



**NUI MAYNOOTH**

Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

**Charles Villiers Stanford's  
Preludes for Piano op.163 and op.179:  
A Musicological Retrospective**

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## Table of Contents

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<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Music Examples.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter 4 Preludes op.163 .....</b>	<b>1</b>
4.1 Prelude no.1 .....	1
4.2 Prelude no.2 .....	10
4.3 Prelude no.3 .....	21
4.4 Prelude no.4 .....	32
4.5 Prelude no.5 .....	40
4.6 Prelude no.6 .....	46
4.7 Prelude no.7 .....	55
4.8 Prelude no.8 .....	65
4.9 Prelude no.9 .....	72
4.10 Prelude no.10 .....	83
4.11 Prelude no.11 .....	88
4.12 Prelude no.12 .....	96
4.13 Prelude no.13 .....	104
4.14 Prelude no.14 .....	115
4.15 Prelude no.15 .....	119
4.16 Prelude no.16 .....	125
4.17 Prelude no.17 .....	133
4.18 Prelude no.18 .....	140
4.19 Prelude no.19 .....	148
4.20 Prelude no.20 .....	154
4.21 Prelude no.21 .....	159
4.22 Prelude no.22 .....	165
4.23 Prelude no.23 .....	173
4.24 Prelude no.24 .....	185
<b>Chapter 5 Preludes op.179 .....</b>	<b>190</b>
5.1 Prelude no.25 .....	190
5.2 Prelude no.26 .....	194
5.3 Prelude no.27 .....	198
5.4 Prelude no.28 .....	202
5.5 Prelude no.29 .....	206
5.6 Prelude no.30 .....	211
5.7 Prelude no.31 .....	215
5.8 Prelude no.32 .....	219
5.9 Prelude no.33 .....	224
5.10 Prelude no.34 .....	230
5.11 Prelude no.35 .....	234

5.12	Prelude no.36 .....	238
5.13	Prelude no.37 .....	245
5.14	Prelude no.38 .....	250
5.15	Prelude no.39 .....	254
5.16	Prelude no.40 .....	259
5.17	Prelude no.41 .....	265
5.18	Prelude no.42 .....	270
5.19	Prelude no.43 .....	278
5.20	Prelude no.44 .....	282
5.21	Prelude no.45 .....	288
5.22	Prelude no.46 .....	292
5.23	Prelude no.47 .....	298
5.24	Prelude no.48 .....	305
<b>Chapter 6 Aspects of Stanford's Style as Exemplified in the Preludes ...</b>		<b>311</b>
6.1	Introduction .....	311
6.2	Conventions and Characteristics in Stanford's Collection.....	313
6.3	Intentions and Function of Stanford's Preludes .....	314
6.3.1	A Dual Pedagogical Function?.....	315
6.3.2	Stanford's Preludes' Suitability for Salon Entertainment .....	317
6.4	Stanford's Classical Persona as Characterized through the Preludes .....	318
6.4.1	References to a Native Tradition .....	318
6.5	Aspects of a Stanfordian Style .....	319
6.5.1	Typical Harmonic Devices .....	320
6.5.2	Structural Devices .....	325
6.5.3	Rhythm .....	328
6.6	Nineteenth-Century Organicism: Towards a Unified Composition.....	329
6.7	Stanford the Traditionalist: Indebted to the Past? .....	332
6.7.1	Brahms and the Germanic Tradition .....	335
6.7.2	Following Schubertian Trends .....	336
6.7.3	Reliving the Bachian Prelude Tradition .....	337
6.7.4	Following the Romantic Prelude Tradition .....	339
6.8	Contextualising Stanford's Preludes: 1910–1925 .....	341
6.8.1	Stanford's Preludes and Stanford's Piano Music 1913–1925 .....	341
6.8.2	Stanford's Preludes and the British Piano Tradition 1910–1925 .....	346
6.8.3	Stanford's Preludes and the British Prelude Tradition 1900–1925 .....	349
<b>Chapter 7 Conclusion and Research Findings: Stanford's</b>		
<b>Contribution to the Prelude Tradition .....</b>		<b>352</b>
7.1	Introduction .....	352
7.2	Answering the Secondary Research Questions.....	353
7.3	Answering the Primary Research Question .....	360
7.4	Pathways for Future Research.....	363
7.5	Stanford's Contribution to the Prelude Tradition .....	365
<b>Appendices .....</b>		<b>370</b>
Appendix 1: Stanford and the Feis Ceoil .....		370
Appendix 2: Stanford and the Bach Choir .....		376
Appendix 3: Stanford and the Piano Duet.....		377
Appendix 4: Stanford and Chamber Music.....		379

