,
including the composer. Following the premiere of \textit{The Troubadour} on Tuesday 8 June
1886 and in an understandably depressed mood, Mackenzie wrote a letter expressing his
sentiments about the whole affair to his colleague Nicholas Kilburn, a Sunderland iron merchant and amateur choirmaster.  

Thank you for your letter of condolence; to be brief the Opera has not been understood. The first performance was simply disgraceful and, as the singers themselves, although note perfect, did not get time to understand the work, it is not to be wondered at that the “comic” (sic) press failed to take a serious work in. Altogether the surroundings of Drury Lane [...] are simply fatal to English Opera. Rosa senza Harris e gia terribile, ma con Harris impossibile. Certainly the book does not turn out as well as I expected and I need not say that “Master” Hueffer has now to light his lanterns and leave his tub in search etc. Personal feelings have no doubt biased the mind of serious critics, which is doubly unfortunate, and I fear that the question whether the “sides” of different organs ought to be allowed their full swing without some kind of protest from some important judge. Of course I as an actor myself cannot take up the pew, although in these times a little “Whistlerism” might not do harm. But it “likes me not”. Now the opera goes smoothly and the singers (MacGuckin, Crotty, Valleria) feel their places. But the cheap and nasty band is too awful, in fact beyond control.

Mackenzie’s later reflections on the production of The Troubadour were not to change and forty years later the composer subtitled chapter XVII of his A Musician’s Narrative, in which he gave an account of the affair, ‘An Unfortunate Opera’.  

Other professional musicians who attended the premiere of The Troubadour were equally critical, finding the work heavily influenced by Wagnerisms so beloved of the librettist. In his diary entry for 8 June 1886, Hubert Parry noted the following:  

Hueffer’s libretto is unsurpassably bad. Structures all obviously borrowed from Tannhäuser, Tristan or Flying Dutchman and invariably spoilt. The development of the plot depends on grimaces and unintelligible actions and drags fearfully, and comes to no climax anywhere. There is no action in the first and second acts, the latter of which simply comes to a stop when the curtain comes down. [...] It seemed to me Mackenzie’s music was very inadequate to give any impression of the situation. By the end of the performance half the stalls were empty.

Although Dibble ascribes some of the acerbity behind these remarks to Parry’s own frustration over his unperformed opera Guenever, the composer usually gave balanced assessments of the works he heard. ‘There is some fine and effective scoring and some fine music here and there,’ continued Parry, giving a more constructive assessment, ‘but the general impression to me was hollow and rather meretricious, with occasional passages of strong sensuality.’

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122 See brief biographical notes on Kilburn in A/T, 1 January 1901, 19–20 [and photo].
123 Letter to Nicholas Kilburn, no date [c.18 June 1886], NLS MS 21501, ff. 99–100. In another earlier postcard to Kilburn (NLS MS 21501, f. 98) Mackenzie gives his address as ‘Tomb of Art, S. E.’.
124 M/N, 142–45.
125 Diary of Hubert Parry, 8 June 1886.
126 Dibble, op. cit., 238.
Chapter 3: The Lyrical Dramas

A more musically-derivative work than Mackenzie’s earlier lyrical drama, *The Troubadour* attracted a great deal of discussion in the press about the parallels of its music and libretto with the work of other composers and writers, most notably Wagner. Never one to feign his enjoyment of new music, the Austrian critic Eduard Hanslick considered *The Troubadour* to be ‘one of the dullest and most disagreeable affairs I have ever encountered in the form of music in costume.’ Visiting England in 1886 Hanslick reported his numerous musical experiences in a long ‘Letter from London’. Having met many of the most conspicuous composers and musicians in London including Mackenzie, Stanford and Cowen, he found them to be extremely courteous and urbane. However, he thought English composers were more suited to the production of ‘instrumental music in the more concise forms, as well as serious choral music’. ‘Opera, on the other hand, requires melodic invention,’ Hanslick mused, ‘strong sensuality and a consistent style — all characteristics with which the English are not notably endowed.’ He noted that most opera composers ‘think that all can be saved by imitation of the ultimate Wagnerian style’, although this was true of Mackenzie’s music in *The Troubadour* only ‘to a certain extent. For he mixes long scenes of word-dependent Sprechgesang with common song-forms and ensembles of Italian or pre-Wagnerian German stylistic origin.’ In his comments Hanslick actually detected more than, in Mackenzie’s words, ‘the obnoxious odour of Wagnerism he may have nosed in the Troubadour’. He had noted other stylistic and formal influences in Mackenzie’s music, discernible from the composer’s musical training in Sondershausen, London and Italy, which other reviewers overlooked in the scramble to identify *The Troubadour* with their misinterpreted theories of Wagner.

One of the most ardent supporters of Mackenzie’s musical work in *The Troubadour* was Sir Richard Terry (1865–1938) who saw the opera as a young man some time before he became director of music and organist at Westminster Cathedral. Writing towards the end of his life in 1927, he remembered attending one of the performances of *The Troubadour* at Drury Lane. ‘Frankly, I was ravished by the opera,’ he admitted, ‘and though riper years brought with them a more considered judgment upon it, the old glamour still — for me — hangs about it.’ He praised Mackenzie’s

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128 MN, 145.


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courage in striking out on a new line of operatic composition in his lyrical dramas, especially *The Troubadour*, and his creation of a cosmopolitan style which blended ‘Wagnerism’ (‘still a synonym for whatever the many-headed public did not understand’) and thematic interest in the orchestral accompaniment with a rejection of the traditional set pieces of English opera. ‘We must not forget that the commonplaces of today were the innovations of yesterday, and from that point of view Mackenzie was a breaker of fresh ground in British opera.’ Terry noted that during his career he frequently referred to Mackenzie’s Rosa operas in print and considered that although *Colomba* was a success and *The Troubadour* otherwise, ‘the music of the “failure” was better than that of the “success”.’ His discussion even included brief music examples taken from *The Troubadour* to demonstrate the character and standard of the work in comparison with other contemporary British works. ‘I cannot help thinking that if the whole libretto were re-written, and the score condensed,’ Terry hypothesised, ‘the work would be found rather wonderful for the period at which it was written’.

Beyond the 1880s and the direction of the Carl Rosa Opera Company under their founder and impresario, Mackenzie’s two lyrical dramas found little sympathy with the opera programmers of the following decades. As a result of the exertions of producers and, less so, native composers, British taste now favoured Continental opera which was often and widely performed in good English translations. The need for operas composed by British musicians was no longer apparent and the Carl Rosa company, which, in its hey day had commissioned seven new works, only produced two new operas in the 1890s, both by MacCunn. Although the bad reception of *The Troubadour* militated against a revival of this work due to its overt Wagnerism and generally distasteful libretto, *Colomba* fared somewhat better and was revived by students in an end-of-term concert performance at the Royal Academy of Music in December 1909.\(^{130}\) Despite Mackenzie’s influence as Principal of the institution, the reasons behind the Academy’s exploration of a work which had not been performed for a quarter of a century are not forthcoming. However, the report of the concert in *The Musical Times* suggested that ‘a slightly compressed version, especially of the first act, would renew the popularity of the work.’ Another more extensive review of the performance was written by Charles

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\(^{130}\) The performance took place on 11 December 1909 in the RAM concert hall. ‘Royal Academy of Music — Revival of “Colomba”’, *MT*, 1 January 1910, 25.
Maclean, the secretary of the International Music Society under Mackenzie as President, in the Journal of the Society.\textsuperscript{131} After an investigation into the background of the opera in Mérimée's \textit{nouvelle}, Maclean praised Mackenzie's music and, in the same way the critics had done twenty years earlier, dismissed the poetry of Hueffer's libretto. His conclusions on having attended the concert performance were that 'The “book” [...] must be written up. Above all, the engaging Colomba must be rescued from a Hümmerian doom, and made to live again, in lively strains which no one can write so well as Alexander Mackenzie.'\textsuperscript{132}

Rising to the challenge of revision and encouraged by the reviews of the RAM's concert performance Mackenzie rewrote the finale to Act III of \textit{Colomba} during the summer of 1910 whilst staying at his regular holiday retreat of Ilkley in Yorkshire. However, he was simultaneously engaged on a thorough revision of \textit{The Rose of Sharon} in preparation for a performance of the work by the Alexandra Palace Choral Society in November 1910 and decided that \textit{Colomba} needed a greater reconsideration of both its music and drama. On his father's behalf, Ford Madox Hueffer\textsuperscript{133} gave his permission for Hueffer's libretto to be rewritten by Claude Aveling, who took the four acts of the 1883 version and condensed them into three by an amalgamation of Acts III and IV into a revised third act.\textsuperscript{134} Aveling also reconsidered the language of the libretto and transformed Hueffer's often archaic turns of phrase into a more acceptable and natural English idiom, ridding the drama of the rhyming couplets so beloved of the original author. Once Mackenzie had ended his duties for the academic year at the Academy he devoted the summer of 1912 to further work on the music of the opera. Writing to his Viennese colleague Eisenhof, Mackenzie explained,

\begin{quote}
I have been incessantly occupied with very pressing work, which has kept me busy all the time. I have just revised, and partly rewritten, my old opera “Colomba”. It had to be done, if it is ever to have another chance of life. And as the Royal College of Music is going to perform it in November, we took the opportunity of giving the Lady a completely new coat and skirt! \textit{Gott sei gepreisen}, I have finished my part [...] It has taken me all of these two months to prepare.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Ibid.}, 145.
\textsuperscript{133} Ford Madox Hueffer later changed his surname to Ford in 1919.
\textsuperscript{134} Aveling was a member of the staff and later became registrar at the RCM.
\textsuperscript{135} Letter to Angelo Eisner von Eisenhof, 15 September 1912, Museo Teatrale Alla Scala, CA 3425.
\end{flushleft}
In another letter to the same correspondent, Maimie Mackenzie admitted in connection with the opera that ‘I think he [Mackenzie] found more work than he bargained for and has had to “stick” to it pretty closely these last few weeks so as to get it done before leaving on Wednesday.’ As mentioned by the composer in the above letter, the incentive for such major work on the score was the performance at the end of the year by the RCM opera class under the direction of Stanford. The single production of *Colomba* at His Majesty’s Theatre using the newly revised Aveling-Mackenzie score took place three years almost to the day after the RAM concert performance and was a distinct success, although unfortunately the exigencies of the RCM did not allow a second performance.

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136 Letter from Maimie Mackenzie to Angelo Eisner von Eisenhof, 15 September 1912, Museo Teatrale Alla Scala, CA 3426.
137 The afternoon of 9 December 1912. ‘Royal College of Music — Performance of Mackenzie’s “Colomba”’, MT, 1 January 1913, 18.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

During the period in which Mackenzie was working on his two lyrical dramas, discussed in the previous chapter, he also exerted a great deal of his creative effort in the genre of choral music. Although the first two of his works in this genre, *The Bride* (1881) and *Jason* (1882), predate the productions of *Colomba* (1883) and *The Troubadour* (1886), it is helpful to discuss Mackenzie’s choral output in the light of the lyrical dramas, since many of the larger works written during their composition and afterwards, such as *The Rose of Sharon* (1884), *The Story of Sayid* (1886), and *Bethlehem* (1894), are informed by the compositional and dramatic techniques employed in the contemporaneous operas. Beginning with *The Bride* in 1881, Mackenzie’s mature choral works absorbed a greater amount of his time than his involvement in the production of operatic scores and resulted in the creation of twelve complete works together with two which remain incomplete, including the largely-sketched oratorio, *The Temptation*, on which he was working as late as the 1910s. Table 1, below, shows brief chronological details of Mackenzie’s mature choral works and sketches. Almost all of these cantatas and oratorios were written as the result of commissions from musical festivals held in the larger cities of Victorian England. Throughout the nineteenth century, choral music in the form of oratorios and cantatas enjoyed immense popularity in Great Britain and Mackenzie was not alone among his contemporaries in contributing many substantial works to the repertoire. Although the popularity of the two mainstays of the Victorian music festival, *The Messiah* and *Elijah*, was never overtaken, it was a matter of civic pride among the festival organisers that new works were commissioned for performance on a regular basis. Together with new orchestral works, the larger festivals could produce as many as five or more ‘novelties’ over a period of only a few days. Inevitably, this led to great pressures on orchestral and choral rehearsal time and sometimes poor musical preparation for each performance, but the cachet of producing a new work far outweighed the risks of ill-prepared premieres of often very advanced music.
Table 1: A list of Mackenzie's mature choral works.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td><em>Jason</em></td>
<td>William E. Grist</td>
<td>19 October 1882,</td>
<td>Bristol Festival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td><em>The Rose of Sharon</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett, arranged from the Bible <em>Song of</em></td>
<td>16 October 1884,</td>
<td>Revised 1910 and produced on 5 Nov 1910 at the Alexandra Palace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Solomon and Psalms</em></td>
<td>Norwich Festival.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td><em>The Story of Sayid</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett, after E. Arnold's <em>Pearls of</em></td>
<td>13 October 1886,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Faith</em></td>
<td>Leeds Festival.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1886-90</td>
<td><em>The Lord of Life</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett, arranged from the Bible <em>Deuteronomy</em></td>
<td>No production</td>
<td>Commissioned for the Birmingham Festival of 1888 then subsequently abandoned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>and Books of Moses</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td><em>A Jubilee Ode</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett</td>
<td>22 June 1887, Crystal Palace, London.</td>
<td>Produced simultaneously in Canada, Australia, Trinidad, and Cape Colony.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td><em>The Dream of Jubal</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett</td>
<td>5 February 1889,</td>
<td>Liverpool.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td><em>The Cotter's Saturday Night</em></td>
<td>Robert Burns</td>
<td>316 December 1889,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edinburgh.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td><em>Veni, Creator Spiritus</em></td>
<td>John Dryden (paraphrase of the medieval hymn)</td>
<td>6 October 1891,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Birmingham Festival.</td>
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<td>1894</td>
<td><em>Bethlehem</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett</td>
<td>12 April 1894, Royal Albert Hall, London.</td>
<td>Commissioned by the Gloucester Festival for 1892 but not completed in time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td><em>The Witch's Daughter</em></td>
<td>John Greenleaf Whittier</td>
<td>5 October 1904,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leeds Festival.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td><em>The Sun-god's Return</em></td>
<td>Joseph Bennett</td>
<td>21 September 1910,</td>
<td>Continental premiere 16 Jan 1911 by the Vienna Singakademie.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Cardiff Festival.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c.1909-14</td>
<td><em>The Temptation</em></td>
<td>Alfred Lyttelton and Mackenzie, after Milton's <em>Paradise Regained.</em></td>
<td>No production.</td>
<td>Largely sketched but not completed, partly due to death of Lyttelton.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

104
Mackenzie’s mature choral works fall into four distinct groups: the oratorios (The Rose of Sharon, Bethlehem, and the two sketched works, The Lord of Life and The Temptation), the dramatic cantatas (Jason, The Story of Sayid and The Sun-god’s Return), the non-dramatic cantatas with soloists (The Bride, A Jubilee Ode, Ode: The New Covenant, The Dream of Jubal and The Witch’s Daughter), and the ‘choral’ cantatas (Veni, Creator Spiritus and The Cotter’s Saturday Night). Although these divisions are somewhat arbitrary and other classifications may easily be found, they enable an overview of how Mackenzie’s work in the genre of choral music was directed. Most representative of this direction are those works which may be seen as offshoots of his operatic style found in Colomba and The Troubadour, namely all of the oratorios (including the incomplete works) and the dramatic cantatas. Apart from the fact that the former take sacred subjects as the bases for their librettos, there is little difference in the way Mackenzie approached the composition of these works, demonstrating his ability to fuse Continental operatic styles and their melodically-biased textures with certain aspects taken from the traditional format of a British oratorio as exemplified by Mendelssohn’s work in this genre. Coming later in Mackenzie’s output than the others, the last two of this group of dramatic works, Bethlehem and The Sun-god’s Return, differ slightly from the precedents firmly established by The Rose. The oratorio Bethlehem, although using the same compositional techniques as the other dramatic choral works, is a far more reflective musical score, influenced by tableaux rather than the dramatic construction of the libretto and drawing on the tradition of the ‘number’ oratorio. Conversely, The Sun-god is heavily steeped in Wagnerism both in its Nordic subject matter and its musical presentation, confirming it as a remarkably advanced score for a sixty-year-old composer in comparison with his earlier efforts, if not perhaps with contemporary musical trends.

The third group of cantatas is less distinguished and holds little substantial interest, the works mainly deriving their existence from occasional commissions received by the composer to celebrate anniversaries and other similar events, hence Mackenzie’s integration of the British National Anthem and the hymn tune the Old Hundredth in A Jubilee Ode and The New Covenant respectively. For the most part, the scores of these works are traditionally constructed of musical numbers without the need for intervening musical or dramatic links. One exception, discussed later in this chapter, is The Dream of Jubal, an innovation amongst in Mackenzie’s choral works which employs recitation
with suitable orchestral accompaniment to connect musical numbers for soloists and chorus, thereby exploiting the composer's affinity for programme music (see Chapter 7: Orchestral Music). From the last group of choral works and regrettably overlooked by later commentators of Mackenzie's music, the cantata *Veni, Creator Spiritus* is a peculiarly 'English' work contrasting with the 'Doric' musical idiom used by the composer for the other choral cantata, *The Cotter's Saturday Night*. Taking Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens* (1887) as its precedent, *Veni, Creator* presents a refreshing choral score structurally informed by the nature of the poetry and composed in that peculiar diatonic idiom, gleaned in part from the English cathedral tradition and in part from Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*. As a result, the choral writing in this work is far superior to any exhibited in the number cantatas and differs markedly from the music allotted to the chorus in the dramatic works.

* * * * *

In contrast to the introduction to opera and instrumental music afforded him by his Continental training in Sondershausen, Mackenzie had to wait until his return to Britain for a thorough education in the choral repertoire. The fact that German musicians, like their counterparts in France and Italy, concentrated their energies on the production of operatic and orchestral music, whereas British composers engaged themselves in the composition of choral works, highlights the difference in attitudes between British and Continental musicians. To a young and, after his training abroad, highly-Germanised musician like Mackenzie this situation must have seemed somewhat strange. As a general rule, well-known composers in Britain gained public recognition across the country through their choral music rather than opera or important orchestral works, which were limited to performances in London and its environs. However, despite his Continental training and musical attitudes, Mackenzie soon explored the genre of choral music for himself and, among his juvenilia, composed under the direction of Lucas at the Royal Academy of Music, there is an early attempt at a short choral work taking the fashionable subject of Moore's *Lalla Rookh* as the basis for its libretto.¹

¹ *A Fragment of Moore's Lalla Rookh*, RAM MSS 1201–3; MS 1223 (f6). Schumann based his oratorio *Das Paradies und die Peri*, Op. 50 (1843), on Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, and the libretto for Stanford's later opera *The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan* (1881) took its literary inspiration from the same source. For the fashionability of
Accompanied by the pianoforte rather than the orchestra, the cantata comprises four numbers, a solo each for alto and tenor and two choruses, one of which was later published in *The Musical Times* as the part-song, ‘It is this’, Op. 8, No. 1. Even though the composer later reported that the cantata was performed at the Academy during his time there, he did not compose any further choral music until fifteen years later and the appearance of *The Bride*.

In the intervening years and before the production of his first mature choral work, Mackenzie became practically acquainted with the choral repertoire as both a violinist and a conductor. In order to supplement his income during his student years at the Academy, he often found employment as a violinist and he was soon picked to play in a festival orchestra under the famous conductor, Sir Michael Costa. ‘As with very few exceptions all the violinists in Costa’s orchestra were past or present pupils of Sainton, an engagement for the Birmingham Festival of 1864 did not surprise me.’ Prior to the festival, the orchestra rehearsed in St James’s Hall and Mackenzie remembered Adelina Patti singing her solos from Costa’s own oratorio *Naaman*. Also included in the programme was Sullivan’s cantata *Kenilworth*, given under the direction of the composer. Despite the opportunities of playing many interesting and varied works as well as novelties never before heard in public, an orchestral engagement for the Birmingham Festival was not an easy task for any instrumentalist. ‘Festivals of a week’s duration, entailing long morning rehearsals succeeded by two equally long performances daily (we being seated on narrow, sharp-edged sloping stools which left their mark), under the vigilant eye of one [Costa] who never moved a muscle or permitted anyone else to do so,’ Mackenzie remembered vividly, ‘were severe trials of endurance even to the most hardy frame.’ When the composer moved to Scotland to commence his professional career in Edinburgh, Mackenzie remained in contact with his colleagues in London and, as he later wrote, ‘Thus my name was still included in the orchestral lists of the Handel Festival of ’65, and those at Birmingham in ’67, ’70, and [’73].’ His subsequent appearances at Birmingham in 1885 and 1891 were at the request of the

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2 Supplement to *MT*, xvii (1876).


4 *MN*, 56.

5 *MN*, 59. NB — In the original of this passage Mackenzie lists the last date as 1874, but there was no Festival at Birmingham in that year.

107
festival committee as the composer of the Violin Concerto and the choral cantata *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, respectively. Mackenzie was not the only composer of the period to have earned money by playing in festival orchestras: Edward Elgar was also an able violinist and in his early adulthood performed in the Three Choirs Festivals. In an article he wrote for a local annual later in life, Elgar clearly remembered the Worcester Festival of 1881 and the premiere of Mackenzie's first choral work, *The Bride*. 'The coming of Mackenzie then was a real event. [...] It gave the orchestral players a real lift and widened the outlook of the old fashioned professor considerably. "The Bride" was a fine example of choral and orchestral writing, had a rousing reception and was the first of a long series of great works.' Writing on a more personal note from his home at Marl Bank in Worcester, Elgar reminded Mackenzie of the same event in terms that leave no doubt as to the affection in which Elgar held the elder composer.

Here in 1881, 'we'(!) produced *The Bride*, you as composer and myself a fiddler therein: I often pass the old hall where the performance took place & think over those spacious days & my pride & delight at being presented to you by Geo: d'Egville. And what a lovely work it was (& is) & how you startled & dominated us all & how proud we were (and are) of you & none more than your old friend Edward Elgar.'

Mackenzie’s work as a teacher and choir trainer in Edinburgh afforded him further opportunities to forward his knowledge of the choral repertoire. In addition to his responsibilities as precentor of St George's, Charlotte Square, Mackenzie also took on the direction of the 'very capable and well-supported' Scottish Vocal Association. With this choir the composer introduced the city to the Continental choral repertory ranging from Bach's cantatas, through works by Beethoven and Schubert, to Schumann's *Paradise and the Peri* and *Faust*, many of which had never been heard before in Scotland. 'For one season I also directed a large Tonic Sol-fa Society,' explained the composer somewhat tentatively, 'but at a hint that an examination for a qualifying certificate from headquarters must be passed, my services ceased.' In the nineteenth century, the choral movement had been strengthened by the appeal to keen non-musicians of John Hullah’s new system of musical notation, with which it was found they could sing unknown works without the necessity of learning the rudiments of musical

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6 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: Letters of a Lifetime* (Oxford, 1990), 438–40. This is a reproduction of an article, dated 3 June 1931, which Elgar contributed to the Worcestershire annual on 'The College Hall', the venue next to the Cathedral in Worcester used for secular performances at the festival.

7 Letter to Mackenzie from Elgar, dated 22 April 1930 (John Purser).

8 *MN*, 78.
theory. However, although he was not ‘unappreciative of the beneficial use of the system — up to a point’, Mackenzie did not agree with the more fervent missionaries on the eventual replacement of traditional notation with scores printed in tonic sol-fa. As well as conducting in Scotland, Mackenzie played in the orchestra of the Glasgow Choral Union when it visited Edinburgh, working with conductors as distinguished as Julius Tausch and Bülow.

The experience Mackenzie gained through his association with choral societies and festivals induced him to begin work on choral compositions of his own. Although The Bride was the first of the composer’s cantatas to be produced, he had begun to sketch the larger score of Jason as early as October 1879 when he corresponded with Alfred Littleton of Novello concerning payments to William Grist, who had been responsible for providing Mackenzie with the libretto. At the request of the composer, it appears that Littleton had suggested the collaboration with Grist on the strength of the librettist’s earlier work with Ebenezer Prout on his dramatic cantata Hereward, Op. 12 (1878). It was not unusual for composers to employ the services of a librettist in the production of dramatic and choral works and many of them established relationships which lasted for a great number of years. Mackenzie was representative of this type of composer who was, in Cowen’s words, ‘not able to write or compile his own libretto, or did not just fancy any of the standard poet’s works’. The scale of many choral works was such that composers often preferred to set the verse of another to music because it absolved them of the worry of producing adequate poetry as well as good quality music. Working with a living poet or librettist meant that, to a certain extent, the composer could stipulate how the poetry of the libretto should be arranged with the added bonus of being able to request that various lines be rewritten after their initial submission. Mackenzie is known to have favoured this approach in the composition of operatic scores and, in many ways, his middle and late dramatic cantatas may be considered as operas manquées, necessitating the collaboration of another. However, Mackenzie did not find the perfect literary partner in Grist, whose somewhat stilted and formulaic libretto for Jason is reflected in the composer’s musical response. As a consequence of financial

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9 John Hullah, a Government Inspector, thought very highly of Mackenzie, about whom he later wrote that he ‘contains in himself the rarest of opposing qualities. He is not only an earnest, excellent and conscientious musician, but he is also endowed with thorough business capacities.’ See MN, 79.

10 Frederic Cowen, My Art and my Friends (London, 1913), 133.
wranglings with Grist over payment for the libretto of Jason, the composer wrote to Littleton, 'I had no idea that I would have such difficulty with him and now fancy I would not ask him again to write for me.'

Since Mackenzie wrote The Bride to a translation made by a friend of a German poem by Robert Hamerling, it was not until his collaboration with Joseph Bennett for his third piece, the oratorio The Rose of Sharon, that Mackenzie found a man with whom he could collaborate over a longer period of time.

Like the inimitable Francis Hueffer who supplied Mackenzie with librettos for the two lyrical dramas, Joseph Bennett (1831–1911) was a music journalist. Writing primarily for the Daily Telegraph, he also made a great number of contributions to other journals, notably The Musical Times. In working for the latter publication which was the ‘house-paper’ of Novello & Co., he inevitably came into contact with Alfred Littleton and, when Mackenzie was searching for a librettist for his next choral project, Bennett’s name was one of the three he suggested to Littleton for his professional opinion. It is notable that, apart from Edwin Oxenford, a poet whose texts were often set by Mackenzie in his songs, the other name suggested by the composer was Desmond Ryan, music critic of the Standard.

As Mackenzie later lamented in his interview on the subject of opera published in The Musical Times in 1893, there were few professional dramatists in Britain of a standard comparable with those on the Continent where men, such as Boito, wrote specifically for the operatic stage or, in Mackenzie’s words, collaborated with a poet ‘in French fashion’ to produce a libretto worthy of a musical setting.

In this country it was often left to music journalists as professional writers, such as Bennett and Hueffer, to provide librettos, either as an outlet for their ‘creative’ talents or simply as a means of supplementing their incomes. Bennett himself later confirmed the latter reason in a chapter entitled ‘Libretti’ in his autobiography. ‘How it came about that I entered upon this line of work I can hardly say,’ he mused. ‘Probably the money reward

11 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 29 October 1879 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
12 German title, Die Braut, see Robert Hamerling, Hamerlings Werke (Leipzig, 1916), iv, 81–82.
15 ACM Opera.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

had something to do with it; that consideration being one which a musical journalist can hardly afford to treat lightly.\textsuperscript{16}

Beginning at the start of the 1880s, Bennett was industrious in his provision of librettos for composers and was initially concerned with ‘repair’ jobs on cantatas by J. F. Barnett, Alberto Randegger and Julius Benedict. Table 2, below, gives a list of the librettos on which Bennett worked during his professional life as a music journalist.

Table 2: A chronological list of libretti as written or adapted by Joseph Bennett.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>GENRE</th>
<th>COMPOSER</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>The Rose of Sharon</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>Mackenzie</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>The Story of Sayid</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Mackenzie</td>
<td>Leeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>The Golden Legend</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Sullivan</td>
<td>Leeds</td>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>Ruth</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>Cowen</td>
<td>Worcester</td>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>Isaias (English version)</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>Mancinelli</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>The Garden of Olivet (English version)</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>Bottesini</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Jubilee Ode</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Mackenzie</td>
<td>Crystal Palace</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>The Dream of Jubal</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Mackenzie</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
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<td>1889</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>C. Lee Williams</td>
<td>Gloucester</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>St John’s Eve</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Cowen</td>
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<td>1890</td>
<td>Thorgrim</td>
<td>Opera</td>
<td>Cowen</td>
<td>Drury Lane</td>
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<td>1890</td>
<td>The Repentance of Nineveh</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td>Worcester</td>
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<td>1892</td>
<td>Gethsemane</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>C. Lee Williams</td>
<td>Gloucester</td>
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<td>1893</td>
<td>The Water-Lily</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Cowen</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
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<td>MacCunn</td>
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<td>1894</td>
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<td>Mackenzie</td>
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<td>The Transfiguration</td>
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<td>The Dream of Endymion</td>
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<td>The Maid of Cefn Ydfa</td>
<td>Opera</td>
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<td>The Holy Innocents</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>Gloucester</td>
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<td>1906</td>
<td>The Risen Lord</td>
<td>Oratorio</td>
<td>H. J. Edwards</td>
<td>Exeter</td>
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<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>The Sun-god’s Return</td>
<td>Cantata</td>
<td>Mackenzie</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
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</table>

Of all the composers with whom Bennett was associated, he collaborated most extensively with Mackenzie and Cowen, paradoxically the two men who also worked on dramatic projects with Bennett’s professional rival, Francis Hueffer.\textsuperscript{17} Although, by dint of Hueffer’s early death in 1889, Bennett proved to be Mackenzie’s principal collaborator, his relationship with the composer was no less strained than the one Mackenzie shared with the German-born writer. In the composer’s eyes, the fact that he

\textsuperscript{17} See discussion in Chapter 3.
collaborated with both men was a considerable source of antagonism and Mackenzie wrote to Littleton to say he fully expected that Hueffer ‘would resent any interference with his precious pew’. In fact, on at least two occasions, during the composition of *The Rose of Sharon* and *Colomba* on the one hand (1883–4) and *The Story of Sayid* and *The Troubadour* on the other (1885–6), Mackenzie collaborated almost simultaneously with both men. As critics, Bennett and Hueffer were poles apart in their aesthetic appraisal of contemporary music. Bennett, who had visited Bayreuth in 1876, chose to shun Wagner and his concept of opera; Hueffer, conversely, was an ardent disciple whose aesthetic criteria were governed primarily by Wagnerian principles. Inevitably there was friction between the two critics on matters of criticism and the composition of librettos, not to mention their musical treatment. At the time these differences were not lost on Mackenzie who commented somewhat wryly, ‘although I did not take the faintest interest in their bickerings, or knew either of them well, my collaboration was deeply resented.’

Bennett’s first libretto for Mackenzie was an arrangement of verses from the Bible, drawing specifically from *The Song of Solomon*, *The Book of Psalms* and *Isaiah*, to produce the drama for the oratorio *The Rose of Sharon* (1884). Although Mackenzie had been looking for a new librettist as he came to the end of his work on *Jason* in the autumn of 1881, he received a contract to compose the opera *Colomba* early in January of the next year from the impresario Carl Rosa. In the light of this commission, Mackenzie temporarily set to one side his plans for a new choral project while he began to sketch the score of the opera to Hueffer’s libretto. However, the composer kept Bennett in mind for the future and ultimately turned to him for a libretto in April 1883, when he was handed a commission for the Norwich Festival of 1884 by Alberto Randegger, its musical director and also conductor of Rosa’s opera company. It is impossible to know whether Randegger heard about Mackenzie’s plans for *The Rose of Sharon* during the rehearsals for *Colomba*, but the success of the opera, gauged either from pre-performance insights afforded to Randegger in his privileged position, or from the public acclaim which followed its premiere, was instrumental in securing the Norwich Festival commission for Bennett’s libretto.

18 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 20 October 1883 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
20 *MN*, 122.
It is probable that Mackenzie and Bennett had corresponded about plans for their first choral project prior to the premiere of *Colomba* and were able to accept the Norwich commission with little hesitation. In contrast to the amount of primary source material surrounding the geneeses of the later choral works, very little correspondence between the two men survives from the period when *The Rose* was composed. However, Mackenzie later commented parenthetically in connection with the composition of *The Rose* that ‘I never had a complete libretto handed to me in my life’, a comment which foreshadowed the subsequent bone of contention that was to see his collaborative relationship with Bennett disintegrate over the course of the next decade.

Following the tremendous success of *The Rose of Sharon* at Norwich, Mackenzie was immediately approached by the Birmingham Festival to provide a work for their 1885 programme. However, he was already committed to compose *The Troubadour* for Rosa’s 1886 season and felt that attempting to write another choral work at the same time would not be feasible. Rather than reject the Birmingham commission outright, Mackenzie offered to write a violin concerto for inclusion in the Festival, a work which would provide him with the opportunity to exercise his orchestral imagination once more and re-establish himself as an instrumental composer. Once work on *The Troubadour* had been completed, Bennett supplied Mackenzie with the libretto for *The Story of Sayid*, based on a tale from Arnold’s *Pearls of the Faith*. This dramatic cantata was premiered at Leeds in 1886 and thereafter Mackenzie produced a succession of smaller festival or occasional choral works, with and without the collaboration of Bennett: *A Jubilee Ode* (Bennett, 1887), *The New Covenant* (Buchanan, 1888), *The Dream of Jubal* (Bennett, 1889), and *The Cotter’s Saturday Night* (Burns, 1889). However, Mackenzie and Bennett were never quite able to recapture the success of large-scale oratorio achieved with *The Rose*. A commission for an oratorio from the Birmingham Festival of 1888 was reported in the musical press, but, despite a great deal of preliminary work

22 For their 1884 festival, the Norwich Committee decided to send out four commissions for new works to Mackenzie, Stanford, Goring Thomas and Eaton Fanning on the 18 April 1883, which, in the case of Mackenzie, was just over a week after the premiere of *Colomba*. See Robin H. Legge and W. E. Hansell, *Annals of the Norfolk and Norwich Triennial Musical Festivals MDCCCXXIV–MDCCXCIII* (London, 1896), 233, 239–40.

23 MN, 122.

24 See below, Chapter 6.


27 MT, 1 August 1886, 481.
on the project from both sides of the partnership, the commission was withdrawn much to Mackenzie’s relief. ‘After all my work to get my Birmingham piece ready, it is not to be done!’ he related in a letter to August Manns.28 ‘Parry writes a full blown oratorio [Judith] and at the last minute the Committee woke up to that fact, so I retire gladly this time.’ However, although the new oratorio had not been completed in time for the Birmingham Festival, it was reported in the press that attempts had been made by the Leeds Committee to secure the work for their own festival the following year. In scotching this rumour, Alfred Littleton wrote to the Committee to assure them that ‘Dr Mackenzie intends working quietly at this oratorio, without reference to any exact date of its production.’29

In the composer’s correspondence with Bennett, his incomplete oratorio was provisionally entitled The Lord of Life and sketches in the RAM show that its libretto was based on Biblical verses from Deuteronomy and the other Books of Moses in the Old Testament.30 A reconstruction of Bennett’s libretto demonstrates that the work was to concentrate on the relationship between Moses and Miriam, hence Mackenzie’s titles for the extant manuscripts. The life of Moses is one of the most potent subjects which the Old Testament can offer to a dramatist, with many possibilities for dramatically effective scenes in the manner of the choral societies’ favourite work, Elijah. However, this choice of subject matter was probably a contributory factor to the work’s withdrawal from the festival, combined with the proximity of a projected performance of Parry’s Judith which also draws on the Old Testament. Having been offered a further opportunity to premiere a work at Birmingham in 1891, Mackenzie finally fulfilled his obligation and produced the cantata Veni, Creator Spiritus for chorus and a quartet of soloists, taking Dryden’s famous paraphrase of the medieval hymn as his libretto.

