

THE SONG BOOK OF Mme de COUSSY

Alexander Weatherson

So little that offers a real glimpse into the emotional life of any composer has been allowed to survive the passing of the years. A veil of discretion, tactful or otherwise, has drawn a web of obscurity over intimate attachments once part and parcel of an itinerant existence – a counterpart to the mysteries that permanently shelter the machinations of creative discovery. One such material relic however survives in the bowels of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris of the enigmatic relationship between Gaetano Donizetti and the wife of his Parisian banker - the elusive Zélie de Coussy - a random array of evocative vocal survivals that gives an intimate glance at a musical saga once looked on askance but as crucial to his sentimental life as it was deliberately undefined. A poignant relic in which this overlooked dedicatee of *Don Pasquale* - this much-feared and oft-reviled focus for lyrico/amorous fulfilment - emerges at last as muse as well as unwary and unintentional *femme fatale*, capturing the glance of the tragic maestro in his final triumphant phase of achievement and decline.

The witness is a yellowing booklet, a loosely-bound assemblage of copyist manuscripts with its beginning in the unconditional admiration of *Léonor* for *Fernand* and ending in disarray with *L'Ingratitude*. Dare we turn the pages? With its shabby covers and copybook format it is a much-thumbed romantic forfeit for use at the piano - a forgotten tracing in many hands, cherished or so it would seem, several of its emotive series having impromptu autograph additions by the composer with his breathless asides. Some in a personable script. That of the lady? Who can be sure? But that the book is hers is undeniable.

How it arrived in the celebrated Parisian repository for musical enlightenment is undisclosed. The volume remains indifferently collated and is not even catalogued as an autograph item. It is what? A sentimental compendium for domestic usage with its impromptu changes? A memento mori? Such roles defend its latter-day existence on the back shelves of the great library. It is tempting to believe that potent echoes from the past alone explain its present relegation: in among its faded folios is a not-quite extinct sensation of physical contact, a whiff of patchouli as if one was leaning over the warm shoulder of the maestro with his elusive lady side-by-side at the same piano, an unsolicited intrusion that almost closes the fragile covers and turns the reader away. Did Monsieur Malherbe choose to put it out-of-sight?

Practically nothing is known of the de Coussy. Was the *particule* assumed? ¹ Coussy is quite a common name in France with a variety of spellings. Nothing much remains of his life and times, there is a void before the banking couple first encountered the famous composer (in 1835 or so it would seem) and nothing after he had gone. The annals of private banking are not well-served in France. There is a *History of the Bank of France* of course but no detailed studies of systematic importance to the modest businesses that mushroomed in Donizetti's period of turmoil and change. At least we know something of the husband: soldier become banker, Lieutenant Joseph Auguste de Coussy born in Paris on 26 June 1787 has a recorded career in the ranks of Jean de Dieu, Maréchal Soult during the latter's disorderly retreat from Spain, a role witnessed bravely by his Légion d'Honneur but details of his lifestyle and financial destiny in the Paris of Louis-Philippe are as indistinct as are those of his singular and remarkable wife. His character, his personality, his impact upon the composer and financial probity are subject to continuously indignant denigration from the latter's friends and family. A *Vente Tajan* sales catalogue from as late as 2002 puts their view in a nutshell: in order to sell a letter from the maestro to a friend inviting him to dinner with Mme de Coussy the author of the catalogue feels constrained to say

“...laquelle allait petit à petit le porter à un état de démence dont le couple COUSSY profita. En effet, faisant interner le compositeur dans l'asile d'Ivry, il put faire main basse sur ses importants revenus...” ²

It was the composer's place of residence when he settled in Paris on a quasi-permanent basis at the height of his fame that enables us to understand his relationship with Auguste de Coussy as well as allowing some notion as to the precise nature of the latter's financial affiliations. Donizetti had been found a residence in the heart of the musical gratin. The maestro lived initially at No. 32 rue Taitbout in the IX Arrondissement; the Café Tortoni he attended daily was nearby at No. 2 rue Taitbout with a backdoor on to No. 22 Boulevard des Italiens; in between these sites lived Nestor Roqueplan - then director of the *Opéra* (at 25 rue Taitbout), while in the contiguous rue de la Grange-Batelière, a banking venue even today if no longer quite so lyrical - was housed (at No.10) the *frères Tattet* Agents de Change major accomplices in the musical affairs of the day. Much more importantly, however, in an extension to the Grange-Batelière - a part renamed rue Drouot in 1847 - stands the Hotel d'Augny, now Mairie of the IX Arrondissement which in Donizetti's lifetime was the Parisian residence of Don Alejandro Maria de Aguado y Ramirez de Estenoz, *Marqués de las*

¹ Maréchal Oudinot, duc de Reggio married as his second wife a Eugénie de Coussy in 1812 but family links with Auguste and Zélie are yet to be proved. Cfr Louis Chardigny *Les Meréchaux de Napoléon* (Paris 1977) np 227. That he was breveted with the *particule* “de Coussy” on 15 December 1812 in the army of Napoléon when such an *ancien-régime* denomination was still largely under a cloud probably indicates that it was genuine

² If you can believe what Sales Catalogues say you can believe anything! *Vente Tajan*, Geneva 18 November 2002. Catalogue #32 No 66

Marismas del Guadalquivir y vizconde de Monte Ricco, the fabulously rich Spanish Banker upon whom the *Académie Royale de Musique* (the *Opéra*) currently relied for its financial health.

Who can doubt that it was such an all-powerful *mécène* that determined Donizetti's presence. He lived in a place commensurate with his ambitions. The Marquis Aguado - the most prominent cultural manipulator in Paris and Rossini's most powerful patron, host, friend and *aficionado* - whose Bordeaux chateau³ had supplied shelter from a cholera epidemic leading him to accept the incarico of buying works for his celebrated gallery of a paintings, Rossini's urgent invitation had brought Donizetti to Paris in the first place - so if it was a Rossinian decision that the composer should live in this specifically fruitful corner of the great city it would be no great surprise, nor would it be surprising if he was responsible for Donizetti's choice of banker - a comrade in arms, friend, protégé and apprentice of his noble patron.

Auguste de Coussy and his wife lived at No 15 rue de la Grange-Batelière breathing an identical Spanish air and sharing the same gilded pavement to endorse his military *reclâme*. He was no *parvenu* this Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and had no right to disappear so completely as he seems to have done. The whole area in which he and his wife elected to live was suffused with music; the Jockey Club whose members studied form at the Ballet when horse flesh was not available had been founded just before Donizetti arrived (in 1833) and flourished on the corner of the rue du Helder and the Boulevard; Rossini himself, Michele Carafa, Vincenzo Bellini and Fromental Halèvy together with most of the favourite singers of the day (as well as most of their rivals) were within reach as was the Théâtre-Italien and the footloose Théâtre de l'Opéra Comique whose descendent stages still thrive today in much the same busy streets. The Grandee Aguado and the slightly younger de Coussy had fought together under Soult in the Battle of the Pyrenées (in 1813-14) until driven by Wellington with a mixed bag of co-belligerents over the border into France. A barely co-ordinated jumble of Spanish and French participants that subsequently bonded in powerful friendships and alliances in a Paris where Maréchal Soult was destined to become prime minister.

