



Beethoven

Richard Wagner

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From the Author's Preface:

THE author of the present work felt it incumbent upon him to contribute his share towards the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Beethoven's birth, and as no other opportunity worthy of the occasion was afforded him, he chose to offer a written exposition of his thoughts on the significance of Beethoven's music. The form of the treatise was suggested by the idea that the author was called upon to deliver an oration at some ideal celebration in honour of the great musician; and, as such an oration was not to be spoken, he took leave to expound his thoughts at a greater length than would have been permissible had he actually addressed an audience. Thus he was enabled to submit a more thorough investigation of the nature of music, i.e., a contribution towards the philosophy of music, to the consideration of thoughtful and cultivated readers. The supposition that the treatise was actually delivered as a speech to a German audience on a particular day of this so remarkably important year, will justify a warm reference to the stirring events of the time. And as the author has been enabled to plan and execute his task under the immediate impressions of these events, he would desire a like advantage for it in the reading: may the present excitation of the German heart and head facilitate a more intimate contact with the depths of the German spirit than may be looked for in the sluggish course of ordinary national life.

Lucerne, *September 1870.*

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