A similar fate to that of The Lord of Life almost befell Mackenzie and Bennett’s third oratorio project, Bethlehem, and the situation which ensued caused a rift in their relationship and the cessation of any further collaborative efforts for over fifteen years. Based on the events surrounding the nativity, Bethlehem was originally requested by the

28 Letter to August Manns, 28 July 1888, RCM Library (uncatalogued Manns accession).
29 Frederick R. Spark and Joseph Bennett, op. cit., 337. In addition to Mackenzie’s Pibroch Suite premiered by Sarasate at the 1889 festival (see Chapter 6), the Leeds Committee were also offered The Cotter’s Saturday Night in place of the new oratorio, but this was rejected and the composer had to find the work another, more suitable home with the Edinburgh Choral Union.
30 RAM MSS 1193 (‘Miriam’), 1286 and 1287 (‘Moses’).
committeee of the Gloucester Festival of 1892, headed by the organist and composer C. Lee Williams. Instead of arranging verses from the scriptures as he did in the librettos for The Rose and The Lord of Life, Bennett paraphrased the gospel accounts of the nativity in his own poetry for the libretto of Bethlehem, making it a somewhat larger undertaking than previously. Apart from his continuing work as a music journalist, Bennett had committed himself at the time to produce no less than three other librettos concurrently (see below) and found it increasingly difficult to provide portions of the libretto in sufficient time for Mackenzie to work on the score. The composer became completely exasperated by this now familiar situation, under which he had constantly to struggle ever since their first collaboration on The Rose, and he asserted his position by withdrawing Bethlehem from the festival at Gloucester. Writing in confidence to his friend Samuel Aitken, Mackenzie justified his actions in no uncertain terms.

Now, for another and more serious matter which you will oblige me by considering a private one.

I will not be at Gloucester at all. I finished my work, or the "draft" of it last month. But Bennett has dribbled out my book in homeopathic globules to me, in spite of my repeated requests to let me have the whole of it. This has been going on for over two years; and would you believe it, I received the last two scenes about the end of last March. I shut myself up all April to finish the second part and actually accomplished it; but the labour of revision and scoring a whole evening's entertainment in a couple of months was more than I could undertake. Bennett knows all this very well: has taken on several librettos, with Cowen, Williams, MacCunn etc., in spite of my entreaties, while I had to wait. Further, I have never promised the Gloucester Festival to write a work. The definite promises have been made for me by others, and if Bennett was so anxious to have my work he might have taken my warning. Unfortunately he wrote a most unfriendly and ambiguous paragraph in which the entire blame was thrown upon me. Of course, from his dignified seclusion he had the best of the situation. But I was much annoyed and vexed by it, and took the liberty of telling him so. I have heard nothing from him since. Meanwhile, I consider that I have been subjected to rather unfair treatment.

I am now writing the Finale which I had to write, thanks to our friend, in a most inartistic hurry: and am in hopes that in a short time the work will please me better.

My dear Aitken, what is the use or wherein lies the honesty of all this "gassing" about "High Art" in the D. [aily] T. [elegraph] if collaborateurs are treated in this manner. Enough. You will have seen the awkward situation in which I am placed with regard to Bennett. I flatly decline to send out anything which does not give me a moderate amount of satisfaction, to please anybody. And I may say further that J. B. has considered his own comfort alone; has seemingly no idea of the amount of work

31 These requests begin in letters from Mackenzie to Bennett as early as June 1891, first mentioning the Gloucester Festival on 18 October 1891. Letters to Joseph Bennett (Pierpont Morgan Library, Bennett Collection, MFC M156.B4716 (60–67)).

32 These librettos are for Cowen's The Water-Lily, William's Gethsemane, and MacCunn's Jeannie Deans. See Table 2, above, p. 111.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

entailed on the composer, and possibly doesn’t care to think about estimating it. Therefore henceforth I will be the guardian of my own comfort and reputation.33

Two other letters to Aitken, dated 26 and 31 May 1892, discuss this matter further and mention Bennett’s complaint that Mackenzie had withdrawn Bethlehem without informing him first, despite the composer’s efforts to do so. ‘Bennett’s habit of not answering my letters may cause some doubt as to whether he always receives them,’ Mackenzie explained. ‘But, I did write to him at once, and he has no possible grievance on that score.’34 Aitken counselled Mackenzie to come to terms with Bennett’s behaviour and not to allow the situation to ruin their professional and personal friendships. ‘I quite agree with you about the unwisdom of quarrelling between friends,’ Mackenzie eagerly concurred, ‘and will never object to forget all about it.’35 Unfortunately, the Gloucester incident was not easily forgotten and subsequent relations between Bennett and Mackenzie were considerably strained. With the revisions on Bethlehem having been completed, it was premiered at the Royal Albert Hall two years later in the somewhat unseasonable month of April, although at the time of the misunderstanding Mackenzie had initially thought of ‘pimping it out in Chicago’, where the World’s Fair was to be held in June 1893.36

The whole episode provides an excellent summary of Mackenzie’s frustration at having to collaborate with librettists on his choral and operatic works during the 1880s and early 1890s. Although, unlike Parry, he never supplied his own texts for subsequent musical projects, Mackenzie seemed to become more wary of his collaborators and never worked with them more than once, displaying the caution he had learnt from his experiences with Hueffer and Bennett. Moreover, Mackenzie had considerably less time to devote to large-scale composition projects in the 1890s than he had a decade earlier when he was resident in Tuscany. Not only did he have his all-consuming administrative and professional work as Principal at the Academy, but he also began to concentrate on his conducting career following his election as musical director of the Philharmonic Society. In fact, following the production of Bethlehem, there was a ten-year hiatus in

33 Letter to Samuel Aitken, 20 May 1892 (Pierpont Morgan Library, Bennett Collection, MFC M156.A3115(1)).
34 Letter to Samuel Aitken, 26 May 1892 (loc. cit., MFC M156.A3115(2)).
35 Letter to Samuel Aitken, 31 May 1892 (loc. cit., MFC M156.A3115(3)).
36 Letter to Samuel Aitken, 20 May 1892 (loc. cit., MFC M156.A3115(1)). An announcement in The Musical Times (1 March 1893, 149) noted that Mackenzie was to appear and conduct his own choral and orchestral works at the Chicago Exposition in September 1893, and Saint-Saëns was also to appear as an organist and a performer in Chamber Concerts. However, both engagements seem to have fallen through. (See Gerald Norris, Stanford, The Cambridge Jubilee and Tchaikovsky (Newton Abbot, 1980), 266–68.)
Mackenzie’s choral output until the premiere of *The Witch’s Daughter* at the Leeds Festival in 1904. Having produced a new choral work on an almost yearly basis during the 1880s, Mackenzie was sceptical of the benefits the festival system offered in fostering new British music. ‘The present system of Festival-music-cobbling and the general discomfort caused by competition among musicians in London is one which, I fancy, will of itself break (after a few more victims have been sacrificed) down,’ he predicted as early as 1888, ‘meanwhile it is degrading and disgusting. Well, I have had a large share of it and before I left town in June had no more stomach for it, in fact the very idea of sitting down again to write a serious oratorio for the chief English Festival [Birmingham] in a few months gave me a feeling of utter incapacity and the sight of music paper, without joke, acted like an emetic upon me.’\(^{37}\) It is probable that Mackenzie’s private opinions of choral festivals expressed in this letter were shared by a good many of his colleagues. However, the festival system, for all its faults, continued to commission new and exciting works from young composers and was the starting point of many compositional careers.

The professional rift between Mackenzie and Bennett had a substantial effect on the composer’s diminished output in the genre. Without his partner’s collaboration, the music of Mackenzie’s next cantata, *The Witch’s Daughter*, lacked the dramatic impetus and conviction which the composer gained from working closely with a librettist on his choral scores. Rather than pursuing the quasi-operatic style of composition in his choral music which had characterised his successes of the 1880s such as *The Rose* and *Sayid*, Mackenzie fell back on the ‘ballad cantata’, as exemplified by his own *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*, Stanford’s *The Revenge* (1886), Parry’s *The Pied Piper* (1905) and Cowen’s *John Gilpin*. In these works composers took pre-existing, popular poems as librettos and provided ‘chorus-centric’ settings with few or no soloists. Although Mackenzie later considered *The Cotter* one of his favourite works, this choice was as much to do with the setting of Burns’s poetry and a national subject dear to the Scottish composer’s heart as with its musical merits, which are considerably limited in comparison with his other choral scores. Writing to Professor John Stuart Blackie of Edinburgh University, who had recently dedicated his book on *Scottish Song* to the composer,\(^{38}\)

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37 Letter to Nicholas Kilburn, 28 January 1888 (NLS MS 21501 ff. 101-2). The commission to which Mackenzie referred is the oratorio *The Lord of Life* for the Birmingham Festival of 1888 (see discussion above, p. 113).

Mackenzie related that 'somehow I have a greater love for this piece than any other choral matter which I have set down. Time will show whether this is true. Anyhow I am convinced that it is national music idealised so far as in me lies.' In fact, *The Cotter* was rejected by the Leeds Festival for their 1889 season and the composer found a more suitable location for its premiere in the Scottish capital, Edinburgh. Likewise, *The Witch's Daughter* was not a success and, at the time of its first performance, earned the nickname 'The Ditch's water' on account of the dullness of Whittier's poem and the lack of inspiration in Mackenzie's musical response.

Mackenzie's last completed choral work, *The Sun-god's Return*, was the swansong of his relationship with Bennett, for whom the cantata became the first literary child of his retirement. In 1906 Bennett stepped down from his position as music critic of the *Daily Telegraph* after thirty-six years' service with the paper and more than forty as a journalist. In late October and early November 1906, two dinners were held in his honour; one was a small occasion arranged by his fellow music critics and the other a larger banquet held by musicians and other colleagues at the Trocadero Restaurant, near Piccadilly, under the presidency of Mackenzie. Speaking after dinner, the composer proposed a toast to the guest of honour and delivered a glowing encomium of Bennett's career in music journalism. In particular, Mackenzie asked, 'Need I remind you of the many well-known and excellent libretti for oratorios, cantatas, and operas in which he has collaborated with our composers and met them halfway with his own word-music. I have the name of a cantata-book on my grateful tongue which I think has yet to find its equal.' Although he does not clarify his compliment, Mackenzie presumably described the book Bennett had recently supplied him with for *The Sun-god* on which the composer had begun work. 'Our pleasant days of collaboration had been of long

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39 Letter to J. S. Blackie, 9 January 1889 (NLS, MS 2638, f. 4).
40 Originally it was erroneously reported in the musical press that Mackenzie's incomplete Birmingham oratorio was to be produced at Leeds in 1889. However, once this report had been withdrawn, the composer offered the committee *The Cotter* but this was not accepted for inclusion in the programme. See Frederick R. Spark and Joseph Bennett, *History of the Leeds Musical Festivals 1858–1889* (London, 1892), 337.
41 Mackenzie later referred to *The Cotter* in a letter to Dan Godfrey, dated 22 January 1929, who had asked him for his comments on the Scottish national poet for a Burns Nights celebration. 'As far back as 1903 [when Mackenzie made a tour of Canada], it appealed intensely to the Scottish-Canadian population — which is, numerically, a very large one. That work is still, occasionally, heard in Scotland.' (The letter is quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey: Champion of British Composers* (London, 1995), 191.)
43 The first dinner was held on 31 October at the Imperial Restaurant and the second on 6 November 1906.
44 'Mr Joseph Bennett', *MT*, 1 December 1906, 813–15.
duration, though we sharply disagreed on many musical matters,’ Mackenzie remembered diplomatically some time later, ‘and this was the last time we were to work together. After his retirement he withdrew to a remote place in his native Gloucestershire, and soon succumbed, as I believe, to the depressing effects of inactivity and ennui. I am his debtor for many acts of private and public kindness.”

Having completed the score of The Sun-god by 1908, Mackenzie almost despaired of a production of their final collaboration ‘on account of its length and other reasons’ and, fortunately, it was at last accepted for performance at the Cardiff Festival in September 1910. The Scandinavian, almost Wagnerian, basis for The Sun-god provided Mackenzie with the kind of dramatic scenario to which he gave his most sympathetic musical response and the music of the cantata, though heady with the scent of filtered Wagnerisms, recaptures the operatic style of his earlier choral successes. In fact, the cantata appealed so strongly to Continental musical tastes that, soon after its Welsh premiere, the work was given in January 1911 by the Vienna Singakademie, the performance being arranged by Mackenzie’s colleague Angelo Eisner von Eisenhof.

With Bennett’s retirement and death in 1911, Mackenzie did not complete any further choral works, although he did make one last attempt to compose an oratorio worthy of the memory of The Rose of Sharon. Listed at the end of his Narrative among his ‘might-have-beens’, the scores on which Mackenzie had worked yet left incomplete, he remembered that, during the early years of the twentieth-century,

The chief expenditure of time and thought was the composition of an Oratorio in three parts on the subject of “Paradise Regained.” I had made a selection from Milton’s wondrous lines with the view to a short sacred work, and shown it to Alfred Lyttelton, who, to my astonishment, not only urged the adoption of the entire poem, but assisted me enthusiastically in reducing it to reasonable dimensions. Engaged on this engrossing task, we met frequently and corresponded constantly, with the result that I devoted the leisure of several years to the completion of The Temptation. My

45 MN, 227.
46 RAM MS 1122 is dated ‘Finished May 27th 1908’ and at the end of Scene 1 ‘Aug. 1908’.
48 Chapter XXX of MN, ‘Some “might-have-beens”: the War and after’, 243–52.
49 Alfred Lyttelton (1857–1913) was a lawyer, statesman, and, from June 1906, MP for St George’s, Hanover Square, in which constituency the original premises of the RAM were situated. His friendship with Mackenzie probably dates from around the turn of the century. See article on Lyttelton in DNB 1912 21 and also Edith Lyttelton, Alfred Lyttelton: an Account of his Life (London, 1917), although this biography makes no mention of his association with Mackenzie.
friend’s death in [1913] discouraged, and the War prevented, me from giving further attention to its future.\footnote{50} Despite these unfortunate events, Mackenzie was able to sketch a great deal of the oratorio in vocal and full orchestral score and seven drafts of the libretto (in Mackenzie’s hand) survive as a testament to Lyttelton’s encouragement.\footnote{51} Although The Temptation was not completed, it demonstrates that Mackenzie was still fascinated by the possibilities of dramatic oratorio, even without the help of Bennett, his original collaborator in the field. Before the work had reached completion, Mackenzie had approached George Henschel, the famous baritone, to create the role of Satan when the oratorio was produced. Recalling how he had sung the part of Lucifer in Rubinstein’s Paradise Lost (Düsseldorf, 1875), based on Milton’s longer and earlier poem, Henschel reported that ‘in later years I seemed to have acquired quite a reputation for impersonating that fallen angel in some form or other[; ...] only two years ago my old friend, Sir Alexander Mackenzie wrote to me: “I am at work on a sacred piece ... all I may say is that ‘Satan’ (always a popular gentleman) is in it, and I only wish you would add this one to the several Lucifers it has been your lot to perform.”’\footnote{52} As a choral project, The Temptation departs from Mackenzie’s normal pattern of work in that it was he who chose Milton’s poem, a deservedly great work of literature, as the basis for the project whereas he was accustomed to leave such decisions, within reason, to his librettist. Perhaps Mackenzie had gained enough confidence in his literary abilities to consider such a subject, a quality that does not characterise the approach he took earlier in his career. As with The Sun-god, the surviving score of the oratorio shows that the composer treated his music in terms of opera and, had he not been discouraged from his work, The Temptation would have been an important contribution to the canon of British sacred dramatic oratorios, most recently championed by Elgar with The Apostles (1903) and The Kingdom (1906), but ultimately dating back to works such as Mackenzie’s The Rose of Sharon and Stanford’s Eden (1891).

\footnote{50} In MN, Mackenzie wrongly asserts that Lyttelton died in 1914; it is probably that he associated this event with the outbreak of War the following year.
\footnote{51} MN, 243-44.
\footnote{52} BL Add. 65517, 65518 and 65519.
\footnote{53} Sir George Henschel, Musings and Memories of a Musician (London, 1918), 137. During his long career Henschel also sang Mephisto in Berlioz’s Faust, Lucifer in Sullivan’s Golden Legend (1886), the title role in Botto’s Mefistofele, and Satan in Stanford’s Eden (1891). Even though Mackenzie did not finish The Temptation with its leading part for Henschel, he later wrote and dedicated to the singer the scena The Walker of the Snow (1913), of which he later produced an orchestral version in 1915.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

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Although the majority of Mackenzie's choral scores were written to librettos with secular subjects, it was in his treatment of the sacred, Biblical subject of *The Rose of Sharon* that he first found a suitable stylistic medium for the composition of choral music. As shown in the following discussion, a great deal of the music in *The Rose* was filtered through Mackenzie's operatic training and experience on the Continent, in a style that was often at odds with the presentation of a sacred subject in a British oratorio. Traditionally conservative and morally uplifting, the nineteenth-century oratorio found its precedents in the works of Handel, Haydn and Mendelssohn. The libretto of Handel's *Messiah*, essentially a collection of commentaries and extracts from the Scriptures, provided the composer with reflective verses which he could translate into musical arias and scenas suitable to the prevailing musical style of the eighteenth century. Although some of these verses lent themselves to dramatic treatment, on the whole the work concerned itself with reflective and celebratory musical numbers linked in a linear textual narrative. Haydn adopted a similar narrative aspect in his setting of words from Genesis in *The Creation*, using effective colouristic orchestration to provide dramatic musical accompaniment. It was left to Mendelssohn in *Elijah* to instil the drama of Romanticism into the oratorio with the employment of dramatically-paced scenes reliant on the interaction of chorus, semi-chorus, soloists and orchestra. Although the work still recognisably conformed to the early nineteenth-century ideal of oratorio in its decorous approach to the sacred material in the libretto, it instantly caught the imagination of the festival-going public. With this level of public acclaim, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* became the ideal nineteenth-century oratorio, and, together with the tradition established by Handel a century earlier, it established precedents for the following generation of British oratorio composers in the middle of the last century.

Set against the background of stories from the Old Testament of the Bible, from which many composers and librettists have taken the subjects for their oratorios, the *Song of Solomon* is unusual in that the book is a collection of poetry rather than prose writings. Furthermore, the poem has always had a controversial place in Hebrew literature owing to its concentration on the erotic side of human nature in what, in
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

Bennett's words, 'is so manifestly a love-poem, without any religious basis'. Writing of his involvement in the oratorio, considered by Bennett to be one the most pleasurable on which he had worked, he justified his choice of subject by quoting the commentary of W. L. Courtney.

It would have been felt to be a strange omission if Hebrew literature did not contain some specimens of erotic songs. This is clearly an Epithalamium, perhaps consisting of several bridal songs sung during the seven-day marriage festival, when the bridegroom was looked upon as a king (Solomon), and his bride as a queen. According to the Oriental ideas, the love here depicted must be conjugal love, not the love of an amorous girl.

Bennett chose to retain almost all of the Biblical poetry and, at the same time, provided a prologue and an epilogue to the libretto which emphasised his interpretation of the story as a parable of Christ's love for his church, represented by the Beloved and the Sulamite respectively. However, the librettist felt that Victorian sensibilities were still likely to be offended by references 'to the numerous wives and concubines of Solomon, and to the strong expressions of Eastern love-passion with which the original poem abounds. It did not occur to me,' Bennett declared in retrospect, 'that these, having place in a Book which we are taught to read, study, and reverence would be condemned as “improper” elsewhere.' There is no doubt that a Victorian audience would have found the sentiments exhibited in The Rose of Sharon to be somewhat beyond the pale and this is often given by later commentators as a reason for its neglect, though the oratorio was widely performed both in Britain and North America in the decade following its first production.

In his adaptation of the Biblical poetry for the libretto of The Rose, Bennett combined the eight chapters of the original to produce a drama split into four parts (Separation, Temptation, Victory and Reunion), following the then current operatic fashion for four acts, as noted by Mackenzie in his Musical Times interview on the subject. The verses of the Song of Solomon do not follow a logical dramatic order and Bennett’s arrangement of the libretto clarifies the narrative thread of the poetry. In the Lebanon, the villagers of Sulam begin their work in the vineyards while the Beloved wakens his love, the Sulamite, from her sleep. The beauty of the Sulamite is well-known.

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54 Bennett, op. cit., 383.
55 Bennett, 383; W. L. Courtney, The Literary Man’s Bible (London, 4/1908), 358.
56 Bennett, 384. Also quoted by Mackenzie in MN, 123.
57 The Prologue and Epilogue do not enter into the dramatic flow of the oratorio and are therefore not included in the synopsis given below.
throughout the land and has been brought to the attention of King Solomon. Paying a visit to the village he asks the Sulamite to join his harem and she is reluctantly persuaded to leave her Beloved behind and follow the king. At the royal palace, she is questioned by the wives and concubines of the harem and witnesses the pomp and ceremony of the Procession of the Ark which passes beneath them in the streets of Jerusalem. The Beloved appears to the Sulamite in a dream and she wanders the city desperately to find him. When she wakes, she is tempted by Solomon in the harem and, having spurned his advances, is sent back to the vineyards of Sulam to be reunited with her Beloved. This freely adapted arrangement of the *Song of Solomon* also draws on other Biblical passages, notably the *Book of Psalms*, *Isaiah* and the first three chapters of *Revelation*, which provide the bases for the procession, sections of the fourth part and the epilogue respectively.\(^{59}\) Most of the verses taken from outside the *Song of Solomon* were used for the choral portions of the oratorio and the texts would have been familiar to any educated Victorian. To a certain extent, this explains the popularity of the choral sections, particularly the Procession of the Ark which was published separately and often performed by choral societies on its own.

Bennett was not the first librettist to consider the *Song of Solomon* as a suitable subject for dramatic and musical treatment and, even when Mackenzie was at work on the oratorio, the composer’s former acquaintance from his Edinburgh years, Anton Rubinstein, produced an opera on the same topic entitled *Sulamith*.\(^{59}\) In the same way that the Sulamite is the central character in Rubinstein’s opera, Bennett’s drama also concentrates on the Eastern beauty and she is at the centre of almost every scene save those led by the chorus; the other main roles in the oratorio are given to the Beloved and Solomon. Essentially a dramatic libretto, *The Rose* concentrates on the interaction of the Sulamite with the other characters or groups of characters she encounters and her steadfastness and constancy in love, despite her alien situation. It does not dwell on the reflective aspect traditionally associated with oratorio as did many contemporary works in the genre but, despite and through the beauty of the Biblical language, it attempts a certain degree of characterisation, often lacking in other similar works, in the role of the

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58 The verses not in the *Song of Solomon* are taken from Psalm 23.1–2 & 4; Ps. 26.6 & 8; Ps. 29.1; Ps. 45.3–4, 10–11 & 13–15; Ps. 46.9; Ps. 48.2; Ps. 50.2; Ps. 80.1, 8 & 10; Ps. 88.18; Ps. 100.1–2 & 4–5; Ps. 118.24; Ps. 128.2 & 5–6; Ps. 150.3–4; Isaiah 49.10 & 13; and Revelation 1.3, 2.7 and 3.5.

59 See Foreign Notes, *MT*, 1 December 1883, 682.
Sulamite. Mackenzie had the full libretto before him by late October 1883 and pronounced Bennett’s work ‘strong and generally very admirable’, noting that ‘the religious element is strong in it’, particularly in the final sections. However, Mackenzie must initially have been attracted to the dramatic rather than the religious possibilities of the libretto, especially in the light of his recent success with Colomba, a work which ultimately influenced the musical style employed in the oratorio, and with which it compares favourably as an *opera manqué.*

It was in the creation of the solo part of the Sulamite that Mackenzie adopted his operatic methods of composition. Whereas the composer knew when writing his lyrical dramas that the roles of Colomba and Margarida would be given to Alwina Valleria, the prima donna of the Carl Rosa Company, he was not initially certain who would take the part of the Sulamite in The Rose, but believed that the famous soprano Emma Albani (1847–1930) would be engaged for the Festival. When it was confirmed by the Norwich Committee that the soprano soloist would in fact be the younger American opera singer, Emma Nevada (1859–1940), Mackenzie reluctantly began to tailor the solo part in his score accordingly, even though her voice was unknown both to him and British audiences. "The “Nevada” engagement gives me much trouble, for I have to change many keys and alter much more than I thought, besides rewriting modulations etc.,' he grumbled to Littleton. However, on hearing Miss Nevada sing in Paris a few months later, Mackenzie was delighted with her and did not seem to mind the extra work her engagement had entailed.

The girl has a small voice, but sings charmingly and I think there will be no risk in letting her keep the part. Her girlish voice will to my mind suit the rôle and there is no doubt that she sings like an artist and seemed to me to be remarkably quick in picking up a hint, or seeing through the musical sense of the part and read also very well. She won’t have anything altered and says the part lies quite well in her voice. I think the voice, although not large, must be very telling in a large room.

This episode reveals a great deal about how Mackenzie worked on his choral and operatic music. Although, as mentioned above, he later recorded that ‘I never had a complete libretto handed to me in my life’, he probably had the majority of the text when

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60 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 20 October 1883 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
61 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 14 March 1884 (Novello-Littleton Collection). Although he had already made adjustments for Nevada’s voice, Mackenzie hoped that Albani would indicate her willingness to attend the premiere of The Rose.
62 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 7 February 1884 (Novello-Littleton Collection). Mackenzie completed the full score of the oratorio on 11 March 1884 (date from RAM MS 1114).
63 Letter to Alfred Littleton, [May 1884] (Novello-Littleton Collection).
he came to produce an initial sketch of *The Rose* in late 1883. He would first tackle the choral portions since these needed to be made ready for the copyists and engravers concerned with the publication of the score, a necessary evil in the production of a choral work due to the large number of performing forces involved. After this he busied himself with the solo material of the oratorio before making a full orchestral score, which was also published in this instance, though it is difficult to ascertain whether this would have been available at the time of the premiere. His adaptation of the music to suit Nevada’s voice may have upset his original tonal plans for the oratorio but it was necessary in order to ensure that the central role flowed naturally in order to secure the best possible premiere of the music.

Having heard Nevada sing through the solo parts of the oratorio in Paris, Mackenzie returned to his rural retreat at Borgo alla Collina and spent the summer working on the first two movements of the Violin Concerto and *The Troubadour*. Carefully avoiding the cholera epidemic raging through Tuscany during the summer months, he left for London in September and held a preliminary orchestral rehearsal of *The Rose* at the Royal Academy of Music in early October. The rehearsal of the choral sections of *The Rose* were entrusted to the musical director of the Norwich Festival, Alberto Randegger, with whom Mackenzie had worked the previous year on the Rosa opera season. Unfortunately, as the composer later reported, ‘the inhabitants of Norwich, probably influenced by unfavourable judgments passed on the work at choral rehearsals, evinced a disinclination to invest in seats for the performance.’64 The chorus, in Bennett’s words, ‘even after many rehearsals, which should have taught them better, condemned [The Rose] almost with unanimity’.

But after the general rehearsal, under the composer’s direction, when the masterly orchestration had been heard for the first time, and the solos had told their tale through the mouths of Nevada, Patey, Lloyd, and Santley, there was a sudden revolution. The chorus again went about the city, this time with fervent words of praise; the tickets sold rapidly, and, after the performance, the music was crowned with the laurel of victory.65

The spectacular premiere of *The Rose of Sharon* took place on the morning of Thursday 16 October 1884 in St Andrew’s Hall, Norwich, and was attended by a full audience. In making her British choral debut as the Sulamite, the Rose of Sharon from the oratorio’s title, Miss Nevada wore a rose-pink dress and sang from a copy of the vocal score bound

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64 *MN*, 123.
65 Bennett, *op. cit.*, 384–85.
in the same colour; the ladies of the chorus followed suit and each sported a rose.66 ‘The extraordinary scene when the last note had sounded,’ remembered Mackenzie, ‘during which I was pelted on and off the platform with roses, roses, all the way, is unforgettable.’67

Following the structure of Bennett’s libretto, the music of *The Rose* is arranged into scenes within the four parts analogous to operatic acts. Eschewing the construction of his choral work from separate numbers as in the scores of *The Bride* and *Jason*, Mackenzie chose to blur the distinctions between various musical sections in the manner of opera, and, more particularly, *Colomba*. Whereas the earlier and less operatic *Jason* suffered from the stiltedness of sharp physical divisions between aria and chorus, scena and ensemble, the music of *The Rose* is relatively continuous and this promotes a greater sense of dramatic progression in performance. Although, as with the lyrical dramas, the staple formal structures of mid-century Italian and French opera and oratorio are audible in *The Rose*, these are linked together musically within the score. In general, such musical structures come to the fore in the choral portions of the oratorio and otherwise the solo passages are written in a predominately operatic style.

* * * * *

As in *Colomba*, the sections of soliloquy and dialogue in *The Rose* are saturated with representative themes, some of which are employed on a local level and others which permeate the whole work from beginning to end. Mackenzie did not employ such representative themes to the same extent in his earlier choral works; *The Bride* is given some semblance of cyclic continuity over the span of its four solos and choruses by the sharing of thematic material between the Prelude and the final chorus (‘Down, down in the sea’s chilly bosom’),68 and the music of *Jason* makes further and more developed use of reminiscence motives though it does not attain the thematic integration apparent in the score of *The Rose*. This musical coherence and the opportunities for the use of representative themes are partly explained by the significant structure of Bennett’s libretto. Being based on pre-existent poetry, Bennett’s arrangement of the Biblical verse

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67 MN, 123.
68 *The Bride* vs (1881), 39–46.
follows the example of the original eight chapters of the *Song of Solomon* necessitating the repetition of a certain number of key phrases and lines of text. Most notably these include the phrases ‘My Beloved is mine and I am his’ and ‘My love is strong as death, and unconquerable as the grave’, both expressing sentiments central to the interpretation Bennett placed on the narrative. Such repetitions of text provided Mackenzie with ideal opportunities for the use of recurrent thematic ideas in his music, much in the same way that parallel dramatic incidents in *Colomba* and *The Troubadour* were highlighted through thematic reminiscence in either the vocal line or, more usually, the orchestral accompaniment.

One of the most fertile portions of *The Rose* in terms of representative themes is the first scene of the first part, ‘Separation’. After the initial chorus, ‘Come, let us go forth’, the Beloved sings a section of accompanied recitative followed by the aria, ‘For lo! the winter is past’. He soon wakes the Sulamite who, having recognised his voice calling her from sleep, sings part of a vineyard song, ‘We will take the foxes’. They join together in the luxurious duet, ‘Come, Beloved into the garden of nuts’, before a recapitulation of the initial chorus. It is in this section of linked recitative, aria and duet that Mackenzie first employs the more important representative themes used during the course of the oratorio. Even before the initial chorus, the orchestra introduces the unison vineyard theme in order to set the morning scene in the village of Sulam (see Music example 1). This theme is later used as the melody of the Sulamite’s vineyard song, ‘We will take the foxes’, mentioned above, and it also appears in rhythmically transformed versions in the later orchestral Intermezzo, ‘Spring Morning on Lebanon’, and as an accompanimental figure to the questions of Solomon’s Princes and Nobles in the following scene.

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69 *The Rose of Sharon* vs (1884), 6–17. NB There were two versions of the vocal score printed by Novello in 1884. Unless stated, all page numbers refer to the version which has a total of 238 pages (i.e. the shorter version).

70 *The Rose* vs (1884), 23.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

Music example 1: The Vineyard theme (The Rose vs, 6) and its later transformations (vs, pp. 37 and 48).

Another representative theme accompanies the important recurring textual motive, ‘My Beloved is mine and I am his’, which appears several times during the course of The Song of Songs and the first part of The Rose. One of the most haunting lines in the oratorio, it is used variously by the Sulamite as a declaration of her love and a proclamation of fidelity when she is tempted by Solomon and the other women in his harem. Mackenzie enables this dual interpretation of the text in his musical response by ensuring that the vocal melody which accompanies the words is always loyal to the initial exposition of the theme, thereby characterising the Sulamite’s steadfastness and naïveté (see Music example 2). The theme is also employed orchestrally and is associated with the sound of the Sulamite’s voice. Before the Beloved wakes her, he asks, ‘let me hear thy voice’ (vs, p. 23), and is rewarded with an orchestral reminiscence of the Sulamite’s declaration in the lower strings (see Music example 3). During the rest of the work, this theme is used sparingly and only to emphasise the key-points in the Sulamite’s speeches, notably at the end of the second part before her ‘Temptation’, and during the third part to ward off the amorous advances of Solomon.\(^7\) In this section of the oratorio, Mackenzie achieves some extremely telling combinations of thematic material, and in the latter episode, having responded to the king’s praises with a short solo (‘Lo! a vineyard hath Solomon at Baalhamon’, vs p. 176), the Sulamite sings ‘My Beloved is mine’

\(^7\) The Rose vs, 21–22, 69, 94–95, 155–56, 177–79, and 221.
against a reprise of Solomon’s earlier aria to the words, ‘How fair and how pleasant art thou for delights’ (see Music example 4).\textsuperscript{72}

Music example 2: ‘My Beloved is mine and I am his’ (Sulamite, The Rose vs, pp. 21–22).

Music example 3: Part of the reminiscence motif, ‘My Beloved is mine’, as heard in the orchestra (The Rose vs, p. 23).

\textsuperscript{72} The Rose vs, 176–79.
Following the Sulamite’s rejection of Solomon, the third most important representative theme in the oratorio is introduced in the vocal line of the subsequent Grave section, ‘My love is strong as death, and unconquerable as the grave’ (see Music example 5). As the motto theme for the entire oratorio, the melody, which formerly provided the thematic basis for the material of the alto soloist and orchestra in the Prologue, does not surface in the score again until this point. To heighten the drama at the reawakening of this material, after two solo, homophonic repetitions of the theme the Sulamite sings the representative theme in augmented note values over a reprise of the women’s chorus, ‘Art thou so simple?’, in which Solomon joins. The effectiveness of this masterly ensemble is apparent even from the vocal score and provides a fitting conclusion to the third part of the work. It is only in The Rose that Mackenzie attempted to employ a comparable system of operatic representative themes similar to those used in his lyrical dramas to such great effect. Although a decade later he tried to recreate a similar set of relationships in his oratorio Bethlehem, the music lacked the conviction of such episodes in The Rose described above. One of the reasons for the comparative failure of representative themes in Bethlehem was the structure of the libretto provided by Bennett. Having presented the composer with a libretto comprising a series of

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73 The Prologue, The Rose vs, 1-5.
74 The Rose vs, 180-92.
animated tableaux instead of a developing drama, the resultant linear narrative could not support the use of representative themes nearly so well as the repetitive poetic text of *The Rose*. Mackenzie overloaded the libretto of *Bethlehem* with musical dramatic devices to which it was not suited, whereas *The Rose* and the dramatic cantata *The Story of Sayid* were perfect for such operatic treatment.

**Music example 5:** The motto theme of *The Rose*, ‘My love is strong as death, and unconquerable as the grave’. (*Sulamite, The Rose vs, p. 180)*.

At the centre of the oratorio is ‘The Sulamite’s Dream’, which begins the third part of the work and has often been quoted by later commentators as one of the most operatic passages of the entire score.\(^{75}\) In his survey of *Half a Century of Music in England*, Francis Hueffer compared this section of the oratorio with the music his librettos had inspired in the lyrical dramas: ‘Mr Mackenzie’s maiden effort in opera, *Colomba*, showed dramatic qualities of a very high order indeed, as did also the first and the fourth acts of *The Troubadour*, and the so-called dream-scene of the oratorio, “The Rose of Sharon”.’\(^{76}\) However, in the same volume, written just before his death in 1889, Hueffer pointed out that such promise in dramatic composition ‘has not been altogether fulfilled in other works’.\(^{77}\) Since Mackenzie did not write any operas after *The Troubadour* in the period before Hueffer’s death, the critic’s comments must refer to the other choral works on which the composer collaborated with Bennett, such as the dramatic cantata *The Story of Sayid*, and the occasional works *A Jubilee Ode* and *The New Covenant*. It is highly likely that Hueffer still harboured resentment towards Bennett and Mackenzie concerning their collaboration, especially when he felt he had a prior call

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\(^{75}\) The beginning of this scene and also the solo sections from the first scene of Part 1, discussed above, were recently recorded by Patricia MacMahon and the BBC SSO as part of John Purser’s radio series, *Scotland’s Music* (programme 24), commissioned by BBC Radio Scotland.


