1 | Preparations for Opera: *Le Martyre de Vivia, Le Duc de Parme*

The music of the Romantic age is one of the great success stories of western culture, since the masterpieces of the nineteenth century – and innumerable compositions of lesser stature – are still the staple diet of our listening and performing today. To have been born a musician in 1835, as Saint-Saëns was, was to grow up in a world where the balance between expression, language and technical means was wonderfully well adjusted. Composers from Berlioz and Schumann to Strauss and Mahler gave the world a body of music that is passionately loved and admired, and which speaks with a strong stirring voice to listeners of every generation. Those composers were addressing their own contemporaries, of course, whose tastes and expectations were different from ours, and although we feel a strong empathy for their music, we can only envy audiences of that age who were present when works such as Chopin's preludes, Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*, Wagner's *Ring* cycle or Brahms's symphonies were first played and first heard.

The language of tonality – based on major and minor scales – was firmly in place, a secure harbour to which expeditions into chromatic zones always returned, the exploration itself providing individuality and piquancy without disturbing the listener's grasp of geography (to extend the metaphor) and sense of well-being at the home-coming. Music's ability to suggest things, persons, places, activities and emotions, already exploited in the baroque period, was accepted as a kind of standard glossary, so that the character of any piece could be grasped in words and its emotional content shared. A Nocturne or a Capriccio did not need to be elucidated. Tchaikovsky could respond to a request to explain the content of his Fourth Symphony by inventing a narrative that probably had little to do with his original thoughts when composing the work, but at least he recognised that some such content was taken for granted and was regarded by his audience as a help to understanding and appreciation. Once Anton Schindler had been shown up as an impostor, his tale that Beethoven told him that the opening of the Fifth Symphony represented Fate Knocking at the Door could be disbelieved, but that the motif represented *something* was never in doubt. Eduard Hanslick's tract *Vom musikalische Schön* of 1854 did cast doubt on such an assumption, but his views were shared by very few before the twentieth century. It was assumed that the stuff of poetry and painting was within the proper domain of music, and that the reader or listener could respond to one just as he or she would to the other.

Technical advances created a mighty solo instrument out of the modest forte-piano; the advent of valves enormously enlarged the relevance and potential of brass instruments; certain instruments like the harp and the bass clarinet developed carefully distinct orchestral roles. Behind such advances as these, mercantile prosperity provided big theatres and concert halls and audiences who could afford to go to them. The railways allowed musicians, especially virtuoso soloists, to travel freely and quickly from city to city. Journals devoted exclusively to music and reporting on musical news from home and abroad sprang up in every country. Lithography made printed music cheaper, allowing choral groups to expand to an extraordinary size. Orchestras and conservatoires were founded in all the major cities of Europe and America.

Music of the past was now respected and gradually allowed to infiltrate programmes in which otherwise all the music was relatively new. Beethoven was never treated as 'old' music, as his music forced itself to the centre of the repertoire, whether for pianists, chamber musicians or orchestras. Establishing the greatness of Bach was one of the nineteenth century's most important achievements. Yet new music and living composers were still the main focus of interest, and they would remain so until the middle of the twentieth century.

Within the larger picture French, German and Italian music of the nineteenth century had their distinctive lines of development. Along with her sister arts, literature and painting, music in nineteenth-century France was centralised to an extraordinary degree. In this the arts were only following the money and the politics, which since Louis XIV's time ensured that Paris projected a magnetism and drew all ambitious young men, not to mention drifters and chancers, to the capital. There were defiant provincials, of course, who insisted that money could be made and life could be enjoyed elsewhere, but the overwhelming prestige of the capital was recognised throughout Europe, feeding on itself and holding firm at least until the First World War. Being born in Paris gave Saint-Saëns, like Gounod and Bizet, a great start as a musician.

After Napoleon's defeat in 1815 France rapidly buried her reputation as a military bully and became instead an enlightened utopia for mercantile progress and artistic glory. Foreigners were welcomed to Paris and many, like Heine, Chopin and Rossini, chose to stay. Open borders offered particular advantages to musicians not dependent on language to ply their trade. From Italy, Germany and eastern Europe they came in good numbers to work with other top-class musicians and to sample the world-class wares of Pleyel and Erard. They came to attend the Conservatoire, a path-breaking institution founded in the turmoil of the Revolution, and they came, too, to attend the Opéra, about which so much was reported in the world's press. Since French was the language spoken by educated people everywhere, Paris was a city that visitors found particularly congenial and hospitable.