It had been the most bizarre of military manoeuvres that had brought Alejandro Aguado and Auguste de Coussy together. Astute, politically opportunist, born in Seville in 1784 of noble descent, the millionaire marquis had begun fighting *against* the French in the Spanish War of Independence, then took up the cause of Joseph Bonaparte - the brother that Napoleon had hopelessly imposed upon Spain - joining the French troops sent to support him and rising to be colonel

³ He owned the world famous wine Chateau Margaux as well as the out-of-town Chateau de Petit-bourg in the Seine et Oise which had been used as a hunting lodge by Louis XV

and aide-de-camp to the Maréchal in command who was notoriously ambivalent about imperial nepotism. But when, exactly, and how, the unknown Auguste de Coussy came to the notice of Aguado we shall never know.

Whatever its origin it proved to be an affinity provoking a mixed bag of loyalties, retreats and recoveries but ending-up with prosperous exile in the French capital where, thanks to family resources, Aguado promptly became a triumphant banker. Colonial deals and insider-orientated international loans had initially encouraged him to make his peace with Ferdinand VII at home but his practical endorsement - instead of confirming a native loyalty to Spain - paradoxically encouraged this slippery sunflower to take French nationality instead! Paris was worth more than the magnificent canals which had been his brainchild. But handsome, talented, a superb business-man, capable of great things, distinguished, affable and brave, Aguado was above all a man of culture and where else should he find an ideal residence but in Paris?

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The *sequence* of the songs in this book is not without significance nor is their relevance to the cause of amorous intimacy. A few of the manuscripts are prior to publication, some are post-publication but almost all the contents have spontaneous revisions with amendments to dynamics and/or other changes and modifications. Even if no one can ever be completely sure how and when such an amorous litany actually began the music of this battered volume supplies more than one clue - even a timetable of sorts - with now and then an occasional emotional pressure-gauge signalling a climax: '*Pas d'autre amour que toi*' speaks volumes and is in the hand of the composer while '*Tu m'aimes plus*' ends the series.

The contents (some 15 distinct items) are as follows:

CONTENTS

1. *O mon Fernand* (La Favorite) 14pp 1 blank (copyist Ms)
with musical variants, some autograph, some in other hands
2. *Pas d'autre amour que toi* 11pp (1 blank and some pasting over)
autograph dated and dedicated "*Paris le 21 Xbre 1842*"
3. *Evviva Sr. Gaetan!!! Donizetti!!!* 1p fully autograph
4. *Valz sur la Romance Je ne me plains pas* 1p fully autograph
(together with) *Je ne me plains pas* 9pp (copyist Ms)
1 blank. Autograph dynamic markings
5. *Il serait là* 6pp (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics

6. *Corri destrier* 6pp (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics – added notation
7. *Qui dove mercè negasti* 8pp 1 blank (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics and autograph dedication “*A Madame de Coussy*”
8. *Le bal Masqué* [Jacob] 5pp (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics and dedication “*Pour Mad. de Coussy. Donizetti*”
9. *Oh! Ne me chasse pas* 3pp (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics
10. *Or ch’io sono a te rapita* 3pp 1 blank (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics
11. *Les Revenants* [Jacob] 6pp (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics and additions
12. *Morte* 5pp 1 blank (copyist Ms)
Autograph dynamics and dedication “*A Madame de Coussy*”
13. *Pourquoi me dire* 2pp
Sprawling autograph dedication “*Z de C par D*”
14. Three pages of sketches 1p entirely autograph,
15. *L’Ingratitude* [incomplete Schonenberger edition] 2pp
Tu m’aimes plus!
One tiny autograph change to the music

That they first met in 1835 – even if we don’t quite know when or how – is recorded. That she was on his mind in 1836 (ie *before the death of Virginia* in 1838) we also know.⁴ The dedications listed above, added to the dedication of his masterwork *Don Pasquale* to her in 1843, confirms that the songbook opening with *La Favorite* was a point of departure of something far more than tender acquaintance.

The music of the Song Book is for two voices, for “voce virile” (*ténor* according to the clefs) and soprano. Do we visualise the couple singing duets with Gaetano and Zélie as protagonists in a domestic scena or is this merely a vulgar speculation? But it also supplies another consideration – not in respect of the historical origin of the songs (which cannot be in chronological order) but in respect of the evolution of the *affaire*, some of the pieces included being still warm from the pen while others are copyist transcriptions of vocal items composed earlier and elsewhere and included here as songs to be played through with Zélie for empathic editing - thus winning a new dynamic pointing and a perfectly tangible *frisson*. Few items are completely autograph and composed *all’improvviso* at her side but even the manuscripts of songs already in print have a recognisable immediacy. One item only – and this the last – is a printed score but pointedly in this instance – a mere fragment.

⁴ As evidenced by the dedication to her of ‘*Voga. Voga il vento tace*’ in *Nuits d’été à Pausilippe* (1836)

Some of the them are blue-prints. The *affaire* – as chronologically suggested by the order of the items here includes songs like ‘*Qui dove mercé negasti*’ and ‘*Or ch’io sono a te rapita*’ which prove to be authentic states of vocal offerings later to be depersonalised by the composer in printed versions.

Stylistically the contents differ notably from known versions. The salon songs of Donizetti and his Italian contemporaries are very seldom to be heard now within their original vocal contours. In an age where opera ruled, even the amateur vocalist sought an extra-theatrical emotive response to his or her modest efforts using improvised dynamics and *portamenti* which were conspicuously absent on the page but were a *sine-qua-non* round the piano. It is no good invoking lieder. These manuscripts have a pointing discarded for public dissemination - a levelling in which keys have been simplified and daring modulations removed. The phrasing, the dynamics so carefully inserted into these performances at Zélie’s side having been cruelly discarded.

The poets of this Song Book too are a mixed bag. Many are not identifiable: some of the texts of the unpublished items may be by Mme de Coussy herself whose lachrymose train of thought (all too evident in her surviving letters) is unmistakable. The Bergamasc maestro seems to have readily accepted such a literary challenge to his musical skills while making fun of her wayward French. A gauge of love? He set such querulous offerings with a gravity that barely conceals both irritation and amusement. In any sensible context the incredible diatribe of ‘*Je ne me plains pas*’ can scarcely be described as a poem at all and his laconic setting seems to have indulged both these contrary responses to the full. Has he simply set to music one of her complaining letters? A deadpan feat, naughtily emphasised by compiling a waltz to add to the gaiety? There is a strangely intimate aura about such an absurd idea whose absence of formal melodic derivation supplies a whole succession of erotic overtones to underpin the results.

Some of the texts seem like a private conversation or covert amorous exchange, most especially in their sequence. The order in which the songs appear in the Song Book may not be without a concealed programme. For example ‘*Oh! Ne me chasse pas*’ is immediately followed by ‘*Or ch’io sono a te rapita*’. The *plainte* [of Zélie?] instantly capped by the meridional assurance [of the maestro?]. But maybe it should be the other way round?