\(^{77}\) Ibid., 25.
on the composer’s creative talents, but he nevertheless displayed a certain amount of
magnanimity in his estimation of *The Rose*. In fact, Hueffer attributes the apparent loss of
dramatic qualities in Mackenzie’s work to ‘the circumstances in which London musicians
are compelled to work, surrounded as they are by the turmoil of the largest city in the
world, and impelled by competition to produce against time and in excess of the degree
of spontaneous inspiration allotted to man.’ There is little doubt that Mackenzie
produced some of his most inspired scores during his residence in Tuscany and that the
effects of an establishment position at the RAM and its concomitant administrative duties
affected the frequency rather than the quality of his compositions. As evidenced by his
letters to Littleton and Bennett during the early 1880s, Mackenzie enjoyed the time he
was able to devote relatively uninterruptedly to his composition. In reference to the
dream-scene in the third part of *The Rose*, Mackenzie himself isolated the idiosyncratic
character of the section and asked Littleton, “‘The Sulamite’s Dream’ I beg leave of you
to judge about until you hear it, as it is altogether a piece of orchestral fancy, and quite
distinct from the rest of the oratorio.”

The dream-scene is essentially a section of soliloquy for the Sulamite with
occasional interruptions from the imagined presence of her Beloved and the Watchmen
of the city as she hurries through the streets. The scene is preceded by an exquisite
orchestral Introduction to the third part entitled ‘Sleep’ which compares favourably with
Elgar’s later evocation of the same state at the beginning of the second part of *Gerontius*
written some fifteen years later. Characterised by a drooping semitone motive and a fugal
chromaticism which alternates between the two modal versions of various chords, the
Introduction is in a bipartite form the second half of which is a harmonically modified
repeat of the first. This ends in a high ethereal tonic chord of B minor to prepare for the
entry of the soloist. The Beloved sings the first words of the dream, ‘Open, open to me
my sister’ (vs, p. 159), in a manner reminiscent of his first awakening of the Sulamite in
Part I, although the two sections are not linked thematically. The orchestral
accompaniment is a loose continuation of the Introduction, as if to suggest that the
Sulamite is dreaming or, at least, in a state halfway between consciousness and sleep.
The vocal line of the Sulamite presents a mixture of recitative and aria-like melody, and

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79 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 7 February 1884 (Novello-Littleton Collection).
Mackenzie is careful to balance the importance of both the instrumental background and the soprano soloist. The ‘orchestral fancy’ of the composer is uppermost in this scene, although the operatic overtones and the masterful pacing of the music help to convey the emotions of the Sulamite. In his Narrative, Mackenzie wrote that ‘When Bache once spoke of the musical settings of these passages as “sugary”, I replied that I meant them to be as sweet as I could possibly make them.’ It is probable that, in his comments, Bache was referring to sections like the ones described above.

Although the operatic nature of the music in The Rose and The Story of Sayid did not escape contemporary commentators, they would have proved difficult to bring to the dramatic stage. However, some years after the Norwich premiere of his first oratorio Mackenzie was approached by an enterprising American who, having seen the score of the work, was interested in staging a production of The Rose. Having been approached with the project, the composer told Bennett that ‘even with the help of many cuts, the choristers will find great difficulty in committing that sort of music to memory and I pity the chorusmaster who has the job of drilling it into them. I confess I would rather have heard that “Sayid” had been selected for performance, as the chances of success are greater.’ Writing to Littleton on the same subject, Mackenzie raised similar objections, but added that ‘The Yankee notion of putting the ‘Rose of Sharon’ on the stage is amusing [...] However there can be no earthly objection to the trial of it.’

Unfortunately, Mackenzie does not record whether the projected production of the oratorio went ahead, but he was correct in identifying that Sayid would have provided a much better opportunity for staging purposes. Its drama is much more direct in nature than that contained in The Rose, which, despite its exquisite music, is prone to musical reflection more akin to the traditional style of oratorio. A dramatic enactment of Sayid would provide an audience with much greater suspense (especially in the final scene where Ilmas is about to be executed), one of the operatic characteristics lacking from the poetic basis of The Rose even after Bennett’s transformation of the text.

Apart from the generally reflective nature of the oratorio in comparison with an operatic libretto, Mackenzie’s other objection to the staging of The Rose concerned the difficulty and length of the choral sections in the oratorio. It is in this aspect of the music

\[ \text{\textsuperscript{80}} \text{M/N, 123.} \]
\[ \text{\textsuperscript{81}} \text{Letter to Joseph Bennett, 26 September 1887 (Bennett Collection, MFCM156.B4716(40)).} \]
\[ \text{\textsuperscript{82}} \text{Letter to Alfred Littleton, 24 September 1887 (Novello-Littleton Collection).} \]
that Mackenzie’s dramatic choral works differ from the lyrical dramas. Not only does the music of the dedicated choral episodes contrast strikingly with the operatic style used for the solo sections given to the Sulamite, the Beloved and Solomon, but Mackenzie also adopts more learned mannerisms and archaic turns of musical phrase such as fugato in his treatment of the choral parts. In the second scene of the first part, for example, Mackenzie accompanies the ‘entrance’ and ‘exit’ of Solomon with a fugato chorus on ‘God save the King’ (vs, pp. 46–48 and 70–72). With his employment of such a musical process, Mackenzie alludes to the venerable traditions of Handelian oratorio and heightens the formality of the situation. This is immediately contrasted with an extraordinary section in which the chorus is allotted more than one dramatic role in the venerable manner of the turba, interacting with both Solomon and the Sulamite. Assuming the various parts of the princes and nobles (tenors and basses), who accompany Solomon, as well as the villagers of Sulam (SATB), not only do they comment on the drama from the perspective of their roles, but they are also part of the drama themselves. The princes and nobles question the Sulamite and, under the direction of the Elder (solo baritone), the villagers persuade her to leave them to live in Solomon’s favour at the palace in Jerusalem.\footnote{This chorus was published as a supplement to The Musical Times with slightly altered words. ‘Hearken, O Lord’, Anthem for Bass solo and chorus, \textit{MT}, 1 February 1885, [facing p. 85].} Mackenzie deploys his chorus in a similar manner in \textit{Sayid} where they play the parts of soldiers, people and attendants on Ilmas, and it is possible that this is another reason why he favoured the possible staging of the cantata rather than the longer oratorio.

Whereas operatic writing predominates in the first and third parts of \textit{The Rose}, scene two of the second part is almost completely scored for chorus and orchestra, presenting the Procession of the Ark of the Covenant through the streets of Jerusalem, as seen by the Sulamite from the palace.\footnote{\textit{The Rose} vs, 102–53.} The Procession is the longest section of music for chorus and orchestra included in Mackenzie’s dramatic choral works, with the exception of those cantatas, such as \textit{The Cotter’s Saturday Night} and \textit{Veni, Creator Spiritus}, expressly written for such forces. Not unexpectedly, the episode is of a sectional character in order to give the impression that the listener, in this case the Sulamite, is stationary as the procession passes and to allow different musical characterisation of the various groups. Maidens (SAA), elders (TTBB), shepherds accompanied by vinedressers...
(SAT), soldiers (ATB), priests (TTBB) and the people of the city (SATB), each have different thematic material to sing, often drawing on music heard earlier in the work, and each section is scored for different vocal arrangements to provide textural interest. Drawing most of its text from the Psalms rather than the Song of Solomon, the whole episode begins with a setting of the Jubilate (‘Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands’, Ps. 100) for full chorus in an almost Wesleyan, mid-Victorian church style and it acts as an introduction to the whole procession. After an instrumental March, the Maidens sing the words of Psalm 150 to a chromatically decorated and closely scored melody in C minor. An oriental flavour is added through the preponderance of augmented seconds in the vocal lines, echoing some of the melodies sung earlier by the Sulamite. The male chorus of elders sing in a homophonic style (Pss. 48 and 50), contrasting with the lyrical and pastoral section for the shepherds and vinedressers (Ps. 80), whose music draws upon material from the first part of the oratorio set in the village of Sulam. To the words of ‘Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty’ (Pss. 29 and 49), the soldiers sing a theme which has come to be associated with Solomon and is used earlier in the procession as part of the march heralding the approach of the maidens. To create a religioso atmosphere, Mackenzie sets the priests’ ‘I will wash my hands in innocency’ (Ps. 26) in the archaic manner of a chant. There is little harmonic or melodic movement in the choral parts in this section and the words of the male chorus are heard for the most part in bare fifths or octaves, accompanied by organ and strings. The procession ends with two large choruses; one written in a free contrapuntal style on the words ‘Arise, O Lord, unto Thy rest’, and the other being a reprise of the fugato, ‘God save the King!’ from the first section of the work.

Through this brief description of the choral styles used in the second part of the oratorio, it is possible to see how Mackenzie created an episode in the drama which centred around the chorus rather than the soloists. Its subsequent popularity as an excerpt from The Rose was substantial and probably due to its variety of choral textures, cumulative musical effect and the familiarity of the text from the Psalms. Mackenzie attempted to recreate this episode in the later Jubilee Ode (1887) in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Victoria’s accession, for which Bennett supplied the composer with a procession of nations from different parts of the Empire paying homage to the Queen. Though considerably shorter than the section in The Rose, the procession of the

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nations in *A Jubilee Ode* was more contrived and during its composition Mackenzie admitted to Bennett, ‘May the Lord forgive; but it is a dreadful potboiler I think!’\(^{85}\) However, in the words of Ernest Walker these traditional portions of Mackenzie’s oratorios and cantatas, ‘redolent of what might be called highly modernized Mendelssohnianism, are in their own way decidedly impressive’,\(^{86}\) and they contrast with the more modern, dramatic roles the chorus plays at other points. It is probable that Mackenzie wished solely to write his choruses in a dramatic style, but it was expected that nineteenth-century festival composers should provide music both suitable for the existing choirs and within their orbit of musical experience.

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One of the best examples of Mackenzie’s sustained choral writing is to be found in the cantata *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, which he wrote as the result of a commission from the Birmingham Festival in 1891. As mentioned above, the festival committee had asked Mackenzie to contribute a work for inclusion in their programmes as early as 1885, but his operatic obligations at the time meant that he could only offer an instrumental work, namely the Violin Concerto. Having attempted and failed to complete the large oratorio *The Lord of Life* for the 1888 festival, Mackenzie finally produced his long-awaited choral work three years later. For some reason, *Veni, Creator Spiritus* is not mentioned in the composer’s writings and, unlike most of his other choral works, references to it seldom appear in his personal correspondence, presumably because he did not need to collaborate with a librettist on the work. Mackenzie completed the cantata the day before New Year’s Eve 1890, some ten months before its premiere, and wrote to his friend, Kilburn, ‘I have just finished a work for Birmingham “Veni Creator Spiritus” for Chorus and orch. (no soli): lasts about a very full half-hour. I have put a lot I know, and more that I don’t know into it. But have hopes that this last child of mine (Op. 46) may live long.’\(^{87}\) In his choice of Dryden’s paraphrase of the eleventh-century Latin hymn, Mackenzie turned at last to one of the great authors of English literature. Many later critics have berated Mackenzie for accepting the ‘hackwork of men like Joseph Bennett

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\(^{85}\) Letter to Joseph Bennett, 15 March 1887 (Bennett Collection, MFCM156 B4716(14)).


\(^{87}\) Letter to Nicholas Kilburn, 30 December 1890 (NLS MS 21501, f. 122).
and Francis Hueffer, from whom nothing distinguished could come',\(^{88}\) rather than turning to the classics. It seems, however, that in their overgeneralisation they have omitted to examine this important work in the composer’s choral output.

Without the need for professional soloists, Mackenzie produced his musical textures in *Veni, Creator* from full chorus, a quartet of soloists (or semi-chorus) and orchestra. Indeed, the orchestra clearly provides more than just an instrumental accompaniment in the work and is essential in the introduction and the linking of the choral sections throughout. Whereas the scores of the dramatic choral works and lyrical dramas by Mackenzie are influenced by the vocally-orientated style of French opera, the composer’s music for *Veni, Creator* seems to exhibit the unabashed diatonicism of the German instrumental school as exemplified in the overture to Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger*, with its masterly handling of complex chromaticisms and dissonance within a controlled tonal context. Moreover, with its bias towards instrumental rather than vocal melodies, the choral writing in *Veni, Creator* suggests that Mackenzie wished his chorus to act as an equal partner to the orchestra. The integration of instrumental and choral forces in the cantata is further reflected in the way Mackenzie develops thematic material in the vocal parts which had initially been heard in the orchestra and vice versa. With such a close, symbiotic relationship between the two performing groups in the cantata, Mackenzie manages to produce one of his most homogeneous, intuitive and organically-developed scores, without recourse to the picturesque and often artificially-imposed method of representative themes to provide a semblance of musical coherence.

Possible models for *Veni, Creator Spiritus* are to be found in works such as Brahms’s *Schicksalslied* (Song of Destiny), Op. 54 (1871), and Parry’s *Blest Pair of Sirens* (1887), a setting of Milton’s *Ode: At a Solemn Music*. As choral odes, both of these pieces attempt to reconcile the demands of a poetic text with a suitable musical embodiment. Of the two composers, Brahms puts the need for musical symmetry first, applying a classical approach gleaned from instrumental music in order to create a satisfactory setting of the words. In the later work, Parry weds the different aspects of ‘voice and verse’ to create a choral setting which is as succinct in its response to the poetic text as it is in its eloquent musical structure. Dealing with the classical Pindaric form of the ode, Parry cleverly makes use of this structure with its strophe, antistrophe

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and epode, as a framework on which to hang his music. Dibble attributes the ‘acute sense of preparation and climax in *Blest Pair*’ to Parry’s ‘consummate understanding of Milton’s poetic structure which in turn produced a cohesive musical form of powerful simplicity’. The structurally repetitive, strophic text of the hymn which Mackenzie chose for *Veni, Creator* is considerably less complex than the well-established pattern of the ode set by Parry in *Blest Pair*. However, although Dryden’s translation preserves the essential strophes of the hymn, his paraphrase is less restrictive in the number of English lines employed to convey the meaning of the four lines of each verse in the original Latin. This freely-structured reading of the text contrasts with the more famous, seventeenth-century version by Bishop John Cosin (‘Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire’) which is still used in two services found in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* and often sung at Whitsun. A comparison of Dryden’s text with the six strophes of the Latin original confirms that the poet added an extra verse at the end of his paraphrase to serve as a Gloria and Amen. In his choral setting, Mackenzie has created an appropriate musical response to the poetic structure of the hymn, delineating the seven strophes with clearly contrasting sections during the course of the cantata, as shown in Table 3, below. Like Parry in *Blest Pair*, Mackenzie also places greater musical emphasis on the last lines of the poem, providing a huge choral fugue as the culmination of the preceding sections.

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90 *Veni, Creator Spiritus* is used in the important Anglican services for the Ordering of Priests and the Consecration of Bishops. See J. Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology* (London, 1892).
91 See *English Hymnal*, No. 153.
Table 3: A diagram of Veni, Creator Spiritus (1891), showing the three sections of the cantata.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGES</th>
<th>TEXTURE</th>
<th>TEXT</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Orchestral introduction</td>
<td>D major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-7</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Creator Spirit! by Whose aid The world's foundations first were laid, Come, visit every pious mind; Come, pour Thy joys on human kind; From sin and sorrow set us free, And make Thy temples worthy Thee.</td>
<td>D major, loose homophonic style for the opening statement, then moving into choral polyphony. Fugato with dense sequential counterpoint, modulating to A major (dominant area).</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Orchestral ritornello</td>
<td>A major (long tonic pedal), followed by a quick modulation to F major just before a cadence into the solo entry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-14</td>
<td>Solo section (SAA[or T]) Chorus Chorus/Soli Soli Soli/Chorus</td>
<td>O source of uncreated light, The Father's promised Paraclete! Thrice holy fount, thrice holy fire, Our hearts with heavenly love inspire. Come, and Thy sacred unction bring To sanctify us, while we sing.</td>
<td>F major [Three statements] Sung by the chorus leading to an interlude in A flat major, then soli mark the return to F major.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Orchestral episode</td>
<td>F major modulating to D major; use of the 'creator' and 'descend' motives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>Chorus (TTBB)</td>
<td>Plenteous of grace, descend from high, Rich in Thy sevenfold energy. Thou strength of His Almighty hand, Whose power does heaven and earth command, Proceeding Spirit, our defence, Who dost the gifts of tongues dispense, And crown'st Thy gift with eloquence.</td>
<td>Polyphonic and split voice parts in the chorus. Series of declamatory statements using motive from fugato on 'Come, pour thy joys'; doubling in thirds and octaves. Fugato on 'joys' motive, p. 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>Chorus (SATB)</td>
<td>Over an F (dominant) pedal; cadences into B flat major at the next choral entry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>Orchestral ritornello</td>
<td>D major to B flat major; based on 'creator' motive over a tonic pedal [cf. orch. ritornello pp. 7-8 of which this is a transposition]; metre change from duple (4/4) to triple (3/4).</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>Solo Quartet Chorus Solo Quartet Chorus</td>
<td>Over an F (dominant) pedal; cadences into B flat major at the next choral entry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Chorus Solo Quartet</td>
<td>Fugato entries moving to a more homophonic texture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Free polyphonic writing based on 'creator' motive. Unified choral statements (hemiolas). Move from B flat to D major (on a dominant pedal). Orchestral link ends with hemiola rhythms to prepare for time change.</td>
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<td>56-59</td>
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Chapter 4: The Choral Music
Although the cantata is through-composed, the individual sections of the work shown in Table 3 may be grouped into three ‘movements’ or parts which have a direct relationship to the sentiments expressed in the poetry. Acting as an invocation to the ‘Creator Spirit’, the first three verses of the poem comprise the initial part of the cantata (vocal score, pp. 1–21). Set in a ternary form with the central passage in tonal juxtaposition to the two outer sections, this first part of the cantata firmly establishes D major as the home key of the entire work. A substantial orchestral introduction prefaces both the cantata and the first part, and is written in a similar kind of ‘muscular tonality’ said by Dibble to characterise the instrumental writing of Blest Pair. In the initial unison fanfare, Mackenzie introduces the opening ‘creator’ motif sung by the chorus at their entry (see Music example 6). However, whereas the orchestra’s motive is set in the tonic D major, the chorus’s statement is transposed a fifth higher, thereby using the D major established by the introduction as a dominant chord in order to cadence temporarily into G major, the subdominant. Although there follow a number of cadences over the course of the next few phrases, none of them is strong enough to re-establish the strong tonic of D major championed by the introduction and, in this way, Mackenzie uses the chorus to move away from the home key to the dominant A major before the next orchestral episode. The first few phrases of choral writing in this section are generally homophonic with some slight variation in the inner parts. At rehearsal figure B in the vocal score (p. 3), a natural polyphony breaks out which follows the rapid semiquavers of the accompaniment in the previous bars and, more importantly, this introduces a fugato on ‘Come, pour Thy joys on human kind’, being the second main melodic figure used throughout the work (see Music example 7). The subsequent A major orchestral ritornello is based on the melodic motives from the introduction and the first choral section, but soon modulates to F major in preparation for the mixed solo and choral settings of the hymn’s second verse, ‘O source of uncreated light’.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

Music example 6: The 'creator' motive as introduced by the chorus at the start of Veni, Creator.

Music example 7: The fugato motive on 'Come, pour Thy joys on human kind'.

Coming between the shared thematic material of the first and third verses of the hymn, the second verse in the contrasting key of F major provides a moment of relief from the bright D major sections which surround it. Initially set for three voices, soprano and divided altos (or tenor in place of the second alto if a solo quartet is used), this section is reminiscent of the beautiful female choruses included by Mackenzie in the course of The Rose and Sayid. However, the composer probably chose this texture to reflect the words 'Thrice holy fount, thrice holy fire', which he sets in three statements, repeating the second phrase twice. An air of serenity characterises this section and, with the absence of the bass voice, the texture is somehow lighter and more translucent. While the choral writing is less contrapuntally involved than previously, it still retains an imitative element in the part-writing and, for the most part, the textural interest lies in the opposition of one voice to the other two, or the alternation of soloists with chorus. The section beginning 'Our hearts with heavenly love inspire' moves away from F major towards the flattened submediant key of A flat major over an A flat pedal in the bass (vs, p. 10). This tonal interlude does not last long before the bass pedal climbs to a B flat and then to a C acting as the dominant to F major, to which key the music returns on p. 12 after the repetition of the text by the solo voices (vs, p. 11, bottom). The final couplet of the second verse is set in a similar style to the rest of the section and in its final
interrupted cadence onto the dominant of D minor leads seamlessly into the orchestral episode which moves the music back towards the home key of D.

The third portion of the first part of *Veni, Creator* continues the counterpoint so integral to the opening section and indeed it has close motivic and tonal links with the earlier section. To contrast with the femininity of the F major section, Mackenzie begins with a setting of the words ‘Plenteous of grace’ for four-part male chorus. The melodic motives used for these words are foreshadowed in the previous orchestral episode, in which are found both the dotted stepwise ascent of a third for ‘Plenteous of grace’ and the downward leap of a fifth for the second part of the phrase, ‘descend from high’. A homophonic choral statement for ‘Rich in Thy sevenfold energy’ is quickly followed by a syncopated contrapuntal section, before the motive from the former fugato on ‘Come, pour forth Thy joys’ is introduced in a series of declamatory statements using the words ‘whose power does heaven and earth command.’ These statements precede a largely homophonic section which dissipates into a further fugato on the same motive. Like the instrumental passage on pp. 7–8 of which this is almost a direct transposition, the orchestral ritornello which concludes the third section of the first part is based on the ‘creator’ motive, though this time over a tonic pedal rather than the dominant as before. As the tonality moves from D major to B flat, the metre is also transformed from quadruple to triple by a series of syncopations and hemiolas, effecting the change to the central, *Andante tranquillo* section of the work.

Among other things, the middle section of *Veni, Creator* is differentiated from the others by its triple metre. However, whereas the internal passages within the outer sections are more clearly delineated, the central section is freer in its internal construction with fewer structural limitations than the ternary form of the first section. This allowed Mackenzie the license to react in a more direct way to the statements in the text and goes some way to explain the line-by-line treatment of the poetry, resulting in a series of fugatos which lead each time into more settled homophonic writing. These fugatos need little comment and are described in Table 3, above. The focus of the central section is the sixth verse of the hymn, ‘Make us eternal truths receive’, which Mackenzie sets in the form of a freely written fugal exposition. Heard first in the soprano line, the subject of the fugue is a triple metre version of the ‘creator’ motive and is initially heard against a florid line of quavers in the bass voice (see Music example 8). Mackenzie does not allow
the full fugue to be worked out in the score and it is interrupted by the homophonic statements for full chorus on ‘Give us Thyself’, which culminate in a statement using the triple-metre ‘creator’ motive just before the key changes from B flat to D to end the central part of the cantata (vs, p. 33).

Music example 8: The beginning of the fugal exposition at the sixth verse of the hymn, ‘Make us eternal truths receive’, (vs, p. 30), using a triple metre version of the ‘creator’ motive as the subject.

The denouement of *Veni, Creator Spiritus* is the final part, a setting of the last verse of Dryden’s paraphrase which has no precedent in either the Latin original or Cosin’s earlier translation. In effect, the final verse acts as a Gloria to the text and Mackenzie seized the opportunity to set it as a contrapuntal *tour de force*, drawing on the extensive counterpoint earlier in the work and, on this occasion, allowing it to develop as a fully-matured sectional choral fugue. Beginning in a moderate *alla breve*, the first section of the fugue is based on a diatonic subject characterised by the two initial intervals of a descending fifth and a rising octave (see Music example 9, below), with the voices entering in turn from Soprano to Bass. At rehearsal figure A (p. 37), the tenor introduces a different version of the subject with the head altered so that the second interval is a seventh rather than an octave. Apart from strengthening the contrapuntal diatonicism of the section, this new version later appears on equal terms with the original subject of the fugue at rehearsal figure H, over the long dominant pedal in the bass. However, it does not affect the flow of the first section which soon modulates to the relative minor key in preparation for some new thematic material given to the solo quartet on ‘The Saviour Son be glorified’ (see Music example 10). Rather than treating this new theme fugally, Mackenzie pairs the solo voices so that the tenor and the soprano sing it as a duet in the tonic key (B minor) before the alto and the bass commence their duet on the dominant, with freely adapted counterpoint in the other two voices. Eventually the soloists make way for the chorus which continues in a similar contrapuntal

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91 An interesting comparison can be drawn with a similar procedure in Parry’s *Thanksgiving Te Deum* (1900).
style until the music comes to rest on a dominant pedal in D major (pp. 46–47). Mackenzie uses this pedal to signify the end of the first two sections of the fugue and an important reminiscence of the ‘creator’ motive is provided in the soprano line to the words ‘Attend the Almighty Father’s name’ before the new section commences.

Music example 9: Fugal subject on 'Immortal honour, endless fame ...' (vs, p. 35).

Music example 10: The new thematic material on 'The Saviour Son be glorified' (vs, p. 39).

A renewed attack is made on the subject and altered subject at the piu mosso of rehearsal figure H, each alternating with the other in the choral entries. Building up the tonal tension, the fugue develops in much the same sectional manner as before, with one point of interest being the appearance of an augmented version of the subject in the soprano line at rehearsal figure K (p. 53), echoed shortly after in the bass line. As the tempo increases towards the final bars, the harmony becomes more chromatic than before, especially after the dominant pedal and even longer tonic pedal on pp. 54–55. Numerous snatches of the fugal subject are heard until the choral parts cadence into the Presto section on p. 104. Although now notated in crotchets rather than semiquavers, the orchestra repeats some of the material from the introduction based on the ‘creator’ motive before the final choral Amen and subsequent largamente orchestral cadence.

Although the involved contrapuntal processes in Veni, Creator are hardly representative of Mackenzie’s work in general, it is interesting to see how he approached the more ‘academic’ side of musical composition. The cantata shows him to have the
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

ability to handle long-term vocal and developmental structures not dependent on
dramatic stimuli and, more importantly, to maintain interest by means of musical rather
than picturesque techniques. In the words of The Musical Times’ special correspondent
at the Birmingham Festival, ‘We have, therefore, a very homogeneous work, wherein all
the resources of choral writing are drawn upon and used as a master uses them. [...] Dr
Mackenzie has written nothing better in its way than this solid, noble, and convincing
music.’93 However, in his emulation of a ‘style in music which Englishmen accept as
peculiarly sacred’,94 Mackenzie the practical musician assumed himself into the academic
musical establishment in a way he had not previously done, inviting the oft-quoted
criticism of Bernard Shaw about the seemingly self-congratulatory trio of composers at
the centre of British musical life.

If you doubt that Eden is a masterpiece, ask Dr Parry and Dr Mackenzie, and
they will applaud it to the skies. Surely Dr Mackenzie’s opinion is conclusive; for is he
not the composer of Veni, Creator as guaranteed excellent music by Professor Stanford
and Dr Parry? You want to know who Dr Parry is? Why, the composer of Blest Pair of
Sirens, as to the merits of which you have only to consult Dr Mackenzie and Professor
Stanford.95

Shaw’s critical comments aside, it is a shame that, with this work, possibly the most
adventurous in the genre of pure choral music attempted by the composer, together with
his contemporaries Parry and Stanford, Mackenzie should be seen to have given way to
the conservative musical academicism so far from the modern dramatic style he normally
espoused and for which he was well known. There is little wonder that, from this period,
Mackenzie’s interest in choral music began to wane, when neither his dramatic or
contrapuntal musical styles proved popular with his audiences and collaboration with his
journalistic librettists was becoming increasingly difficult.

* * * * *

Having examined how Mackenzie tackled both dramatic and non-dramatic choral
music as represented in The Rose of Sharon and Veni, Creator Spiritus, it now only
remains to consider his most unusual choral work, The Dream of Jubal (1889). A hybrid
of orchestral and choral music combined with melodramatic recitation, Jubal is

93 ‘Birmingham Musical Festival’, MT, 1 November 1891, 660.
94 Ibid.
simultaneously both innovative and stylistically retrospective. Its innovation lies in the extensive use of recitation with a sympathetic orchestral accompaniment; the retrospective element of the work is to be found in the choral and solo numbers, which, set within the modernity of the recitation, are stylistically more analogous with mid-century choral works. However, this is not to say that the musical numbers are unworthy of comment in their own right, merely that they are of little musicological interest in comparison with the concept of the recitation itself. When approached with the idea for a work making use of recitation by Bennett in May 1888, Mackenzie approved without hesitation.

The idea is very good and I think we might at once agree to take it up. As the piece is written for a choral performance it would be necessary almost to give the greater prominence [to] the Chorus. The declamatory part need not be long, but I think we ought to keep to that idea. I believe that pieces with declamation have not been a success but I am sure that this is because the part for the reader is too long and tedious, tiring the audience out.96

In planning *Jubal*, Mackenzie and Bennett were careful to keep the sections of recitation as short as possible, and, apart from a long Introduction for speaker and orchestra at the start of the work, the spoken passages between the later solo and choral movements are kept to a minimum. This is facilitated to a great extent by the nature of the story: in ancient times, Jubal, a Biblical Apollo figure, creates a lyre from a tortoiseshell and, as a result of his invention, is visited by an angel with visions of what music will be like in the future. Necessarily varied in nature, these musical visions become the choral and solo movements in the cantata, while the narrator also assumes the roles of Jubal and the angel, moving the story from one vision to another (see Table 4, below, for the overall structure of the work). With relatively traditional formal structures, the numbers themselves portray the choral music of a cathedral, a song of comfort, a victorious march and chorus, a labourer’s song, a funeral march, a lovers’ duet, and a final invocation to music for both soloists and chorus. The solo numbers are reminiscent of those Mackenzie wrote for his other cantatas of the period, *A Jubilee Ode* and *Ode: The New Covenant*, and the marches are similar to those found in *The Rose of Sharon* and *The Story of Sayid*. The antiphonal setting of the Latin Gloria, the longest movement in *Jubal*, is scored for chorus and SATB soloists. Whilst not attaining the technical assurance of the diatonic contrapuntal writing evident later in *Veni, Creator*,

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96 Letter to Joseph Bennett, 23 May 1888 (Bennett Collection, MFCM156.B4716(27)).
the Gloria does end with an alla breve fugue in 6/4 on the words ‘cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris, Amen’ in a mid-century Victorian church style.

Table 4: A plan of the movements in The Dream of Jubal (1889).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages (vs)</th>
<th>Movement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–11</td>
<td>No. 1: Introduction (speaker and orchestra)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12–42</td>
<td>No. 2: ‘Gloria in Excelsis’ (soli and chorus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>43–45</td>
<td>Link (speaker and orchestra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46–50</td>
<td>No. 3: ‘The Lord is Good’ (soprano)</td>
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<tr>
<td>50–53</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53–65</td>
<td>No. 4: Triumphant March and Chorus: ‘Hail! to our Chief’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66–68</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69–77</td>
<td>No. 5: The Song of the Sickle (tenor and chorus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79–87</td>
<td>No. 6: Funeral March and Chorus</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89–94</td>
<td>No. 7: Duet, ‘Mine! and the Shadows have vanished from Life’ (soprano and tenor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>95–97</td>
<td>Link</td>
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<tr>
<td>98–115</td>
<td>No. 8: Invocation (soli and chorus)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recitation itself in Jubal is another demonstration of Mackenzie’s affinity with theatricality and the dramatic in music. The use of melodrama was a peculiarly nineteenth-century technique first used by German composers such as Beethoven in Fidelio and Mendelssohn in his music to A Midsummer Night’s Dream. However, in The Dream of Jubal Mackenzie took the use of melodramatic recitation one stage further by making it not only incidental to the music, but integral to the whole conception. As a well-known master of orchestration, Mackenzie was more than competent at providing an appropriate accompaniment for a speaker and this is ably demonstrated in the Introduction of the cantata, the longest section of recitation in the work. With a relatively small number of recognisable melodic themes, the composer is able to depict Jubal’s first attempt at playing his new lyre and the reaction of the natural world to these new sounds. In many ways, the recitation in The Dream of Jubal is no more than an extension of nineteenth-century programme music, of which the composer was so fond and had written two notable examples for orchestra during the 1880s, La belle dame sans merci and the Twelfth Night overture. In effect, using a narrator to speak over the music goes one step further than providing a programme note to describe the sound which the listener will hear. This technique was later used by other British composers such as Bliss in Morning Heroes (1930) and Vaughan Williams in An Oxford Elegy.
Chapter 4: The Choral Music

(1949), though neither employed recitation as extensively as Mackenzie, who also wrote and published a set of recitations of popular verse for speaker and piano.\(^\text{97}\)

Written mostly during the last half of 1888, *The Dream of Jubal* was commissioned by William Clarke for the Jubilee Concert of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society and at its initial performance on 5 February 1889 was accorded a very good reception. Due to the speed at which the work was written, Mackenzie had to enlist the help of Eduard Silas to score some of the Triumphal March and the last chorus, although he arranged the more delicate solo sections himself.\(^\text{98}\) Conscious of the pressures from Liverpool in having the cantata ready for rehearsal, Mackenzie was adamant that the chorus would not get their parts until six weeks in advance of the performance and told Bennett that ‘These successful Grocers need to be taken up quickly and I must stop [their] irritating correspondence.’\(^\text{99}\) However, on having conducted the cantata, Mackenzie noted how in performance the work took a great deal out of him, and, apart from the novelty of the conception, he considered Bennett’s contribution to be ‘the best libretto ever written.’\(^\text{100}\) The role of the speaker in *Jubal* was created by the actor Charles Fry, and he was often requested to recreate the role at later performances of the work, even sailing out to Canada to bring the cantata to new audiences during Mackenzie’s tour of the colony in 1903.

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Like most of his contemporaries, Mackenzie used the genre of choral music to establish his national reputation as a composer in late-Victorian Britain. Without the early successes of works such as the Scotch Rhapsodies and *The Bride* he would not have received a commission to write *Colomba* for the Carl Rosa company; and had it not been for the operatic success of *Colomba*, Mackenzie would not have been asked to write *The Rose of Sharon*, perhaps his greatest essay in the choral genre. It is significant that the composer’s operatic and choral works are interdependent in terms of commission, because the latter share a great deal of common stylistic ground with the

\(^{97}\) Recitations set to music for piano, Op. 59, J. Williams 1899. There are also two other unpublished recitations in the RAM manuscript collection.

\(^{98}\) Letter to Joseph Bennett, 12 October 1888 (Bennett Collection, MFCM156.B4716(33)).

\(^{99}\) Ibid.

\(^{100}\) Letter to Joseph Bennett, 28 February 1889 (Bennett Collection, MFCM156.B4716(40)).
former. In the same way that Handel used the sacred oratorio to present his secular musical style which was heavily influenced by Italian opera, Mackenzie employed his own operatic idiom, as represented in the two lyrical dramas, for the scores of his dramatic oratorios and cantatas. In so doing he produced works which exhibit the influence of both French opera and Lisztian harmony in their solo sections, whilst the choral portions can be placed in a direct line from mid-century Romantic oratorio as initiated by Mendelssohn. His masterpiece in the genre of choral music, *The Rose of Sharon*, has all of these. It not only falls chronologically between the composition of *Colomba* and *The Troubadour*, but also follows similar structural precedents traditionally associated with opera.

Even though Mackenzie had long lost his predilection for choral music by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, he did take time to reconsider *The Rose* for a performance at the Alexandra Palace in 1910, just before he also revised *Colomba* for a production by the RCM opera class under Stanford in 1912. Ever since the first performance of the oratorio, he had considered it to be too long, and his devotion to and belief in the work is demonstrated in his revision of the score over a quarter of a century later. ‘Shorn of a prosy Elder and several unnecessary numbers, the dramatic action gained in conciseness,’ the composer explained, ‘in a completely revised edition (published in 1910) with the omission of Prologue and Epilogue, some of the words rewritten and a new Part IV, any suggestion of a religious basis disappeared.’ Having divested the work of its parabolic emphasis, the oratorio became less susceptible to the theological criticism which marred its initial reception into the festival repertory. In losing some of its Biblical significance, *The Rose* assumed its true nature as a story of erotic Eastern love with an intense and dramatic setting by the composer. Writing to his Austrian colleague, Angelo von Eisner-Eisenhof, Mackenzie speculated, ‘Whether watering and cutting will make this old Rose bloom again, remains, of course, to be seen.’

101 *MN*, 124. After the initial publication of the full vocal score in 1884 (262 pages), *The Rose* was soon after issued in a more compact version (238 pages) which lacked the first three numbers of the original Part IV (Chorus: ‘The fields of the Beloved languish’, Solo: ‘Gladness is taken away’ (contralto), Solo: ‘Thus saith the Holy One of Israel’ (bass)) and the Epilogue. A different orchestral introduction was also included to introduce the now initial chorus, ‘O Lord, be gracious unto us’.