The prominence of opera in Parisian culture has been widely observed and studied.[1] Its roots can be traced to the superiority of French wine and cuisine, which has led to the cultivation of long, exquisite meals in which the art of conversation can only flourish. This in turn has led to the breed of French connoisseur who is familiar with all the current issues in art, literature and politics and is willing to assert his opinion on any of them. Such people read all the new novels, visit all the new exhibitions and attend all the new operas, which guarantees that the opera house will be patronised by a great number of individuals with little or no musical expertise but plenty of willingness to air their views. With opera's literary element (the libretto) and its scenic element (sets, costumes and dancing) there is still plenty for the non-musician's attention, whereas orchestral concerts offered much less scope, even though all concerts at that time included at least some vocal items.

Built in 1821 in the Rue Le Peletier, the new Paris Opéra was equipped to present large-scale spectacles with a huge stage and orchestra pit and all the latest technology. Gas lighting was introduced in 1822. This eventually allowed the house lights to be dimmed, but throughout the century the house lights were sufficient for the audience to follow the action with the printed libretto. Publishers were anxious to issue these librettos in time for the first night, so that their texts are often based on versions of the opera that were not actually staged. Vocal scores took longer to print and were not usually ready by the time an opera opened, but they are often a better record of what was sung and played. Conversation and discussion during the music was less intrusive than in the eighteenth century, but was still inescapable, with 'bravo' and 'bis' shouted or singers booed. The claque was in action throughout the first part of the century at least, noisily supporting whatever the management paid them to support. Individual artists had their personal claques too.

A major attraction at the Opéra was the magnificence and realism of the sets, sustained well into the twentieth century, though entirely lost today. If an opera was announced as in 'four acts and six tableaux' the spectator could expect six sets, some repeated as necessary, each requiring the erection in three dimensions of whatever buildings were to be seen: churches, castles, taverns, palaces, with rivers and mountains often visible in the distance. Interior settings would be fully furnished according to the style of the period. Historical accuracy in the sets and costumes was much vaunted, and a great number of expert designers were engaged. Scene changes were long and intervals many, of varying length, and in some of them an entr'acte would be played by the orchestra with the audience taking little or no notice.

The Opéra was proud of its ballet, with a large *corps* and some great dancers on its roster. Modern criticism now yawns at the idea of ballet in opera, but this was not the case in nineteenth-century Paris. It was not just the well-known interest of the rakes of

[1] See Fulcher 1987, Johnson 1995, Gerhard 1998, Charlton 2003 and many other studies.

the Jockey Club ogling the ballerinas with their binoculars, nor just the fact that ballet provided one of the only occasions on which even a part of a woman's legs could be seen in public. Ballet was appreciated for its scenic beauty and grace, and was intended to enhance the *couleur locale* of an opera with a setting in a particular place and time. Saint-Saëns never objected to composing ballets for his larger operas, nor did Gounod, nor did Thomas.

The standard dramaturgy of grand opera involved a love affair conducted across a tribal or religious or political barrier, with a foreground of leading singers passionately involved with each other (love, hate, jealousy, etc.), while the background was the responsibility of the chorus and the political leadership (kings, fathers, priests, etc.). The tenor voice was transformed into the heroic, stentorian instrument it has always remained, and the dramatic baritone emerged as a new type of voice, distinct from the real bass voice, which was left to impersonate kings, high priests and grandfathers. The conflict usually, but not always, ended in tragedy. Events drawn from (or imagined in) the Middle Ages or Renaissance were standard. As antiquity fell out of favour the operas of Gluck disappeared from the repertoire, while the Dark Ages and Arthurian mythology came into fashion late in the century. Everything at the Opéra was of course sung in French.

Artistic standards were inevitably variable, while social pressures maintained the prestige and showiness of grand opera. It was always the place for socially ambitious Parisians and their ladies to be seen, and evening dress was *de rigueur*. Berlioz saw in current operatic practice an opportunity for great artistry too rarely achieved and also a target of some of his most biting satire.[2] After the death of Meyerbeer in 1864, most historians suggest, the genre declined. Perhaps it lost some of its glamour with the fall of the Second Empire, but the formula remained much the same until 1914, at least as treated in their larger works by Saint-Saëns and most of his French contemporaries.