Even the copyists of the various manuscripts invite questions we are unable to answer. Who were all these different scribes? Are they Italians writing such bad French (only one of the copies is linguistically irreproachable) or were they Donizetti’s pupils as had so often been the case in Naples which would make the defects understandable? Do we see here the hand of Matteo Salvi or Uranio Fontana? Some stretches of the music appear to be the work of an elderly scribe - an Italian acquaintance in all probability whose services were on hand in

Vienna? And how is it that Donizetti had to make so many corrections to music that had already been copied more than once? Was it his practice (like that of Giovanni Pacini) to have his compositions copied while awaiting completion – the work to be finalised and corrected at the piano of his mistress? It is clear that whatever the attractions of the lady in question that a cosy domestic environment came to the aid of musical revision by this unwilling bachelor, editing and re-editing being fruitful both at her piano as at her table according to the foolish myths surrounding the gestation of *La Favorite*.

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Documentary coverage of the contacts of Donizetti with the de Coussy ménage begins at the time of *Marino Faliero*. The composer first makes reference to Auguste in a letter of 16 July 1835 to Gaetano Cobianchi [Zavadini 170] characteristically giving his address as “15 Rue Grange Batelière” (sic). Reference to Zélie follows in a letter to Auguste of 8 August with an envoi “*cose amabili a Mad. De Coussy*” [Z 173b] while a successive letter of 24 March 1836 with its reference to his own award of the Légion d’Honneur uncovers a distinct rise of temperature: “*Come avrà gioito Zélie!*”

Friendly references continued on a regular basis, it is clear that on his travels Donizetti used the home of Auguste and Zélie de Coussy as a musical base and established such a relationship that he could write to the Marquis de Custine inviting him to a concert “*chez Mr et Mme de Coussy qui seraient charmés de vous recevoir*”.

The joint letter from Auguste and Zélie to the composer on Christmas Eve 1840 [Z AppendixA.29] is of the greatest significance especially to the virulently negative view of Madame de Coussy as cherished in Italy and elsewhere. They write as bosom friends, the most revealing extract, however, is the plaintive literary rondò added by Zélie making it transparently clear that the foundation of an affaire was already *in situ*. Are we to assume that this codicil was added without the knowledge of her husband? The formal terms with which she addresses the composer are a red-herring (she calls him “*Monsieur*” and “*vous*” unlike the “*tu*” of Auguste but these frigid terms were bon-ton for women of standing), the actual message of this furtive envoi, however, is already overheated: “*Je suis déjà allée deux fois à la Favorite, sans jamais pu rester au quatrième acte. Je suis si faible et si souffrante que je dois redouter les émotions trop fortes, et cette romance et duo me rappelant temps plus heureux, me déchirent le cœur.*”

By the time the Song Book was in existence, however, neither the celebrated dining table nor the shared piano were any longer in the rue de la Grange Batelière. Early in the 1840’s the de Coussy ménage transferred to 8 rue de la

Michodière – even nearer to Donizetti who, when freed from musical duties at the Imperial Court of Vienna, elected to stay at the Hotel Manchester. The Marquis Aguado was however as active in Paris as never before: “*L’Opéra n’est pas sans quelques ressemblance avec certaines combinaisons gouvernementales. Il a bien à peu près ses six ou sept ministres qui administrant aussi...sous le bon Plaisir de M.Aguado, marquis de Las Marismas, chef effectif et invisible du cabinet*”⁵ His role was never concealed from Donizetti: “*Ora il Marchese Aguado vorrebbe un’opera in 4 atti per l’Accademia oltre il mio Duca D’Alba*” he wrote to Giovanni Ricordi on 23 May 1841 [Z 200] – a creative disposition according to the proverb “*he who pays the piper calls the tune*” whose practical compatability links Donizetti with De Coussy and Aguado and remains viable until death removes these protagonists one by one from the stage.



Alejandro Aguado, marquis de Las Marismas

How old was Zélie de Coussy? The malice she received at home in Italy is almost comic: “*quella donna di 50 anni*” according to his brother-in-law who never of course met her but “*la vecchia*” peppers his correspondence. Alas an

⁵ A-L Maillot *La Musique au Theatre* (Paris 1865) 92

example of the wishful thinking and denigration of someone both physically and financially incapable of coming to the assistance of the now mortally ill maestro. The fact that Zélie was there at his side in his final Parisian days while Toto Vasselli was in Rome never assuaged his guilt. He was taken to task by Michele Accursi: “*Sono stato veramente sensibile alla tua espressione nel credere Gaetano in preda a persone interessate ed isolato da veri amici. Se tu sapesti la vita che facciamo da sei mesi non parleresti così. Se tu conoscessi cosa habbia fatto, e facia la famiglia de Cousi [sic] , conosceresti li falsi, ed infami rapporti avuti. Ti dico che io, la famiglia de Cousi abbiamo fatti sacrifici di tutti sorti. Per dio è crudele di non aver neppure un’apparente riconoscenza a tanti sacrifici, se non da Gaetano, che diffida di me, almeno da suoi amici.*”⁶

And who was she precisely? The Song Book supplies the sole clue, one that explains her linguistic hurdles. She was almost certainly Spanish. It is a puzzle to be resolved in the way of Baron Ochs in a later musical exemplar, that is with sudden comprehension: “*Mariandel? The Marchallin? Octavian!*” could be an echo of “*Zélie? De Coussy? Aguado!*” thus resolving the conundrum with a suitably operatic panache. We simply do not know where she came-from or where she went, but her financial status and social standing had always been remarkably assured.

It is the opening items of the Song Book that set the pace for this understanding. Most especially Item 3 with its Iberian quote and *Dom Sébastien*; followed by the composer’s amusement at her faulty French in Item 4; Item 5 with its despair heralds Item 6 ‘*Corri destrier*’ with so much more sophisticated a text than the preceding items however urgent or seductive and even in its Neapolitan guise as ‘*L’amante spagnuolo*’ finding an especially appropriate place here - its hero galloping bolero-wise to his beloved. It is far more measured an offering to Zélie than is usual in this collection, with a compulsive refrain reaching a thrilling climax and a vocal line notable for some vaulting scale passages. Altogether an engaging lyric with a life-enhancing lilt and pulsation. Is this key song the answer to our question?

Appendix

A list of further items dedicated to Zélie de Coussy

1. *Il barcaiuolo* (L.Tarantini) pub 1836 by Girard [in] *Nuits d’été à Pausilippe*
2. *La ninna nonna/nanna* (A. de Lauzières) pub 1838/9 by Girard [in] *Un hiver à Paris ou Reveries Napolitaines*
3. *La pazza di Sant’Elena* (A.Nourrit) Written in Naples in 1838 with a text by the great tenor it was first published in *Un hiver à Paris ou Reveries*

⁶ Letter of 23 January 1846

Napolitaines and republished in French as ‘*La Folle de St Hélène*’ by Latte in 1839. It is clear that the French text was initially by the composer who intended to replace it in the Girard album *cfr* Letter of Nourrit to Duverger of 16 August 1838 [in] M-L Quicherat *Adolphe Nourrit: sa vie, son talent, son caractère* (Paris 1867) Letter 79, 28