The revisions in the 1910 score (196 pages) are more extensive and mostly concern the omission of choruses in the first two parts as well as a complete structural overhaul of Part IV.

The performance by over a thousand participants of *The Rose* in its revised version at the Alexandra Palace took place under Mr Allen Gill in November 1910.103 Having come after the first production of *The Sun-god’s Return* at Cardiff in September of the same year, this performance of *The Rose* marked the end of Mackenzie’s public relationship with choral music, and it is fitting that he should end it with a reconsideration of his best work in the genre, even if the occasion cannot rightly be called a ‘premiere’. Although the composer undertook further work on his Miltonian oratorio, *The Temptation*, this was never completed and, with the onset of hostilities in Europe and the resultant hiatus in the annual round of the provincial choral festivals during the 1910s, this work would have been unlikely to have received a performance. After the war, sensing that the committees of the choral festivals were likely to turn to the younger generation of composers for their novelties, Mackenzie wrote no further choral music and thus closed an important and fruitful chapter in his compositional career.

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103 "*The Rose of Sharon*” at the Alexandra Palace — November 5’, *MT*, 1 December 1910, 782.
Chapter 5: The Later Operas

Following the respective public success and failure of his Carl Rosa commissions, *Colomba* (1883) and *The Troubadour* (1886), Mackenzie appears to have lost direction in his operatic composition during the 1890s. Francis Hueffer, his collaborator on the lyrical dramas, had died at the end of the previous decade and, as a result of the ill-feeling surrounding the production of *The Troubadour*, the two men did not speak to one another again for the remaining three years of the librettist's life. In addition to the well-known difficulty that almost every professional musician found in dealing with Hueffer, it is probable that the silence between him and Mackenzie was further fuelled by the composer's continuing work with Joseph Bennett on his choral commissions during the 1880s and 1890s. However, the discussion of this relationship in Chapter 4 has shown that the relationship of Mackenzie and Bennett suffered from the same tensions as the composer had with his earlier collaborator. With the premature death of Carl Rosa in the same year as Hueffer, Mackenzie lost another important colleague and mentor for his operatic work. Moreover, the British musical establishment was deprived of an impresario who firmly believed in the provision of operatic productions in English, either as translations of contemporary Continental operas or as newly commissioned works from native composers. By the end of the 1880s the work of Rosa and his company and the new management of Covent Garden had raised the profile of opera in London and the provinces, and audiences were now more eager to explore the Continental repertory in translation rather than hear new native works, a situation which had an adverse effect on the operatic fortunes of composers such as Mackenzie.

As a composer of opera with no high-profile commissions to ensure good quality productions of his work, Mackenzie found himself in a frustrating and difficult situation. His two earlier essays in the genre had been written more or less at leisure in Italy, where he could devote himself wholly to their production. Now that he and his family had moved to London, Mackenzie was distracted by his responsibilities as Principal of the RAM and conductor of the Philharmonic Society, and he had even less time to invest in such time-consuming endeavours. This resulted in several abandoned and half-finished projects, described in Chapter XXX of his *Narrative* ("Some "Might-Have-Beens"”), which occupied Mackenzie’s time during the early years of the 1890s. Bereft of a literary
operatic partner, Mackenzie was unable, or loathe, to provide himself with his own librettos and he cast around for many possible subjects and collaborators. Following his operatic development in the large-scale lyrical dramas *Colomba* and *The Troubadour*, Mackenzie’s next project was ‘a Grand Opera in four Acts, dealing with Duke Alva and the Netherlands on a Meyerbeerian scale’. Unfortunately no sketches or manuscript material for this opera exist in the Mackenzie collection at the RAM, so it is impossible to assess the scale of the work completed by the composer or even the breadth of the subject matter and libretto. Considering the demise of this opera, Mackenzie recollected that ‘a large portion was sketched before the hopelessness of a production deterred further progress.’ Obviously Mackenzie discovered that it was not a good idea to engage on such a large project without the commercial and artistic backing afforded by a commission from an impresario such as Rosa.

Another of Mackenzie’s works which has been lost without a production is the three-act operetta *Phoebe*, Op. 51, written to a libretto by B. C. Stephenson. In 1886 the librettist had previously supplied a book for the comic opera *Dorothy* by Alfred Cellier (1844–1891) and it can only be assumed that *Phoebe* would have been in the same vein as this earlier work. Although never performed, *Phoebe* was completed in its entirety, filed away in a drawer by the composer and subsequently lost, with neither the manuscript scores or libretto surviving. This enigmatic state of affairs seems all the more curious considering that many sketches and incomplete compositions survive in the Mackenzie collection at the RAM, yet nothing can be attributed to this lost work. Moreover, nothing is known of the subject of the libretto, which presumably revolved around the exploits of the heroine named in the title. There are two contemporary references to *Phoebe* in interviews with the composer yet neither of them gives any idea of the subject matter or construction of the operetta. Fortunately, references to *Phoebe* or ‘eine Komische Oper’ in Mackenzie’s personal correspondence and a long biographical article on Mackenzie written by Charles Willeby allow the composition and

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1 *MN*, 243.
2 *Dorothy* was first produced at the Gaiety Theatre, London, on 25 September 1886.
4 Letter to Giuseppe Buonamici, 13 August 1891, NLS Acc. 9698 (2359); letter to Joseph Bennett, 25 April 1893, Pierpont Morgan Library, MFC M156 B4716(70). In the latter document Mackenzie writes, ‘I am trying to finish a little comic opera (with B. C. Stephenson) which I have occasionally written snatches of. Another month ought to finish it now.’
completion of *Phoebe* to be dated to the period 1891–93. Speaking of Mackenzie’s incidental music to Irving’s production of *Ravenswood* showing the composer ‘in a new light’, Willeby commented that ‘there are many to whom it will come as a surprise to know that he has by him the score of a comic opera written to a ‘book’ by the author of “Dorothy”.’⁵ Although it was a complete work, *Phoebe* must have suffered the same fate as the earlier grand opera about the Duke of Alva with no prospects of a possible production.

Although there is little documentary or anecdotal evidence concerning its subject matter, the importance of *Phoebe*, the composer’s first operetta, lies in his adoption of a lighter, comical premise for musical theatre. This hints at a more general change in attitude towards his operatic work and is further reflected in the subjects and librettos of *His Majesty, The Knights of the Road*, and, to a lesser extent, *The Cricket on the Hearth*. Writing about the latter, Mackenzie isolated his reasons for this different subjective outlook which pervaded not only his operatic output, but also his orchestral and instrumental essays, of which the overture *Britannia* and *Suite: London, day by day* are products.

Apart from personal inclination, it was not quite without an ulterior motive that my fancy turned to thoughts of a lighter genre of composition at this period. I was aware that a mawkishly-morbid, thoroughly un-British style, which I cordially detest, was rapidly influencing the minds of the talented young folks with whom I was in daily contact and for the public production of whose works I was responsible. While not foolish enough to imagine that tides can be stemmed, I was not afraid to wet my feet and thought that cheerful example might be better than precept or preachment.⁶

Indeed, there are many examples of ‘lighter’ musical style in Mackenzie’s output, and they are not limited to this period beginning in the 1890s. However, the style of music he employed in these operettas is quite different to that on which he based the lyrical dramas. It shows that, as an accomplished composer, Mackenzie was well able to provide the most appropriate musical setting to complement the libretto on which he currently worked, regardless of any previous stylistic tendencies.

In contrast to the comic subject of *Phoebe*, Mackenzie’s compositional work during the 1890s also encompassed two other short operas which concentrate on more serious librettos. The first of these is *Le Luthier de Crémone*, based on a translation of

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⁵ Willeby, *op. cit.*, 171.
⁶ MN, 206.
François Coppée’s original drama by Sutherland Edwards and the second portrays a maritime Cornish story with the original libretto supplied by Frederick Corder, Professor of Composition and Curator of the RAM under Mackenzie. The composer began work on *Le Luthier de Crémone* during or before 1894 and had the English translation of the drama made at his own request. The story of the drama revolves around the famous violin-makers of the North Italian town of Cremona who vie with each other to produce the best instruments possible. A reconstruction of the libretto from the sketch vocal score (RAM MS 1285) introduces four main characters and the chorus. Giannina, the daughter of the craftsman Ferrari, has fallen in love with his apprentice Sandro. However, a competition is to be held amongst the guild members to find the violin which can ‘surpass all others in this town’ and, in addition to the prize of the late Podestà’s gold chain, Ferrari has promised to give his house and the hand of his daughter to whoever wins the contest. Giannina protests that she may become the unwilling wife of a drunkard or ‘a brute who beats a woman’, to which her father retorts that the former ‘genial failing, dear, is sometimes mine’, before singing a drinking song. Ferrari exits and Giannina is found by the love-sick Sandro whom she questions about whether he has completed his violin for the competition. Having been left alone by Sandro, Giannina is joined by Filippo, her father’s other apprentice. ‘The poor deformed, despised Filippo, object of sneers and stones’ is also in love with his master’s daughter and he tells her of his violin which is sure to win the competition. ‘In shape, construction, it resembles others but in one special point it stands alone. For I have found the secret of the varnish known to the ancient masters, theirs alone, now lost, yes wholly lost to their posterity.’ Having described his creation to Giannina, Filippo mistakes her tears as those of love for him (‘Oh magic power of art! I whom all mocked with laughter now draw tears’), whereas she cries for her impending loss of Sandro. The final section of the manuscript is a setting of Filippo’s soliloquy in which he realises that his love for Giannina is not

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7 Henry Sutherland Edwards (1828–1906) was an author and journalist who had worked on the staff of *Punch* and *The Times* before becoming the first editor of the *Graphic* in 1869. His later publications included musical histories and biographies, as well as translations.

8 The manuscript sketches of this opera are without a title. However, when Mackenzie sorted out his manuscript scores in the mid-1920s he noted on the first page of the score (RAM MS 1195) ‘Cornish Opera Book by Corder Lost by Gus Harris.’ (See footnote 15, page 157.) The present author has decided to refer to this work in the following discussion and Catalogue Appendix as *The Cornish Opera*.

9 RAM MS 1281 (sketches) and 1285 (sketch vocal score). The former manuscript was originally attached to a letter from Sutherland Edwards to Mackenzie which briefly discusses the libretto and is dated 21 July 1894; the latter manuscript is dated at the end ‘Marlotte 1894 Sept 21’.

10 All quotations of dialogue from the libretto are taken from RAM MS 1285.
returned. At this point the sixteen double-sided pages of the sketch manuscript vocal score end.

Despite its initial strong resonances of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*, the scenario which Mackenzie chose to set seems to offer many opportunities for musico-dramatic inspiration. Unfortunately the manuscript sketches give only a partial insight into the music Mackenzie envisaged for the opera. A construction of this music would be a fruitless task since neither the libretto nor the vocal score are complete in terms of the drama and it would be impossible to ascertain what direction the music would have taken. With the concentration of the plot on the violin, Mackenzie's own first study during his training as a musician, the composer would, no doubt, have produced wonderful instrumental showpieces and soothing ballads within the drama, recreating his earlier successes of the Violin Concerto, *Pibroch, Highland Ballad* and *Benedictus*. Also fewer principal characters in the drama would have resulted in a tight ensemble performance if the opera had been produced. Mackenzie later related, however, that the composition of *Le Luthier de Crémore* had to be abandoned because the translation by Edwards was mislaid 'without hope of recovery'.\(^\text{11}\) Considering that Edwards's translation was an almost verbatim version of Coppée's original drama, it could easily have been attempted once more and the opera completed, but, despite the time he had invested in the sketches, Mackenzie obviously forsook this score for other musical projects.

Such difficulties of completion were not an issue for Mackenzie in his next operatic project, *The Cornish Opera*, written to a libretto by Frederick Corder. As Professor of Composition at the RAM, Corder had already composed several operas himself and had won critical acclaim for his work, *Nordisa*, Op. 17, commissioned by Carl Rosa for his company's 1887 season. The biographical entry on Corder in *Grove*\(^2\) lists several other operas and operettas completed before the composition of *Nordisa* and also states that 'Mr Corder is understood to have completed several other operas for his own gratification, as it is hardly likely, in existing conditions, that they will see the light.' The collaboration between the Principal of the Academy and its Professor of Composition to produce an opera may initially seem strange, but Corder was also known

\(^{11}\) *MN*, 243.
for his literary works and working together professionally would have provided many opportunities for discussion of the opera.

The apparently complete manuscript vocal score of *The Cornish Opera* is considerably fuller than that of *Le Luthier* and runs to over fifty double-sided pages. Although the pages of the manuscript are not in strict dramatic order, it is again possible to reconstruct the libretto on which Mackenzie worked. Set on the coast of Cornwall, the story begins with the villagers’ return from the local fair with a storm brewing in the distance. Rhea Pernarvon, the lighthouse keeper’s wife, questions one of the men (Rory) about the group of ‘strange sailors’ who were present at the fair: ‘Cornish men they are but strange here.’ Immediately she is reminded of Alan, her former fiancé, who went to sea and promised to return and marry her when he had made his fortune. Musing on the identity of the sailors, she returns inside to soothe her baby with a Cradle Song and to await the arrival of her husband, David, from the fair. On his return, David attempts to cheer his wife knowing that she has been brooding on her lost love. Eight months earlier, when Alan had left on a ship from Gorran Port and she despaired of his return, David had married Rhea and taken responsibility for her then unborn child. He tells Rhea of the sailors at the fair and how one of the men spoke of her and asked David to give her a pearl earring which matches the single one she is accustomed to wear. During supper David presents his wife with the shawl he has bought for her and then leaves to prepare the lighthouse’s beacon for the night. Now alone, Rhea hears someone approach and she sees Alan enter at the garden gate. They talk and, reeling from the revelations of Rhea’s marriage to Pernarvon and the birth of the child, Alan leaves again with one of the earrings to sail away with his ship from the port despite the tempest which has now arrived. Having overheard the last part of their conversation, David fears he might lose his wife and the baby. Alan’s ship founders on the rocks of the bay and David is called by a neighbour to help rescue the crew. Taking the other earring from Rhea, David proves his love for her by saving Alan from the wreckage and loses his own life in the waves as Rhea watches horrified from the cliff-edge above.

In the same way that *Le Luthier de Crémone* has echoes of Wagner’s dramatic masterpiece, with his libretto based on a Cornish coastal scenario, Corder and Mackenzie

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12 Quotations of dialogue taken from RAM MS 1195. NB In the manuscript Rhea is also called Annie, and Alan appears as Willie — the author must have had a change of heart while writing the libretto.
pre-empted many later successful British maritime operas, including Smyth's *The Wreckers* (1906) and Britten's *Peter Grimes* (1945). In *The Cornish Opera*, Mackenzie had again chosen a libretto which concentrated on a very small number of characters, enabling him to explore their emotional development during the course of the plot in a manner denied him to a certain extent in the lyrical dramas. Obviously, in the absence of commissions from a large and well-organised company such as Rosa's, the composer aimed at a different audience in his operatic output. Small-scale operas were more likely to be produced by provincial and ad hoc companies or appear as 'fillers' on the programmes of the larger ones. In his interview on opera for *The Musical Times* in 1894 referred to in Chapter 3, Mackenzie was asked the question 'Are you in favour of one-acters?' 'I have said that I regard three acts as the ideal form;' he replied, 'but operas in one act are by no means to be sneered at. They are being overdone at present, of course; but what of that? There is room for operas in one act — good ones.' As would be expected, Mackenzie's attitude to the interviewer's question is symptomatic of his own work at the time; if it was not possible to write in the grand style of the Rosa company's lyrical dramas of the 1880s, then one-act operas were the next best thing for a composer to produce.

Having completed the majority of *The Cornish Opera* by 1896, Mackenzie was approached by Augustus Harris, Rosa's deputy during the Drury Lane seasons of the 1880s and by then ensconced at Covent Garden, where he had introduced the House to opera in its original language. 'The book passed into Augustus Harris's hands at his own bidding, not many weeks before his death,' explained the composer, 'but, after that event, search and inquiry failed to restore it to its owner.' Harris may well have been seriously considering a production of Mackenzie’s opera and presumably saw a much fuller version of the vocal score than that which has survived in the Academy's manuscript collection. As with the proposed revival of *Colomba* by Rosa at the end of the 1880s, Mackenzie was robbed of the opportunity to present his operatic work before the general public, knowing only too well that half the battle for the opera composer was to secure a production. In the same paragraph in which an allusion to the earlier *Phoebe* appeared, *The Cornish Opera* was mentioned once again in the important biographical

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14 *MN*, 243. Sir Augustus Harris died in 1896.
15 The author hopes that this complete copy of *The Cornish Opera* may one day come to light.
article on Mackenzie published in *The Musical Times* a couple of years after Harris’s
death.16

Each of the four incomplete operatic projects on which Mackenzie worked
during the early 1890s bears witness to his changing attitudes to the genre. Without the
financial backing and assured productions afforded by the Rosa commissions, Mackenzie
quickly lost faith with the production of large musical dramas such as his project on the
Duke of Alva and the Netherlands. He invested his creative talent in the production of
smaller works more likely to meet the approval of audiences in their immediacy of
subject matter and digestible story-lines. At the end of his 1898 *Musical Times*
interview, Mackenzie is reported as wishing to ‘do something in my lighter vein’,
remembering fondly his first popular success with the comic male partsong, ‘A Franklynne’s dogge
jumped over a style’. Ever a man to keep his word, Mackenzie’s next three operas, *His
Majesty, The Cricket on the Hearth,* and *The Knights of the Road,* show him to be as
comfortable with the vernacular of comic opera and song as he was with the lyrical
drama of *Colomba* and *The Troubadour.* Neither approach to his operatic scores
precluded the success of the other.

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Having worked closely with the deservedly-renowned Carl Rosa company on
*Colomba* and *The Troubadour,* Mackenzie turned to another recently-established
company, the Savoy, for the production of *His Majesty, or the Court of Vingolia* (1897),
his next completed operatic score. In the mid-1890s the reputation of the Savoy Theatre
was suffering as a result of the squabbles between Gilbert and Sullivan, and Mackenzie
himself noted that ‘two of the most knowing and accurate chroniclers of Savoy history
write freely of the prevailing “irreconcilable antagonism” at the Theatre. Following their
first break, Sullivan had composed *Haddon Hall* (1892) to a libretto by Sydney Grundy,
who, as a result, became extremely disillusioned with the Savoy and its company. In a
public letter, which is quoted in part by Mackenzie in his *Narrative,* Grundy wrote, ‘As a
humble but sympathetic student of dramatic and musical criticism, may I suggest that a
short Bill be introduced into Parliament making it a penal offence to supply the Savoy

Theatre with a libretto? Surely this was not an auspicious recommendation for following in Gilbert’s footsteps down the Strand. Yet, despite a reconciliation between Gilbert and Sullivan, during which they produced *Utopia Ltd* (1893) and *The Grand Duke* (1896), the composer still continued to work with other librettists, notably F. C. Burnand with whom he had collaborated at the start of his career on *Cox and Box* and *The Contrabandista* (both 1867). Sullivan completed the music for Burnand’s *The Chieftain* in 1895, a year before his last work with Gilbert and after which their break-up really was irreconcilable, much to the disappointment of the Savoy’s loyal audience and their manager Richard D’Oyly Carte.

The Savoy management soon cast round for ‘new’ composers and librettists to step into the breach, and Mackenzie was ‘asked to write an opera with F. C. Burnand and R. C. Lehmann, an offer which was gladly accepted. Alive to the risks,’ he explained, ‘I was not surprised when Mr Carte — like the war-horse sniffing danger from afar — confided to me, before I had been at work very long on the congenial task: “I see it beginning already: nothing but G. and S. allowed.”’

Equal to both Sullivan and Gilbert in theatrical experience, Francis Cowley Burnand (1836–1917) was very much of the old Savoy school and, as mentioned above, had given Sullivan his first opportunities in the genre of operetta some twenty years previously. Burnand’s colleague from the staff of *Punch* magazine Rudolph Lehmann (b. 1856) shared a similar written style and sense of humour, and on paper he and Burnand made the perfect literary team. However, as Selwyn Tillett points out in his monograph on *His Majesty,* Burnand ‘was still just about acceptable as a writer of smart dialogue’, but ‘his plots creaked’ and his lyrics were ‘complex, over-clever, and frequently unsettable’. Given Burnand’s reputation as a writer outlined above, Mackenzie may not have entered into the wisest of professional relationships from which to produce his first operetta to reach the stage.

Politically, Carte had put great store by *His Majesty* from the outset even before it reached production. Not only was he attempting to diversify the company’s repertoire in order to release them from the stranglehold of constantly reviving Gilbert and Sullivan’s operettas, but he was also attempting to negate the influence of the modern

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17 MN, 201.
18 Selwyn Tillett, ‘*His Majesty* or, the dead end of comic opera,’ in *Mirette and His Majesty: A study of two Savoy Operas* (Coventry: The Sir Arthur Sullivan Society, 1996).
19 Ibid., 29.
musical comedies with their ‘more vulgar’ precedents in the music hall. Part of his plan to bring about this change was the return of George Grossmith to the Savoy stage after an absence of eight years. A member of the original company, Grossmith was to take the title role in Mackenzie’s operetta. More than anything, Grossmith’s return combined with Burnand as the librettist for the new work signalled Richard D’Oyly Carte’s plan ‘to recapture the theatrical supremacy of the Savoy’s heyday ten years before and to re-establish what the Savoy stood for’.20 With such politically-charged machinations providing the backdrop to His Majesty, in many ways Mackenzie’s operetta was to be condemned even before the first number had been sung. ‘Every music-lover knew that Sir Alexander might be trusted to do nothing that was not in the highest degree musicianly. With such an expert librettist as the Editor of Punch, the famous former Principal of the Royal Academy of Music would, it was thought, have the assistance of a most worthy colleague. Much, then, was expected from such collaboration.’21

Beside the wonderfully muddled plots of Gilbert, Burnand and Lehmann’s dramatic situation for His Majesty takes on labyrinthine proportions.22 Elements of dual personality, mistaken and disguised identity, an unwanted arranged marriage, a suspected assassination attempt on the King, international war, and the revelation of a high-born birth are only some of the plotlines which Burnand and Lehmann managed to compress into the libretto. Moreover, the work was burdened with the unsubtle situation of an operatic Ruritania and its echoes of contemporary German politics.23 In addition, at several points in the play the librettists take excursions from the main thrust of the plot and, consequently, the first act alone lasted for one and three-quarter hours at the premiere. Due to ongoing revisions of the libretto in the run-up to the first night, there are in fact two versions of the opera, as noted by Tillett: the one which Burnand originally read to the company when he was commissioned to write the libretto, and the other which finally reached the Savoy stage. Even though the majority of the literary work was undertaken by Burnand and Lehmann, the final score also contained a couple

20 Ibid., 28.
22 Though admirably summarised by Tillett in his monograph, the entire libretto is also held in the collection of the Theatre Museum, Covent Garden. (F. C. Burnand and R. C. Lehmann, His Majesty; or the Court of Vingolia (London, 1897).)
23 Mackenzie noted that ‘To the annoyance of the management the strictly enjoined rule of secrecy as to plot and title had been disregarded, and a statement that the book was a skit on “His Majesty” of Germany also appeared.’ MN, 201.
of additional lyrics written by Adrian Ross, an up-and-coming librettist and lyric writer who was beginning to find his feet in the world of music theatre during the 1890s.24

Compared with the literary contribution of the other collaborators, Mackenzie’s music for the operetta was always going to be the greater portion of the finished work. It holds, however, little of the innovation to be found in a good many of Mackenzie’s other scores during the period, such as the *Scottish Concerto* and *Britannia*. It is therefore perhaps not unsurprising that many of the twenty-two vocal numbers find their precedents in the work of Sullivan and, through him, of Offenbach and his contemporaries.25 This is not to say that, despite its stylistic derivation, the music is not entertaining. The composer writes charmingly for the chorus throughout the piece and makes good use of them dramatically, particularly in No. 3, ‘I was born upon a Sunday’, a patter-song for King Ferdinand (Grossmith) with comic interpolations from the chorus of Vingolian courtiers.26 Also, the ensemble writing in the quartet ‘Who goes home?’ (Gertrude, Adam, Boodel, Felice)27 was extremely well-received by the critics at the first performance and it was considered to be one of the best numbers in the work. In Tillett’s view, however, the Savoy company were not necessarily ready for the intricacies of musical theatre grafted onto the plot by Mackenzie with his background in lyrical drama and grand opera. ‘The Finale to Act I was acknowledged as the ‘finest’ piece of concerted writing ever heard at the Savoy, which left the reader free to draw his own conclusions as to its difficulty.’28 Writing of Mackenzie’s scoring in their history of the Savoy operas and their creators, Cellier and Bridgeman concluded that ‘The composer’s superb instrumentation and beautiful choral effects were better suited to Grand Opera.’29

Mackenzie was much more at home writing for the solo voices both as a serious and a comic composer. In Act 2, obviously inspired by the lyrics of Adrian Ross, he provided a mock Strauss waltz for Felice as the final section of her song ‘When a gallant soldier lover from his lady love must go’.30 Adrian Ross also supplied the lyrics for the

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24 Adrian Ross was the pseudonym of the former Cambridge academic Arthur Reed Ropes (1859-1933) who had worked with fellow Cantabrigian Osmond Carr (real name, Oscar Neville) on musical comedies since 1889. See entry in *DNB* and Tillett, ‘Mirette: The New International Opera which is not comic’, op. cit., 13.
26 *His Majesty*, vs, 19-32.
27 *His Majesty*, vs, 51-56.
28 Tillett, *op. cit.*, 37.
29 Cellier and Bridgeman, *op. cit.*, 337.
30 *His Majesty*, vs, 166-77.
Coon Song, a number given to Boodel (Walter Passmore) in the first act which he sings as he muses on the possible explosives contained in Felice’s unopened trunk, addressing it as ‘my Dinah, Dynamite!’ in a dialect which Banfield called ‘quite unprintable today’. By today’s standards this somewhat politically incorrect selection of verses satirises the tradition of the Minstrel songs so popular at the time, and it underlines the difference between the new members of the Savoy company such as Passmore who had risen from the ranks of the more vulgar music hall and the old guard of operetta as represented by Grossmith. Boodel is also given the popular Sailor’s Song and Hornpipe, ‘Who would not be a sailor to his tarry fingertips?’, which in many ways repeats the success of the College Hornpipe which Mackenzie had employed together with Arne’s ‘Rule Britannia’ in his overture Britannia a couple of years previously.

The most interesting number in the opera has to be the polyglot trio of Act 2 which comes at a point when the plot is at its most tangled and the three principals, Felice, Chloris and King Ferdinand, pretend to be German, Italian and French respectively in order to preserve their identities. Mackenzie seized the opportunity of this comic situation to demonstrate his effortless ability to assume the stylistic characteristics of each nationality in his music.

Felice leads off with Little Miss Muffett as Wagner might have attacked it, in remarkably good German. Chloris responds with an over-elaborate Italian aria whose text consists almost entirely of musical instructions and operatic references, set to convincing parodies of snatches of Bellini, Verdi, Mascagni, and a recurring four-bar phrase respectfully lifted straight out of The Gondoliers... Ferdinand is let loose on a French version of Froggy would a-wooing go in the style of Robert Planquette, which goes astray into the Folies Bergère before all three voices combine for a brief ensemble in English.

One can only surmise that, as a consummate polyglot himself due to his education and subsequent travels, Mackenzie took particular delight in this number since it would have struck a chord with his own sense of humour. The musical character sketches afforded by this trio are evidence of Mackenzie’s acquaintance with the styles of his contemporaries and of his own ability to mimic these styles at will.

31 ‘In de music-hally when de rumty-tumty ceases’ (Boodel), His Majesty, vs, 105–112.
33 His Majesty, vs, 178–184.
34 Tillett, op. cit., 28.
Despite the criticisms of *His Majesty* in the press, who obviously compared it with Sullivan’s work in the genre,\(^{35}\) the work ran at the Savoy Theatre for 61 performances until 24 April 1897, making it easily the most performed opera in Mackenzie’s output. Following the London run *His Majesty* visited the provinces with the Savoy C Company and toured Northern England, Scotland and Ireland until August 1897. The B Company also took it to Buxton and the Isle of Man during the late summer months. Unfortunately it was during this period that the full score of the opera was mislaid, as noted by Mackenzie in a footnote to his *Narrative*, and this has still not come to light. As with many of his scores, Mackenzie was stoical about the opera’s limited success and soon moved on to other compositional projects. However, one of the composer’s reminiscences from his autobiography should be read as a conclusion to his encounter with the world of the Savoy.

I paid occasional summer visits to New Brighton where my friend and ex-student, now professor, Granville Bantock, was installed as Musical Director. Wending our way to a rehearsal of an orchestral concert through the beautiful grounds, Bantock halted on an eminence for the purpose of letting me hear his newly-formed military band which, at his signal, played a selection from a comic opera. After praising the performance I remarked, “Well, Sullivan does write some jolly good tunes.” A roar of delight followed, and Bantock, recovering his breath, managed to splutter out something to the effect that I had just been listening to *His Majesty!* It had completely passed from my mind. But did not the lapse of memory perhaps indicate that after all, I may not have strayed so very far from the Savoy path?\(^{36}\)

Having battled with the politics of a returning Savoyard and the invasion and ascendancy of a music-hall character actor in the 1897 production of *His Majesty*, Mackenzie took on the music hall directly in *The Knights of the Road*. ‘An unpretentious piece of the tuneful English type once in vogue’, the six numbers of *The Knights* were written to the libretto of Henry A. Lytton as ‘an attempt to stimulate an interest in operetta on the music-hall stage.’\(^{37}\) The short and trivial scene is based on the visit of a band of highwaymen to an inn, during which one of them, Will, becomes engaged to the landlady Rose. Their revelry is disturbed by the arrival of the King’s Sergeant, who is quickly revealed before the final curtain bound and gagged by the highwaymen. ‘If the venture did nothing else,’ wrote Mackenzie, ‘it induced King Edward and other members of the Royal Family successively to visit the Palace Theatre for the first time since

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\(^{35}\) Tillett’s monograph is particularly exhaustive in its evaluation of the contemporary press reviews.

\(^{36}\) *MN*, 202–03.

\(^{37}\) *MN*, 220.
“Variety” had replaced “Opera”.\textsuperscript{38} It also established the composer’s friendship with Herman Finck, whose orchestra was resident at the Palace Theatre and who was later one of the four founding members of the ‘ACM Club’.\textsuperscript{39}

For his next operatic project, Mackenzie drove a middle course between the seriousness of his earlier lyrical drama and the comic excesses of the Savoy operas to produce \textit{The Cricket on the Hearth}, based on one of Dickens’s \textit{Christmas Books}. The subject matter was suggested by the American-born barrister and writer Julian Sturgis (1848–1904) to whom Mackenzie had applied for a libretto. The former considered it ‘a promising subject for a wholesome and lively English comic opera [and] the amiable author of \textit{Nadeshda} and \textit{Ivanhoe} could hardly have been induced to employ his pen so devotedly to the project by any expectation of financial gain.’\textsuperscript{40} Work on the opera must have begun in the mid-1890s, probably before the production of \textit{His Majesty}, since Mackenzie remarks on Goldmark’s use of the same novel for his \textit{Heimchen am Herde} (Berlin, June 1896) to a libretto by Willmers. Before his untimely death in the same year Augustus Harris had visited the Continent to hear Goldmark’s setting of the opera. Obviously anxious about using the same literary material for an opera, Mackenzie remembered that ‘To my questions regarding its merits, the experienced impresario replied: “There isn’t any cricket, and the hearth is a German stove!”’\textsuperscript{41} A tersely-expressed verdict which seems to have been verified.\textsuperscript{42} Reduced now to provincial operatic productions, the Carl Rosa company attempted to secure performing rights to Mackenzie and Sturgis’s new opera before it was complete but could not commit to a London production. ‘I therefore, rightly or wrongly, withheld the opera,’ reported the composer. Not to be dismayed, the Carl Rosa management soon took up Goldmark’s recent version, ‘so, for the time being,’ commented Mackenzie, ‘there could hardly be room for a couple of crickets on the operatic hearth.’\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{MN}, 220.
\textsuperscript{39} The ‘ACM Club’ was a dining club with only four members: Mackenzie, Herman Finck, Edward German and Col. J. Mackenzie Rogan of Kneller Hall. It was intended to meet to celebrate the birthdays of the members, but, as Mackenzie wrote in a footnote to his \textit{Narrative}, ‘our natal days occur too frequently to be reliable as to the accuracy of their dates.’ (\textit{MN}, 252.) See also John Mackenzie Rogan, \textit{Fifty Years of Army Music} (London, 1926), 245; and Herman Finck, \textit{My Melodious Memories} (London, 1937), 206–07 [includes photograph of the ACM Club].
\textsuperscript{40} \textit{MN}, 206.
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{MN}, 207.
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{MN}, 207.
After the production of Goldmark’s opera, it seems that Mackenzie was in no hurry to push his own *Cricket* into the theatrical limelight. Both the composer and the librettist ‘worked harmoniously together con e per l’amore’\(^{43}\) on the score, suggesting that Mackenzie had at last found a librettist with whom he could happily work. The full score of the opera was completed in January 1900, just after the turn of the century, and was published in vocal score the following year. It is unfortunate that, although he may have been present when the Overture to the opera was produced at one of the Philharmonic Society’s concerts in July 1902, Sturgis did not live to hear the opera performed in its entirety. This did not take place until a few weeks before the declaration of the First World War, when the ‘*Cricket*, aetat twelve, sang for a week in a series of excellent performances (with a double cast) on the Academy hearth.’\(^{44}\)

Many of the young actors and actresses whose lively support gave me so much pleasure are now well known on the English operatic stage. To mark its appreciation of the event, the student-company presented me with a silver kettle, which “began it” by sending forth clouds of steam — produced by liquid oxygen — at a merry tea-party, none guessing that our stage would henceforth be occupied solely by female students who, when put to the test, thought it great sport to continue the operatic and dramatic classes without interruption during the grim time before us.\(^{45}\)

The opera also received three further outings at the Royal Academy of Music, the first two as part of the centenary celebrations of the institution in July 1922 and also after the composer’s death in 1936.

Rather than start from scratch with his libretto, Sturgis adapted much of the spoken dialogue in *The Cricket* from Dickens’ original novel and supplied lyrics for the musical numbers where necessary.\(^{46}\) Sturgis and Mackenzie’s choice of a Dickens novel as the subject for their collaboration is extremely interesting. During the twentieth century, *The Cricket on the Hearth* has always been eclipsed by its more popular literary sibling *A Christmas Carol*. This was not always the case, however, and at the time when the opera was written, *The Cricket* was definitely the more popular story and in many ways appealed more strongly to late-Victorian sensibilities. In his essay for the British Music Society’s publication on *British Opera in Retrospect*, Stephen Banfield provided an evaluation of Mackenzie’s operatic output compared with that of Stanford and Smyth

\(^{43}\) MN, 206.
\(^{44}\) MN, 245–46
\(^{45}\) MN, 246.
\(^{46}\) Two typescript copies of Sturgis’s libretto which the composer used when setting *The Cricket* are preserved in the Mackenzie bequest to the Library of the RAM (MSS 1247 and 1249).
and isolated the Scotsman's two later operas as his most pleasing. 'The Cricket on the Hearth' (Bosworth, 1901) and The Eve of St John (Ascherberg, 1923) undoubtedly contain Mackenzie's most original operatic music, and show, as does Stanford's The Travelling Companion, how beneficial could be the retreat from grand opera and Wagnerian mythology, not into operetta but into fairytale opera or something similar. Both are good vehicles for a student or young professional cast.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, Mackenzie's Cricket is something of a chamber opera and would have done well as a touring production with the Rosa company, though maybe its delayed production in 1914 helped it to sit more comfortably with other British operas such as The Travelling Companion, which may not have been the case at the end of the nineteenth century.