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Appendix 5: Stanford and his Generic Choices .....	380
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Web Resources .....</b>	<b>421</b>
<b>Discography .....</b>	<b>426</b>



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List of Figures

---

Fig A1: Copy of the Stanford Memorial Medal Awarded at Feis Ceoil ..... 370

Fig A2: Genres Used by Stanford in his Piano Music ..... 380

---

## List of Tables

---

Table 4.1: Unorthodox Tonicizations and Modulations in Prelude no.1 .....	4
Table 4.2a: Chromatic Movement Spanning the Interval of a Third in Prelude no.1 .....	9
Table 4.2b: Chromatic Movement Involving Three Notes in Prelude no.1 .....	9
Table 4.3: Sectional and Tonal Analysis of Prelude no.2 Outlining the Predominance of the Tonic Key .....	19
Table 4.4: Sectional and Tonal Analysis of Prelude no.3 Outlining Mediant Relationships .....	26
Table 4.5: Phrase Structure, Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining Neapolitan Harmonies in Prelude no.4 .....	33
Table 4.6 Structural Analysis Outlining Mediant Relations in Prelude no.5 .....	42
Table 4.7: Dominance of Tonic Harmony as a Unifying Feature in Prelude no.7 .....	59
Table 4.8. Use of Sectional Cadences in Prelude no.7 .....	59
Table 4.9: Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining Tonicizations and Modulations in Prelude no.8 .....	69
Table 4.10: Abrupt Tonicizations and Key Changes in Prelude no.9 .....	81
Table 4.11: Mediant Relations in Prelude no.11 .....	95
Table 4.12: Predominance of Tonic Harmony in Prelude no.12 .....	102
Table 4.13 Tonicizations and Modulations to the Flat Side of the Key in Prelude no.15 .....	122
Table 4.14: Shifting Key Changes in Prelude no.16 .....	128
Table 4.15: Structural Analysis of Prelude no.18 .....	141
Table 4.16: Tonal Recurrence in Prelude no.23 .....	174
Table 5.1: Key to Grace Notes Annotated in Example 5.30.1 .....	212
Table 5.2: Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining Mediant Relations in Prelude no.30 .....	213
Table 5.3: Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining a Ternary Form and Orthodox Shifts in Harmony in Prelude no.34 .....	233
Table A1.1: Works by Stanford Performed at the Feis Ceoil 1897–1929 .....	370
Table A1.2: List of Works Composed or Arranged by Stanford Included on Syllabus of Feis Ceoil Competitions from 1897–1907 .....	373
Table A1.3: Competitions for Which the Stanford Cup was Offered at Feis Ceoil 1936–2011 .....	374
Table A2.1: Works by Bach Performed by the London Bach Choir Under Stanford's Conductorship .....	376
Table A3.1: Select List of Piano Duet Performances by Stanford During the 1870s ...	377
Table A3.2: Stanford's Compositions for Piano Duet Including Arrangements of Works for Two Pianos .....	378
Table A4.1: List of Stanford's Chamber Compositions Involving Piano .....	379