4. *Tu mi chiedo s’io t’adoro* (anon) pub 1840
5. *Non amerò che te* Romanza pub by Ricordi 1842
6. *La mère et l’enfant* (A.Richomme) pub 1847 by Girard [in] *Dernières glânes musicales*. Donizetti per Camera
7. *Le petit Montagnard* (anon) pub by Cottrau 1849 [in] *Villa Barbaia*. Fiori di sepolcro. Donizetti per Camera

NB The “Trente-six vocalises” published by the tenor Marco Bordogni (1788-1856) pub Schlesinger (c1833) were dedicated to Madame de Coussy

The songs

No.1

O mon Fernand

Eterographic manuscript, preceded by two blank pages 18pp (including title page and blanks) in a professional hand with autograph dynamics, hairpins, slurs, fermate throughout, these include autograph embellishments to the vocal line (ornaments, scale passages, linking staccati) of some significance, supplying an added fluency and continuity

MANUSCRIPT

6/8 D major/F Major Larghetto
soprano and piano

(the title may have been added subsequently)

La Favorite

Air chanté par Mme Stoltz

Musique

de Donizetti

O mon Fernand
tous les biens de la terre,
pour être à toi -
mon cœur eût tout donné;

Mais mon amour,
plus pur que la prière,
au désespoir, hélas! hélas!
est condamné.

Tu sauras tout,
et par toi méprisée,
j'aurai souffert tout,
tout ce qu'on peut souffrir. Ah!

Si ta justice est alors apaisée,
mon Dieu! fais-moi mourir, -
mon Dieu! fais-moi mourir.
(etc)

Venez, cruels! Qui vous arrête?
(etc)

Mon arrêt - descend du ciel.
Venez tous, c'est une fête!
de bouquets - parez l'autel,
q'une tombe - aussi s'apprête!
Et jetez - une voile noir -
sur la triste fiancée qui,
maudite et repoussée,
sera morte avant ce soir.
(etc)

Pour bandeau de fiancée,
Qu'on me jette un voile noir.
Venez cruels, venez!

Mon arrêt descend du ciel
(etc)

This would appear to be either a very early version or an intermediate phase in the long gestation of this air, there are remarkable differences in the stesura and both keys and accompaniment differ from the performed version, the manuscript gives the impression, moreover, of having been amended in actual performance with the composer at the piano. This suggests that Mme de Coussy may actually have been singing. If so, she was a (mezzo?) soprano it would seem and, judging by Donizetti's elaborations here, capable of a reasonable vocal extension and some agility (but maybe Donizetti had Mme Stoltz in mind only for these

ornaments!)

The cabaletta ‘Mon arrê^t descend du ciel’ is as sung at the prima of *La Favorite* but with some addition fioriture and with a different key [ie the key of the preceding recitative F Major] is included. Some of this additional fioriture is to be found in a printed edition of *La Favorite* - ie in that of Leon Grus published later in the century.

See also p392 and LXXXVIII of the printed vocal score of the critical edition of *La Favorite*, also np516 and p872 (134-137) of the full score of this critical edition. A note upon the modifications made to this air is included on p871. [*La Favorite (edizione critica definitiva)* a cura di Rebecca Harris Warrick, Ricordi (Milano 1997)]

No.2

Pas d'autre amour que toi

11pp working ms (inc. one blank, pages partly pasted-over, and two partly-sketched incomplete pages)
primarily autograph Donizetti - dated “Paris le 21 Xbre 1842”

[published as]

À M^{ME} DE COUSSY

PAS D'AUTRE AMOUR QUE TOI!

MÉLODIE

Paroles de Mr.Emile Barateau

Musique de

G.DONIZETTI

Au Ménestrel, Maison A.Meissonnier & Heugel

(Pl. No. H140 indicating a date of 1842-3)

MANUSCRIPT

D flat Major/C Major 3/8 Allegro vivace

(tenor and piano)

Pas d'autre amour que toi

Ah! Si tu voulais, toi que j'aime (crossed-out)

(autograph title page)

à Madame de Coussy

le

maestro Donizetti

Dediè_

Passy le 21 Xbre 1842

Allegro vivace

Avec enthousiasme

This key song is far more extensive in the present holograph original than in its

printed counterpart, almost like an operatic *scena* with at one point an interpolated three bars of spoken dialogue: “*Enfant/suis moi/viens/j’ai de l’or*” Whereas the printed version is compressed into two stanzas with an ecstatic repeat and a simple key of C Major, the manuscript version - also 3/8 - is in D flat Major with a brief centre-section in C Major (the quasi-operatic “*oui reste pure en ta famille/ne flétris jamais tes beaux jours-jamais/et ne m’aime pas pauvre fille*”) and with its second couplet following a repeat mark gives the impression of having been fabricated on the spot with a remarkable urgency - its recipient at hand and an invitation to depart there and then?

(See also ‘*Corri destrier*’ for a similar theme of flight)

The text of the printed version (C Major 3/8 Allegro vivace) is as follows:

Ah! si tu voulais, toi que j’aime,
Avoir un peu d’amour pour moi, pour moi!
Certe, ici-bas, comme au ciel même
Je n’aurais d’autre amour que toi, que toi, toi, toi!

Pour toi, pauvre enfant d’Ibérie,
Je quitterais parents, amis...
L’amour, c’est une autre patrie;
Ton pays serait mon pays!
ah!...

ah! Si tu voulais, toi que j’aime,
Avoir un peu d’amour pour moi, pour moi!
Certe, ici-bas, come au ciel même
Je n’aurais d’autre amour que toi! toi! toi!
D’autre amour que toi! toi! toi!
D’autre amour que toi!

In this manuscript the orthography and spelling are those of the composer

Ah! si tu voulais toi que j’aime,
avoir un peu d’amour pour moi, pour moi.
certe, ici bas comme au ciel même
je n’aurais d’autre amour que toi - toi - toi

Pour toi pauvre enfant d’ibérie
je quitterais parens amis,
l’amour c’est une autre patrie
ton pais serait mon pais
ah!

ah! Si tu voulais, toi que j’aime,
avoir un peu d’amour pour moi, pour moi.
certe ici bas comme au ciel même
je n’aurais d’autre amour que toi toi--toi,
d’autre amour que toi toi toi---
d’autre amour que toi

Non, je n’irai te redire...

enfant, suis moi, viens, j'ai de l'or (marked "p") **parlé**

ces mots ne sauraient te séduire.
Ton indigence est un trésor,
oui, reste pure en ta famille
ne flétris jamais tes beaux jours - jamais
et ne m'aime pas pauvre fille -

Oh! laisse moi t'aimer toujours - toujours-
toujours, ah!...

(2^{ème} couplet)

Mais réponds
crains tu ma présence
aussitot je méloignerai...
as tu pitié de ma souffrance
Je resterai... je te reverrai et ...

puis si le ciel m'est prospère
et le ciel me servira bien,
ta mère un jour sera ma mère
car mon nom deviendra le tien le tien le tien
ah!...

(repeat mark)

ah! si tu voulais etc etc

Surely one of Donizetti's most extraordinary songs. It would seem that though M. Barateau may well have supplied the text in the first place the maestro has made long and fervent additions of his own which later he discarded. This text, however, poses a question of some importance: does this song indeed reveal an undisclosed depth to their relationship as well as underline the Spanish roots of Madame Zélie de Coussy? And even then, and even if only in the process of definition, the decipherable content of the second couplet remains perfectly surprising...