As in His Majesty, Mackenzie's musical language in The Cricket represents a decided change from the elaborate through-composed structures of Colomba, The Troubadour and the incomplete operas of the mid-1890s. 'Musically Mackenzie develops a sort of neoclassicism,' explains Banfield, 'still tonal, indeed unadventurously diatonic, but with fresh progressions, turns of phrase and part-writing.'¹⁴⁸ There is no doubt that the primary recommendation of this score is the lyrical accessibility of the sixteen musical numbers and the clarity of the orchestral palette used to accompany the vocal lines.¹⁴⁹ It is as if Mackenzie had intended the work to be performed by young voices from its inception and tailored the music to this end. The tight ensemble performance which would result from a good production of this opera is exactly the formula for which Mackenzie had been searching in his incomplete operas of the 1890s and also in His Majesty, though this latter work became bogged down in the conventions of the Savoy even before it was begun. Though the majority of The Cricket is comprised of musical numbers in the form of ballads and songs, Mackenzie was allowed greater licence in his setting of the finales to the three acts, in which the majority of the opera's pivotal drama occurs. These finales are lengthy ensemble pieces which make use of most of the cast in some capacity, especially those of the second and third acts, reflecting his previous essays in His Majesty. At the centre of the entire opera, the finale to the second act of The Cricket concentrates on the wedding supper of John and Dot Peerybingle with

¹⁴⁷ Banfield, op. cit., 64.
¹⁴⁸ Banfield, op. cit., 64.
Caleb’s rousing drinking-song, ‘We’ll drown it in the bowl’, poignantly masking John’s private grief at his wife’s perceived infidelity.\(^{50}\) This emotion is carried through into the wordless melodrama at the start of Act 3 during which John, fired with thoughts of his ruined marriage, considers attacking Edward with the old gun over his mantelpiece. Before he achieves this, John is calmed by the Cricket Fairy with a vision of Dot as a young girl and her words assuring him of his wife’s love.

In a score littered with charming, memorable songs and ballads, two of the most tender are given to the character of Edward. The ballad, Hawthorn of the May, ‘They talk of orchid plants that grow beyond the western sea’, is one of these (see Music example 1).\(^{51}\) Built around two identical musical strophes, each verse simply modulates to the dominant and then back to the tonic, differing only in the arrangement of the accompaniment each time. Similarly, the folksong, ‘O green and pleasant England, My heart goes out to thee’, sung by Edward offstage as part of the penultimate number in the third act, is as effective for its dramatic situation, being the unveiling of his true identity to his father and blind sister, as it is for its melodic and tonal simplicity. In this opera Mackenzie found a style with which he was completely at home and which allowed his natural lyricism full rein.

\(^{50}\) *The Cricket*, vs, 131–65.

\(^{51}\) *The Cricket*, vs, 47–49.
Chapter 5: The Later Operas

Music example I: The beginning of the ballad, Hawthorn of the May, The Cricket on the Hearth, Act I.

Even at the time of his compositional excursion into the world of comic opera, Mackenzie remained a staunch ally of the campaign to establish a National Opera House in London. ‘Thrice I took an active part in fruitless endeavours to establish National Opera,’ he later wrote. On the first occasion Rosa had architect’s plans for a permanent home prepared, and armed with these, we gained admission to the Mansion House without any result.’ Rosa’s subsequent death in 1889, which was a considerable blow both for his own Opera Company and for British opera in general, delayed any further representations on the subject to the City, Government or the newly-created

52 MN, 172.
London County Council, consolidated by the Local Government Act of 1888. It was not until 1898, following the lightening success and failure of Sullivan’s *Ivanhoe* at D’Oyly Carte’s specially-built English Opera House in 1891, that another attempt to lobby the authorities on the matter of National Opera was made. ‘Again, the chairmanship of an exceptionally representative committee, backed by favourable public opinion, imposed many months’ work upon me, as well as the privilege of presenting a petition to the London County Council and of being well heckled on that occasion.’ The committee of nineteen, headed by Mackenzie and including Sullivan among others, presented its petition signed by 140 distinguished people to the LCC on 27 June 1898, and it was referred to the General Purposes Committee. Supplementary evidence was also submitted in support by other interested parties and experts such as D’Oyly Carte, Mapleson, and Richter. Despite an extremely strong case and a deputation headed by Mackenzie to report on the subject, the Committee recommended in its conclusions delivered almost a year later in May 1899 that it would not advise the creation of an opera house, but favoured the encouragement of higher forms of art in London by the State or the Municipality. 53 Although one of the central arguments of the case was that the National Opera House would need ‘the provision of a repertoire to obviate reliance on the success — or other — of a single opera’, the case study provided by the failure of *Ivanhoe* was often quoted in opposition to their request. ‘If Sullivan could not keep the Palace Theatre open, how can you expect to do so?’ This was the burden of the song,’ reported Mackenzie. 54

Although he does not mention specifically with which third opera scheme he was involved, Mackenzie notes that it ‘met with the same perverse fate, when I made a futile vow — since then several times disregarded — to touch the nettle no more.’ 55 The foundation of a National Opera house was a preoccupation of many musicians during the final decade of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth. In 1908 Stanford published in his *Studies and Memories* a persuasive chapter devoted to the subject which detailed the history of various projects and rationalised the request for a National Opera house into three portions: a site, a building and a subvention. 56 He also

54 M/N, 172. Carte’s English Opera House, latterly known as the Palace Theatre of Varieties, was the same theatre in which Mackenzie’s *The Knights of the Road* was premiered in 1905.
55 M/N, 172.
made comparisons with the amount the Government spent on the other arts in the form of the National Galleries in London and the British Library. Having worked with and enjoyed success at the hands of the Carl Rosa Opera Company, both Stanford and Mackenzie were ardent supporters of any scheme which brought opera to London on a more permanent basis. However, it would seem that, without an internationally-recognised repertory of British operas, the authorities did not see National Opera as a priority for the public purse and, in the same way that concert promotion was left to impresarios, opera too had to remain the province of private finance.

* * * * *

In the middle of the second decade of the twentieth century Mackenzie was fully occupied with the long-awaited production of *The Cricket on the Hearth* by his students at the Academy, only a few weeks before the Declaration which began the First World War. Like many other academic institutions, the Academy’s activities were severely curtailed by the absence of its male students and professors and Mackenzie, then in his mid-60s, found more time to devote to his last operatic score. ‘Jack was in danger of becoming a dull dog during the war-time,’ he explained, ‘had he not sought and found recreation and distraction in the composition of an opera in one Act by Eleanor Farjeon — an authoress of inherited literary gifts and musical talent — entitled *The Eve of St John*.'\(^57\) The score was finished at the end of the decade, coinciding with the end of the War, and the composer then began to look round for a suitable opera company to produce the work. Having met and corresponded with Percy Pitt (1870–1932), the musical director of the Grand Opera Syndicate at Covent Garden, in connection with the Academy production of *The Cricket*,\(^58\) it was to him that Mackenzie turned for help and advice on the project.\(^59\) Pitt had also been closely associated with Beecham’s opera company and its productions during the 1910s and, although the company had folded when its leader and founder was forced to withdraw temporarily from the musical scene towards the end of the decade, the singers and instrumentalists soon reformed into the

\(^{57}\) *MN*, 249.

\(^{58}\) Letter to Percy Pitt, 3 and 4 June 1914, *GB—Lbm Egerton* 3305, ff.89–90.

\(^{59}\) Letters to Percy Pitt, 29 February 1920 to 20 April 1924, *GB—Lbm Egerton* 3305, ff. 102–118. These letters concerning *The Eve of St John* give an interesting insight into the seventy year old composer’s approach to the administrative and musical problems of staging an opera.
British National Opera Company of which Pitt became musical director. The first performance of the new Company took place in February 1922 and it specialised in producing new works by British composers, giving Holst’s *The Perfect Fool* in its 1923 season and *At the Boars Head* in 1925. Mackenzie recalled a few years later that ‘It was mainly owing to the generosity of the Committee of the Carnegie Trust — always helpful to the aspirations of young (!) composers — that, by relieving me of the expense of supplying the copied material (full score, orchestral parts, etc.) I was able to offer it to the British National Opera Company in hopes of a production, which eventually took place at Liverpool in April 1924.’ The Ballet Music from the opera had already been heard in the concert hall when Henry Wood conducted it at a Promenade concert on 27 September 1923.

Given his help with the project, it was unfortunate that Pitt was no longer the musical director of the BNOC when *The Eve of St John* was produced for the first time and Mackenzie expressed his regret in a letter that Pitt was ‘not to favour me by baptising the child of my old age’. A couple of years earlier Pitt had been made musical director of the embryonic British Broadcasting Corporation and eventually had to choose between his operatic commitments and a career with the new broadcast medium, favouring the latter. However, Mackenzie remained in contact with him and following the premiere communicated with his friend:

> I only wanted you to hear from myself how greatly pleased I was on Wednesday at Liverpool, when “John’s Eve” had a splendid reception indeed. The cast fitted like gloves, and the performance was well-nigh perfect. Among other things, I owe the selection of the Principals to you, and you couldn’t have done better for me. As a matter of fact the preparation was so good, that it wasn’t like a first night at all: and instead of being fidgety about it, I quite enjoyed rehearsals and performance with a very easy mind. The staging was capital, and Harrison knew it backwards, so rehearsals passed most pleasantly — rare occurrence! — thanks to the extreme good will of all who had act and part in it.

The composer’s concluding words on the work in his *Narrative* echo these sentiments and he wrote, ‘I have never been present at any première of mine which gave me less anxiety or more enjoyment.’ Having recently announced his retirement from the Royal...

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61 *MN*, 249.
63 Letter to Pitt, 24 March 1924, Egerton 3305, f. 117.
64 Letter to Pitt, 20 April 1924, Egerton 3305, f. 118.
65 *MN*, 249.
Academy of Music, the project was a remarkable undertaking for a man in his late seventies and Mackenzie had a right to feel proud of his achievement.

Following the subject matter of *The Cricket*, Mackenzie’s last opera also mines the rich seam of the fairytale world through Farjeon’s libretto and concentrates on the events in a wood on St John’s Eve, traditionally a time of magic and midsummer madness. The action is set in a single act with a small cast of four principals and with a substantial portion of the music given over to ballet. Unlike *His Majesty* and *The Cricket, The Eve of St John* is through-composed without spoken dialogue and much of the music in the score is stylistically based on an advanced, though loose diatonicism. Certain sections, however, such as the entrances of the tinker and the poacher, are set in the manner of folksong, and indeed this genre has a great effect on the melodic contours to be found in the rest of the score. ‘The dryad and the naiad (soprano and mezzo) have two luscious duets, and even if one is not quite tempted to see the crisply impressionistic nature — music that frames the plot — as pointing towards Tippett, the opera is nevertheless an authentic example of an English theme running from Shakespeare through to *The Midsummer Marriage* and Bliss’s *The Olympians*.66

Even as a product of Mackenzie’s later years, *The Eve of St John* is an extremely fresh and young work which, had it come earlier in his career, might well have resurrected his reputation as a serious composer of opera and have led to other, similar works. Yet it is a great achievement for Mackenzie that his acquaintance with the genre of opera, beginning with the success of *Colomba* as early as 1883, lasted for well over forty years and also resulted in his not insubstantial yet final public work.

66 Banfield, op. cit., 64.
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

Mackenzie's first essays in absolute music, including the String Quartet, Piano Trio and Piano Quartet, have been discussed in Chapter 2 and it was with these chamber works that Mackenzie first exhibited his individuality as an instrumental composer. Writing for a medium to which, as a violinist, he was very close, in these works Mackenzie emulated the musical and formal schemata established by mid-century German composers. This is not surprising considering how he had championed the works of Schumann and his contemporaries in Edinburgh at the very same concerts in which he premiered his own works. However, a few years were to pass before Mackenzie turned to composing in absolute musical forms again. By the end of the 1870s he had written the two Scotch Rhapsodies, *Cervantes* and the *Scherzo* for orchestra, and, as a result of the confidence he gained from these works, both personally and from his colleagues such as Manns and Bülow, he decided to quit Edinburgh for Italy and become a full-time composer. His early creative work in Tuscany was devoted to the production of large-scale dramatic choral works and the two lyrical dramas for the Carl Rosa Company. Having been asked to supply yet another choral work for the Birmingham Festival of 1885, Mackenzie found that he was too busy to consider so large a project while he was attempting to complete both *The Rose of Sharon* and *The Troubadour*, and so proposed the idea of composing a Violin Concerto. In this way he returned to the composition of absolute music after an absence of creativity in this field of over a decade during which his primary concerns had been programmatic orchestral and vocal works.

No longer the young professional violinist espousing the hallowed mid-century German masterpieces of chamber music, Mackenzie found that his sympathies in instrumental composition now lay elsewhere. Influenced by the music of Max Bruch and his two violin concertos, Mackenzie produced a concerto which was melodically-driven, with the consideration of the solo line uppermost. His long period of work on choral and operatic music had developed a strong sense of melodic lyricism in his music. This aspect of his style outweighed the thematically discursive elements inherent in the traditional sonata form that were normally associated with the composition of concertos and had recently been championed by Brahms in his Violin Concerto. Eschewing the intellectual and developmental rigour of sonata form, Mackenzie's Violin Concerto and *Scottish*...
Concerto for piano favour less constrained formal structures which are nonetheless still
governed by the nature of the thematic material. Indeed, in his approach to the form of
concerto, Mackenzie fused hybrid sonata structures with lyrical thematic treatment as
exemplified in the two Scottish Rhapsodies. At the end of the 1880s when he looked
again to the inspiration of national melodies to compose the Pibroch and later the
Highland Ballad, he treated his thematic material in a manner similar to that previously
used in the earlier Scottish works. Conversely, in the later Suite for Violin and Orchestra,
Op. 68, Mackenzie returned to the approach of the two concertos, and produced four
movements in hybrid sonata forms which, in their adoption of the abridged sonata model,
lack formal development sections.

Mackenzie’s approach to the composition of orchestral works with a solo
instrument was not new, but certainly reveals particular idiosyncrasies of formal structure
discussed below. With his rejection of full-blown development sections, Mackenzie
found other more melodically organic methods of providing interest in the concertos. He
experimented with the dramatic nature of the genre by providing extensive cadenza
episodes at focal points in the structure of the movements, which grow out of the
melodic development. Moreover, he transferred the teleological interest of both works
onto the finales, thus providing an antithesis to the Beethovenian and Brahmsian
precedents where the initial movements, with their vast sonata structures, are held to be
most important. In his earlier chamber works Mackenzie showed that he was able to
sustain Germanic first movements, but in these more mature instrumental essays chose to
employ alternative strategies in order to promote the solo instrument above all else.

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The violin always played a significant role in Mackenzie’s life. His father had
been the principal violinist and leader of the band at the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh, and
was keen for his eldest son to follow in his footsteps: it was for this reason that he
arranged for Alick to study music abroad in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, where he
played second violin in the ducal orchestra, and benefited from exposure to some of the
most advanced music of the day in the scores of Wagner and Liszt. Mackenzie’s true
apprenticeship in the violin took place after his return to Britain when he entered the
Royal Academy of Music, gaining the precious King's Scholarship to realise his ambition of studying under his father's former tutor Prosper Sainton. A short career as a teacher in Edinburgh followed, and he used his spare time to compose and to play the violin in chamber music ensembles (which often premiered his early mature works), and to lead orchestras in both Edinburgh and Glasgow. Although Mackenzie did not become a full-time professional violinist, preferring instead to turn his hand to composition, he never forgot his affection for the instrument.

Mackenzie began work on his Violin Concerto in C sharp minor in mid-June 1884 while still resident in Tuscany at the castle of Borgo alla Collina, Casentino, not far from Florence. The concerto was written as the result of a commission from the organisers of the 1885 Birmingham Festival. He had originally been asked to supply a choral piece but work on his oratorio The Rose of Sharon for the 1884 Norwich Festival prevented him from consenting to another large project. At the same time he was also engaged in writing the first act of his second grand opera The Troubadour, commissioned by the Carl Rosa Opera Company for the 1886 season. Writing to Alfred Littleton, the publishing manager of Novello and Co., he commented, 'I ought to turn out something decent but I fancy that a fiddle concerto is about the most difficult thing I could have chosen.' The opportunity to work on a musical project such as a concerto alone and without a librettist absolved Mackenzie of the usual worry he felt when dealing with collaborators in his dramatic and choral works. Also, much of his early reputation rested not on his choral and operatic output but rather on his orchestral studies such as the two Scottish Rhapsodies (1879 and 1880) and the orchestral ballad La belle dame sans merci (1883).

Although the concerto took six months to complete, Mackenzie sketched the initial two movements within a month. The third movement, however, gave him the most problems and before embarking on it he had already revised the others twice. 'These last movements are a nuisance,' he grumbled, noting that he had not felt the inclination 'to dash off the last movement of which as yet not a note is written.' Further interruptions slowed the completion of the concerto in full score. In October 1884 he visited England to be present at the production of The Rose of Sharon in Norwich, a

1 Mackenzie, MN, 42.
2 Letter to Alfred Littleton, 17 June 1884 (Littleton-Novello Collection).
3 See letters to Littleton, 26 June and 8 July 1884 (Littleton-Novello Collection).
4 Letter to Littleton, 24 July 1884 (Littleton-Novello Collection).
work which enjoyed great critical success and proved to be a major turning point in Mackenzie’s career.⁵ His return to Italy was delayed by the request that he personally conduct the first London performance of *The Rose* at the Crystal Palace in late November. The pressure of writing the Violin Concerto was exacerbated by the worry of securing a soloist to premiere the work at Birmingham. In the first instance Mackenzie wrote to the violinist Joseph Joachim in November 1884 asking him to play the concerto, though he did not receive an immediate reply.⁶ After a few weeks, the composer sent a second letter preceded by copies of the first two movements, explaining that Dr Millward of the Birmingham Committee had enquired whether ‘Mr Joachim has approved of Mackenzie’s Concerto and expressed his willingness to play it.’⁷ Although Mackenzie had still not completed the third movement, in his letter to Joachim he quoted the solo theme to be employed as the basis for the finale and he promised to send it a week later, though this promise seemed very optimistic. ‘I am likely to be some time over the Finale,’ complained Mackenzie at the start of 1885 to Alfred Littleton, whose company later published the concerto.⁸ Although the composer foresaw problems in revising the finale once the sketch had been completed, he knew that the first two movements had already undergone such changes as were necessary. Taking pride in his work on the completed sections, Mackenzie noted, ‘I fancy the first movement, although not enormously so, will be found quite difficult enough when it is played broadly — it is I should say quite as difficult as Bruch’s much-played Concerto [No. 1 in G minor].’⁹

In the end Joachim did not consent to play the work, although it is difficult to know why this was since there is no extant correspondence from the violinist to Mackenzie which might resolve this matter. Mackenzie notes that Joachim was in the process of going through a divorce which may have preoccupied him, but the violinist procrastinated a remarkably long time before delivering his decision. However, a few years earlier Joachim had treated Dvořák in a similar manner, keeping the manuscript of his A minor Concerto (1879) for over two years before telling the composer that he would not play it, thus delaying the premiere of the work until 1883.¹⁰ Joachim’s

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⁵ See Chapter 4: The Choral Music. The *Rose’s* premiere took place on 16 October 1884.
⁸ Letter to Littleton, 2 January 1885 (Littleton-Novello Collection).
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ Played by the Czech violinist Ondricek (1859–1922).
decision must have dented Mackenzie's confidence and also tried his patience, since he still had to find another violinist to premiere the work with only five months remaining before the Birmingham performance. 'I never have expected Joachim to play the Concerto therefore it is no disappointment to me,' wrote Mackenzie to Littleton, trying to conceal his indignation after he had received the violinist's reply. Quite probably Mackenzie had depended on his long-term friendship with Joachim to secure the performance of the Violin Concerto at Birmingham. It is perhaps somewhat ironic therefore that Pablo de Sarasate, with whom he was completely unacquainted, should have agreed to play the work without hesitation and with little time to spare before the Festival in August. As a result the concerto, which might have borne Joachim's name, was instead dedicated to Sarasate.

The nineteenth century had a growing preoccupation with the cult of the instrumental virtuoso. Both the Austro-Hungarian Joseph Joachim (1831–1907) and the Spanish violinist Pablo Martín Melitón de Sarasate y Navascuez (1844–1908, less formally known as Pablo de Sarasate) were prime exponents of different schools of violin playing (the German and the French respectively). Himself a composer and author of a violin concerto (the 'Hungarian' Concerto, Op. 11 of 1861), Joachim favoured the classical approach to the genre that had been spearheaded by Brahms. Indeed, as if to underline the aesthetic consensus between the two men, Brahms composed his Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77, for Joachim in 1878. In general Joachim's style of playing favoured a more cerebral stance that eschewed mere virtuoso display. It is no surprise, for example, that he preferred to play Bach for his encores, rather than traditional showpieces. On the other hand, Sarasate favoured technical fireworks and glorious melodic lines which would best exhibit his perfect intonation and pure, sweet tone. As a young man he trained at the Paris Conservatoire, winning the premier prix in violin at the age of seventeen, and artistically considered himself to be more of a Frenchman than a Spaniard, though he never lost his love for his native town Pamplona. A large amount of

11 Letter to Littleton, 7 March 1885 (Littleton-Novello Collection).
12 For biographical information on each of these two men see especially: 'Joseph Joachim', MT, April 1898, 225–30 [and portrait]; Mackenzie, 'Pablo Sarasate: Some Personal Recollections', MT, November 1908, 692–95 [and portrait]; Julio Altadill, Memorias de Sarasate (Pamplona, 1909) [N.B. this book quotes extensively in Spanish from the Mackenzie article]; Orange Woolley, 'Pablo de Sarasate: His Historical Significance', ML, xxxvi (1955), 237–52; E. van der Straeten, The History of the Violin (London, 1933); Dettmar Dressel, 'Four Geniuses of the Violin', The Strad (1952), 296–98.
13 Analyzed by Tovey in vol. iii of his Essays in Musical Analysis (London, 1935–38).
concerted violin music was written for Sarasate to perform on his subsequent concert tours both in Europe and the Americas, which included works by Saint-Saëns (Concertos Nos. 1 and 3 of 1863 and 1880, and the *Introduction and Rondo capriccioso* of 1863), Bruch (Concerto No. 2 of 1877 and the *Scottish Fantasy* of 1880), and Lalo (Concerto in F minor of 1872 and the *Symphonie espagnole* of 1873). Sarasate's approach to the genre of the violin concerto was that of a man whose instinctive musicianship outweighed all other considerations, allowing, as Mackenzie noted, his 'natural ease and grace, without a trace of self-consciousness or affectation' to shine through.\(^{14}\) Mackenzie's concerto presents a fusion of the French and German schools of violin playing. Although certain Germanic elements of harmony and form are evident in the concerto (Mackenzie had Joachim in mind during the work's conception), there is also something more technically extrovert in the music that clearly emanates from the sensibility of the French school, which would have appealed greatly to Sarasate.

The concerto begins with the introduction of a dark and brooding theme in the home key of C sharp minor (see Music example 1), moving after some melodic development to the relative key of E major for a broader second subject group (see Music example 2). These two themes are initially heard on the solo instrument and they contain the thematic motives (marked on the examples) which become the basis of the orchestral interludes placed between the entries of the violin. The exchange of material between the soloist and the orchestra in this movement is consistent in spirit with their traditional Classical concerto roles. The only exception is the extremely short introduction before the entry of the violin. Scored for only clarinets, bassoons and lower strings, it lasts for a mere eight bars which provides too little time for the orchestra to expatiate on its own thematic material. Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto also has a short introduction before the entry of the soloist, although its function is merely to set in motion the accompanimental figure of the first theme in the orchestra. In Mackenzie's Concerto the melody carried by the clarinets, bassoons and strings has a greater thematic involvement and leads seamlessly into the soloist's first notes, though never assuming any significance in terms of separate orchestral thematic material. However, it does establish from the very beginning the supremacy of the solo instrument with the orchestra

\[^{14}\text{See Mackenzie, op. cit., 693.}\]
merely providing an accompanimental role, especially in the exposition of the main thematic material of the movement.

Music example 1: The main theme of the first subject group (C sharp minor), Violin Concerto, first movement.

Music example 2: The main theme of the second subject group (E major), Violin Concerto, first movement.

In this first movement of the concerto it is possible to see Mackenzie’s idiomatic and unusual handling of traditional sonata form. Departing from the conventional structural plans which he fostered in the three Edinburgh chamber works of the 1870s, Mackenzie dispensed with the need for a tonal and thematic development in the concerto which would normally follow the traditional exposition. With the conclusion of the first structural section (marked as the exposition on Figure 1, below), Mackenzie embarks upon a cadenza for the violin in place of the customary development (bb. 133–146, Quasi Cadenza ad libit.), yet expatiating on the thematic material of both subject groups. This unconventional process is typical of Mackenzie’s mature interpretation of the sonata principle which can be observed in other works, for instance in the first movement of the later Scottish Concerto for piano (1897, see discussion below). The idea of a central cadenza for the soloist finds a precedent in the famous Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in E minor (1844), although in that instance Mendelssohn does use a conventional
development section beforehand.\textsuperscript{15} Despite Mackenzie's omission of the expected development, both composers treat their respective cadenzas in a markedly similar manner. In each instance the cadenza is measured in strict metrical notation even though the underlying tempo is deservedly \textit{rubato} in nature. This allows both of the cadenzas to combine easily with the cleverly hidden 'a tempo' entries of the orchestra. In Mendelssohn's movement the end of the violin's cadenza becomes the accompaniment to the recapitulation of the main theme in the orchestra. Mackenzie's concerto on the other hand is symptomatic of the genre in the late-nineteenth century insofar as the soloist retains both the dominant musical role and the restatement of the main theme. Even though Mackenzie was not original in his use of a central solo cadenza in the first movement, his uncomplicated structure gives the music a concision and lack of discursiveness that may have appealed more directly to the extrovert Sarasate than to the cerebral Joachim, possibly explaining the latter's lack of affinity with the work.

The outcome of the omitted development is manifested in the recapitulatory section of the movement (see Figure 1). After the restatement of the minor theme by the violin, a larger ritornello is allotted to the orchestra which extends and develops the equivalent section previously heard in the exposition. As before, this leads to an appearance of the E major theme, notable for the retention of its original key and the fact that it is played by the orchestra rather than the soloist. However, this is a fleeting and quickly developed treatment of the second group which leads into a passage of harmonic transition in order to prepare for the recapitulation of the second group proper in the key of D flat major. Mackenzie's use of the enharmonic major version of the home key instead of its true minor version helps to retain the contrasting sweet character of the second group thematic material and also appeases the principles of sonata form. The remainder of the recapitulation is a more developed version of the expositional material, including more advanced violin figuration for the soloist and a greater intensity of thematic variation. As a result of this belated development, Mackenzie is able to sustain interest until the very end of the movement's overall structure. The music is never static in its repetition of material, but constantly changing its harmonic and thematic emphasis in order to augment its long-term teleology. The recapitulation is also longer than the exposition and with its emphasis on the brooding C sharp minor tonality it is able to re-

\textsuperscript{15} Mendelssohn, Violin Concerto in E minor, first movement, bb. 309–35 (Eulenburg Miniature Score).
establish the superiority of the home key with the absence of material repeated in the brighter E major. The soloist’s final cadenza is emphatically punctuated by chords from the orchestra, and a brief statement of the orchestral ritornello derived from the first group brings the movement to a close on a unison C sharp (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: An outline of the structure of the first movement of the Violin Concerto.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPOSITION</th>
<th>Recapitulation/Repeat</th>
<th>Cadenza</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.1 Intro.</td>
<td>b.147 Group 1 Solo C#min</td>
<td>b.133 Quasi Cadenza (based on Groups 1 &amp; 2) Solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.8 Group 1</td>
<td>b.155 [extension] Orchestra</td>
<td>cf. b.101ff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.37 Group 2</td>
<td>b.172 Solo [to V of V in E]</td>
<td>[Recap.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.64 Solo Emaj</td>
<td>b.181 Group 2 Solo C#min</td>
<td>b.211 Group 2 Key change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.79 Group 1 Quasi Cadenza (based on Groups 1 &amp; 2)</td>
<td>b.194 [Climax] Orchestra</td>
<td>b.294 Group 1 Orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.97 Orchestra C# pedal</td>
<td>b.129 Solo C#min</td>
<td>b.234 B pedal (V)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.133 C#min C# pedal</td>
<td>b.257 Group 1 [largo]</td>
<td>C#min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.280 [Climax] Solo Cadenza over V in bass</td>
<td>b.287 C#min C# pedal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.264 Group 1 [largo]</td>
<td>b.287 C#min C# pedal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The central Largo asserts its relationship to the tradition of concerto slow movements and is a lyrical ternary movement in A major. Concentrating on dialogue between the orchestra and the soloist, the movement gives the violin ample opportunity for the expansion and decoration of motives within a simple structural framework. Within the first section there are three main thematic groups (as outlined in Figure 2 below) and their exposition accounts for almost half of the movement. The return of these themes in the recapitulation is decorated by ornamental figures in the solo violin and the order of their initial presentation is reversed. In conjunction with the coda which is based on orchestral material heard in the introduction, the recapitulation presents the thematic material of the movement palindromically. To balance the traditional ‘tonic-dominant-tonic’ tonal strategy of Section A the C major central portion of the Largo is more dynamic and developmental than the outer sections, and consequently the thematic material is treated sequentially to ensure greater tonal variety.
One of the chief difficulties of Mackenzie's Violin Concerto is his choice of C sharp minor as the home key for the first movement and therefore as a frame for the whole work. Most other violin concertos from the nineteenth century use more idiomatic tonalities, i.e. G major, D major, A major, E major and their relative keys, which make good use of the natural harmonics and open strings available on the violin. However, C sharp minor does not fall into this category and it presents problems because of the keys to which it is cognate, especially its tonic major in either of its enharmonic forms. Rather than present the soloist with the hazardous, not to say unidiomatic, key of C sharp major for the finale, Mackenzie opted for E major. The fact that the movement is couched in the relative major creates a sense of unusual exuberance, one that is heightened through its juxtaposition with the slow movement in A major which effectively acts as a long dominant key area to the tonality of the finale. Following in the tradition of the Brahms Violin Concerto, where Hungarian dance rhythms are employed in the last movement, Mackenzie's finale is based on the Polish dance, the Krakowiak. The idiomatic rhythms of the Krakowiak are shown in Music example 3 below. In alternate duple-time bars the accents appear on the first and second crotchet beats, with the following bars stressing the syncopation of the quaver-crotchet-quaver rhythm. After a short orchestral introduction in which snatches of the thematic material are heard, the violin plays the main theme with its distinctive syncopated Krakowiak rhythm in E major (see Music example 4) and this returns at intervals throughout the movement.

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16 The tonality of C sharp minor produces a sweet, dark tone on the violin which is eminently suitable for the first movement of Mackenzie's concerto and this is the probable reason for his choice of such an unusual key in the genre. Parry's Piano Concerto in F sharp (1878-80) and the Fantasie Sonata in B (1878) present other instances of the use of uncongenial instrumental keys.

17 As pointed out by Dr John Purser (correspondence with the writer).
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

Music example 3: The rhythm of the Krakowiak.

Music example 4: The main theme of the finale, Violin Concerto.

The finale is made up of three main themes including the one in Music example 4. Preceding the movement is a fanfare scored for trumpets in C which is punctuated by off-beat orchestral chords. Heard twice more in a similar scoring during the course of the movement, the fanfare appears at the central point in the structure and in an abbreviated form in the final bars. It also provides the basic motive of the Largamente theme at rehearsal letters D and H (bb. 135 and 257 respectively) and a comparison of the fanfare with the Largamente theme is seen in Music example 5, below. This theme is an extension of the fanfare, being played first by the orchestra and then answered by the violin. As purely romantic melodic material it contrasts well with the rhythmic impetus of the Krakowiak first theme, and also plays with the important and structural harmonic motive encapsulated in the upwards or downwards shift of a tone. This shift is inherent in the fanfare theme and guides the harmonic structure of the movement in its inverted form at the change of key signature, i.e. a B major triad moving to an A minor triad (rehearsal letter C, b. 106), and again at b. 203 when the music moves to the dominant key of the movement by way of a seventh chord on C. The third theme of the movement provides a minor contrast to the Krakowiak and can be seen at rehearsal letter C. It makes good use of a large tessitura and is instrumental in the introduction of the triplet rhythm which often appears as a double-stopped passage in the solo line (see Music example 6).

See also article in Grove's, based on article in MGG, vol. vii.
Music example 5: A comparison of the initial 'fanfare' with the Largamente theme, third movement, Violin Concerto.

Music example 6: The minor theme, third movement, Violin Concerto.

The structure of the finale is another of Mackenzie's adaptations of the sonata principle, leaving the development and extension of the thematic material until the second half of the structure. As discussed above in connection with the first movement of the concerto, this strategy has the advantage of holding the listener's interest for the entirety of the movement, rather than merely satisfying the traditional expectation of a harmonically altered and re-directed repeat. Figure 3 below shows a brief diagram of the finale and concentrates on the main thematic and harmonic events of the movement. The material is re-ordered in the recapitulation so that there is no reprise of the minor episode from the exposition section (b. 106) and also the orchestral ritornello in C sharp minor appears in a different position on its return, providing a brief interrupted cadence before the E major coda. Figure 3 attempts to draw parallels between certain sections of the movement in order to emphasise their harmonic importance. For example, the Largamente episode retains the move from its initial key to the dominant (C major to G, and E major to B) in both instances, and so the latter appearance is merely a transposition of the former since they both serve the same local harmonic function.
Mackenzie was pleased that Sarasate agreed to perform the work for the first time at Birmingham, 'without any previous personal knowledge of me'. He described the initial run-through of the work with the Spaniard thus:

'Je suis myope' was his excuse for propping up the manuscript on the mantelpiece while I took my seat at the other end of the room. Nevertheless his short-sightedness did not prevent him either from dealing easily with the technical difficulties or from entering into the spirit of the piece a prima vista. ... After the final chord there followed — for me — a somewhat embarrassing silence. Then he held out his hand, remarking, to my great relief, 'Je n’ai rien à dire, rejouons le encore,' from which I was shrewd enough to gather that he had expected to have a great deal to say.

With no further alterations to be made to the manuscript score, Novello and Co., Mackenzie’s principal publishers, lost no time in publishing the Violin Concerto and adding it to their catalogue. As well as producing a version of the concerto for violin and piano, Novello also engraved the full orchestral score, demonstrating the confidence the publishers had in future productions of the work after its premiere. It must have been a relief for Mackenzie to see a work through the press which he probably presumed would have to be altered in accordance with suggestions made by Sarasate at such a late stage.

Almost fourteen months after Mackenzie began its composition, the concerto was first performed by Sarasate at the Birmingham Festival on the evening of 26 August 1885 under the direction of the composer. The work was very well received by the reviewer in the *Musical Times*, who noted the ‘magnificent playing of Señor Sarasate’ and the ‘warmest marks of approbation’ given to Mackenzie. The composer notes in his autobiography that to this event ‘I owe the beginning of a friendship which lasted until his death.’

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19. The copy of this version held in the Library of the Royal Academy of Music has certain manuscript additions to the piano score in Mackenzie’s hand. These are mostly concerned with transpositions of the solo line, which the composer often marks as an octave higher than it originally appears in the printed copy.

20. MT, 1 September 1885, 543–44.
Before the composition of his second mature concerto Mackenzie made the acquaintance of the Polish concert pianist Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860–1941). Although his concert career had begun with performances in both Paris and Vienna, Paderewski did not arrive in London until two years later in 1890 when he gave a series of recitals in St James’s Hall organised by the musical impresario Daniel Meyer. The pianist attracted considerable attention in the musical press and even the acerbic critic and playwright George Bernard Shaw wrote reviews of the performances. ‘Regarded as an immensely spirited young harmonious blacksmith, who puts a concerto on the piano as on an anvil,’ explained Shaw, ‘Paderewski is at least exhilarating; and his hammer-play is not without variety, some of it being feathery, if not delicate. But his touch, light or heavy is the touch that hurts; and the glory of his playing is the glory that attends murder on a large scale when impetuously done.’ Despite Shaw’s disparaging remarks and other similarly-worded reviews concerning the youthful vivacity of the pianist’s performances, the British public soon ‘came under the spell of Paderewski’s music and personality even during his first visit,’ as his biographer Landau later asserted. Paderewski visited London almost every year in the early part of the 1890s and in due course the pianist was engaged by the Philharmonic Society to perform his own Piano Concerto in A minor at a concert in their 1893 series. This work was well known to Mackenzie and together with ‘the brilliant Polish Fantasie had entered early into the R.A.M. pianoforte repertoire, which had by this time been brought thoroughly up to date by the energetic work of my ... pianoforte professors.’ Mackenzie had also recently taken over from Cowen as the conductor of the Philharmonic Society and it was probably at this performance of Paderewski’s work that the two men met professionally for the first time.