The rigidity of the Opéra's presentation was to some extent the result of Napoleon's decree of 1807, which circumscribed the roles of the capital's three opera houses. The Opéra-Comique was required to provide the lighter genre, with operas usually in one, two or three acts, often in double or triple bill. The cast was small, the chorus limited and normally no ballet included. Between separate musical numbers the plot was conducted in dialogue, sometimes very extensive, so that the entertainment was as much a play with music as an opera with speech. Emotional and political conflict was slight, always resolved happily. Public morality was not to be offended.

Saint-Saëns's operas were clearly formulated to accord with these two institutionalised genres, with minor deviations. He was no rebel in this respect. He admired but had no dealings with the third theatre in Napoleon's provision, the Théâtre-Italien,

[2] See especially Berlioz 1852, Ninth Evening.

which was exclusively devoted to Italian opera, but he was involved from time to time with the Théâtre-Lyrique, set up after the political turmoil of 1848 and prominent in the 1850s and 1860s by circumventing the rules and presenting a fresh repertoire of operas of different genres and different dimensions. After 1864 any theatre was permitted to present opera of any kind, so a raft of new ventures came and went with alarming rapidity, usually foundering for lack of funds.

The drawback of the rich artistic milieu of Parisian culture, of which Saint-Saëns was a particular victim, was the appalling inadequacy of what then passed for music criticism. Since the seventeenth century Parisian culture had always been a literary culture, which gave men of letters a privileged position as arbiters of taste. In the nineteenth century the men who wrote about books, poetry, theatre and music in newspapers and journals were normally literary men, highly cultivated and often excellent writers, but few had any musical skill or training. A review of an opera would devote as much space to the 'poème' as to the music, and the critic would often be more interested in the singers than in the music itself. Symphonic concerts attracted far less attention in the press than opera, so that a 'symphonist' was automatically assigned to a lower class of composer. The critics also exchanged faddish opinions following the hot topic of the day. The most glaring example of this is the obsession with Wagner which dominated music criticism in France for half a century.

Saint-Saëns put his finger very precisely on this problem when he wrote: 'Is it not well known that writers are inclined to judge music without knowing anything about it while musicians have no rights in the domain of literature even when they are literate?'[3] Berlioz had a similar thought in a letter to his father after the failure of *Benvenuto Cellini* in 1838: 'The French have a passion for arguing about music without having the first idea about it nor any feeling for it. It was like that in the last century, it's like that now, and it always will be.'[4]

The critics of the period were especially vulnerable to fads and fashion. Saint-Saëns analysed the problem as follows:

> In former times music criticism in France had no other aim than to reflect public opinion. One day it developed the ambition to lead the public rather than follow them. This was a noble aim, no doubt, but it manifested itself at first as bitter, blind hostility towards all innovation and all progress in art, as if it were possible to stop it! At that time – I am going back only to the Second Empire, believe it or not – Beethoven and Mozart were 'musical algebra'. The success of the *Marriage of Figaro* at the Théâtre-Lyrique was dismissively poo-pooed. Berlioz and Gounod were as good as insulted! [. . .] The lovely Prelude to *Lohengrin* was treated as a joke.
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> Then suddenly the wind turned. Critics would acknowledge nothing that was not original and avant-garde. What was considered revolutionary until then was sneered at as reactionary. The

[3] Preface to Augé de Lassus 1894, p. 1; Soret 2012, p. 480. [4] Berlioz 1975, p. 457.

> Opéra, that admirable institution where poetry, drama, music, dance and miracles of staging all meet in a final product unique in the world, was scornfully repudiated. Singing was out, dancing was out; so was drama, unless that drama was the inner drama expressed by the orchestra alone. Young French composers took fright at the minefield lying ahead and dived headlong into myths and symbols.[5]

In parallel with this destructive flaw in the field of criticism, the management of opera houses, always held in the hands of the Ministry of the Interior, passed from one *fonctionnaire* to another; some of them had theatre experience as dramatists or designers, but most often they were politically acceptable managers, never a composer. An exception was Rossini as director of the Théâtre-Italien in the 1820s, but the directors of the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique were almost always men with no musical training or skill. Opera composers were thus faced with the double hurdle of winning the support of a theatre director in order to be played and of winning the support of the press in order to be applauded. Unmusical music critics were responsible for the failure to recognise Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* in 1846, and ill-informed theatre directors were responsible for the crime of not performing *Les Troyens* at the Opéra. Bizet had the benefit of a sympathetic director in Léon Carvalho (except in his rejection of *Ivan IV*) but the obstacle of an ignorant press who could see no virtue in *Les Pêcheurs de perles* and little good in *Carmen*. Lalo was bedevilled by being labelled a symphonist, so that his *Fiesque* was never performed at all and *Le Roi d'Ys* was played many years too late.