No.3

Evviva Sⁿ Gaetan !!! Donizetti !!

A wholly autograph manuscript of 1 page consisting of 9 bars of music
with French text. Vocal line only
with no indication of place or time but
clearly addressed to Auguste de Coussy

MANUSCRIPT

C'est un soldat qui revient de la guerre,
La main qu'il tend, fut blessé au combat.

Il vous demande, ainsi que Belisaire,
riches deniers,
l'obole au vieux soldat.
Donnez, donnez, Seigneur,
au vieux soldat..

This jeu d'esprit - a joking demand for cash set to music and presented to Zélie's husband - is adapted from ActIII Sc.7 of *Dom Sébastien roi de Portugal* (1843) when Camoens (sung by Paul Barroilhet) first sees approach the refugee monarch (Gilbert-Louis Duprez) and in his guise as a beggar extends his casque for alms... His second couplet

Je vous demande, ainsi que Bélisaire
Riche, donnez l'obole au vieux soldat

was described by a contemporary critic as being sung "*avec une emotion qui remue toute la salle [et] fera le tour de l'Europe*" In this instance Donizetti has put the touching (literally) moment to more comic use on his arrival in Paris. The cry of the composer in need of funds set to music with a tripping vocal line and no indication of key or tempo but coming to a neat little climax.

This amicable souvenir has been lovingly conserved in this volume seemingly by Zélie. The "Sⁿ Gaetan" very clearly written like the notation - despite a text scribbled and scarcely legible - may not implausibly be a Donizettian attempt to write a Hispanic ñ for the benefit of his hostess rather than any sort of nod at the exotic apotheosis of the tragic sovereign.

No.4

Je ne me plains pas

Eterographic manuscript 10 pp (plus one page page blank) in an unknown (unprofessional and not a French) hand with autograph dynamics ("*pressez [un] peu*"; "*cres*"; "*rall*" etc) hairpins and fermate, preceded by a 1 page "*Valz*" and "*Trio*" relating to the theme of this music both of which are completely autograph and signed twice "Donizetti" with the heading

"Romance- Je ne me plains pas - Donizetti"

MANUSCRIPTS

"Valz Donizetti" 3/8 Eflat Major of 33 bars (1 page, solo piano) apparently

intended to be played before the reprise of the entire song. On the same page is a 16 bar “*Trio*” which may well be an alternative to this last and also completely autograph

The song is without title merely indicating only that is in
6/8 G Major Larghetto
(soprano and piano)

Je ne me plains pas
quand ta froideur cruelle
me fit repandre
tant de pleurs.

Mais je me plains, hélas!
voulant être infidèle,
de ne changer
que de douleur.

Je te l’avoue en vain
par de nouvelles chaînes,
je voudrais pouvoir me lier. Ah!
Je me sens retomber
sous tes lois inhumaines.
Hélas! hélas! laisse-moi t’oublier.

Oh n’abuse donc plus
de ton funeste empire.
Sois généreuse et par pitié.
Ne me prodigue plus
cet énivrant sourire

Je dis vainement,
vainement envié
à toutes les douleurs
qui consomment ma vie.
Ton souvenir vient
hélas! s’allier

Mais! Puisque l’espérance à mon cœur est ravie,
au moins laisse moi t’oublier.
Un sentiment plus doux m’attache à l’existence -
Oh! pourquoi me troubler?

Je pouvais supporter peut-être ton absence.
Pourquoi viens tu me la rappeler,
eh bien, sans résistance encore?
Je te livre ce cœur qui fut crée pour toi
mais deux fois à l'espoir je ne pourrais survivre.

Je t'aime.
Prends pitié de moi (etc)

The rambling but highly charged text above (and maybe even the actual script - it is not completely impossible!) may well be that of Zélie in person, it gives the impression of being nothing more or less than one of her lachrymose letters (Mme de Coussy would have been described in her own day as "*pleurnicharde*") sent to the maestro which he has naughtily set to music just as written, later capping the feat with a portentous intermezzo in *tempo di Valzer*. The near-hysterical reproaches of the text are set-off with a breezy guitar-like accompaniment and the music itself is spelled-out in a minute notation with a precision that hints at a perfectly deliberate irony.

Nothing whatsoever indicates the date of composition of this joyous tease on the part of the composer. The poor French it sometimes employs may be an indication of her - rather than his – non francofone origin, though the "song" could well have been copied out by one of his less-than-fluent Italian pupils.

No.5

Il serait là

Eterographic manuscript 7pp in a professional hand
with a few added autograph dynamics ("*pressez*" "*Pressez un peu*" "*cres*" etc)
and some additions/alterations to the accompaniment
as well as some boldly added slurs and fermate. The sixth page
has a curious deletion and the final page an amended coda.
[the sparse changes to the text - quite crude - seem not be autograph Donizetti
and the reproachful poetry concerned with the absence of the lover -and the
changes to it - may well be by Zélie de Coussy herself]

MANUSCRIPT

6/8 E flat Major Larghetto
(soprano and piano)

"Donizetti"

Plus ne m'est rien

Il a brisé ma chaîne.
Sa voix trempeuse
En vain me rappela.

Ah! de l'amour
S'il connaissait la peine
Il serait là.

Les yeux encore
sa voix, son doux sourire
repèterait ce que je sent si bien.

Et ce que j'ose à peine lui redire,
car mon amour
ne veut parler qu'au sien...

Plus ne m'est rien
Il a brisé ma chaîne,
Sa voix trempeuse
En vain me rappela.

Oui, s'il aimait
Il devènerait l'heure
L'heure si chère aux fideles amours.

Ne sait-il pas
que s'il tard je pleure?
Et qu'a lui seul
J'ai confié mes jours?
A lui seul?

Plus ne m'est rien,
il a brisé ma chaîne
Sa voix trempeuse
En vain me rappela.

Ah de l'amour
S'il connaissait la peine
Il serait là

S'il connaissait la peine
Il serait là

Il serait là

The song appears to be complete despite the rather zany scribbled changes (autograph Donizetti) added notation and final chord (equally Donizetti) at the end, and it requires an insistent accompaniment such as has featured earlier in this book of songs in which Zélie herself could be the unacknowledged author of the text.

NB The completely autograph vocal line of the first four sections of this poem is included on the first of the three pages of sketches later in this songbook. In his catalogue Luigi Inzaghi includes this song - but not under its correct title of '*Il serait là*' but as '*Plus ne m'est rien*' (Inzaghi 539) its opening phrase

No.6

Corri destrier

Eterographic manuscript 7pp (one blank) in a hand identical to previous item

with autograph dynamics hairpins, fermate etc throughout, and with a few added notes. No title, without dedication, the song having been composed elsewhere (Naples?) and published as

L'Amante Spagnuolo [in]

Soirées d'automne à L'Infrascata

Girard 1837

Text by Leopoldo Tarantini

MANUSCRIPT

3/4 G Major Allegretto
(tenor and piano)

"Donizetti"

Corri destrier, deh! celere;
Corri, la via divora.
Recami accanto all'Angelo
che la mia vita infiora.

Deh! pria che l'alba in Cielo
spanda il suo roseo velo.
L'avverta il tuo nitrito
che il suo fedel torno.