21 These took place on 9, 20, 29 May and 10 June 1890.
24 The concert took place on 15 June 1893. As well as the performance of Paderewski’s work conducted by Mackenzie, Max Bruch directed the soloist Gorski in his Violin Concerto in G minor. See review in MT, 1 July 1893; Shaw, op. cit., iii, 12–15 (review dated 21 June 1893).
25 Mackenzie, MN, 192.
Following this concert, Mackenzie later explained, 'It was at the suggestion of a mutual friend, the late Mrs Angelina Goetz — herself an accomplished pianist — that a *Scottish Concerto* was written.'

Musically gifted from an early age, Angelina Goetz was the eldest daughter of Joseph Moses Levy, the first proprietor of *The Daily Telegraph*, and she shared her father’s interests as a patron of the arts. Having married the businessman Edward Goetz in 1859, Angelina continued her father’s tradition of hosting numerous domestic musical soirées during the years 1844–83. These events were attended by many famous musicians including Meyerbeer, Gounod, Rubinstein and Sullivan, and it is probable that she retained her musical contacts throughout her life.

In these circumstances Mrs Goetz’s acquaintance with Mackenzie seemed inevitable from the time he was appointed Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, and it is her attendance at London musical performances which accounts for her friendship with Paderewski. Unfortunately Mrs Goetz did not attend the performance of Paderewski’s Concerto by the Philharmonic in 1893 because she could not present herself at any public engagements due to a recent death in her close family. Instead, Mackenzie wrote to Francesco Berger, the secretary of the Society, to obtain four rehearsal tickets which he then sent to Mrs Goetz.

It was probably at this rehearsal or some other concurrent social function that Mrs Goetz first proposed that Mackenzie himself should compose a concerto for Paderewski to perform. Her suggestion of the collaboration was later commemorated by the composer when the full score of the resulting *Scottish Concerto* was published by Fr. Kistner of Leipzig in 1899 and dedicated to ‘Seiner Freundin Frau Angelina Goetz’.

The genesis of the *Scottish Concerto* is most clearly traced in the series of letters between Mackenzie and Francesco Berger in their capacities as conductor and secretary of the Philharmonic Society. The work is first mentioned in a letter from the composer to Berger in the late summer of 1895. Writing from his holiday retreat in West Malvern,
Mackenzie enthusiastically affirmed that the score would be sent to Paderewski on the following Monday for his 'perusal and advice' on the piano part. 'When he returns I shall begin to score it,' he noted, 'not before. But I hope to have it all ready and copied and tried before the 10th October. So, it is well on the way.'

The composer’s optimism in his intended speedy completion of the score turned out to be ill-founded, since he did not take into account how Paderewski would delay the project through his lack of prompt correspondence — a not dissimilar state of affairs to that Mackenzie had faced with Joachim over the Violin Concerto a decade earlier. No mention of the piece is made until May of the following year when Mackenzie expressed his disbelief that Paderewski might have left him in the lurch over the affair. The pianist had not replied for over ten weeks to an earlier missive from the composer when he had promised to do so within a fortnight. Mackenzie wrote to Paderewski to ask if he wished to see the full score or to wait until they could meet in Paris or London in order to discuss the work together. 'I had to communicate with him on artistic grounds,' declared Mackenzie, 'not because there was any doubt on my part as to his coming.'

In the end Paderewski was not able to fulfil his commitment and take his place in the concert programmes of the Philharmonic Society in 1896 as he had intended. A telegram expressing his apologies was sent to Berger, and Paderewski asked that the Secretary should ‘transmettre à Sir Mackenzie et aux directeurs tous mes regrets et toutes mes plus respectueuses excuses.’

Although Mackenzie would not have been particularly happy with the fact that the pianist had reneged on his promise to play in the 1896 season, it did give him some breathing space to prepare the concerto more fully for its premiere. Writing to the composer in the autumn of 1896, Paderewski made a certain number of suggestions as to where the music of the concerto might be improved. The composer made careful notes of Paderewski’s comments, which the pianist had written in German on the manuscript score, and did indeed change minor aspects of the music in compliance with the pianist’s thoughts. The majority of these alterations were to the

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29 Letter to Berger, 10 August 1895, British Library, Loan 48 (Philharmonic Society), 13/21, ff. 92–93.
33 See RAM MSS 1148A and 1148B. The former is a draft piano part of the Concerto; the latter consists of two draft manuscript short scores of the third movement only with annotations in German by Paderewski — presumably the corresponding short scores of the first two movements have been lost, or more probably destroyed.
third and final movement of the work, and mostly concerned the piano figuration of the solo part. A case in point is the cadenza with which the soloist enters in the finale. In the first short score of MS 1148B, page 16, after the orchestral introduction a cadenza follows for the pianist which begins high up in its register, descends in octaves to the instrument’s middle range for four bars then ascends a further four bars before the double octave trill commences. The second short score of MS 1148B has exactly the same passage unaltered, yet MS 1148A, the draft piano part, contains another version where the piano begins low down in its compass and ascends to the trill using accented F sharps to punctuate the semiquavers every fourth note. This is in Mackenzie’s hand but on an opposite page Paderewski has supplied another version which became the final and definitive one.\(^{34}\) His suggestion is for a fuller, harmonised arpeggio using a seventh chord on F sharp rather than the bare octaves of the previous versions thus providing a more arresting entrance for the soloist (see Music example 7).

Music example 7: A comparison of the entrance cadenza in the final movement of the Scottish Concerto by a) Mackenzie (MS 1148A, p. 31), and b) Paderewski (MS 1148A, p. 31a).

Despite this and other alterations to the Concerto, Mackenzie’s anxieties over the work seemed to have abated. Writing to Berger in October, he remarked that he would not be able to complete any corrections until the Academy’s term came to an end before Christmas, and that he would endeavour to comply with Paderewski’s request and send him the piano part in January so that he might have enough time to study it properly. ‘All this points to his wish to perform it,’ declared Mackenzie, ‘In fact he professes himself

\(^{34}\) RAM MS 1148A, p. 31a (placed between pp. 31 and 32). It is headed in German, ‘Seite 31 und 32 bis zum Motto Marcato’ (‘Pages 31 and 32 until the Molto Marcato’).
much delighted with the pieces. Mackenzie’s only reservation about the situation was that the orchestral parts for the Concerto had already been copied and Paderewski’s suggestions meant that the parts would have to be altered necessitating additional expenditure. Inevitably, when all of his conditions had been met, Paderewski sent a telegram to the composer from Paris a few weeks later confirming that he would play Mackenzie’s *Scottish Concerto* ‘with pleasure’ in the following year’s Philharmonic season.

Mackenzie and Paderewski differed on one final aspect of the music, namely its title. Until this point the composer had given the piece the working title of ‘Scottish Fantasie’, and it was only in the autumn of 1896 that he changed the title to ‘Scottish Concerto’, informing Berger of this modification in a short letter. The reasons for Mackenzie having altered his initial designation of the work are not clear from the surviving correspondence. He may have felt that the designation of ‘fantasie’ belittled the intent of the composition as a serious concert work. Moreover, the genre of concerto was more popular at the time and had been at the centre of a resurgence of interest among composers, with a number of contemporary concertos produced as a result. With the Violin Concerto Mackenzie had already shown that he had begun to dismiss the traditional sonata-form conception of the concerto, and, in his choice of fantasie as a genre for this later work rather than concerto, he may have been attempting initially to distance his music from the confines of such a musicologically-loaded genre. In musical terms the genres of concerto and fantasy are almost in direct opposition. The former genre had many musical precedents from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and, as noted in the discussion above on the Violin Concerto, it was approached by composers in one of two distinct structural manners, i.e. the sonata-form movements of Brahms and the melodically-driven movements of Bruch.

The composer’s original conception of the music may illuminate how he approached its composition since the genres of concerto and fantasy differ in various key ways. The traditional harmonic and thematic structures of a concerto have been discussed above in connection with the Violin Concerto, written by the composer a decade earlier; indeed the Violin Concerto is more conventional in its adherence to the
traditions of the concerto, and it happily takes its place in the nineteenth-century canon. On the other hand the fantasy is the more idiomatic and unconventional form, giving emphasis to an unconstrained approach to musical structure and harmonic direction, and a rhapsodically treatment of thematic material. In many ways the music of the Scottish Concerto is fantastical: within the work Mackenzie created structures which defy the traditional formal schemata and attempt to confront issues of harmonic teleology with a type of ‘directional tonality’, and the title of ‘fantasy’ is more applicable to this music than to almost any other work by the composer. However, by the time the work was composed at the turn of the century, the concerto had lost the traditional strict architecture on which it had been based a hundred years earlier and began to employ the characteristics of other similar structures such as the fantasy and the rhapsody. That Mackenzie contemplated calling his work a concerto reflects a shift in contemporary musical conception. The ramifications of the word ‘concerto’ place emphasis on the soloist as the protagonist in the music with the orchestra playing a supporting role. Conversely a ‘fantasy’ describes a piece in which the soloist (if there is one) shares equal importance with the orchestra. Perhaps Mackenzie did not wish to invite parallels between his Concerto and Paderewski’s Fantaisie Polonaise sur des thèmes originaux, Op. 19 (1893), a similar work in its nationalistic intent.

The eventual premiere of the Scottish Concerto on Wednesday 24 March 1897 heralded the start of the eighty-fifth season of concerts given by the Philharmonic Society. It was coupled with some orchestral arias sung by Blanche Marchesi, Dvořák’s Scherzo capriccioso, Beethoven’s Fourth Symphony and Wagner’s Kaisermarsch. The concert itself presented the difficult logistical problem of arranging sufficient rehearsal time with which to placate the needs of the soloists, particularly the irascible Paderewski. In fact the pianist’s incessant protestations and complaints forced Mackenzie to assert in uncharacteristically forthright terms that ‘These artists are divils!’ Prior to the performance Mackenzie also became increasingly agitated about the amount of time remaining to arrange for the re-copying of the orchestral parts following

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38 See discussion below, p. 193.
39 Some composers, however, such as Brahms and Stanford, held true to the classical concerto form.
41 See review of the concert, MT, 1 April 1897, 239.
the various corrections he had implemented. As a result of this process, there was not
enough time for the full score of the work to go to the ‘Analytical gentleman’ and
Mackenzie took this opportunity to write the programme notes himself. ‘This is nothing
new,’ he explained to Berger, ‘Stanford and others have written their own remarks. Mine
must be very few as I find that anything I say is seized upon in no genial spirit by the
Press.’ A week later the composer had furnished Berger with his notes on the work and
commented that he ‘should have liked to have mentioned that the composition was a
“labour of love” after certain brutal comments made about “money” going round the
press, but it is not worth while taking any notice.’ Mackenzie was obviously very wary
that there was a continuation of the journalistic bad-feeling towards him in the London
and national newspapers following his successful suit against The London Figaro in 1896
for defamation of character.

The popularity of the piano concerto as a musical form reached its height in
Britain from the 1870s onwards. Although Mackenzie, like Parry, only wrote one essay
in this form, other composers such as Stanford and Cowen wrote more than one
concerted work for piano and orchestra. It is to the premiere of Cowen’s Piano Concerto
in A minor (1869) that Dibble assigns a change in attitude among native composers to
the concerto, since Cowen’s work gained him a national reputation as a composer of
note even though he was only aged seventeen at the time. Three years later Brahms’
Piano Concerto No. 1 was premiered at the Crystal Palace in March 1872 and repeated
by the Philharmonic Society in their concert season a year later. While at Cambridge in
1873 Stanford wrote his concerto in B flat major and it was performed a year later by the
University Musical Society. As a work of small proportions it did not prepare the British
musical world for the large scale Piano Concerto in F sharp major written by Parry for
Edward Dannreuther, who first performed the work in 1880. This work, despite its
intensely difficult home key, opened the conceptual horizons of subsequent composers
and their concertos, leaving the stage set for works such as those by Mackenzie,
D’Albert and Hurlstone written towards the end of the 1890s.

44 Ibid.
46 See the sleeve-notes to the recording of Parry’s Piano Concerto in F sharp major and Stanford’s Piano Concerto
No. 1 in G Major, J. Dibble, 1995 (Hyperion CDA 66820).
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

Coming after the composition of his other concerted works, the Violin Concerto (1885), Pibroch Suite (1889) and the Highland Ballad (1893), Mackenzie's Scottish Concerto of 1897 follows in the tradition of British piano concertos. There are three substantial movements which are linked in various ways: thematically, harmonically and physically. The work begins in G major yet much of the composition is couched in the key of E major and its relative tonal areas, the finale being wholly in this key. Even the first movement contains substantial sections in the tonal area of B major/minor, the dominant of E major, which not only prepare for the second and third movements in E major but also verify Mackenzie's use of 'directional tonality' within the first movement itself. The idea of directional tonality has been used by Kinderman to interpret the use of tonal areas in the music of Chopin. In Chopin's piano works, such as the Ballade in F major, he puts much of his thematic material into the key of A minor and treats both key areas equally within the structure of the piece. He underlines the importance of A minor to the overall harmonic structure by ending the piece in that key rather than the traditional 'home' key as one would expect. In his music Chopin attempted to distance himself from tonal relationships in this and similar pieces, choosing to eschew the traditional 'circle of fifths' for movement between keys which are a third apart. Similarly, Mackenzie employs the keys of G major and E major equally over the course of the Scottish Concerto and ends the work in the latter key. This is not an unusual procedure since the Violin Concerto begins in C sharp minor and ends in E major, but in that instance there are practical considerations which militate against the use of the relative major key of C sharp major (enharmonic D flat major).

The first movement of the Scottish Concerto is open-ended in its construction. Apart from the atmosphere of tonal uncertainty caused by the overall move from G major to E major which prepares for the relative harmonic stasis of the second movement, the thematic material is presented in such a way that the movement feels incomplete in its own terms and needs the addition of the other movements in order to regain its structural balance. With a structure reminiscent of the Violin Concerto, Mackenzie again uses a modified sonata form as the basis for the movement, avoiding once again the traditional need for a discursive development section in the centre (see Figure 4, below). The pianist is given a cadenza at the same structural point as in the

earlier Violin Concerto and it is employed in the same manner to introduce a recapitulation or restatement of the primary thematic material. However Mackenzie’s harmonic strategy is slightly different in the *Scottish Concerto* in that he places the repetition of the initial material in the key of B major, a third away from the tonic G, thereby suggesting a directional tonality in the music. The displaced development section occurs after the B major recapitulation and the harmony becomes tonally fluid, touching on such related keys as A minor and E minor. A final statement in G major leads into the coda and the final cadenzas which link the first movement to the second. It is only at this point that Mackenzie’s choice of B major for the recapitulation can be explained since the section acts as a long term dominant key area serving to introduce the E major/minor tonic of the other two movements in the work, reinforcing the physical link (i.e. no pause between movements) with harmonic premises.

Figure 4: The main thematic and structural events in the first movement of the Scottish Concerto.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRODUCTION/RITORNELLO</th>
<th>CADENZA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.1 (Allegro Maestoso)</td>
<td>b.39 (meno mosso)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horn-call &amp; ‘Raahes’</td>
<td>(Same material)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomp. theme</td>
<td>V of Gmaj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gmaj 1→V</td>
<td>[to next line]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOLO &amp; ORCH</th>
<th>SOLO (ORCH ACCOMP.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.40 (Allegretto)</td>
<td>b.61 (Andantino)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New quaver theme</td>
<td>Expansive theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V of Gmaj (pedal bb.40–6)</td>
<td>Gmaj → Gmin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Combination of themes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expansive &amp; quaver</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOLO &amp; ORCH</th>
<th>SOLO &amp; ORCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.95 (Allegretto)</td>
<td>b.106 (Andantino)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaver theme</td>
<td>Expansive theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tonic pedal bb.95–104)</td>
<td>b.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bmaj</td>
<td>DLympt — Horn-call heralds Cad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b.141 Cadenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>quasi cadenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>material used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V of Gmaj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gmaj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CADENZA — TRANSITION &amp; LINK</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.158 (Maestoso)</td>
<td>b.167 (più lento, espressivo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses both introductory &amp; solo cadential material</td>
<td>[linked with second movement]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gmaj</td>
<td>to V of Emaj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thematical the first movement centres on three melodic figures and their variations. The introduction makes use of a striking ‘horn-call’ motif which is followed by a grand opening gesture made by the whole orchestra which may be derived from the *Reel of Tulloch.* However this lively gesture seems idiomatic of the Scottish reel in general and its melodic figuration does not link it to the *Reel of Tulloch* in particular. The triplet quaver accompaniment serves to prefigure the ‘quaver theme’ with which the soloist enters after an extended cadenza. This theme is based on the melody of the

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48 According to Dr John Purser (correspondence with the author).
traditional song ‘Green grow the Rashes, O’ which is later used in the ending of the finale (see p. 196, below); Mackenzie disguises the thematic material in this earlier appearance, however, by placing it in a different rhythmic structure (triplets) and slightly altering the original series of pitches in the melody. At letter D in the published score a new ‘expansive theme’ is introduced to cement the music in the key of G major which has been reached after an extended harmonic period underlined by the dominant of the home key (see Figure 4). All of the thematic material for this movement has been introduced by this point and it is recapitulated in accordance with the harmonic structure as outlined above.

The second movement of the concerto is by far the most traditional in structure and has as its basis a simple ternary form, which can be seen in Figure 5. Again this can be compared with the second movement of the Violin Concerto which has a similar formal layout and also makes use of lyrical thematic material. The Scottish Concerto employs the well-known melody of ‘The Wawking of the Fauld’\(^{49}\) (see Music example 8) as the main theme in this movement and Mackenzie chooses to treat the material simply in a manner comparable with his handling of the traditional melodies employed in the two Scottish Rhapsodies dating from the beginning of the 1880s. The melody is given to the solo instrument in full, followed by a development section in which the thematic interest is shared in equal parts by the soloist and the orchestra.

*Music example 8: The original version of 'The Wawking of the Fauld'.*

\[^{49}\]This melody is a very ancient one and is usually sung to Alan Ramsey’s words ‘My Peggy is a young thing’. See Charles Kirkpatrick, *Stenhouse Notes and Additional Notes to 'The Scots Musical Museum'*, (Edinburgh, 1853), 90.
The third and final movement of the *Scottish Concerto* also makes use of a traditional Scottish melody as its thematic goal. The movement begins with an orchestral introduction which combines the ‘horn-call’ of the first movement with snatches of the second part of the main theme, and it is with a full rendition of this theme that the soloist enters at bar 89. Mackenzie’s initial sketch for this theme was less elegant than the one which appears in the published score and it was left to Paderewski to offer the more pointed version which is split between the pianist’s two hands for ease of execution. It is based on the ‘horn-call’ theme which began the first movement, and uses the structure of the major triad to underline a series of closed melodic patterns punctuated alternately by the soloist and orchestra. The theme is shown below in Music example 9 with its two distinct parts clearly marked. Throughout the movement both parts of the theme are subjected to a number of variations and at points are combined with new melodic material (as outlined in Figure 6 below). The ‘thirds’ theme has distinctive pianistic figuration and is quite different from any previously heard material almost all of which is derived from the main theme. The goal of the movement is the coda in which Mackenzie provides a virtuosic treatment of the traditional melody ‘Green grow the Rashes, O’ foreshadowed in the first movement of the concerto. Mackenzie knew this melody well and had produced a piano arrangement of it in his collection of *Scottish Melodies* published in 1897, the same year as the premiere of the *Scottish Concerto* (see Music example 10 below). Here the melody is heard in its entirety after having been alluded to in earlier sections of the finale, most notably at bb. 203 and 332 (see Figure 6) where the piano plays the initial melodic phrase emphasised with 6/3 chords.

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50 See RAM MS 1148B (discussed above).
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

Music example 9: The main theme of the finale of the Scottish Concerto.

Music example 10: Mackenzie's arrangement of 'Green grow the rashes, O', from his collection Scottish Melodies (1897).

GREEN GROW THE RASHES O.
Lively but not too quick.
**INTRODUCTION**

b.1 (*Allegro vivace*)  b.69
Thematic fragments in  Pf Cadenza
Orchestra
Emin  V of Gmaj

**EXPOSITION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b.89</th>
<th>b.113</th>
<th>b.142</th>
<th>b.164</th>
<th>b.174</th>
<th>b.203</th>
<th>b.241</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main theme</td>
<td>Variation I on</td>
<td>Variation II on</td>
<td>Main theme</td>
<td>Thirds theme</td>
<td>Chordal ‘Rashes’</td>
<td>Dotted melody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd half of theme</td>
<td>2nd half of theme</td>
<td>in orchestra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>slowing music down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emin  V of G</td>
<td>Amaj-Amin  Gmaj</td>
<td>modulatory to V of V</td>
<td>Emin</td>
<td>Bmin  → F#maj</td>
<td>F#maj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANDANTE CENTRAL SECTION**

b.256 (*Andante*)

*Andante 6/8 variation of main theme in melodic contour of the piano’s chords; also cello obbligato.*

**RECAPITULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b.280 (<em>Allegro</em>)</th>
<th>b.288 (<em>Tempo I</em>)</th>
<th>b.307</th>
<th>b.332</th>
<th>b.346</th>
<th>b.376 (<em>Molto piu mosso</em>)</th>
<th>b.412</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return to duple time</td>
<td>Main theme: Thirds theme acciaccatura var.</td>
<td>Chordal ‘Rashes’ Variation II on</td>
<td>Main theme with dotted rhythm melody</td>
<td>Main theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emin  E minor</td>
<td>B flat min  Fmaj</td>
<td>B pedal [stretto]</td>
<td>Emin: IV  → VI  → V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CODA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b.440 (<em>Più mosso</em>)</th>
<th>b.496</th>
<th>b.522</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Rashes’ theme Quote of horn-call from 1st mvt</td>
<td>[end]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emin  (mode change)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The structure of the finale is again analogous to sonata form with the development section omitted, although the thematic material is slightly rearranged in the ‘recapitulation’ of the movement as can be seen in Figure 6. The finale may also be seen as supporting a loose set of variations on the principal theme which itself returns at intervals in the manner of a rondo. However the coda does not seem to be part of this thematic variation process which permeates the finale, but closely links itself with the music of both the final and the first movements of the Concerto. Despite the movement’s harmonic and thematic direction towards the coda and its treatment of the Rashes melody, another unusual aspect of the finale is the inclusion of the Andante central section in which the soloist shares the melodic interest with the cellos who play an obbligato line accompanied by the piano’s appoggiatura variation of the main theme. In the slow movement to his own Concerto in A minor Paderewski used a very similar orchestration in which a solo violin and then a solo cello respectively are accompanied by the piano’s arpeggios.\(^{52}\) In this obvious reference to the earlier work Mackenzie not only adds greater interest to the orchestral texture at this point in his concerto, he also allows the soloist a slight respite from the technical acrobatics demanded of him in the remainder of the movement: RAM MS 1148B traces the genesis of this part of the finale showing the original and less developed cello line which was later revised by adding a more interesting dotted rhythm to the melody.\(^{53}\) This section of the manuscript also has suggestions from Paderewski, who remarked that it could be played with or without the cello obbligato.

Written over a decade apart, the two concertos chart Mackenzie’s changing attitudes to the genre during his most prolific period as a composer. Both works gain from not only the lyricism but also the sense of drama he acquired while working on the Rosa operas and the earlier choral works. The concertos are, however, absolute music and devoid of the programmatic associations that Mackenzie as a mature composer almost always required in order to express himself fully. (This is despite the fact that the Scottish Concerto is based on traditional melodies, which, importantly, were not identified in the score, manuscript or programme note for the premiere.) Perhaps this goes some way to explain why he only wrote two works specifically in the genre, and why the other concerted works take more literal subjects as their bases.

\(^{52}\) Paderewski, Concerto in A minor, Op. 17, (189 ), II: Romanza (Andante), bb. 57–74.
\(^{53}\) See RAM MS 1148B, p. 21.
The Pibroch: Suite for Violin and Orchestra followed in the wake of the Violin Concerto, some four years later, and was written at the request of Sarasate for inclusion in the Leeds Festival programme of 1889. Appropriately, the work was completed on the composer’s native soil, while he spent his summer vacation in Braemar during August 1889. He finished scoring the suite in just over ten days during the middle of his stay, having probably sketched the music beforehand. Writing from his Scottish holiday retreat to Nicholas Kilburn, a friend and choral director from North-East England, Mackenzie explained:

I have been here since the 1st August, enjoying the damp, cold weather and scoring a new violin piece for Sarasate in the mornings. I have just finished it ten minutes ago however, so another opus (good or bad) goes out into this world of strife. It is to come out at the Leeds Fest. but I don’t anticipate success there, as it is a Scottish effusion and likely at first at least to be mis-understood [sic] of the people: now especially the Leeds people.\(^{54}\)

The work was premiered later that year under the baton of the composer in the evening concert of Thursday 10 October at the Victoria (Town) Hall, Leeds.

The Suite may be grouped with other Scottish works by Mackenzie such as the Rhapsodie Écossaise (1879), Burns: Second Scotch Rhapsody (1880), the Scottish Concerto (1897) and other smaller works whose musical idiom is derived from the use of traditional Scottish melodies. In the programme note to an early performance of the work, presumably written with the approval of the composer, the writer relates how the ‘pibroch’ (Scottish Gaelic piobaireachd, ‘pipe music’) represents the highest form of bagpipe music and how Mackenzie’s suite resembles it through the utilisation of several different movement types. Essential to this combination of movements is a set of variations on a theme known as the urlar (Gaelic, ‘ground’) which is represented by the second central movement in Mackenzie’s work. The first movement, however, as its title ‘Rhapsody’ suggests, concentrates on the element of improvisation and has a very free formal structure employing extensive quasi-improvisational writing for the soloist with scant orchestral accompaniment. The programme note describes the movement as ‘a series of brilliant and diversified passages for the solo violin’. Indeed with its looseness of

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\(^{54}\) Letter to Nicholas Kilburn, 16 August 1889 (National Library of Scotland, MS 21501 ff. 109–10).
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

metre the violin figuration during this section gives the listener the feeling of an extended cadenza. The introductory motive in the orchestra (see Music example 11) recurs with increasing insistence throughout the movement, particularly in its more disturbing minor mode version, and is taken up by the violin in the central section (bb. 40–61) as a foil to the gentler cadenza episodes. The violin itself introduces two discernible themes which vie for attention between the elaborate cadenza-like episodes. The first is concise and notable for the openness of its melodic line compared with the second theme which is more elaborate yet subject to further embellishments during the course of the music (see Music example 12). These two themes provide much of the motivic material on which the violin expatiates during the cadential episodes. In atmosphere the entire movement shares similarities with the first section of Bruch’s *Scottish Fantasy*, Op. 46 (1880), also written for Sarasate. On a technical level both Mackenzie and Bruch write extended cadenzas for the soloist and make considerable and prominent use of harps in the orchestration, suggest another Celtic instrumental tradition.

Music example 11: The introductory orchestral motive of the 'Rhapsody', Pibroch.

Music example 12: The first and second themes introduced by the violin in the 'Rhapsody', Pibroch.

Although the first movement concentrates on the improvisational quality of the violin and by extension the bagpipe, of which the violin is the representative in this instance, the work’s relationship to pibroch music is more manifest in the second movement, ‘Caprice’. Pibroch is often considered to be the ‘classical’ music of the Scottish bagpipe repertory (see discussion above), and generally distances itself from the music and rhythms of traditional dance-music contained in pieces such as reels and
strathspeys. Musically it is related to the idea of a theme and variations which increase in complexity as the set progresses. On the pipes the variations are made through the inclusion of ‘cuttings’ or ornaments between notes following formulae taken from the pibroch tradition.\textsuperscript{55} Cuttings are the only way of varying the texture and rhythmic emphasis of music played on the pipes which, apart from playing a natural scale with a very restrictive tessitura and without recourse to accidentals, would otherwise have uniform attack and dynamics. Later in the piece the piper would often repeat the original theme in order to remind the listener of the basis of the music and provide a respite from the complexity of the ornamentation.

Mackenzie’s ‘Caprice’ is a loose set of nine variations on the Scottish melody ‘Three Guid Fellows’ combined with an orchestral introduction based on the theme, smaller interludes and a more extended cantabile central section which is recapitulated later in the movement.\textsuperscript{56} The theme itself appears at bb. 23–39 with the repetitions of both halves of the melody written out and played an octave higher by the soloist. The orchestral introduction in which the soloist participates prefigures the theme and makes heavy use of the initial motive of the melody of ‘Three Guid Fellows’, marked in Music example 13 below. The variations themselves are clearly labelled in the published score and, true to the tradition of pibroch, they vary only the surface of the music and on the whole retain the basic harmonic and periodic structure of the theme. In this way the first variation is a paired-semiquaver ‘double’ of the theme, the second employs the violinistic techniques of pizzicato, spiccato and harmonics, and so on (see Figure 7 below).\textsuperscript{57} Between the sixth and seventh variations a more lyrical original melody appears which utilises the close relationship between the simple and compound metres of 6/8 and 3/4. The original theme entrusts itself to the latter, simple metre and as such provides a melodic relief from the uncompromising dance rhythm of the pibroch variations. The central section also heralds the first harmonic divergence from the home key of A minor. The difficulty of writing variations on the same periodic and rhythmic structure as the theme lies in the lack of harmonic modulation which can sometimes leave the music with a sense of harmonic stasis no matter what technical feats the soloist may be attempting.

\textsuperscript{56} ‘Three Good Fellows’ also appears in Mackenzie’s collection of \textit{Scottish Melodies}. See footnote 51, above.
\textsuperscript{57} The similarities between the sections in the ‘Caprice’ and the Baroque convention of ‘doubles’ in sets of variations are quite close, betraying the pibroch’s classical music ancestry. It also emphasises the need for a varied texture in both seventeenth-century keyboard and bagpipe music owing to the difficulty in the production of dynamic gradations on both instruments.
on the surface. Mackenzie’s choice of placing the cantabile section in the key of F major with its later recapitulation in A major gives the movement a sense of direction which is denied it by the harmonic structure of the variations themselves. The harmonic progressions between the key areas are focused in the orchestral episodes which surround the two appearances of the cantabile section, showing how the composer can use the motives of the \textit{urlar} in a developmental context. Later development of these motives occurs at the end of the ‘Caprice’ where they are combined with the cantabile material in an elaborate coda.

\textit{Music example 13: ‘Three Guid Fellows’, the theme or \textit{urlar} of the variations in the ‘Caprice’}. 

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example13}
\end{center}
Figure 7: The structure of the 'Caprice' giving a description of the variations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section (bars)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction (1–22)</td>
<td>Use of motives from the theme; cadenza</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme (23–39)</td>
<td>'Three Guid Fellows'; both sections repeated in turn octave higher by violin</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode (40–43)</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation I (44–51)</td>
<td>Slurred paired-semiquavers</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation II (52–59)</td>
<td>Pizzicato, spiccato and harmonics</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation III (60–67)</td>
<td>Chromatic; string crossing</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IV (68–75)</td>
<td>Arpeggios</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation V (76–83)</td>
<td>Violin and orchestral dialogue</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode (84–87)</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation VI (88–103)</td>
<td>Staccato solo line; extended in length</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestral episode (103–15)</td>
<td>Prefigures cantabile theme of soloist</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantabile (116–48)</td>
<td><em>Più tranquillo</em>; simple (3/4) rather than compound (6/8) rhythm</td>
<td>F major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode (148–71)</td>
<td>Return to the variations by the re-introduction of thematic motives (cf. introduction)</td>
<td>Moves to A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation VII (172–80)</td>
<td>Acciacaturas and octave displacement in the solo line</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation VIII (181–88)</td>
<td>Octaves in solo line</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IX (189–96)</td>
<td>Pizzicato</td>
<td>A minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode (197–210)</td>
<td>Orchestral development of thematic motive modulating to A major</td>
<td>At the end of the section modal key change from A minor to A major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantabile (211–45)</td>
<td>Recapitulation of earlier section (cf. bb. 116–48); transposed into A major</td>
<td>A major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quasi Recit. and Cadenza (246–end)</td>
<td>Mixture of motives from both theme and cantabile sections; freely-written cadenza links into the final movement</td>
<td>A major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 'Caprice' is linked by a measured cadenza for the soloist to the final 'Dance' which makes use of variation techniques though to a lesser extent than the preceding movement. The main theme of the 'Dance' is taken from 'Leslies Lilt', a melody from the seventeenth-century Scottish Skene Manuscript,\(^\text{58}\) which is combined later with

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\(^{58}\) *En Adv. MS. 5.2.15*, pp. 91–92. The Skene Manuscript is a collection of music written for the mandore (a small lute), which was edited by William Dauney and published under the title *Ancient Scottish Melodies* (Edinburgh, 1838). It is probably from this source that Mackenzie took the melody for this movement in the *Pibroch* and also the two melodies he later arranged for string quartet/orchestra entitled *Ancient Scots Tunes* Op. 82 (see Appendix 3, p. 317).
another theme in the relative minor. After several variations of the material and abrupt changes of tempo, these melodies propel the music towards the frantic presto coda.

Despite the well-written solo part and accompanying music, the Pibroch does not have as sophisticated a structure as the two concertos. Mackenzie had essentially written a show piece for a virtuoso violinist to play in concert programmes instead of a more cerebrally-involved concerto. Like the Scottish Rhapsodies at the beginning of the 1880s, the Pibroch exhibits the composer’s interest not only in traditional Scottish music and its melodies, but also in the performance of this genre of music on the violin. However, the Pibroch was not his only Scottish essay for violin and orchestra written with Sarasate in mind. The violinist is known to have thought highly of both the Violin Concerto and the Pibroch and used to play them frequently on his concert tours around the world. His friendship with Mackenzie blossomed in the following years and, after the introduction of the Pibroch in Leeds, the composer dedicated the Highland Ballad, Op. 47, No. 1 (1893), to Sarasate. Initially scored for violin and piano and coupled with the Two Pieces: Barcarolle and Villanella, Op. 47, No. 2, it was published in its original arrangement by Novello in 1891. Mackenzie was quick to orchestrate the Ballad and it received its premiere from the Westminster Orchestral Society under Mackenzie on 17 May 1893 with Hans Wessely rather than Sarasate as the soloist.

Not surprisingly the spirit of the Pibroch infuses the Highland Ballad despite its smaller scale in comparison with its predecessor. The piece is through-composed in the manner of an instrumental scena with sections which return in a palindromic format moving from the lyricism of a quasi-improvisational section to the virtuosic and technical displays given by the solo violin in the central episode of the work. The first of these sections echoes the initial movement of the Pibroch with its reference to the use of cadenzas and integration of arpeggiated harp-writing in the orchestration. This section

59 Believed to be the old border air, ‘Hollin Green Hollin’ — see Alexander Campbell, Albyn’s Anthology, (Edinburgh, 1816), ii, 4–5. This was identified by Dr John Purser and is the only published source for this melody (correspondence with the author). The words in the Anthology were especially written for the publication by James Douglas.
60 RAM MS 1176.
61 Full score, GB-Lbm Add. 50775. The two other pieces from the Op. 47 set were also orchestrated (RAM MS 1277) though never performed to the author’s knowledge. The orchestration of the Highland Ballad reflects the earlier experience Mackenzie had with the Larghetto and Allegretto for cello and orchestra, Op. 10 (1875), which was originally a chamber piece before its orchestral reincarnation. This contrasts with the orchestration of the Benedictus — originally for violin and piano, Mackenzie gave the solo line to the first violins to produce an arrangement for small orchestra rather than a concerted work.
62 See review, MT, 1 June 1893, 342.
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

moves into a lyrical *Andantino espressivo* in triple metre (bb. 36–116) which introduces new melodic material and leads into the more technically-extrovert central section at the key change (rehearsal letter C, b. 117). A dissolution of the music into a cadenza for the soloist at b. 200 prepares for the recapitulation of thematic material from the *Andantino espressivo* section which appears an octave higher than it was previously heard. This shortened and condensed recapitulation draws heavily on the transcription and rearrangement of previous sections (compare bb. 201–05 with bb. 62–66, and bb. 206–223 with bb. 36–53) and occupies itself harmonically with the introduction of a tonic pedal from b. 226 (rehearsal figure I) and then a dominant pedal (b. 244, rehearsal figure J). The conclusion of the piece is provided by a repetition of the second part of the initial *Lento* where the music settles into the long-awaited perfect cadence into D major foreshadowed by the dominant pedal in the previous section.