It is no coincidence that the best music critics of this period were themselves composers. Berlioz stands out, followed by Reyer, Joncières, Hahn and Saint-Saëns himself. The rest, non-musicians such as Scudo, Blaze de Bury, Pougin, Comettant, de Lauzières, Adolphe Jullien, Willy and dozens of others, did more harm than good.

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If Saint-Saëns had been just a pianist, he would have been as famous and as acclaimed as Rubinstein, Leschetizky, Paderewski or any other lion of the age. His piano concertos, all of which he played himself, provide scintillating evidence of his astonishing technique both in weight and nimbleness. Yet playing the piano was only one of many activities, not all of them concerned with music, that consumed him over a very long life. He was an immensely productive composer, of course, producing music 'as an apple-tree bears apples', as he described it himself.[6] No genre of music was untouched: operas, symphonies, concertos, chamber music, songs, choral music, all in abundance; even a film score, one of the first ever composed. For many years he was organist at the Madeleine church in Paris; he conducted frequently; he wrote articles for the press and published half a dozen books; he wrote poetry and plays; he took a close interest in

[5] 'À propos de *La Juive*', *La Nouvelle Revue d'Égypte*, January 1904; Soret 2012, p. 582.
[6] Letter to M. Levin, 9 September 1901, Dandelot 1930, p. 181.

astronomy, archaeology, philosophy and classical literature; he spoke many languages and travelled all over Europe giving concerts, including a series of eleven Mozart piano concertos in London; he went to Scandinavia, Russia, Indo-China and Uruguay; he was involved in the whole spectrum of music-making in France for all of his career, and was a prime mover in the Société Nationale de Musique. His tastes ranged effortlessly from Wagner to the baroque, and the composers he most admired were Mozart, Rameau, Gluck, Schumann, Berlioz and Liszt. He was a modernist and a reactionary at the same time, an atheist who composed a huge quantity of religious music, a deeply serious and thoughtful composer whose best-known work is the frivolous *Carnival of the Animals*.

His versatility and eclecticism was described by Gounod many years later:

> M. Saint-Saëns is one of the most astonishing musical personalities I know. He is a complete musician, better equipped for his profession than anyone else. He knows the repertoire by heart, he plays the orchestra as he plays the piano. He has exceptionally rare descriptive powers and a prodigious capacity for assimilation. He could write like Rossini, Verdi, Schumann, or Wagner if he wished. He has a thorough knowledge of them all, which is perhaps a guarantee that he will not imitate any of them. He is not troubled by the fear of not producing an effect (a terrible torment for the weak spirited), he never exaggerates. Furthermore he is not affected or violent or emphatic. He uses all combinations and all resources without abusing, or being a slave to, any.[7]

The early part of Saint-Saëns's long career was bedevilled by the accusation that he was a 'symphonist', and therefore not a fit person to compose operas. If ever there was a musician for whom this was the opposite of the truth, it was Saint-Saëns, since he was adept in every branch of music and showed little inclination throughout his life to specialise in one or another. As a child prodigy he exhibited his musicality as a pianist and composer of trifles for the piano and violin, but he was already studying the full score of *Don Giovanni* at the age of five. 'Every day, and without any special thought, I fed on my score with that prodigious appetite and capacity for assimilation that children have, I learned how to read a score and I learned all about voices and instruments.'[8] When he heard the opera sung in Italian a few years later, he knew it by heart. His teachers were Stamaty for piano and Boëly for organ, but their teaching and the careful nurture by his mother and his great-aunt Charlotte were not narrowly confined. At no point did they determine that he would be exclusively a great piano virtuoso. His eagerness to compose and his skill at the organ offered two alternative paths, and the boy's interest in the wider world of knowledge, especially literature and science, was evidence of his exceptional curiosity and his capacity to absorb impressions and ideas from all sources.