---

## List of Music Examples

---

Example 4.1.1. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 14–20.....	2
Example 4.1.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 1–2.....	5
Example 4.1.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 24–28.....	5
Example 4.1.3. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 70–78.....	7
Example 4.1.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 1–15.....	8
Example 4.1.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 45–58.....	9
Example 4.2.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 1–3.....	11
Example 4.2.1b. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.6, bars 1–4.....	11
Example 4.2.2. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 13–15.....	12
Example 4.2.3. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 21–26.....	13
Example 4.2.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 27–28.....	14
Example 4.2.4b. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.20, bars 15–16.....	14
Example 4.2.5. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 44–48.....	15
Example 4.2.6. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 50–56.....	16
Example 4.2.7a. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 57–60.....	16
Example 4.2.7b. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 61–64.....	17
Example 4.2.8. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars /72–77.....	18
Example 4.3.1. Chopin: Etude op.10 no.12, bars 1–7.....	22
Example 4.3.2. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 44–52.....	23
Example 4.3.3. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.3, bars 1–6.....	23
Example 4.3.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 28–29.....	25
Example 4.3.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 45–48.....	25
Example 4.3.5. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 51–56.....	27
Example 4.3.6. Stanford Prelude no.3, bars 22–27.....	28
Example 4.3.7. Stanford Prelude no.3, bars 48–51.....	29
Example 4.3.8. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 33–38.....	30
Example 4.4.1. Stanford Prelude no.4, bars 1–5.....	34
Example 4.4.2. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 33–37.....	35
Example 4.4.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 16–20.....	36
Example 4.4.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 24–26.....	36
Example 4.4.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 4–5.....	38
Example 4.4.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 25–26.....	38
Example 4.5.1. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 43–48.....	41
Example 4.5.2. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 1–8.....	43
Example 4.5.3. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars /25–30.....	43
Example 4.5.4. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 31–36.....	44
Example 4.5.5. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 21–24.....	45
Example 4.6.1. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 1–4.....	47
Example 4.6.2. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 48–51.....	47
Example 4.6.3. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 26–32.....	50
Example 4.6.4. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 19–21.....	50
Example 4.6.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bar 22.....	51
Example 4.6.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bar 11.....	51
Example 4.6.5c. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 2–3.....	52
Example 4.6.6. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 15–19.....	52
Example 4.6.7. Sterndale Bennett: Capriccio op.11 no.5, bars /1–2.....	53

---

Example 4.7.1a. Stanford: Piano Concerto no.2 III, bars /15–22 .....	57
Example 4.7.1b. Stanford, <i>Phaudrig Croohore</i> , bars /1–6 .....	57
Example 4.7.2. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 48–51 .....	60
Example 4.7.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars /1–3 .....	61
Example 4.7.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars /48–51 .....	61
Example 4.7.4. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 7–8 .....	62
Example 4.7.5. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 29–33 .....	63
Example 4.7.6a. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 44–46 .....	63
Example 4.7.6b. Schumann: <i>Carnaval</i> op.9, Prélambule, bars 130–135 .....	64
Example 4.8.1a. William Sterndale Bennett: Prelude no.9, bars 1–2 .....	66
Example 4.8.1b. Hennes: Tone Gradation and Evenness of Note Successions, bars 1–4 .....	66
Example 4.8.1c. Henri Bertini: Prelude and Andante no.10 from <i>Douze petits morceaux</i> , bars 1–4 .....	67
Example 4.8.2. Stanford: Prelude no.8, bars 67–74 .....	68
Example 4.8.3. Stanford: Prelude no.8, bars 10–16 .....	70
Example 4.9.1. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 1–5 .....	74
Example 4.9.2. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 18–22 .....	75
Example 4.9.3. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 22–27 .....	76
Example 4.9.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 27–33 .....	77
Example 4.9.4b. Beethoven: Symphony no.9, II, bars 951–953 .....	77
Example 4.9.5. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 1–5 .....	79
Example 4.9.6. Bach: Sinfonia no.3 BWV 789, bars 1–2 .....	79
Example 4.9.7. Dvořák: Humoresque op.101 no.2 in B major, bars 5–6 .....	80
Example 4.9.8. Schumann: <i>Humoreske</i> op.20 II, bars 1–6 .....	82
Example 4.10.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars /1–4 .....	84
Example 4.10.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars 59–63 .....	85
Example 4.10.2. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars 54–58 .....	85
Example 4.10.3. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars /19–38 .....	86
Example 4.10.4. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars 47–53 .....	87
Example 4.11.1. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 1–8 .....	89
Example 4.11.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 13–15 .....	90
Example 4.11.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 32–33 .....	90
Example 4.11.2c. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 34–38 .....	90
Example 4.11.2d. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 64–66 .....	90
Example 4.11.2e. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 82–85 .....	91
Example 4.11.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 1–6 .....	92
Example 4.11.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 13–17 .....	92
Example 4.11.4. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 37–49 .....	93
Example 4.11.5. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 58–67 .....	94
Example 4.11.6. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 82–85 .....	94
Example 4.12.1. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 1–7 .....	97
Example 4.12.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 9–15 .....	98
Example 4.12.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 30–37 .....	99
Example 4.12.3. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 7–8 .....	100
Example 4.12.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 1–3 .....	100
Example 4.12.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 44–49 .....	100
Example 4.12.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 1–4 .....	101
Example 4.12.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 27–28 .....	101
Example 4.12.6. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 1–7 .....	102
Example 4.12.7. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 36–38 .....	103
Example 4.13.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 1–13 .....	109