Harmonically and structurally the *Highland Ballad* is of little interest in comparison with the innovations and formal control exercised in the concertos, or even in the *Pibroch*, the most direct musical progenitor of the work. However, Mackenzie’s handling of the small-scale palindromic thematic and harmonic episodes in the piece is assured, providing a wonderfully self-sufficient instrumental scena. Although the *Ballad* is set in the key of D major, the initial *Lento* is more concerned with the establishment of the subsidiary key areas of E minor and A major, thereby executing a long-term II-V-I cadential articulation into the D major *Andantino espressivo* at b. 36. The central episode begins in the dominant key of A major but soon gravitates to the relative F sharp minor at the entry of the soloist. These key progressions are soon reversed with the recapitulation of former material, eventually leading to the same cadential articulation of II-V-I in the final *Lento*. Though the work is harmonically conservative, rarely venturing into tonal areas comparable with those touched upon in the Violin Concerto, it presents a unified musical structure. Mackenzie reflects the arched harmonic progression of the work in his pacing of the thematic material, with the most technically demanding section for the soloist placed in F sharp minor, the furthest key area from the tonic. This also reveals Mackenzie’s penchant for the dramatic intensity of the sharp minor keys when writing for the violin which he had previously exploited in the first movement of the Violin Concerto.
Chapter 6: The Concerted Music

The atmosphere of the *Pibroch* and the *Highland Ballad* is also echoed in Mackenzie's last concerted work, the Suite for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 68, of 1907.\(^{63}\) The opening movement is entitled 'Celtic Legend' and makes a similar atmospheric use of the cadenza between orchestral episodes, whereas the other movements are cast in either dance or more traditional instrumental forms such as the ritornello. The work also reflects Mackenzie's tendency to unite movements into suites during the first decade of this century (compare with the *Coriolanus* Suite (1901) and the Suite: *London, Day by Day* (1902)), and it is unusual for a concerted work to have four rather than three movements. Mackenzie may have chosen the four movement structure of a suite because of its association with the symphony and the symphonic style, thereby treating the Suite as a *symphonie manqué* (see discussion of the two orchestral suites in Chapter 7). Compared with the other music written in this genre the Suite exhibits the most advanced harmonic outlook owing to its composition during a period in Mackenzie's career when he was moving away from the Romantic harmonic idiom as exemplified in the two concertos. His treatment of harmony and key relationships is more varied and innovative, displaying a lack of self-consciousness in the lateral development of thematic material. Structurally the movements of the Suite are rooted in Mackenzie's idiosyncratic interpretation of sonata form which he had perfected in the two concertos. Despite the overtly symphonic treatment of material in the Suite, the music is still melody-driven with importance accorded to the solo line and this shows that Mackenzie was always aware of the limitations and conventions of the concerto.

The work was designed for the young Russian violin virtuoso Mischa Elman and dedicated 'to William H. Ash Esq. and the Worshipful Company of Musicians, London' by whom it was presumably suggested or commissioned. The Suite was given a private hearing for the dedicatees but it received its public premiere on 18 February 1907 at the Queen's Hall under the direction of Hans Richter.\(^{64}\) The four movements are relatively substantial in length and the work lasts for over half an hour in performance. The first movement of the Suite, 'Celtic Legend', already mentioned as a descendant of the Scottish atmosphere in the *Pibroch*, is set in a sonata form with a truncated development which makes use of a sequential fanfare (b. 80ff., moving up a semitone from E flat.


\(^{64}\) See programme note for the first performance (held in RCM Portraits Department). There is a general lack of documentary evidence surrounding the genesis of this work, and even the manuscript score has yet to be located.
major to E minor) followed by a condensed version of the first subject at b. 87 (compare with its first appearance at b. 23). The harmonic structure of the Legend progresses from the initial home key of E minor to end in the modal major, having visited the relative G major for the second subject at b. 55, which returns in the key of C major during the recapitulation (b. 113). The coda to the movement makes use of thematic material from the introduction and ends with a brief reference to the first theme at b. 153. The ‘Scherzo capriccioso’ also employs a sonata exposition and development and its thematic material is characterised by the use of 3/4 and 6/8 rhythms which are uppermost in the last of the four principal themes (b. 88, see Music example 14). To emphasise this shift between compound and simple metres Mackenzie makes use of general pauses between the introduction of new themes in the exposition, adding to the episodic feel of the music. It is the second theme that provides the basis of the development section which begins in G minor and moves sequentially towards a dominant pedal in G at b. 55. Although the exposition has been couched for the most part in G major, the recapitulation begins in the home key before placing the second and third subjects in E minor and the fourth in C minor. It is only in the coda to the movement that the music returns to the home tonality by way of E minor, employing a long tonic pedal to cement the final return. In this way Mackenzie varies the traditional harmonic structure of the recapitulation so that it is not merely a repeat of the initial thematic material, and the return to the home key is only brought into effect in the final bars of the piece, a strategy he had used earlier to great effect in the concertos.

Music example 14: The fourth subject of the ‘Scherzo capriccioso’ showing the varying use of simple and complex metres, Suite for Violin, Op. 68.

The ‘Ritornello’ is the only one of the four movements in the Suite to be based on a purely instrumental form, and, as such, has the simplest structure. Beginning in B minor, the ritornello itself (see Music example 15) is alternated with two further themes
or episodes with the appearance of the second acting as a developmental section which is elongated by the reintroduction of the first episode in B major (compare bb. 114–24 with bb. 47–56). A fleeting appearance of the ritornello theme in E minor (b. 125) pre-empts the expected B minor version at b. 129, after which follows a coda in the home key employing material from all of the previous sections. This movement is one of the most beautiful that Mackenzie composed, in which the independent orchestral accompaniment only serves to heighten the melancholy of the solo violin. The mood of the final movement, ‘Alla Zingara’, with its use of ‘gypsy’ rhythms makes a great contrast to the ‘Ritornello’. Mackenzie chose the key of E major for this final dance movement as he did in the finale to the Violin Concerto finding that it bestows the music with an exuberance suitable for the finale of the entire Suite. The comparison between this and the Violin Concerto is apt owing to the heavy use in both movements of dotted rhythms in triple metre reflecting the earlier piece’s terpsichorean influence from the Polish Krakowiak. During the course of the movement the tonic key is alternated with G major and C major as well as the unusual appearance of the third theme in A flat major (enharmonically G sharp, the mediant of E major). The movement is episodic in structure and made up of three main themes which appear at bb. 19, 68 and 157, respectively. The programme note to the first performance of the work records a resemblance between the second of these themes appearing in the orchestra and one which is used in the ‘Celtic Legend’, although this is only a passing intervallic similarity (compare IV: bb. 68–69 with I: bb. 23–24). The second theme returns transposed into the key of E major at b. 207 which marks the end of the A flat major C major presentation of the third theme and allows the music to conclude in the tonic key.


Mackenzie’s approach to the concerto is one of great variety and innovation in comparison with his work as a whole. The earlier preoccupation with the concerto proper gave way to the freedom of treatment available in the form of the suite, although

65 N.B. the repeats marked on the second page of this movement in the piano reduction are ‘written out’ in the published full score and so this affects the bar numbering. All bar numbers given in this discussion are taken from the piano reduction (i.e. not taking into account the repeated sections).
these are also to be considered as concertos in spirit. It is perhaps no surprise that a composer with an affinity for the theatrical and dramatic such as Mackenzie felt more at home with the realism and extra-musical inspiration of the suite rather than the abstraction of the concerto. However his early achievements in the Violin Concerto and later the *Scottish Concerto* allowed him to make his name in the concert hall away from the pressures of the choral festival and the opera house, and his work resulted in the great friendship with the violinist Sarasate who played the Violin Concerto and *Pibroch* on his many concert tours around the world. The two men kept in contact until Sarasate's death and it is notable that Mackenzie was asked to give his own personal tribute to the man in a short article for *The Musical Times*.66

66 *MT*, 1 November 1908, 693–95.
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

Unlike his work in other genres, Mackenzie’s orchestral output is not confined to a single period of his life, but ranges from his earliest mature compositions to his very last, such as the overtures *Cervantes* and *Youth, Sport, Loyalty* of 1876 and 1922 respectively. The previous chapters have shown that the music of the other genres was in part linked with the various practical musical activities that Mackenzie undertook during his career: his chamber works were written when he played in the Edinburgh quartet, his lyrical dramas when working with Hueffer and the Carl Rosa Opera Company, and his concertos as the results of commissions and collaborations with two of Europe’s leading instrumentalists. Since he enjoyed relatively close links with one orchestra or another during the majority of his creative life, there is a wide variety of music written for the medium which reflects these various relationships. For the orchestra of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Choral Unions he produced the Scottish Rhapsodies, for the Philharmonic Orchestra he wrote *La belle dame sans merci*, and for his own orchestra at the RAM Mackenzie composed the celebratory overtures *Britannia* and *Youth, Sport, Loyalty*. Having already examined the other major works written by the composer, it is perhaps easier to appreciate the various influences on his orchestral conceptions as his career progressed. It was only during the busy middle period of his creative life that Mackenzie did not concentrate on producing many new orchestral scores, since his time was then fully taken up with the composition of the lyrical dramas and the large choral works. However, at the same time as these larger compositions, he did manage to complete the orchestral ballad *La belle dame sans merci* and the *Overture to Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night*, two of his longest and, for the period, most innovative orchestral works.

Understandably perhaps, the genesis and reception of Mackenzie’s orchestral music is not as widely documented as his activity in the dramatic genres, where the music relied primarily on collaboration with writers, other musicians and theatrical people. Probably the best source of information giving insight into his creative processes for the orchestral works is his autobiography, though this does not always supply adequate detail as to how he approached each composition in musical terms. Where possible, reference will be made in the discussion below to other literary views on his work, even including a few letters from the composer in which he enlightens a colleague on the
nature of his latest composition and why it was written. In much the same way as with his choral works for the regional festivals, the majority of Mackenzie’s orchestral essays owe their existence to commissions secured from various orchestras in London and elsewhere. In the 1890s and the early years of the twentieth, it would seem that many of the composer’s orchestral overtures and character pieces were written as pièces d’occasion or novelties and took their inspiration from the event they were written to celebrate, rather than originating from the composer’s own artistic impulse. This only serves to underline Mackenzie’s practical nature and craftsmanship as a composer, writing for the present rather than posterity, even though much of his work holds a great deal of interest for musicologists almost a century on.

In order to gain a general overview of his mature orchestral music (listed in Table 1, below), Mackenzie’s output can be divided into four different types of piece, according to the nature of the musical structures he used, the commissions which generated the music, or the period of his creative life from which a work dates. The first of these groups is the rhapsodies of which Mackenzie wrote four examples: the *Rhapsodie Écossaise* (1879), *Burns: Second Scotch Rhapsody* (1880),¹ the *Canadian Rhapsody* (1904) and *Tam o’ Shanter: Third Scottish Rhapsodie* (1911). Based on traditional Scottish and Canadian melodies, the rhapsodies and their musical arrangement prefigure the work of the English folksong school of composers such as Vaughan Williams, Sharp and Holst in the early twentieth century. The works derive from Lisztian precedents and the nineteenth century’s preoccupation with traditional or native music, though Mackenzie’s essays do not necessarily hide a nationalistic agenda. Conversely the orchestral ballads, *La belle dame sans merci* (1883) based on Keats’ poem of the same name, and the *Overture to Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night* (1888), are both born of literary inspiration. These are extended sonata form works dealing with the depiction of tragedy and comedy respectively and both draw on Mackenzie’s formidable mastery of dramatic orchestration, a talent he had honed during his work on other dramatic scores during the 1880s.

¹ The printed title page of this work uses the archaic adjective, ‘Scotch’, rather than the more usual and, in modern times, more correct word, ‘Scottish’. One can only presume that Mackenzie preferred the picturesque nature of the former word, and thought that it would have a greater appeal to his English audiences.
Table 1: A summary table of Mackenzie's mature orchestral scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td><em>Cervantes</em></td>
<td>Sondershausen, 1877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Scherzo for Orchestra, Glasgow</td>
<td>Glasgow, 1878</td>
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<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td><em>Rhapsodie Ecossaise, Op. 21</em></td>
<td>Edinburgh, 1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Overture 'Tempo di Ballo', unpubd</td>
<td>Unperformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td><em>La Belle Dame sans Merci, Op. 29</em></td>
<td>Philharmonic Society, London, 1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Symphony (1st &amp; 4th Movements), sketched only</td>
<td>Unperformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td><em>Benedictus</em>, Op. 37 No. 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td><em>Britannia</em>: Overture, Op. 52</td>
<td>RAM, London, 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td><em>Coronation March</em>, Op. 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Suite: <em>London Day by Day</em>, Op. 64</td>
<td>Norwich Festival, 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td><em>La Savannah</em>, air de ballet, Op. 72</td>
<td>Bournemouth, 1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td><em>An English Joy-Peal</em>, Op. 75</td>
<td>Westminster Abbey, London 1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td><em>Ancient Scots Tunes</em>, Op. 82</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Around the turn of the century, Mackenzie began to order his orchestral essays into suites. Having failed to complete his attempts at two symphonic movements in 1887, his adoption of the suite is symptomatic of his need to write a symphonie manqué in the same way that he treated the oratorio and cantata as operas manqués. In total he completed three examples of the suite, two of which were written expressly for orchestra. The later Suite for Violin and Orchestra (1907) discussed in Chapter 6 is preceded by the orchestral suites *Coriolanus* (1901) and *London, Day by Day* (1902). Last, and by no means least, Mackenzie wrote many lighter orchestral works in the form of overtures on a wide range of subjects. Perhaps the most enduring of these overtures is *Britannia: A Nautical Overture*, composed to celebrate the belated seventieth anniversary of the Royal Academy of Music in 1894. Other overtures such as the *Coronation March* (1902) and *An English Joy-Peal* (1911) were written to commemorate State occasions, the latter being played during the coronation ceremony of George V in Westminster Abbey.

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2 Only two movements of the symphony were sketched in short score (RAM MS 1283) while Mackenzie was on vacation at Ver sur Mer in the Calvados region of France. The work was also mentioned by the composer in letters to his colleagues such as Joseph Bennett.
Mackenzie's adoption of the rhapsody as a musical form betrays the influence of Liszt on the young composer's musical thought. Having trained in Sondershausen so close to Weimar where the great Hungarian was then employed, Mackenzie came into almost daily contact with Liszt's music, especially his latest and most advanced compositions. It was the rhapsody, however, and in particular the *Rhapsodies Hongroises* by Liszt that the young Scot chose to emulate in his two orchestral works written towards the end of the 1870s. Liszt was the first composer to translate the rhapsody into the medium of music, since it had previously been considered a literary and, more precisely, a poetic form. Moreover, in his fifteen *Rhapsodies Hongroises* that appeared during 1853–54 he established the precedent of linking them to national or traditional music. Never an overly cerebral and developmental musical form, the rhapsody remained true to its Greek etymology, and provided 'a string of melodies arranged with a view to effective performance in public, but without regular dependence of one part upon another.' Liszt's rhapsodies were initially written for piano solo and some were later orchestrated. Conversely, Mackenzie's essays in the form were conceived for orchestra from the outset. Both of the two early Scottish rhapsodies and the later *Canadian Rhapsody* have a basic three-movement structure, linked in one continuous musical arc. Although not dissimilar to this tripartite form, *Tam o' Shanter* departs from the format of the earlier rhapsodies by additionally depicting the narrative described in Burns' famous poem of the same name, rather than presenting three superficially unrelated poems or songs. In an essay written a decade ago and with the benefit of hindsight, Percy Young considers the *Rhapsodie Écosaise* to be 'one of the earliest British examples of the freely composed orchestral piece, which in its more ambitious form was called a symphonic poem.' Continuing with this train of thought, he also notes that 'Mackenzie in his earlier years was far ahead of most British composers in respect of orchestral practices and techniques.' This assertion is indeed true to a certain

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3 'Rhapsody' is taken from the Greek, ῥαψῳδία: ῥαψ = I sew, and οἶδα = song, ode.
4 E. [dward] D. [anreuther], 'Rhapsody', *Grove2*.
5 Percy Young, 'Orchestral Music', in Nicholas Temperley, ed., *The Romantic Age 1800 1914, The Athlone History of Music in Britain (volume 5)* (Oxford, 1988), 372 [Young's own italics]. It is interesting to note that the 'symphonic poem' was pioneered in Britain by William Wallace (1860–1940), another Scottish composer who deeply admired the work of Liszt. See main discussion below.
extent. The composer’s exposure from an early age to mid-European orchestral music, particularly the work of Liszt, is responsible for his relatively advanced compositional style in this period and this is audible in the music itself.

As nationally-inspired music, the three Scottish rhapsodies belong to another group of Mackenzie’s output which has been little discussed in previous chapters. This is not because this group of Scottish works does not form an important part of his musical persona, but rather because, more often than not, the pieces in question do not exhibit any great innovation or imagination in terms of musical substance. Apart from the ubiquitous arrangements of Scottish songs which Mackenzie published throughout his life\(^6\) and the orchestral rhapsodies themselves, there exist the *Three Scenes in the Scottish Highlands* for piano (1878), the *Pibroch Suite* (1889) and *Highland Ballad* (1891) for violin and orchestra, *The Cotter’s Saturday Night* (1888), the *Scottish Concerto* for piano and orchestra (1897), the incidental music to *Marmion* (1891), *Ravenswood* (1890), and *The Little Minister* (1897), the set of violin and orchestral pieces *From the North* (1895), and the *Ancient Scots Tunes* (1915), as well as other smaller works. These works are all either based on traditional Scottish melodies, on Scottish manuscript sources in the case of the second movement of the *Pibroch* and the *Ancient Scots Tunes*, or take their musical inspiration from the composer’s perception of Scotland itself. It is hardly surprising that the composer himself later described this affinity with his native country and its music. ‘Whether with exactness or not, it has been said that all through my efforts at composition the Scot keeps peeping out. If that be so, he obtrudes his presence either unwittingly or beyond control. When I did write in the Doric I meant it; and must have contributed more than nineteen works to its native list.’\(^7\)

In his exhaustive *A History of Music in Scotland*, Farmer concludes his discussion of Mackenzie’s legacy as a composer with the following statement. ‘In spite of the generally expressed opinion to the contrary, it was the distinctly Scottish characteristic in many of Mackenzie’s contributions to the renascence of British music that was the torch that kindled the flame which burned so brightly in the Scottish National Group of composers from Hamish MacCunn to [Sir] John B. McEwen in the last two decades of the 19th Century.’\(^8\) The 1800s were witness to a particular flowering

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\(^6\) See Appendix 3: Catalogue of Works, Section J: Solo Songs and Section L: Miscellaneous Collections.


\(^8\) Farmer, *op. cit.*, 518.
of nationalist music and, despite there being many reasons for this phenomenon, no such music can and should be considered outside of the context in which it was written. Of itself, national music can be divided into two types. Firstly, there is the use of traditional melody to produce national music with ‘exotic’ or decorative value. Secondly, there is nationalist music which, as Dahlhaus explains, ‘invariably emerges as an expression of a politically motivated need, [and] tends to appear when national independence is being sought, denied, or jeopardized rather than attained or consolidated.’ In outlining the stance of Mackenzie and his contemporaries as nationalist composers, Farmer is careful to state that ‘in almost every one of this band an intense love of country pervaded their souls.’ This fact differentiates the Scottish music written by this group of composers from the political agenda often associated with nationalism in music, for example in the works of Smetana and Dvořák. As far as can be discerned, politically both Mackenzie and his younger compatriots Wallace and MacCunn, like the Irish Stanford, were Unionists, living and working in London, the British capital, without sacrificing the identity of their native births. In many ways, the nationalism associated with these Scottish composers and, indeed, with Stanford in his Irish Symphony (1887) and rhapsodies is the forerunner of a regionalism in the British Isles, which was further explored by the next generation of musicians and composers such as Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams.

However, in terms of Scottish nationalism, Farmer isolates Mackenzie’s Rhapsodie Écossoise as a turning point in the history of the country’s musical development. ‘After [it] had appeared, the vision of a “National School” in the creative sense took a firm hold on the imagination of the prescient few, and before many years had passed this reverie had become an accomplished fact in the compositions of Hamish MacCunn, Learmont Drysdale, Frederick J. Simpson, William Wallace, J. Moir Clark, Charles Macpherson and John B. McEwen.’ There is no doubt that Mackenzie was a follower and possibly even the founder of the national school of composition in the ‘creative sense’. He was careful, however, not to concentrate solely on the inspiration of Scotland to guide him in every work and, more often than most, allowed the Continental

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9 Carl Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 1989), 38.
10 In 1906, Mackenzie gave a course of lectures on the music of Smetana at the Royal Institution, also publishing a paper on the subject. See Mackenzie, ‘The Bohemian School of Music,’ Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft, vii (1905–1906), 145–72.
11 Farmer, loc. cit.
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

aspects of his musical training to the fore in more than one area of his compositions. Had he composed Scottish music for the remainder of his career it would have been relatively short-lived, a fact that is corroborated by Samson who writes that national schools of music have ‘a limited lifespan. They escape provincialism only by admitting the influence of the wider contemporary world.’\(^\text{12}\) Mackenzie’s Scottish music is evidence of this, and it is influenced by stylistic models not only from north of the border, but also from the heart of nineteenth-century Europe.

True to the Continental precedents of Liszt’s *Rhapsodies Hongroises*, it was at the request of August Manns, a German musician, that Mackenzie was persuaded to write the *Rhapsodie Écossaise* during 1879.

Manns, then at the conductor’s desk in Glasgow, strongly urged me to adopt the plan (initiated by Liszt and followed by Glinka, Svendsen, Grieg, and others) of working up national material into artistic shape, and he himself did much to popularize these efforts. Although I was the occasional recipient of public and private advice not to meddle with the “auld sangs,” my own inclination led me to contribute several specimens of the kind which were not unfavourably received elsewhere.\(^\text{13}\)

Having recently taken over the Glasgow Choral Union orchestra from Julius Tausch,\(^\text{14}\) Manns was engaged on what Mackenzie later referred to as his ‘Scottish Campaign’ as part of the Crystal Palace concerts during the 1879 and 1880 seasons.\(^\text{15}\) The German conductor had previously given a performance of Mackenzie’s manuscript *Scherzo* for orchestra (1878) in London and, following this, he invited the composer to put together a rhapsody on Scottish themes. ‘Curiously enough,’ Mackenzie later commented, ‘when Manns suggested to me that I should write it, he also suggested as a model Svendsen’s Norwegian Rhapsodies, which hint I took and wrote it in that 3 movement (sinfonietta) form.’\(^\text{16}\) The adoption of Svendsen’s rhapsodies as immediate models for the *Rhapsodie Écossaise* and its counterparts explains the three movement structure of the works, since they are not as formally fluid as the music of Liszt’s *Rhapsodies*. However, in giving the


\(^{13}\) *MN*, 95. Confirmation of Manns’ suggestion to Mackenzie can also be found in a contribution by the composer to H. Saxe Wyndham, *August Manns and the Saturday Concerts: A Memoir and a Retrospect* (London, 1909), 222. Mackenzie also wrote to Joseph Bennett mentioning the nature of this commission.

\(^{14}\) Founded in Glasgow during 1874, the orchestra also performed in Edinburgh and was conducted by Henry A. Lambert (1874–75), Arthur Sullivan (1875–76), Hans von Bülow (1877–78), Julius Tausch (1878–79) and August Manns (1879–94), with all of whom Mackenzie was on good terms as both colleague and friend. See Farmer, *op. cit.*, 476–77.

\(^{15}\) Letter to C. A. Barry, 7 March 1889 (RAM, Barry Collection: letter inside copy of Scottish Rhapsodies, shelfmark 046505).

\(^{16}\) Letter to Joseph Bennett, 1 June 1888 (Bennett Collection, Pierpont Morgan Library, MFCM156.B4716(28)).
first of his rhapsodies a French title, Mackenzie acknowledged the debt that the music owed to the Hungarian composer, as well as allowing the music to retain more immediate parallels with Svendsen's work in the genre.\footnote{Incidentally, the \textit{Rhapsodie Écossaise} is dedicated to Prosper Sainton, Professor of violin at the RAM, who taught both Mackenzie and his father before him. In the dedication the composer refers to his tutor as 'son maître estimé.'}

The \textit{Rhapsodie Écossaise} received its premiere in the Scottish capital under Manns on 5 January 1880 and even merited a review in \textit{The Musical Times}, a rare thing for a new piece by an unknown composer, which noted how the work 'produced a marked effect upon the audience, and has since received the warmest of eulogisms from the local papers.'\footnote{\textit{MT}, 1 February 1880, 81.} In his contribution to Wyndham's biography of Manns, Mackenzie asserted that this occasion 'was practically the beginning of my career as a composer',\footnote{Saxe Wyndham, \textit{op. cit.}, 222.} and later in the year the \textit{Rhapsodie} was published by Neumeyer & Co., being the first orchestral score by the composer in print. Delighted with the commission, Manns immediately made his intention known that the \textit{Rhapsodie} would soon receive its London premiere at the Crystal Palace, accompanied by 'another new work' from Mackenzie. This, of course, was \textit{Burns: Second Scotch Rhapsody}, Op. 24, so called because each of the three movements is prefaced by a verse from the Scottish poet that matches the melody upon which each section of the work is based (see below). Although the music for the second rhapsody may have been sketched following the premiere of the \textit{Rhapsodie Écossaise}, it was not completed and fully scored until nine months later. In selecting his dedicatee of this second rhapsodic essay, Mackenzie chose 'Madame J. Hillebrand in Florence', a keen musician and intimate of Liszt, Wagner and Bülow. When the composer had moved to Florence the previous year to enable him to undergo a period of recuperation, Jessie Hillebrand, 'an English lady who devoted herself heart and soul to the cause of music in Florence',\footnote{Constance Bache, \textit{Brother Musicians: Reminiscences of Edward and Walter Bache} (London, 1901), n.148.} had taken the family under her wing and, on Bülow's recommendation,\footnote{\textit{MN}, 95; 101-03.} introduced them to her social circle in much the same way as she had befriended the English pianist Walter Bache two decades earlier.\footnote{Bache, \textit{op. cit.}, 148-60.}

Remembering Mme Hillebrand in connection with her own brother's career, Constance Bache stated that 'she had the absolute genius for discovering the exact worth and
capabilities of young musicians’ and also that ‘her practical help formed the turning-point in Bache’s career, and no less so in that of Signori Sgambati of Rome and Buonamici of Florence.’ To this list of famous names may be added that of Mackenzie, whose close acquaintance with the Hillebrands was cemented when he and his family lodged in the mezzanino of the same building during the second year of their stay in Florence.23

Like the Rhapsodie Écossaise before it, Burns was premiered by Manns on Scottish soil in both Edinburgh and Glasgow in December 1880 and January 1881 respectively, before transferring to the Crystal Palace a couple of months later.24 Cast in the same form as its earlier counterpart, the rhapsody originally had a different finale from the one in the published score. ‘I remember that when the Finale was returned to me by Manns with the remonstrance, “Much too wild,” I supplied him with another movement. The discarded piece would probably be rejected as being “much too mild” today.’25 A reporter from The Musical Times attended the London premiere and pinpointed one of the rhapsody’s antecedents, saying that it ‘belongs to the class of music called into life by Liszt’s “Rhapsodies Hongroises”’.26 He also recorded that ‘the Hungarian master has spoken very favourably of his young admirer.’ Describing the older composer in a chapter of his Narrative, Mackenzie tells of how Liszt had demanded to see some of the Scotsman’s work when attending a dinner given by the Hillebrands.

> A fourhand edition of my Burns having been produced, he [Liszt] sat down to play it with Buonamici (or Hatton) before being dragged off to table. I was then sent for, and the meal over, the reading of the piece was resumed. All his amiability returning, he declared himself extremely pleased. Pointing to a passage of exceptionally Scottish flavour, he said, “Ich habe viel dererlei gemacht, aber doch nicht dieses” (I’ve done much of this sort of thing, but not that).27

Another composer who identified with the techniques and melodies that Mackenzie had used in the Scottish Rhapsodies was Edvard Grieg. At the suggestion of Liszt, the

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23 MN, 99. The Mackenzies had previously rented accommodation in the noisy Via della Pergola.
24 In MN Mackenzie notes that the premiere of the work was the performance at the Crystal Palace in March 1881; Walter Stock, however, states that the first performance was given in Glasgow. Moreover, writing in Wyndham’s biography of Manns, Mackenzie clearly identifies a concert in Edinburgh on 27 December 1880 as the first hearing of the work. It is probable that he overlooked this when compiling MN nearly twenty years later.
25 MN, 107.
26 MT, 1 April 1881, 179. The Austrian critic Eduard Hanslick also reviewed a performance of Burns, see Hanslick, ‘Schottische Rhapsodie (Nr. 2, Op. 24, von Mackenzie),’ in Der Moderne Oper — Aus dem Tagebuch eines Musikers (Farnborough, 1892/1971), vi, 183–85.
27 MN, 126. Liszt subsequently demanded that an orchestral score of Burns be sent to Budapest and a performance given by the orchestra there. However, since this request was not granted, Liszt cancelled his annual visit to the city.
Norwegian had also arranged some national folksongs into a similar musical form. 'Of Scottish extraction himself, my *Burns Rhapsodie* ... led him to expatiate on the similarity of our countries' melodies and their characteristics,' Mackenzie recollected. 'I am not, however, yet convinced of the existence of so striking a likeness as he seemed to discover.'

Mackenzie's views on the use of Scottish material in his compositions is best reported from a letter he wrote in 1889 to an Edinburgh colleague and academic, John Stuart Blackie, the author of a recent book on *Scottish Song* which he dedicated to the composer. 'My reticence in giving too much National Music of my own is chiefly due to an experience which has reached most thinking musicians [recently],' he wrote. 'That a composer may use it, [and] only too easily become a mere mannerist. Some of the Norwegians and Swedes have taught us this. All the same at intervals I work at it.' In isolating composers in Norway and Sweden in this statement, Mackenzie implied the work of Grieg and Svendsen, both of whom had provided him with the impetus for his own Scottish Rhapsodies. However, Mackenzie was careful not to concentrate solely on the inspiration of traditional Scottish melody, preferring to use it in order to gain initial recognition for his music while building the majority of his reputation on a more cosmopolitan style in the 1880s. As a result, instead of becoming a 'mere mannerist', he ensured that his music was accepted on equal terms with that of composers outside his native land. After the composition of the two early Scottish Rhapsodies, it was not until twenty years later that Mackenzie composed again in this form, writing the *Canadian Rhapsody*, Op. 67 (1904) following his tour of the Province in 1903 organised by the British-born composer, Charles Harriss. However, thirty years were to pass before Mackenzie revisited the rhapsody as inspired by Scotland, when, as President of the International Music Society, which held its Congress in London during May and June 1911, he provided *Tam o' Shanter* for a concert to celebrate the different British

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28 MN, 191.
30 Letter to Prof. John Stuart Blackie, 9 January 1889 (NLS MS 2638, f. 4). This letter was prompted by Mackenzie's receipt of Blackie's book. The composer also described his recent experiences with *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, a piece which he considered 'national music idealised so far as in me lies.'
31 See discussion of the tour in Chapter 1. The *Canadian Rhapsody* is based on the following traditional melodies: first movement — 'Tenaouich! tenaga, Oui'cha (C'était un vieux sauvage)', 'C'est la belle Franyoise [sic]'; second movement — 'Bytown', Canadien errant'; third movement — 'Alouette, gentille alouette'. Mackenzie arranged some of these melodies for voice and piano as *Four Canadian Folksongs* (Boosey, 1907). See Appendix 3: Catalogue of Works, Section J: Solo Songs.
32 This was one of the busiest periods of Mackenzie's professional life, with the Congress, the Coronation of George
nationalities. Based on Burns’ famous poem, the third Scottish Rhapsody, despite its closer reading of a literary narrative structure, can be divided into three distinct movements, following in the footsteps of its earlier counterparts. Much of its music is in Scottish style rather than drawing upon specific traditional melodies, but the composer does make use of the drinking-song, ‘Willie brewed a peck o’ maut’, as the chief theme of the rhapsody (see Music example 1). ‘To emphasize my own nationality,’ wrote the composer, ‘a bagpipe chanter was mercilessly added to the wood-wind in the score of Tam o’ Shanter.’ Mackenzie obviously did not trust the conventional ensemble to be able to portray the ‘hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys and reels’ of the central bacchanalian ceilidh without this most integral of Scottish instruments.

Music example 1: The chief theme of Tam o’ Shanter: ‘Willie brewed a peck o’ maut’.

In selecting the melodies used in the two Scottish Rhapsodies, Mackenzie carefully chose three contrasting songs for each work. Music example 2, below, shows the melodies employed by the composer in the Rhapsodie Écossaise. ‘Muirland Willie’, the first of these, is in a tempestuous, compound-time G minor which contrasts well with the restful D major of ‘Braw, braw lads of Gala Water’ in the rhapsody’s central section.

V and the relocation of the RAM to its Marylebone site occurring in quick succession, for all of which occasions Mackenzie composed celebratory works.

Works by Stanford and Parry were also performed at the same concert to represent Ireland and England.

Mackenzie’s “Tam o’ Shanter”, MT, 1 June 1911, 377.

RAM MS 1127. The part for chanter was removed from the manuscript at a later date.

All of the melodies used by Mackenzie in the Scottish Rhapsodies as well as some of those in the Pibroch and Scottish Concerto are to be found in arrangements for piano made by the composer and published in two books as Scottish Melodies (Paterson, 1897). Mackenzie also contributed to and edited his father’s volume of The National Dance Music of Scotland (Paterson, 1859, 2/1889).
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

The work culminates in G major with the sprightly dance melody of 'There was a lad was born in Kyle' amid various bagpipe or double-pedal drones so characteristic of the finales from Mackenzie's Scottish works.\textsuperscript{38} Interestingly, both the second and third melodies used in this first rhapsody had been furnished with words by Burns himself, and so it is hardly surprising that Mackenzie used this literary link to name his second Scottish rhapsody. Again the melodies are well contrasted, being respectively a war song, a love song and a humorous song (see Music example 3). Probably the most famous of these traditional songs is the first, 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled', being the unofficial Scottish national anthem. A martial song, the theme was also used variously in both the last movement of Bruch's \textit{Scottish Fantasy} (1879–80) for violin and orchestra and William Wallace's fifth symphonic poem, \textit{Sir William Wallace} (1905). The central movement is based on the melancholic melody of 'She's fair and fause' with its bittersweet words by the Scots poet. The third song, 'The Cardin' o't', is usually sung to an older melody called 'Salt fish and dumplings'.

\textit{Music example 2: Melodies used in the Rhapsodie Écossaise: a.} 'Muirland Willie'; \textit{b.} 'Braw, braw lads of Gala Water'; \textit{c.} 'There was a lad was born in Kyle'.

\textsuperscript{38} Compare with corresponding movements in \textit{Burns} and the \textit{Scottish Concerto}. 
The composer’s treatment of these traditional melodies in the two rhapsodies is not overly developmental and, writing about the Rhapsodie Écossaise to his colleague C. A. Barry (1830–1915), the author of many programme notes for new works played at the Richter concerts during the period, Mackenzie states that ‘I think you are right regarding the analysis and I am glad that there is to be none, because I consider the piece too slight to bear much talking about.’ In a later letter about the same work, Mackenzie admitted that ‘there is no programme to the piece’, thus revealing to his correspondent that the musical settings of the melodies were to be as transparent as possible.\footnote{Letter to C. A. Barry, 2 May 1881 (RAM, Barry Collection: letter inside a printed score of the Scottish Rhapsodies, shelfmark 046505).} \footnote{Letter to C. A. Barry, 7 March 1889 (RAM, Barry Collection: Scottish Rhapsodies, shelfmark 046505).}
Nevertheless, when providing Barry with the accepted versions of the melodies for his analysis, Mackenzie concedes that 'I have, of course, taken liberties with them (dotted notes where there are none etc. for musical purposes). You will observe,' he continued, alluding to the melody of 'Muirland Willie', 'that I have pushed the rhythm of the first one half a bar forwards to avoid the “sonority of the commonplace” as Berlioz says, and 6/8 is a very precarious rhythm as regards tendency to vulgarity.' In the first movements of both rhapsodies, Mackenzie treats the traditional melodies on a phrase by phrase basis, sometimes elongating the final notes to add internal decoration within the accompaniment, sometimes repeating a particular phrase sequentially in order to further the harmonic momentum of the movement. This last technique is particularly prevalent, and all the more important since, almost without exception, the melodies used in the rhapsodies comprise closed musical couplets which do not normally allow developmental treatment and expansion. However, by isolating specific motives to repeat in the orchestra Mackenzie varies the presentation of the melody so that melodically it results in a cumulative movement. This method contrasts with the other movements of the rhapsodies which concentrate on more straightforward presentations of their melodies.