Opera was never excluded; it was never supposed that he would become a 'symphonist'. Throughout his life he upheld the virtues of the two characteristic genres of opera seen at the two principal opera houses during his childhood, powered

[7] Gounod 1896, pp. 346–47. [8] Saint-Saëns 1894B; Soret 2012, p. 470.

by a genuine admiration for certain works and certain singers that he knew in his childhood. He started to attend the Paris Conservatoire in November 1848 when he was thirteen, and it is likely that, with *Don Giovanni* at the Théâtre-Italien behind him, he started serious opera-going at that time. The works he most clearly remembered from the Opéra-Comique date from 1849: Adam's *Le Toréador* in a double bill with Auber's *L'Ambassadrice* in repertoire since 1836, Thomas's *Le Caïd* and Halévy's *La Fée des Roses*, with Thomas's *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* in 1850. The biggest sensation at the Opéra in 1849 was Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète*, for which Saint-Saëns always had great admiration, especially for the original leading singers, Pauline Viardot and Gustave Roger, and for the original staging, which he must have first seen at this time.

In October 1851 he joined Halévy's composition class which was exclusively directed towards the composition of vocal music and opera. Halévy himself owed his eminence to a long series of successful operas, both grand and light, and was a man of great erudition.

> My work for this class consisted of writing vocal and instrumental pieces as exercises, along with orchestration. [. . .] Halévy, then at the end of his career, was constantly writing operas and opéras-comiques which contributed nothing to his fame and disappeared after a respectable number of performances, never to be seen again. Absorbed in his work he neglected the class, attending only when he could find time. The students attended anyway, so we were subject to each other's teaching, a lot less indulgent than the official teacher's, whose worse fault was his excessive kindness. Even when he was there in class, he could never refuse to see singers who wanted him to listen to them. [. . .] When the teacher sent word that he was not coming, which was often, I used to go to the library and I completed my education there. The amount of music, both old and new, that I devoured there is beyond counting.[9]

During his student years Saint-Saëns was composing at a prodigious rate, as he was for the rest of his life. It was not focussed on any particular branch or genre. There are songs, piano pieces, chamber music, symphonies, a ballet, sacred choral music. Some of this may have been shown to his teacher, and some may have been intended for performance by his fellow-students. In 1852, at the age of sixteen, he entered for the Prix de Rome, which was awarded annually by the Institut as a scholarship to enable promising young composers to study for two or more years in Rome. There were parallel scholarships for painters, artists and architects. For musicians the prize was seen to be an avenue into the world of opera since it tested the candidate's skill at writing for voices and for the orchestra. If Rome itself was a source of inspiration for visual artists who studied antiquity or Renaissance art, for musicians there was no clear local benefit

[9] 'Le Vieux Conservatoire', *L'Écho de Paris*, 22 January 1911; Saint-Saëns 1913, pp. 42–43; Soret 2012, pp. 682–83.

other than respect for Italy as the *fons et origo* of opera, where the art of singing was cultivated more seriously than anywhere else.

It seems unlikely that Halévy took any particular interest in Saint-Saëns (or in any other student), so the drive behind competing for the Prix de Rome was probably his mother, seconded by Auber, the Conservatoire's head, who thought he should have won it. But the prize was awarded to another, for in any case he was too young to travel alone to Italy to study. Failure to win the prize would have been a setback to his career if he was not already making his mark as organist, pianist and composer with performances in all three roles already featuring regularly in Paris's concert calendar. It appears that he left the Conservatoire after the Prix de Rome result; he barely needed further instruction. He was nearly seventeen and sufficiently well connected in Paris to attract a public. Even before his student days were officially over, he was already engaged in the multifarious musical activities that he would continue to pursue to the end of his life, for another seventy years. Only the writing and the touring remained in the future. In this light it was perhaps to his advantage that he did not win the Prix de Rome; some successful prizewinners complained that they were cut off from Paris for two years when they might have been furthering their careers at home.

In this period he did not turn away from opera, even though he had more success and was more visible to the Parisian public as a composer of instrumental music. In 1854 he took the post of organist at the church of Saint-Merry, close to the Hôtel de Ville. After his First (actually second) Symphony in E♭, successfully performed by Seghers in December 1853, he wrote a piano quartet, then a piano quintet and various works for the organ. From Saint-Merry he moved up in 1858 to the highly prestigious post of organist at the Madeleine with an excellent salary. For Saint-Saëns this was a period in which he did his best to strengthen his connection with prominent older musicians, chief of whom were Gounod, Pauline Viardot, Seghers, Berlioz, Rossini and Pasdeloup.

