THE ROMANCES

These short pieces will appeal to many harpists. With one or two exceptions they are of easy to medium grade. In groups, they will be welcome additions to Recitals, or individually, as encore pieces. Students can also acquaint themselves with the sensitive poetical phrasing needed in the performance of romantic music.

To this end, I have also included some of the poems which inspired Parish Alvars. More than anything they will give the "feeling" of the romantic sensibility of the period. I have chosen 24 of the 94 Manuscripts and have included a list of the complete set. Parish Alvars only occasionally indicated dynamics and so most of these and the phrasing are my own.

ELIAS PARISH ALVARS

Parish Alvars was the most famous harpist of the nineteenth century and his spectacular playing prompted Berlioz to call him the "Liszt of the harp".

He was born in Teignmouth in Devon on the 26th February 1808. He studied with Dizi, Labarre and Bocshsa and at the age of sixteen was already well known as a performer. His successful concert tours took him to Germany in 1831 and Italy in 1834. In 1836 he lived in Vienna for two years with occasional visits to London. From 1838 to 1842 he toured the Middle East, collecting folk melodies he used in many of his successful salon pieces. In 1846 he stayed in Leipzig where his friendship with Mendelssohn had a powerful effect on his last compositions. In 1847 he settled in Vienna and was appointed Chamber Musician to the Emperor. He died there on the 25th January 1849.

Today much of the revival of interest in Parish Alvars has been stimulated by Ann Griffiths' research and Nicanor Zabaletas performances and recordings of his important compositions. Indeed Nicanor Zabaleta, in the World Harp Congress Review Spring 1989, reflects on his visits to the Morley shop in Kensington where John Sebastian Morley gave him, as a present, the original orchestral parts of the Parish-Alvars Harp Concerto op.81 and which he subsequently recorded.

MOTTO FOR ROMANCE (M.W.17)

'Tis done! I saw it in my dreams;
No more with hope the future beams;
My days of happiness are few
chill'd by misfortunes wintry blast
My dawn of life is overcast;
Love, Hope and Joy, alike adieu!
Would I could add REMEMBRANCE too!
FOR FRANK STERNFELD

MOTTO FOR ROMANCE (M.W. 29)

I give thee all, I can no more
Though poor the offering be,
My heart and harp are all the store
that I can bring to thee.
A harp whose gentle song reveals,
the soul of love full well,
and better far a heart that feels
much more than Harp can tell.....MOORE

SOURCE

In the late nineteenth century, the manuscripts of these delectable pieces were purchased from Monsieur J. Dubez in Vienna. He had studied with Parish Alvars and he and his family were friends of the Morleys. For nearly a hundred years these pieces have lain in the Morley Library. Of these ninety-four Romances only two are known and appear as Nos.: 3 and 21 in the John Thomas Collection (M.W. 93 and 17 respectively)

David Watkings

THE MORLEY COLLECTION

At the end of the nineteenth century 56 Old Brompton Road (then Sussex Place) in London became the meeting place for harpists from all over the world. John George Morley made and repaired harps, sold music and strings. His wife Cecilia, herself a harpist, was the dedicatee of many compositions and received presents and tributes from famous musicians. Together they collected a huge library of important music and this was handed down to John Sebastian Morley and thence to Clive Morley
TWELVE ROMANCES FOR THE HARP

BY

PARISH ALVARS

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( Facsimile )
Romance in C en forme de Prélude

Andante Con Moto

\( \text{In C+ D#} \)
Romance in E Minor

By Sorrow and Misfortune passed

BYRON

(Andantino)
Romance in G

Andantino

\[MUSIC:\]
Romance in Ab

Andantino

\[ \text{Music notation here} \]
Romance in Bb

Oh! teach me to love thee, to feel what thou art,
Till, fill'd o'er with the sacred image, my heart.
Hope all other pleasures to outstrip,
Like some pure temple that shines apart,
Reserved for thy worship alone!

In joy and in sorrow through praise and through tone,
Oh! still let me, living and dying the same,
In thy service them and decay—
Like some love burnt whose torture flame
In holiness wasted away!

Through borne on that lect, and born it by my birth
To pain and affliction, to darkness and death—
Oh! let my spirit rely—
Like some rude dale, that, fed, on earth,
Still looks for its light from the sky!
Romance in C minor

Allegro

(... musical notation continues)
Romance in Ab

I'd mourn the hopes that leave me
If thy smiles had left me too.
I'd weep when friends disperse me,
If thou went like them, untrue.

But, while I'm thee before me,
With heart so warm and eyes so bright,
No clouds can linger o'er me;
That smile becometh thee all to light.

'Tis not in fate to harm me,
While fate leaves thy love to me;
'Tis not in joy to charm me
With joy the shared with thee.

One minute dream about thee
Were worth a long, and endless age
Of waiting thee without me
My own love, my only dear!
Romance in B♭

The kiss, dear maid, thy lip was soft – BYRON

Andante

[Music notation]

Bb

Bb