Corri, corri la via divora.
Corri, vola o destrier.
E il volto a lei di giubilo

tu scintillar farai.

E de'suoi dì delizia
o mio destrier -
si, si farai.

Verrà la man pudica
a carezzati amica.
E men di te felice
Io stesso allor sarò.

Corri, corri la via divora
corri, vola o destrier.
(etc)

So much more suave a text than the preceding items, however urgent or seductive, and even in its Neapolitan guise as *'L'amante spagnuolo'* (appropriate to its place in this Songbook) with its hero galloping bolero-wise this is a far more compulsive an offering to Zélie than is usual in this collection, with a melody reaching a thrilling climax and the vocal line notable for some highly effective scale passages. It is altogether an engaging song with a special lilt and pulsation referring teasingly to the Guelph chorus introduced to open Act II of *Pia de'Tolomei*.

No.7

Qui dove mercè negasti

eterographic score 8pp without title but with
autograph dynamics and autograph dedication

"A Madame de Coussy"

Published with dedication

by Girard, Chappell and Ricordi in succession as

Duetto pastorale

Il Fiore (anon) in

Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata

between 1838 and 1900

MANUSCRIPT

“Donizetti”

3/8 (there is no mark Allegro as in the printed versions, but the key is a consistent F Major as in all the later printings of the song)
(soprano and tenor with piano)

The manuscript of this love duet, unlike all the printed versions, gives no indication that the voices of tenor and soprano alternate in this music, that it is so only clear from the text. But the anonymous text remains relatively if not completely intact in both manuscript and printed versions with differences only in detail and in the colloquialisms missing in the printed scores (“*Or dimmi*”; “*Lo viddi*” and so on). The seven-bar introduction is entirely different in this manuscript from the later versions which have a rising scale passage only and are shorter; above all there is as yet no real indication of the unison finale of the printed versions, instead the duet terminates with a vocal flourish - for tenor only it would seem - of operatic eloquence replete with several bold fermate. Only the autograph word “*chant*” on the treble of the piano score, eight bars before the conclusion of the song, and some added notation in the maestro’s hand – an added quaver - would seem to indicate a unison not fully realised. The autograph dynamics are relatively modest in this manuscript (“*crescendo*”: “*fp*”: hairpins and slurs) except for the lavish proliferation of highly emphatic fermate at the very end.

Qui dove mercè negasti
All’amor un fiore per te
depose il pastor.
Or dimmi che fù sparito
e quel fior pentita sei tu
men barbaro e il cor?

Al primo apparir del roseo mattin
lo viddi rapir da un lieto angellin
pel Cielo seren mirò lo sparrier,
e sovra il mio sen lasciollo cader.

Ah vedi o gentil...
Che solo, che solo, in tuo cor
sicuro è l’asil
d’un tenero, tenero amor.

Quel fiore gentil
ti posi sul cor,
sicuro è l’asil
lo veglia l’amor.

Ah vedi o gentil
che solo in tuo cor
sicuro è l'asil
d'un tenero amor,
sicuro è l'asil
lo veglia l'amor,
sicuro è l'asil,
lo veglia l'amor.

Men barbaro,
barbaro il cor,
lo vedi o gentil,
men barbaro il cor,
e men barbaro,
barbaro il cor.

No.8

Le bal masqué

5pp eterographic score in the same professional hand as some other items in this songbook and in more or less inexpert French, with autograph dynamics, hairpins, and fermate throughout and one autograph direction (“*agitée*”).

[The text is by Paul Lacroix (*pseud* ‘La Bibliophile Jacob’)
1807-1884

MANUSCRIPT

Le bal masqué (sic)

“*Pour Mad. de Coussy Donizetti*” (autograph)

4/4 F Major Moderato/Larghetto
(soprano and piano)

Je les ai vus, entrer dans cette loge.
La jalousie à ce bal m'appela.
A la fierté mon pauvre cœur déroge.
Je les ai vus! Je les ai vus!

Et je suis encore là.

J'attends que l'infidèle sorte
pour l'accabler de cris injurieux.
Hélas! hélas! puisse-je tomber morte
à cette place sous ses yeux?

C'était bien lui, mon désespoir reclâme
comme un bienfait, le doute et le soupçon.
C'était bien lui!
...Mais qu'elle est cette femme?
Il l'aime! Il l'aime!

Ah! J'en perds la raison!
J'arracherai le masque qu'elle porte;
je publierai son nom mystérieux.
Hélas! hélas! puisse-je tomber morte
à cette place sous ses yeux?

Oui, j'aurais du me faire au moins connaître,
pour le forcer de choisir entre nous...
Et les perfides auraient hésités, peut-être
en me trouvant plus belle à ses genoux...

Il sont ensemble!
Allons, brisons la porte.
Entrons! troublons leur bonheur odieux!

Hélas! hélas! puisse-je tomber morte
à cette place sous ses yeux?

The choice of Jacob's truly agonised poem with its episodes of tremolandi and dramatic *allegro moderato* climax worthy of any real *pleurnicharde* (one of the vocal directions of this song indicates that the injured lady indeed is weeping) would seem to point to a very-real complicity between the composer and its dedicatee. The setting - one of considerable melodic charm - goes to great pains to underpin every nuance of the lachrymose text with a care and indulgence that is more than remarkable.

The result is important in this manuscript. The modulations and changes of tempo, the urgent changes of key, the meticulous dramatic verbal pointing and fluent piano accompaniment together ensure that the melodrama of the poem - the voyeuristic jealousy of the unhappy lover and her tormented flights - is far from artificial. To what extent, one must ask, did such a mature song reflect the actual emotional climate between the composer and his chronically querulous companion?

No.9

Oh! ne me chasse pas

3pp undedicated untitled eterographic score in a professional (Italianate accents) hand with sparse autograph instructions (“avec chaleur” ”cres”), one autograph modification of the text (“ton regard”) but with added autograph dynamic markings: slurs, hairpins and fermate throughout.

MANUSCRIPT

4/4 B flat Major Moderato
(tenor and piano)

Oh! ne me chasse pas.
Je veux ainsi, ma belle,
rester à tes genoux.
Prosterné devant toi.

Je veux scintiller tes yeux
sous ta prunelle, ton regard enivrant,
s’insinuer en moi.

Oh! ne me chasse pas,
Oh! ne me chasse pas.
Je veux rester prosterné devant toi,
Non, ne me chasse pas
(etc)

Oh! je t’aime plus que la vie,
et loin de toi plus de bonheur.
Abrite-moi ma belle ami,
sous ton doux regard enchanteur.
Non, ne me chasse pas, non, ma belle
Ah! ah! ah! ne me chasse pas.

Je veux te voir encore,
dis un seul mot d’amour
mon ange bien-aimé.

A tes pieds, je suis, tendrement

je t'implore ce mot qui resterait
dans mon âme enfermé.

Oh! ne me chasse pas,
je veux rester prosterné devant toi
non ne me chasse pas
non ne me chasse pas

There is no indication of the author of this poetry of this brief song which would seem to bear the emotional imprint of its demanding (but unstated) dedicatee. Its lack of any real poetic scansion may well indicate that it too has its origin in an extract from one of her imploring letters, but here adapted usefully to the response of its recipient.