Saint-Saëns claimed that he first met Gounod when he was ten or twelve at the house of Dr Hoffmann, whose wife was a cousin of his.[10] He would certainly have taken a close interest in the opera *Sapho*, played at the Opéra in April 1851, and when Gounod was composing the incidental music for *Ulysse* a year later, Saint-Saëns worked with the composer, playing from his sketches at the piano. Saint-Saëns considered the failure of both works a serious misjudgment on the part of the public, and he also admired parts of *La Nonne sanglante*, which also failed at the Opéra. To the end of his life Gounod remained a loyal supporter of Saint-Saëns, who later wrote, in his posthumous tribute: 'He was not too proud to take me into his confidence, young student that I was, and reveal his private artistic thoughts, saturating my ignorance with his knowledge. He discoursed with me as with an equal, and I thus became if not his pupil at least his

[10] 'Charles Gounod', *La Revue de Paris*, 15 June 1897; Soret 2012, p. 507. Gérard Condé suggests that the meeting took place some two years later than Saint-Saëns remembered (Condé 2009, p. 74)

disciple and I completed my training in his shadow, or rather in his light.'[11] Gounod took a similarly avuncular interest in Bizet's progress at the Conservatoire, Bizet being three years younger than Saint-Saëns and a friend for life.

Pauline Viardot was one of the most prominent musicians in Paris following her success as Fidès in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* in 1849. Everyone wanted to be invited to her Thursday salons where, at some point, Saint-Saëns became the resident accompanist, probably introduced to her by Gounod. Her performance of Schubert's *Erlkönig* with Saint-Saëns at the piano caused a sensation. Their friendship endured until her death in 1910, and although the role of Dalila was not expressly written for her, she played an important part in the genesis of *Samson et Dalila* and was surely the model for the great mezzo and contralto roles that we find in Saint-Saëns's operas.

François Seghers was an excellent conductor who founded the Société Ste-Cécile and led it from 1849 to 1854. Saint-Saëns was the rehearsal pianist for the chorus. The First Symphony in E♭ was performed by Seghers on 18 December 1853 and dedicated to him. Seghers had withheld the composer's name when submitting the work to his committee and at the concert, knowing they would reject a seventeen-year-old composer's work. Saint-Saëns recollected with justifiable pride overhearing Gounod and Berlioz discussing his work with approval without knowing whose it was.[12]

Composers of Saint-Saëns's generation, such as Bizet, Reyer and Massenet, regarded Berlioz with veneration since they recognised his genius as well as the wall of disdain he encountered both in the press and in official circles. They saw him as a lonely figure who occasionally came into the Conservatoire library, of which he was titular head, and as a mordent critic for the *Journal des débats*, but he never had a teaching position at the Conservatoire and after the cool reception of *La Damnation de Faust* in 1846 his concerts in Paris were rare. Saint-Saëns heard the *Grande Messe des morts* in 1850 but he had no opportunity in his early years to hear *Roméo et Juliette* or *La Damnation de Faust*. The first performance of *L'Enfance du Christ* in 1854 was therefore an important event, and Saint-Saëns never ceased to advocate the revival of all Berlioz's works, not just the familiar ones. Personal contact may date from the Seghers performance of Saint-Saëns's First Symphony, but it became close in 1855 when Saint-Saëns undertook the piano reduction of *Lélio* for publication by Richault. He once accompanied Berlioz on a concert trip – he does not say which one, perhaps to Bordeaux in 1859 – and he did his best to keep the great man from too much coffee, champagne and cigars, which he believed were the cause of his death. Saint-Saëns was, with Reyer, a great comfort to Berlioz in his last days.

The oldest of these important figures, Rossini settled finally in Paris in 1855. Saint-Saëns was introduced to him soon after by the Viardots, and he became one of the regular

[11] Soret 2012, p. 513.

[12] Saint-Saëns's memoir about Seghers appeared in *L'Écho de Paris* on 28 May 1911 and was reprinted in Saint-Saëns 1913; Soret 2012, pp. 714–18.