One notable feature of the two rhapsodies is the manner in which Mackenzie links the first two movements of each so that there is no hiatus in the performance and the music is continuous. In the Rhapsodie Ecossaise, after the last phrase of 'Muirland Willie' is played by the orchestral tutti, Mackenzie repeats material from the introduction at b. 135 and uses this to provide emphatic closing gestures rooted firmly in the tonic key of G minor. The rhythmic pace is slowed down considerably and the orchestration is thinned as the cellos and basses settle onto a pulsating dominant pedal in D major (bb. 152–64), the key of the central movement. Over this two horns play a hunting-call in harmony, giving the impression of natural instruments heard from across the moors, with a short phrase of 'Muirland Willie' heard on the oboe (bb. 156–58). Cleverly, the hunting-call is also the first phrase of 'Braw, braw lads of Gala Water' and so the violins begin at the Adagio molto in the middle of the melody with the answering phrase. A similar process, if more involved, is used at the end of the first movement of Burns. Once the martial dotted quavers have subsided, triplet rhythms are introduced into the melodic line to transform the metre from simple to compound duple. Again the orchestration is thinned out and the initial motive of 'She's fair and false' is passed around the orchestra.
until the bassoon is given a three-bar recitative to lead into the second movement, where the melody begins in earnest. These strategies almost exactly prefigure Mackenzie's structural handling of the relationship between the first two movements in the *Scottish Concerto*. Indeed, the two early rhapsodies might be seen as preliminary essays for the latter work only without the added dimension of a solo part.

In some ways, the legacy of Mackenzie's Scottish rhapsodies was far reaching. Although he was not the first composer to write in rhapsodic form, Mackenzie was the first British musician to compose such works and, as has been noted above, they provided some 'of the earliest British examples of the freely composed orchestral piece.'\(^{41}\) Originating in the mid-European and Scandinavian traditions as exemplified by Liszt, Svendsen and Grieg, Mackenzie's Scottish Rhapsodies set a precedent not only for the next generation of British composers, but also for his contemporaries and colleagues. Of the latter group Stanford was the most prolific, composing his six Irish rhapsodies at the beginning of this century. These works are increasingly developmental in their structure, in accordance with Stanford's symphonic proclivities, and even incorporate solo instruments into the orchestral texture, in much the same way as Mackenzie introduced the piano to the ensemble in the *Scottish Concerto*. The first and most popular *Irish Rhapsody*, Op. 78 (1902), however, is in a direct line from Mackenzie's two Scottish essays and retains the fast–slow–fast continuous tripartite form with its specific quotation of traditional Irish melodies. Edward German also contributed a *Welsh Rhapsody* (1904) along similar lines. But it was not only established composers such as Mackenzie, Stanford and German who wrote rhapsodies, younger composers also took to the form and Vaughan Williams produced his *Norfolk Rhapsody* in 1906, Holst his *Somerset Rhapsody* in 1906–07, Delius his *Brigg Fair* in 1908 (subtitled 'An English Rhapsody'), and later Finzi his *Severn Rhapsody* in 1923. Much of this interest was created as a result of the rediscoveries in the field of English folksong by musicians such as Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams and the foundation of the Folk Song Society in 1899.\(^{42}\)

One notable omission from this list of British composers is Edward Elgar. Never a man to reproduce what his 'academic' colleagues composed in his own output, it was

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41 Percy Young, see p. 214, above.
42 Parry, Stanford and Mackenzie were all founder members of this Society and Cecil Sharp House, where the Society is based in London, is within a hundred yards of Mackenzie's former house at 15 Regent's Park Road.
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

during his inaugural lectures as Peyton Professor of Music at the University of Birmingham in 1905 that he attacked not only the musical establishment and the ‘English School of Music’, but also, and more particularly, the rhapsody as a representative of these former groups.

Twenty, twenty-five years ago, some of the Rhapsodies of Liszt became very popular. I think every Englishman since has called some work a Rhapsody. Could anything be more inconceivably inept. To rhapsodise is one thing Englishmen cannot do. Why take a title simply because it is popular with an Hungarian composer whose very nature it is to rhapsodise. This, you will say, is a trivial incident. So it is, but nevertheless it points a moral showing how the Englishman always prefers to imitate.43

Kennedy asserts that, whereas in his first lecture as Professor Elgar ‘provoked a storm of controversy because ... some of the comments on British music of 1880–1900 were tactless, if true’, during the remainder of the composer’s lecture series ‘he attacked every sacred British cow in sight’.44 Stanford was particularly vehement in his disapproval of the above remarks and took them very personally, in contrast to Mackenzie who seems to have shown a greater amount of tolerance for Elgar’s views. Ultimately the Scotsman knew he had been the first British composer to emulate Liszt’s work in the genre and thus began the trend in this country rather than following another.

* * * * *

Whereas Mackenzie’s Scottish rhapsodies represent the introduction to British music of a new instrumental form, his orchestral ballads are firmly rooted in the tradition of programmatic concert overtures established by Mendelssohn and earlier British composers such as Macfarren, Pierson and Sullivan. What sets both La belle dame sans merci (1883) and the Overture to Shakespeare’s Comedy, Twelfth Night (1888) apart from Mackenzie’s later concert overtures (discussed below) is not only the sheer breadth of musical treatment they receive, but also the close association the pieces have with their respective literary programmes. Discussion in previous chapters has demonstrated that Mackenzie’s affinities as a composer lie in the dramatic sphere of music, as evidenced by his concentration on opera composition and the large number of incidental scores he produced for various theatrical productions. This is further corroborated by


226
Frederich Niecks in his wide-ranging survey of programme music, where he states the following about the composer’s attitude to the subject.

Although Sir A. C. Mackenzie often writes absolute music, and never attempts to follow strictly a poem or drama in its actual sequence of events, yet he has an inclination to programme music. He finds that writing with some definite subject in his mind is more fascinating and easy to him — a picturesque or dramatic figure, the general outline of a poem or play, any given local colour or atmosphere, invariably cause him to work with greater rapidity than he would do without such a mental impression. With some such picture or character before him, the corresponding musical ideas present themselves quickly, without strain and effort, and the contour of the whole piece easily shapes itself after a comparatively short study of the subject chosen for illustration.45

Given the long and close friendship of the two men, there is no need to doubt Niecks’ evaluation of Mackenzie’s approach to programme music and, in the first sentence of the above extract, it is interesting to note that the former believed that Mackenzie often composed absolute music. Among his larger scores, it is only the Violin Concerto that is without a programme, either in substance or in title. However, Niecks may have been suggesting that Mackenzie’s programme music often conforms to the structures used in absolute music but with the illustrative addition of a programme. This is certainly true of both orchestral ballads from the 1880s which are structurally adapted sonata forms. Ever the practical musician, Mackenzie knew better than most the limitations of musical expression through the medium of the orchestra and, moreover, realised that an overture had also to satisfy various structural conditions lest it become formless and lack coherence in its musical material. These opinions are also reported by Niecks when he further qualifies his earlier comments by stating:

Generally speaking, Sir A. C. Mackenzie acknowledges the legitimacy of, and is thankful for, both absolute and programme music, but deprecates programmes that travel beyond the province and possibilities of musical expression, and further deprecates formlessness, although he believes that Liszt’s method of metamorphosis of themes may be to some extent a substitute and help to satisfy the sense of form. The composer explains his liking for programme music by his liking for every kind of stage music, which after all, as he rightly remarks, is nothing else but programme music.46

In terms of theatrical music, La belle dame and Twelfth Night show two different sides of the same coin. The former depicts tragedy and loss; the latter comedy and farce. La belle dame concentrates on a portrayal of the imagery evoked by Keats’ eponymous poem, which is itself nebulous in its meaning and intent; for Twelfth Night Mackenzie

46 Niecks, op. cit., 383–34.
selects a specific aspect of the play, namely the sub-plot in which the minor characters choose to trick Malvolio into thinking that Olivia loves him, and treats this in a narrative fashion. Both of these approaches are musically successful. The scale of the two works is all the more impressive when one considers that Mackenzie was heavily involved in his operatic and choral work during the 1880s. Coming straight after the composition of *Colomba*, *La belle dame* was begun in Florence and completed ‘in Littleton’s house at Sydenham, at the request of the Philharmonic Society’, who presumably wished to secure a commission to ride on the success of the opera.\(^{47}\) It was premiered under the composer on 9 May 1883, and later in the year when the score was published by Novello, Mackenzie dedicated the work to the Philharmonic Society after having sought permission from the Directors.\(^{48}\) *Twelfth Night* was commissioned by Hans Richter for his 1888 season of concerts in London and during January of that year the composer was putting the finishing touches to the short score before commencing the orchestration. Together with the *Six Pieces for Violin*, Op. 37, this piece was one of the first things completed by Mackenzie following a period of rest from his compositional work. ‘I am now, since the beginning of the year, so much better that I have been able at last to recommence work (although I can’t drive at it as formerly) and have written six Violin Pieces,’ he wrote to Kilburn, ‘and am now finishing a lively Overture to “Twelfth Night” so that all is not lost yet.’\(^{49}\) The overture was premiered by Richter on 4 June 1888.\(^{50}\)

In both works the programmatic aspect is conveyed by the use of melodic motives in the musical texture. Since *La belle dame* is less specific in its musical portrayal, there are fewer motives on which the work is based. The first appears in the slow section prefacing the movement and, signifying the question, ‘O what can ail thee, Knight-at-arms?’ it is given to the cellos doubled by the bassoon (bb. 3–7, see Music example 4). This is answered by a stately yet melancholic phrase in the trombones at b. 21, being a motto theme for ‘La Belle Dame sans Merci hath thee in thrall’ (see Music example 5). Following the D minor *Largo mesto* which begins the movement is an *Allegro con brio* characterised by a galloping, pastoral theme in F major (violins, b.

\(^{47}\) MN, 113–14.
\(^{48}\) Letter to Henry Hensel, 10 June 1883 (British Library Loan 48.13/21.f.5).
\(^{49}\) Letter to Nicholas Kilburn, 28 January 1888 (NLS MS21501 ff. 101–02). The rest of this letter explains how Mackenzie had suffered from exhaustion as a result of the demands placed upon him by conducting, composing and travelling in and around London.
\(^{50}\) Hanslick heard the Overture conducted by Richter a year later and wrote a none too complimentary review of the work; see Hanslick, ‘1889: Orchesterconzerte,’ in *op. cit.*, vi, 270–76.
66ff.). A foil to this is the drawn-out love motive in D major heard in the strings at b. 96, which counters the compound triplet quavers with corresponding duplets (see Music example 6). This theme controls the remainder of the movement’s exposition and allows it to cadence into the new tonal area at b. 146 (rehearsal letter E). All of these motives are employed in the development section in various ways, and especially striking is the treatment of the second motive signifying La Belle Dame, which at certain points is heard in close canon in the string section (b. 274ff.). The rhythmic pace of the music is lessened by using sustained chords in the strings just before the initial material of the movement is recapitulated around b. 406. The home key of F major, however, is not emphatically reached until the orchestral tutti at rehearsal letter H (b. 418). Remaining in F major throughout with the exception of various local modulations, the recapitulation heads towards a shortened reprise of the initial Largo mesto in D minor. Here, in answer to the question, ‘O what can ail thee, Knight-at-arms?’, is heard the plaintive love motive on the oboe, leading into the final and solemn plagal cadence.

Music example 4: The motive identified with ‘O what can ail thee Knight-at-arms?’, in La belle dame.

Music example 5: The motive for ‘La Belle Dame sans merci hath thee in thrall’.

Music example 6: The love motive in the Allegro con brio.

Later commentators have found Mackenzie’s orchestral ballad, like many of his
works from the 1880s, to exhibit some of the best characteristics of modern music during
the period. Henry Hadow counted *La belle dame* among the works which opened a ‘new
chapter’ in English music, along with Parry’s *Prometheus*, Cowen’s *Scandinavian
Symphony* and Stanford’s *The Veiled Prophet* and *Elegiac Symphony*, stating that ‘in the
opinion of many critics [it] is his finest work’. 51 Young, too, writes that the ballad
‘exemplifies a talent for transmitting literary ideas into vivid rhythms and sonorities’,
identifying the bassoon solo in the slow introduction as ‘almost Straussian’ and
comparing the orchestration of the second-subject group with Elgar’s *In the South*. 52
However, he points out that Mackenzie’s portrayal of the poem’s protagonist is as a
‘distinctly North British knight-at-arms’, further verifying Mackenzie’s assertion that ‘all
through my efforts at composition the Scot keeps peeping out’. 53

Keats’ Knight may have been glimpsed through the late-Victorian Celtic twilight,
but Mackenzie’s characterisation of Malvolio, Olivia, Sir Toby Belch, and the others
from Shakespeare’s comedy is decidedly more down to earth. Writing to Kilburn, the
composer noted that ‘The Overture gives me much pleasure in working at it and I think
it will amuse you, should it ever come out, for it is written in a rather old-fashioned style
and bears the weight of the periwig with back.’ 54 Of all the motives employed in the
work, Mackenzie was most pleased with the one associated with Malvolio, his leading
man. ‘What do you say to “Malvolio” reading the letter on the Bassoon by way of an
opening?’ he excitedly enquired of Kilburn. The composer’s affinity for the bassoon is
more than evident in his orchestration in general, since he not only gives it prominence in
*La belle dame* and *Twelfth Night*, but also makes solo use of the instrument in *Burns* in
order to link two of the movements. In *Twelfth Night*, Mackenzie centres the entire slow
introduction to the Overture around the ‘Malvolio’ motive which is almost invariably
heard on the bassoon itself, even if the surrounding orchestration is considerably thicker
than when it initially appears at b. 7 above a tonic pedal in the strings (see Music
example 7). The composer himself described his intentions for this scene when writing to
Barry, the author of the programme note for the first performance, which, unsurprisingly,
is heavily based on Mackenzie’s letter. ‘The introduction is Malvolio’s entrance, finding

53 See footnote 7, page 215.
54 Letter to Kilburn, 28 January 1888.

230
and reading the letter,' he explained. 'The “Olivia” Motif is present. I have tried to convey the ideas of pedantry, along with his tenderness for his mistress. He stalks off to the same music as with which he entered.' Although it is only heard fleetingly on the clarinet and in the strings during this section of the music (see Music example 8), the ‘Olivia’ motive is an important dramatic device in the introduction. It not only introduces the listener to an embryonic form of the second subject in the main Allegro section, but also reveals subconsciously what Malvolio is thinking about while reading the letter.

Music example 7: The ‘Malvolio’ motive from Twelfth Night (bassoon, bb. 7–11).

Music example 8: The ‘Olivia’ motive heard in the introduction to Twelfth Night (clarinet, bb. 11–15).

The main body of the overture is the Allegro con brio (b. 88) which, like most of Mackenzie’s overtures and large orchestral works, is in sonata form. It is headed by a quotation from Sir Toby: ‘Why, thou hast put him in such a dream that when the image of it leaves him he must run mad.’ Having set his trap for Malvolio in the introduction, Mackenzie portrays the conspirators with light-hearted music in the key of A major falling into three distinct themes, as shown in Music example 9. ‘The music of the Allegro is I hope conveyed by this quotation [from the play],’ the composer confided to Barry, ‘and it is simply a summary of the characters Maria, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and Clown: all enjoying the trap into which Malvolio has fallen. Nothing more is intended.’ The ‘conspirators’ themes are characterised by an excitability born of syncopation and rhythmic displacement in the melodic lines. These are in direct contrast to the lyricism of the ‘Olivia’ theme, which the composer admitted to Barry he introduced as ‘a foil to the boisterous intriguers’. Having been merely hinted at in the introduction, this theme is

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55 Throughout the overture, Mackenzie placed apposite quotations from the play in the score. The first section is prefaced with Malvolio’s line from Act II, scene v, 84–85: ‘By my life, this is my lady’s hand.’

56 Letter to C. A. Barry, 18 May 1888 (RAM, Barry Collection: letter inside copy of Overture to Twelfth Night, shelfmark 046071).


58 Letter to Barry, 18 May 1888.
now given full rein in F major and is prefaced in the score by the following quotation about Olivia from the Duke who, incidentally, does not appear in the music of the overture:

O, she that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will she love, when the rich golden shaft
Hath killed the flock of all affections else
That live in her.

(Duke, Act I, scene I, 32–36)

‘This is the best description of her that I can find in the play,’ wrote Mackenzie. The theme has much in common with other second subjects that the composer employs in his orchestral movements and overtures. It is long-breathed with a continuity that is noticeably distinct from the short phrases allotted to other ‘characters’ in the overture and it compares well with the love theme of _La belle dame_. The exposition of the thematic material in the overture ends with a modulation to D major (the subdominant of A major in which the _Allegro_ began), and the introduction at b.177 of a dotted, tripping theme which, Barry noted, can be associated with Maria, Olivia’s gentlewoman. The first of the conspirators’ themes soon reappears to end the exposition in D major, signifying that Maria has been joined by the altogether rougher Sir Toby and Sir Andrew.
As with most of Mackenzie’s sonata structures (see discussion on the concertos in Chapter 6), the development section of the overture is comparatively short. It is primarily based around a fugato on the first conspirators’ theme in D minor, which occupies almost half of the section. As ever with his use of independent polyphonic counterpoint, Mackenzie adopts a deliberately learned style for this fugato passage, echoing his previous uses of the technique for choruses in The Rose of Sharon. It also
justifies the comment the composer made to Kilburn that he had written the overture 'in a rather old-fashioned style'.59 ‘In the “working out” I had in my mind the scene in which Malvolio is ill-used, put in prison, chafed by the rest. And I intended the faggott to have a grotesque effect: whether I have been successful remains to be seen at the first rehearsal.’60 Malvolio’s chafing by the conspirators can be heard in the surprising forzandos, marked out by octaves in the horns, which are part of the otherwise pianissimo fugato theme. When the fugato disperses, the material associated by Barry with Maria is heard, alternating with snatches of Olivia’s theme, although the conspirators themselves are never far from the surface of the music, even if their theme is disguised within an accompanying part. Having modulated to A major within the context of the Maria theme, the music then moves to the dominant of that key in preparation for the recapitulation, with a long dominant pedal in the bass instruments and subsequently the brass. Just before this takes place, however, Mackenzie cannot resist one last musico-dramatic trick and, on the dominant note played by the horns against its sharpened seventh in the bassoons, introduces ‘Sir Toby and Sir Andrew’s chuckle, ending in a hiccough!’61 — a thoroughly appropriate comment on the cruel heartache they have inflicted on Malvolio during the course of the development.

The recapitulation repeats almost all of the material from the exposition, either directly or in paraphrase. Instead of reappearing in F major as before, the ‘Olivia’ theme returns in C major at b. 379, played in unison by the string section. This transposed passage allows the third section of the exposition (Maria’s theme) to follow on unaltered in A major, thus mirroring the intervallic relationship of F major to D major when the material was originally heard. Though not as extensive as the final part of La belle dame, Twelfth Night is concluded with a coda which finally completes Mackenzie’s masterly musical portrayal of both Malvolio and the conspirators. ‘At the end Malvolio gets really angry’, noted the composer, and this is portrayed by a brief return at b. 470 of his theme high in the bassoon’s register. ‘The conclusion is simply intended to convey the delight of the successful schemers, beginning first pp and then gradually breaking out into a chorus of guffaws.’62

59 See footnote 54, p. 230.
60 Letter to Barry, 18 May 1888.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
Mackenzie's tragic and comic musical portrayals of *La belle dame* and *Twelfth Night* respectively are extremely successful orchestral essays. Both works reveal the composer to have a mastery of instrumental form, yet at the same time a flexibility of style enabling him to mould those forms to serve an extra-musical programme. More so than in *La belle dame*, the music of *Twelfth Night* demonstrates that the composer was fully able to draw parallels between the narrative of the play's sub-plot and the nature of sonata form. These two aspects combine to produce a piece which is not only linear in its narrative programme, but also works on its own terms as purely instrumental music. Since many of Mackenzie's compositions in the 1880s were dramatic operatic and choral works, it is not surprising to find their influence in these two extended orchestral studies. The musical style is very direct and the expression of the programme, like the dialogue of an opera, is paramount throughout, often outweighing the expected conventions of instrumental music. The work he undertook to perfect his dramatic instrumental style in *La belle dame* and *Twelfth Night* stood Mackenzie in good stead in the following decade when much of his orchestral music took the form of incidental scores written for theatrical productions.

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Having listened to and absorbed much incidental music at his father's feet in the pit of the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh, Mackenzie felt a great affinity for dramatic music throughout his life, and in working with the actor Henry Irving (like his father did before him) his career had in some ways come full circle. Of the six productions to which Mackenzie contributed incidental music, ranging from a single song for Browning's *A Blot on the 'Scutcheon* (1885) to a full orchestral score for *Coriolanus* (1901), three of the most extensive were commissioned by the great Victorian actor. However, Mackenzie was not the only musician with whom Irving worked during his management of the Lyceum Theatre. Table 2 below is a list of Irving's productions and the composers who provided incidental scores for them, with Mackenzie featuring as the most favoured collaborator, especially towards the end of Irving's life. As a producer Irving always

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Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

stressed the importance of music in theatrical productions and in a brief article prefacing a collected edition of Shakespeare's plays based on the actor's interpretation of the texts he noted that

Much objection has been made to the employment of the sister arts of music and painting in the stage representation of Shakespeare, and to the elaborate illustrations of the countries in which the various scenes are laid, or of the different characters. I do not contend that a play, fairly acted, cannot be fully effective without any of these aids and adjuncts. But, practically, their value has ceased to be a matter of opinion; they have become necessary. 65

He is known to have maintained a full pit orchestra at the Lyceum whenever possible, and Mackenzie later bemoaned the fact that during the production of Coriolanus, when the theatre was under different management, there was not a full complement of instruments to do justice to his score.

Table 2: A list of Irving's productions with music by contemporary composers.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Composer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Queen Mary</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Charles Stanford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Julius Benedict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faust</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>Hamilton Clarke</td>
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<td>Macbeth</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Arthur Sullivan</td>
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<td>Ravenswood</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Alexander Mackenzie</td>
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<td>Henry VIII</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Edward German</td>
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<tr>
<td>King Lear</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Hamilton Clarke and Meredith Ball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becket</td>
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<td>King Arthur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manfred</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Alexander Mackenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(proposed, no production)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Alexander Mackenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(proposed, no production)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coriolanus</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Alexander Mackenzie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irving had planned a production of Coriolanus, one of the less popular plays in Shakespeare's oeuvre, as early as 1879 and he had mentioned it in his speech at the end of his second season at the Lyceum. He immediately commissioned Laurence Alma-Tadema, a noted authority on the Classical period, particularly its domestic life, to create designs for the mise-en-scène. 66 After considerable research on the Etruscan period in

66 The incidental music to Manfred in the form of three entr'actes was not performed in the theatre but given in the concert hall instead once plans for the production had fallen through.
67 In 1896–97 Mackenzie and Irving entered into quite detailed discussions concerning the music for Richard II, and the composer had travelled to Birmingham in order to meet the actor. Irving also approached Edwin Abbey, RA, to produce the mise-en-scène. Mackenzie sketched some music for the production (see RAM MSS. 1241–1243) and later used some of the material in his score for Coriolanus and An English Joy-Peel (1911).
order to place the play in its precise historical context of c.500 BC, Alma-Tadema had completed the designs by September 1880.\textsuperscript{69} Then, due to the success of Irving’s production of \textit{The Merchant of Venice}, these designs were laid aside for two decades before the actor fulfilled his intention of producing the play. Stoker noted that during this period many of Irving’s planned productions were shelved due to the success of other plays, but the additional time afforded by the popularity of \textit{The Merchant} ensured that the artist’s ‘studies and designs were unique and lovely’.\textsuperscript{70} In the meantime and before the eventual production of \textit{Coriolanus} in 1901, Alma-Tadema also submitted designs for other plays including \textit{Henry VIII} (1892) and \textit{Cymbeline} (1896) with Irving, and other Classical settings for \textit{Hypatia} (1893) and \textit{Julius Caesar} (1898) with Beerbohm Tree.\textsuperscript{71}

Mackenzie’s involvement with \textit{Coriolanus} did not begin until a production of the play was already certain and the commission from Irving arrived only four months in advance of the opening night while the composer was staying in Florence during the Christmas vacation and about to leave for Naples. ‘Will you write \textit{Coriolanus},’ wired Irving, ‘Book follows.’\textsuperscript{72}

I willingly agreed, and composed the music in Florence, sending it to London in acts, arriving in time for the first stage rehearsal. I never saw him so keen and restless over any play, and unlike my previous experiences, I had to alter, add, shorten &c., up to the very last moment, as he took up one new idea after another. We lived practically for a fortnight in the Lyceum Theatre; and I remember coming home a night or two before the production thinking that my work was quite finished. The next morning I received a letter from him requesting me to write a longer opening to the Senate Scene. In fact, we had a musical rehearsal only an hour before the doors were opened.\textsuperscript{73}

Although not one of Irving’s greatest successes on the London stage, \textit{Coriolanus} ran for thirty-seven almost consecutive performances from 15 April to 20 July 1901.\textsuperscript{74} In his \textit{Narrative} Mackenzie reported the ‘cynical utterance of a tired stage-hand’ concerning the production: ‘“Three knights!” (Irving, Alma-Tadema, and myself), “that’s about all I give it!”’\textsuperscript{75}

It is unfortunate that the entire score of the incidental music for \textit{Coriolanus} has

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{70} Stoker, \textit{op. cit.}, 286.
  \item \textsuperscript{71} Parry supplied the music for \textit{Hypatia} and, in contrast to the amicable relationship which Mackenzie shared with Irving, he seems to have been left exasperated by his dealings with Tree. See Dibble, \textit{C. Hubert H. Parry — His Life and Music} (Oxford, 1992), 305–08.
  \item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{MN}, 178.
  \item \textsuperscript{73} Mackenzie, ‘Sir Henry Irving and Music, some reminiscences’, \textit{MT}, 1 November 1905, 714–16.
  \item \textsuperscript{74} Austin Brereton, \textit{The Life of Henry Irving} (London, 1908), 288–89.
  \item \textsuperscript{75} \textit{MN}, 178–79.
\end{itemize}
not survived since it would have told a great deal about the style of the production for which it was intended. What has survived, however, is an orchestral suite arranged by the composer comprising four of the major movements, the Overture, two entr’actes (Alla Marcia and Voces Populi) and the hero’s Marche Funèbre. It is often the case that a composer will rearrange his theatrical music in this way in order to give it a longer life in the concert hall repertoire and Mackenzie was no exception to this rule. Despite his obvious desire to use the incidental music as a concert work, Mackenzie also acknowledged in his Coriolanus music a deficiency in his orchestral output, namely the production of a symphony. He had attempted to write a couple of symphonic movements during the late 1880s, but these were never completed. In his construction of the Suite dramatique, Mackenzie took care to give it the form of a symphony in all but name.

Sharing the same C minor tonality as Beethoven’s Coriolan, the Overture to the suite is the first movement and, like the later Allegro finale Voces Populi, it is couched in a sonata form structure. Given the nature of his sonata form essays in the two orchestral ballads discussed above and in the two concertos, it is no surprise that both of these movements in the Suite lack the extended formal development sections prevalent in the majority of symphonic movements by other composers. In the Overture the thematic development takes place over a relatively short period (bb. 83–109), occupying itself with sequential treatment of the material, before the advent of the recapitulation. The development section in the finale is even shorter and lasts for only nine bars (bb. 110–18), being more of an interlude than a development. Another notable characteristic of Mackenzie’s sonata form construction employed in these movements is the method of transposing part of the recapitulated material early in the first group in order to allow the appearance of the second subject material in the tonic key without further harmonic modulation or transposition. This is often combined with a reorganisation of the thematic material in the recapitulation, as in the Overture, so that the material does not appear in its original order when it is repeated to give more variety to the movement. Both of these procedures are well suited to the brevity of musical utterance required in an incidental score.

The place of the scherzo movement is taken by the Alla Marcia, which, despite its military tempo and associations, is the lightest of the four movements in the Suite and

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76 RAM MS 1283, c.1887. See footnote 2 above.
with its overall ternary structure the least complex in its construction. Finally and in a well-established nineteenth-century tradition, the slow movement is Coriolanus’ funeral march, which, more than the other movements, shows in its through-composed structure the element of melodrama inherent in most incidental scores, lending itself to curtailment in performance should the need have arisen. It is evident that this movement would have been played at the end of the drama since it reuses material first heard in the opening bars of the Overture, which could be called the Coriolanus theme, see Music example 10 below. In its five-bar span the theme seems to capture the essence of the drama by pitting the fall of Coriolanus as depicted by the descending chromatic line in the treble against an ascending chromatic tenor line signifying the uprising up of the crowd or *voces populi*, arguably the most important protagonist in Shakespeare’s drama. By using this material in both the Overture and the *March funèbre*, with slight melodic references to it in the other movements, Mackenzie created an extremely coherent orchestral suite which might be considered the symphony he never wrote.
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

Music example 10: The 'Coriolanus' theme in the opening bars of the Overture (strings only) and the final bars of the Marche funèbre.

Although also an orchestral suite, London, Day by Day is altogether more light-hearted than the music for Coriolanus. It was first performed in Norwich as a commission for city’s Festival of 1902, where Mackenzie had enjoyed great critical success with The Rose of Sharon almost twenty years earlier. Like many of his shorter concert overtures, the work as a whole shows the composer in his lighter vein with a vigorous waltz representing the ‘Merry Mayfair’ and an equally energetic evocation of ‘Hampstead Heath’ as the finale. The third movement, ‘A Song of Thanksgiving’, a votive offering on the recovery of King Edward VII from illness, is reminiscent of Elgar’s shorter imperial orchestral works, and it also provides an interesting link between the orchestral arrangement of the Benedictus, Op. 37 No. 3 (1888), and the

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77 Young, op. cit., 372-73.
Chapter 7: The Orchestral Music

Invocation, Op. 76 (1912). By far the most interesting movement of the suite, however, is the first, ‘Under the Clock: Humoresque’. Rather than beginning the suite with a sonata form movement, Mackenzie chose to write an extended chaconne on the Westminster chimes. The movement contains eighteen variations in total plus the initial theme and a short coda, and the ground itself is repeated forty-seven times, sometimes more than once within each variation (see Table 3 below). Niecks writes that each of the variations is ‘intended to represent in miniature some phase of street life (military band, hawkers’ cries, &c.) within hearing of the Westminster chimes’. In his use of both the Westminster chimes and the medium of the orchestra to depict life in the capital, Mackenzie pre-dated in London, Day by Day the works of many composers in the next generation, notably Vaughan Williams’ A London Symphony (1911–14), Eric Coates’ London Suite (1932), and Ireland’s A London Overture (1936).

Table 3: A plan of the chaconne variations movement, ‘Under the Clock’, from London, Day by Day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Rhsl letter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Time Sig.</th>
<th>Repetitions of chimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>1–16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. I</td>
<td>17–32</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Grave</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. II</td>
<td>33–48</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Poco mosso</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. III</td>
<td>49–64</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Solenne</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. IV</td>
<td>65–80</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Più mosso</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. V</td>
<td>81–97</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Allegretto</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. VI</td>
<td>98–113</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Animato</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. VII</td>
<td>114–29</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Meno mosso</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. VIII</td>
<td>130–45</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Ancora meno mosso</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. IX</td>
<td>146–61</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Marziale marcato</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. X</td>
<td>162–93</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>[None]/Maestoso</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>11–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XI</td>
<td>194–225</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Andantino</td>
<td>2/4 then 6/8</td>
<td>13–16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XII</td>
<td>226–42</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Molto tranquillo</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>17–18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XIII</td>
<td>243–80</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Allegretto</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>19–23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XIV</td>
<td>281–306</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Allegro Moderato</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>24–26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XV</td>
<td>307–37</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Vivo molto</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>27–30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XVI</td>
<td>338–45</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>Più vivace</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XVII</td>
<td>346–69</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Allegretto (meno mosso)</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>32–37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var. XVIII</td>
<td>370–88</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Più vivo sempre</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>38–46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>389–407</td>
<td></td>
<td>Andante, tempo I</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within a movement that could very easily have become extremely repetitive,
Mackenzie manages to include an enormous amount of variety in the musical texture (Music example 11 below shows the theme and Variations III and IV as examples of this). As can be seen in the table above, the tempo of the music changes from variation to variation with an overall increase in tempo towards Variation XVIII. Similarly, the rhythm of the ground, which always appears in the bass line, is diminished in the later variations and this explains the larger number of repetitions of the ground in this part of the movement. Other rhythmic variations occur when certain variations make use of compound time to provide relief from the basic duple metre. Also, some of the variations do not coincide with the phrasing of the ground, and from Variation XIII onwards certain sections begin before the ground has finished in the previous variation and vice versa. The tonality of the movement (B flat major) remains constant throughout due to the presence of the ground in the bass, but, as the piece progresses, the upper lines become increasingly tonally discordant and make wide use of unprepared harmonic and melodic appoggiaturas. This type of tonality is prevalent in Mackenzie's later music in general, particularly the Fantasia (1909), the Variations on an English Air (1915) for piano, and The Cricket on the Hearth, in connection with which Banfield termed it 'a sort or neoclassicism'.

Although there is no programme for the miniatures of London life which each variation is supposed to represent, in Variations II and III Mackenzie portrays the organ of Westminster Abbey, a passing military band complete with pipers in Variations IX and X, and the Thames in Variation XII. At the same time he also manages to incorporate a fleeting phrase of Auld Lang Syne in Variation IX (bb. 301–305) and a distinctly Scottish flavour in the coda from b. 389, revealing his sense of humour.

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Music example 11: The theme, Variation III and Variation IV of 'Under the Clock' from London, Day by Day (piano reduction).

Some of Mackenzie's later concert overtures are written in a light-hearted style similar to London, Day by Day and, together with the more serious works designed for ceremonial or celebratory performance, they represent the majority of his orchestral
output. In general these works take on the structure of sonata form and representative of this are the overtures Britannia (1895) and Youth, Sport, Loyalty (1922). The former makes use of three nautical themes: the first is interspersed with motives from the College Hornpipe, the second mimics a Dibdinesque style of song, and the third is an original hornpipe. Having introduced the rhythm of Arne’s ‘Rule Britannia’ in the introduction and exposition of the work, it eventually comes to the fore as a melodic theme in the development section where it is first heard in full as part of the climactic G major passage accompanied by the third hornpipe theme. It surfaces again later in the recapitulation and also in the coda, bringing the overture to a rousing conclusion.  

Richter was particularly struck by this overture, of which he gave the second performance in 1894. ‘The great conductor, greatly tickled by its vivacity, averred that, when the second Dibdinesque subject appears on the tuba, the sonorous instrument represents a big whale trying to join in the sea-song;’ explained the composer, ‘but I regret not to be able to claim the fantastic intention.’ Mackenzie also noted that the overture, due to its use of Arne’s famous aria, was the vehicle of ‘a patriotic demonstration rarely witnessed in a British concert room’ and was subsequently banned by the police in Düsseldorf a few days later. ‘Musica proibita!’ he commented. The later overture, Youth, Sport, Loyalty, was written to be performed as part of the RAM’s centenary celebrations in 1922 and, following in the footsteps of Britannia, it uses ‘God Save the King’ with ‘D’ye ken John Peel’ in yet another patriotic combination.

* * * * *

Mackenzie’s orchestral music is representative of his entire output. The first mature scores date from before his decision to devote his career to composition, and the overture, Youth, Sport, Loyalty, was the last of his public works to be composed. Throughout his career as a composer he was drawn to the dramatic possibilities of music and in all of his scores, opera, oratorio and cantata included, these possibilities were

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82 Mackenzie gives an analysis of the overture in a letter to Joseph Bennett, 14 June 1894 (Pierpont Morgan Library, Bennett Collection MFC M156.B4716(73)).
83 MN, 197.
84 Ibid.
85 Although The Eve of St John received its premiere a couple of years after the orchestral overture, it was composed at least one year earlier.
more often than not realised through orchestral effect rather than through melodic or harmonic means. His training as an orchestral musician from his early youth provided an education in the techniques of good ensemble writing and well-crafted music, and it is to these essential abilities and to an unerring dramatic sense that many of his scores owed the success they enjoyed.