No.10

Or ch'io sono a te rapita

4 pp (one blank) undedicated untitled eterographic manuscript, text in a professional hand the music apparently written partly at the keyboard with autograph dynamic marking and change to notation at the end.

Published without dedication
by Girard [Pl. Nos from 4081 (1838), 4235 (1841-2)],
Chappell, Cottrau (1848), Ricordi in succession as
Arietta

La Lontananza (F.Romani) in
Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata
between 1838 & 1900

MANUSCRIPT

(No title)

Andante 6/8 A flat Major/F Major
(tenor (or mezzo-soprano) and piano)

The manuscript is in a quite a different key from the published editions (A flat Major as opposed to the G Major of Girard/Chappell et al), moreover there is a bold modulation to F Major in bar 35 which is absent in all the published versions. This offers a far more lively contour to the reprise of the text. Though both text and tempo in fact remain the same as the printed editions this manuscript contains a plethora of slurs, hairpins, and a more precise phrasing missing in the printed music; the keyboard bass is often more complex and there is a far-more emotive coda: the penultimate bar has an (added) autograph descending scale passage

leading to two arpeggiated chords not present in the Girard and similar scores which have a more bland conclusion. The manuscript contains waves of autograph dynamics, “*chant*” (but in this case meaning *col canto*?) and “*morendo*” before the arpeggiated closure, in fact it could be claimed that few songs demonstrate as clearly Donizetti’s meticulous attention to pacing as this one.

Or ch’io sono a te rapita,
or che tolto a me tu sei.
colle spine di mia vita
gli’altri fior non cangerei.

Se a soffrir è solo un core,
quel soffrir si fa dolore,
caro amore
caro amor.

Or che sono a te rapita,
or che tolto a me tu sei,
colle spine di mia vita
gli’altri fior non cangerei.

Oh caro amor
Oh caro amor.

o caro amor,
o caro amor,
o caro amor.

Oh caro amor a.....mor

No.11

Les Revenants

6pp eterographic undedicated score with autograph fermate, slurs and hairpins,
the title “*Les Revenans*” (sic), “*Jacob*” and “*Moderato*”
on title page are autograph, as is “*avec le chant*” repeated twice in the music.

(The text is by Paul Lacroix
pseud ‘La Bibliophile Jacob’)

Autograph at Naples Conservatorio (gift of Giuseppe Donizetti)

Published as **Les Revenants, parole di B.Jacob**

[in]

Gaetano Donizetti Canzonette inedite

a cura di L.Inzaghi - M.Preda
(Milano 1984), 26-27 & 58-65

MANUSCRIPT

Allegretto (as indicated by copyist, but
corrected by composer to Moderato; no tempo (but 6/8)

G minor/G Major/G minor
(soprano and piano)

Les Revenans

Un soir à l'heure où finit la veillée,
filles, disaient prenons bien garde à nous
des revenants, la bande est éveillée,
rentrant au gîte et tirant les verroux.

Des revenants, ah! je vous en souhaite,
dis une vielle à l'accent sépulcral,
car ce n'est pas le cri d'une chouette -
un feu follet et son rire est fatal.

Les revenants, les revenants,
ne font jamais de mal,
ah! ah! non jamais de mal

Voilà longtemps je fus jeune et jolie,
les amoureux près de moi foisonnaient,
quand un beau jour au village, on s'oublie
que dans les bois des esprits revenaient.

Chacun de fuir, et moi dans leur repaire,
je cours chercher un spectacle infernal...
"Rose - l'esprit c'était votre grand père!"
La commença notre amour conjugal!

Les revenants, les revenants,
ne font jamais de mal

L'esprit et moi menions bon ménage
mais l'ennuie passe avant les cheveux blancs,

et le jaloux sans pitié pour mon âge
me mit sous clef et chasse les galants.

Jamais la danse et les danseurs peut-être,
pour m'arracher à mon geôlier brutal!
Un loup garrou ululait sous sa fenêtre
et mon cousin m'accompagnait au bal.

Les revenants, les revenants
ne font jamais de mal

The printed edition of this wry song is marked *allegretto*, the key of G minor/G Major is as in this version, but the first transition from minor to Major differs in this manuscript score with the change balanced on the second syllable of the word “fa-tal”, marked “*Maggiore*” here and with an emphatic fermata, instead of upon the opening words of the refrain ‘*Les revenants, les revenants ne font jamais de mal*’ as in the printed music: this supplies an unexpected vitality not present in the published edition. Whether this manuscript with autograph annotations takes priority over the autograph in Naples which was used for the edition as edited by Inzaghi is a matter for conjecture, the phrasing is, however, more expressive and detailed in this Coussy manuscript, especially, for example, when it concerns such empathic moments in the song as the setting of the words ‘*la commença notre amour conjugal*’(!) while the highly dramatic, not to say operatic, pauses and tremolandi at the climax of the refrain as seen here before the reprise are fully in accordance with the exotic text. And in this reprise, while the pace is more hectic, indeed wilder in parallel with the surreal words there is an important deviation at the very end: unlike the printed edition which ends in G Major this manuscript in the collection of Madame de Coussy returns to G minor for the concluding five bars in a disturbing coda marked *diminuendo*. The whole represents one of Donizetti’s most mysterious and impressive songs while its precise significance in respect of his contacts with the wife of his banker remains utterly obscure - except maybe as a tease (it is just possible that the trembling Zélie was scared of ghosts and to laugh at her would have been fa-tal!)

No.12

Morte

5pp (one blank)

untitled eterographic manuscript with autograph piano accompaniment
dynamics and changes.

French text - no poet indicated

[published as]
Alla Sig^a Zelia di C.....(sic)

È morta

No.5 [in] **Inspirations viennoises** (B.Girard Pl. No. 5764 1841-2)

Ispirazioni Viennesi (Ricordi Pl. No.13854 Oct 1842)

Raccolta di cinque Ariette e due Duettini italiani

poesia di Carlo Guaita (both with Italian text)

musica di

GAETANO DONIZETTI

MANUSCRIPT

“Donizetti” (non-autograph) *“a Madame de Coussy”* (autograph)

G Major/E Major 12/8-6/8 Larghetto (autograph)

(tenor and piano)

The music of this painfully eloquent song is greatly more elaborate and affecting in this version, longer and more specific in its pianistic requirements and very heavily edited or re-edited on the spot. Or so it seems. Though the key sequence is the same in all versions as are the changes of tempo, there are more trenchant dynamic instructions in Donizetti's hand in this French manuscript: “*pressez un peu*”; “*(piano)*”; “*rall*”; “*pressez*”; “*peu plus pressé*” (sic); “*plus largement/tremolo*” (with an improvised tremolando), not all of which survive in the printed texts together with extra slurs, hairpins and several fermate which seem to have been added in one seance at the piano. The piece is marked *largo non troppo* in the printed version, *larghetto* here. The French text is more urgent, the vocal line less-conventionally sustained than in the Italian editions, slower and with more meaningful pauses. It is far from clear which edition has precedence, the Italian versions, or this French version, but there can only be a suspicion, not more - the French words being simpler and neater - that Carlo Guaita has adapted his text to music and words that already existed.