Example 4.13.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 53–64.....	110
Example 4.13.2. Stanford: Preludes no.13, bars 14–25 .....	112
Example 4.13.3. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 26–38.....	113
Example 4.13.4. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 51–53.....	113
Example 4.13.5. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars /56–64.....	114
Example 4.14.1. Stanford: Prelude no.14, bar 1 .....	116
Example 4.14.2. Stanford: Prelude no.14, bars 16–19.....	117
Example 4.14.3. Stanford: Prelude no.14, bar 20–23 .....	118
Example 4.15.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 1–4.....	120
Example 4.15.1b. Schubert: <i>Ellens Dritter Gesang III</i> D839 op.52 no.6, bars 3–4 .....	120
Example 4.15.2. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 59–67.....	122
Example 4.15.3. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 1–4.....	124
Example 4.15.4. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 48–51.....	124
Example 4.16.1. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /25–32.....	130
Example 4.16.2. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /20–21.....	131
Example 4.16.3. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /35–36.....	131
Example 4.16.4. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bar 16 .....	132
Example 4.16.5. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /40–43.....	132
Example 4.17.1. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 1–10.....	134
Example 4.17.2. Mahler: Symphony no.1, II, bars 1–6 .....	135
Example 4.17.3. Mahler: Symphony no.1, II, bars 285–290 .....	135
Example 4.17.4. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 13–19.....	136
Example 4.17.5. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 31–34.....	136
Example 4.17.6a. Rachmaninov: Prelude op.23 no.5, bars 1–6.....	137
Example 4.17.6b. Rachmaninov: Prelude op.23 no.5, bars 72–77 .....	137
Example 4.17.7. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 43–56.....	139
Example 4.18.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.18, bars 35–38 .....	142
Example 4.18.1b. Schumann: Toccata op.7, bars 3–6 .....	142
Example 4.18.2a. Stanford: Toccata op.42 no.6, bars 1–3.....	143
Example 4.18.2b. Stanford: Intermezzo op.42 no.4, bars 1–8 .....	144
Example 4.18.2c. Stanford: Stanford: Mazurka op.42 no.5, bars /1–2 .....	144
Example 4.18.3. Xaver Scharwenka: <i>Mazurka Caprice</i> op.69, bars 6–7 .....	145
Example 4.18.4. William Sterndale Bennett: Toccata op.38, bar 1 .....	145
Example 4.18.5. Stanford: Prelude no.18, bars 31–35.....	146
Example 4.18.6. Stanford: Prelude no.18, bars 14–29.....	147
Example 4.19.1. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars 41–45.....	150
Example 4.19.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars 47–51 .....	150
Example 4.19.2b. Parry: Jerusalem ‘And did those feet in ancient time’, bars 37–41 ..	151
Example 4.19.3. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars 1–11 .....	152
Example 4.19.4. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars /8–10.....	152
Example 4.20.1. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 1–8.....	154
Example 4.20.2. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 40–42.....	156
Example 4.20.3. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 9–11 .....	156
Example 4.20.4. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 20–27.....	157
Example 4.20.5. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 37–39.....	158
Example 4.21.1. Stanford: <i>Whittington Chimes</i> .....	160
Example 4.21.2. Stanford: Prelude no.21, bars 19–20.....	161
Example 4.21.3. Stanford: Prelude no.21, bars 1–8.....	162
Example 4.21.4. Stanford: Prelude no.21, bars /9–19.....	163
Example 4.22.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 1–4.....	167
Example 4.22.1b. Chopin: Piano Sonata no.2 op.35, III, bars 1–6 .....	167
Example 4.22.2. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars /22–28.....	168

