

Joachim's artistic descent, if we trace it back to Böhm, who was once a pupil of Rode, runs past Viotti, Pugnani, and Somis to the revered founders of the Roman (Corelli), the Paduan (Tartini) and the Venetian (Vivaldi) schools of the violin. It is a mistake to class Joachim's method as German and as opposed to the modern Franco-Belgian school. His is rather a transplanting of classic Italian-French traditions which, in a roundabout way, through Vienna, have now found in Berlin their most pronounced representative. Joachim's name, however, should be linked with the founding of a new era of violin-playing, in so far as he has made useful the tools inherited from his forerunners and developed them into the deepest depth of penetrating musical spirit. As he was the first of his time, so he has remained the greatest, not only in his own narrow territory as musician-violinist and violinist-musician, but more particularly in the kingdom of interpreted music as a whole. As Tausig expressed it, "No one but Joachim can bring to light what he finds in the depths of Beethoven's compositions. People imagine they honor our master especially when they call him the greatest Beethoven player,—probably because they are accustomed to consider the work of the 'Mighty One' as the culminating point of our art, and its perfect interpretation as the highest point attainable by a player. Schumann has already declared Joachim the best interpreter of the phenomenal music of Bach; but we may just as correctly honor him as the most perfect interpreter of both classic and romantic. Where the subject is capable of awakening his intellectual interest, his interpretation is always equally high. Seen through the medium of his deep, sympathetic feeling, his hearers understand its artistic structure anew in all its purity and beauty. His taste, ripened so remarkably early, his feeling for beauty, his unflinching refined inner sympathy, united with truly ethical skill, give him this power."

Bülow, whose admiration of Joachim was boundless, once said after a concert which the latter had given with Clara Schumann in the Berlin Singakademie (in 1855): "This is an evening never to be forgotten, which will have a place of its own in the memory of those who have been partakers of its feast of art. Every one of them was filled to the full

with lasting inspiration. It was not Joachim who played Bach and Beethoven yesterday—it was Beethoven himself. It was not an interpretation of the highest genius—it was a revelation. Even the incredulous must believe in the miracle. Such a transubstantiation has never before occurred. Never before has an art-work been placed before the inner eye so living and so clear; never has the deathlessness of genius been so splendidly and so sublimely verified. We should have listened to him on our knees."

It is difficult to say whether Joachim occupies a higher place as a soloist or as a chamber-musician. At all events, he has in the latter department a circle of followers and admirers too wide to have been dreamed of by former generations. Here he has fulfilled a mission in two respects—he has widened the comprehension of Beethoven's last quartet, and he has brought out the creations of his "comrades in playing and in battle."



JOSEPH JOACHIM IN WEIMAR.

From a pencil sketch by Herman Grimm.

We know from Joachim's letters that at a time when all the world mocked Brahms with the nickname of "Messiah" (and there were few who believed in the final triumph of