Morte, et pourtant hier je la voyais
belle d'amour, belle d'attraits.
J'admirait sa grace piquante,
J'étais fier de ma jeune amante.
Morte! Et hier je la voyais.
Morte! Elle n'entend plus
ni mes serments, ni ma voix d'échirante.
Elle est morte. Elle est morte.
Morte.

Au Ciel, au Ciel
C'est un Ange de plus.
Au Ciel, au Ciel
C'est un Ange de plus.

Et pourtant hier ces doux accents
portaient le trouble dans mon cœur,
pour calmer ma plainte touchante
sa voix était caressante.
Morte, et hier je la voyais. Morte,
elle m'entend plus, ni mes serments
ni ma voix déchirante.
Elle est morte. Elle est morte.
Morte. Morte.

Au Ciel, au Ciel
C'est un Ange de plus.
Au Ciel, au Ciel,
C'est un Ange de plus.

Morte, et portant hier
elle donnait au pauvre
qui la bénissait;
c'était une mère souffrante
qui pressait, pressait
sa main bienfaisante.
Morte. Morte.

Au Ciel, au Ciel,
C'est un Ange de plus
ma jeune amante.
C'est un Ange de plus
ma jeune amante.
Au Ciel, c'est un Ange.
Un Ange de plus.

No.13

Pourquoi me dire

3pp (including title-page) in an efficient
professional hand with a scattering of minor
autograph markings, *Larghetto*, mostly slurs, “p” several times,

“*fp*” twice, “*rall*” twice, with a change to the notation of the piano accompaniment six bars before the end.

Text by the dedicatee?

MANUSCRIPT

Romance

Composée, et dédiée à Madame

3 de C

par

D

(autograph title page)

4/4 C Major Larghetto

(tenor and piano)

Pourquoi me dire qu’il vous aime,
et qui ne vous aimerait pas?
Quand vous voir vous entendre
même c’est déjà vous aimer tout bas.

Avec vous, au bal, s’il assiste,
il est gai, bruyant, tour-à-tour.
Oh! voyez-vous il serait triste.

S’il vous aimait de mon amour
il serait triste, s’il vous aimer
de mon amour.

Oh! il serait triste, il serait triste
S’il vous aimait de mon amour.

The simple melody of this song, marked piano at the outset, is almost poignant, certainly enigmatic, indicating a liaison that was far from simple in its turn. That the song would appear to be a record of some actual event is implicit in the free verse. The verbal pointing is very marked and the tardy addition of a fermata upon the climactic word “*mon*” (before amour) gives a specificity to the text that is irresistible.

Three pages of sketches

These pages have been piously included in her songbook, it would seem, by Madame de Coussy, as a souvenir of the maestro.

The first of these pages is completely autograph, it includes two sketches for '*Il serait là*' [No.5] written apparently on two different occasions with some changes to the vocal line. The first sketch, marked "*Larghetto*" and "*Romance*" (both autograph but written at different times it would appear) is followed by an insertion mark but no such point of insertion is indicated in '*Il serait là*'

The second of these sketches is also of considerable interest. Marked "*Larghetto*" in an eterographic hand with tiny autograph amendments it would appear to be related to '*Pourquoi me dire*' either as a preparatory study or as possible additions to the existing manuscript [No.13]. The ultimate line of page 2 concludes with Donizetti's autograph notation. Both pages are marked as consecutive by the composer and page 3 includes dynamic marks, notational changes, and a word or two also in the hand of the composer.

No.15

L'Ingratitude

(Tu m'aimes plus!)

ROMANCE

(printed music)

Paroles

de Mr Crevel de CHARLEMAGNE

Musique du Chev. G. DONIZETTI

(Schonenberger, Editeur Boulevard Poissonière, 28 Pl. No. 981-2 1843)

[initially published as]

L'Ingratitudine

Non m'ami più

No. 2 [in] **Inspirations viennoises** (B.Girard Pl. No. 5761 1841-2)

Ispirazioni Viennesi (Ricordi Pl. No. 13851 Oct 1842)

raccolta

di cinque Ariette e due Duettini Italiani

poesia di Carlo Guaita. (both with Italian text)

musica di

GAETANO DONIZETTI

This, the ungrateful conclusion of Mme de Coussy's songbook, may well be the

most enigmatic envoi of all. It is a printed song of 2 pages, not the first edition of *L'Ingratitudine* which appeared as No. 2 in **Ispirations viennoises** and **Ispirazioni Viennesi** as *'Non m'ami più'* and which were published in c1842 with a printed dedication, as here, to Prince Joseph Poniatowski (the text attributed to Carlo Guaita), but the slightly later Schonenberger edition of the following year, a reprinting after January 1843 (when the Schonenberger establishment moved to 28 Boulevard Poissonière). It seems probable, that like *'È morta'* in the same Girard publication, that Guaita had made an Italian transcription of an already existing text (in this case a French text by Crevel de Charlemagne).

In respect of the song book, if not of the *affaire* as such, this unhappy *terminus quo* is certainly the most puzzling of all. Blandly inserted at the end of the volume the printed text contains one manuscript alteration in the ninth bar - mournfully simplifying the vocal contour. That this hatched alteration on the word "*Ainsi*" (the song in in E flat Major 4/4) which ensures a pause in the flow, is in Donizetti's hand cannot, I think, be doubted, but seems not to have appeared in earlier or later reprintings and there were many of this bitter song. And then, if we are to believe that the text of *'L'Ingratitudine'* has a significance for the relationship of Gaetano to Zélie, its presence in this book is indeed bizarre. Who are we to suppose is the plaintiff? Who is singing the song? Is it the man or is it the woman (both of whom are pictured on the cover)? This French version is printed in a treble clef and the words are ambiguous (while the less ambiguous Italian editions exist both for mezzo-soprano and baritone). Did Donizetti make the manuscript alteration at Zélie's piano? Surely the content of the song makes this improbable? Did Gaetano send the copy to Zélie? In which case it would have to have been after the première of *Don Pasquale* which was dedicated to her as the date of the Schonenberger removal confirms. Did Zélie send it to Gaetano? the maestro returning it with its miniscule correction? We shall never know. (Though the latter is not totally unrealistic in view of her torrent of complaints).

And of course we shall never know its consequence. The second stanza is missing. A blank follows in the copybook. Would it have told us what we have want to know? Would it have answered any our questions? Nothing, it is to be feared, can do that now.

Tu m'aimes plus! - tu m'aimes plus! perfide!...
Ainsi – qu'un songe ont fui tes vains serments!-
De haine-hélas! je ne suis point avide;
Qu'un jour-le ciel t'épargne mes tourments!

Que celle - au moins que ton cœur me préfère
Ne pleure pas tous ses rêves deçus, non, non, non,
Qu'enfin sa bouche en sa tendre prière
Ne dise pas: l'ingrat - ne m'aime plus.

Ne dise pas, l'ingrat ne m'aime plus-
L'ingrat ne m'aime plus!
Non! non - ne m'aime plus!
Non, non, non, l'ingrat, l'ingrat, ne m'aime plus!

It is to be noted that the one-word autograph amendment adds an especially pointed emphasis to this distressing text...

“Ainsi” - qu'un songe ont fui tes vains serments!”