Example 4.22.3. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 13–21.....	169
Example 4.22.4. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 27–35.....	170
Example 4.22.5. Beethoven: Symphony no.9, I, bars 510–515.....	171
Example 4.23.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 1–2.....	175
Example 4.23.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 7–8.....	175
Example 4.23.1c. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 21–22.....	176
Example 4.23.1d. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 39–40.....	176
Example 4.23.1e. Schubert: <i>Marche Militaire</i> , D.733, op.51 no.1, bars 7–8.....	176
Example 4.23.2. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 6–11.....	178
Example 4.23.3. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 28–38.....	179
Example 4.23.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 1–3.....	180
Example 4.23.4b. Brahms: Symphony no.1 op.68, III, bars 1–3.....	181
Example 4.23.4c. Stanford: Piano Trio no.1 in E flat, II, bars 52–55.....	181
Example 4.23.5. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 50–57.....	182
Example 4.24.1. Stanford: Prelude no.24, bars /1–4.....	186
Example 4.24.2. Stanford: Prelude no.24, bars /18–23.....	187
Example 4.24.3. Stanford: Prelude no.24, bars /25–28.....	188
Example 5.25.1. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 1–7.....	191
Example 5.25.2. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 38–42.....	192
Example 5.25.3. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 65–72.....	192
Example 5.25.4. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 29–30.....	193
Example 5.26.1. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 1–8.....	195
Example 5.26.2. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 47–55.....	196
Example 5.26.3. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 9–12.....	196
Example 5.26.4. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 55–72.....	197
Example 5.27.1. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 17–20.....	198
Example 5.27.2. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bar 20.....	199
Example 5.27.3. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 5–6.....	200
Example 5.27.4. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 1–5.....	200
Example 5.27.5. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 19–26.....	201
Example 5.27.6a. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 9–10.....	201
Example 5.27.6b. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bar 15.....	201
Example 5.28.1. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 31–35.....	203
Example 5.28.2. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 22–23.....	204
Example 5.28.3. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 48–54.....	204
Example 5.28.4. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 8–12.....	205
Example 5.29.1. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 27–35.....	207
Example 5.29.2. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 35–43.....	208
Example 5.29.3. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 43–46.....	209
Example 5.29.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 9–10.....	209
Example 5.29.4b. Brahms: Symphony no.3, I, bars 7–10.....	210
Example 5.30.1. Stanford: Prelude no.30, bars 12–22.....	212
Example 5.30.2. Stanford: Prelude no.30, bars 38–49.....	213
Example 5.30.3. Stanford: Prelude no.30, bars 81–86.....	214
Example 5.31.1 Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 1–14.....	216
Example 5.31.2. Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 35–38.....	216
Example 5.31.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 42–50.....	217
Example 5.31.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 81–86.....	218
Example 5.32.1. Stanford: Prelude no.32, bars 41–49.....	220
Example 5.32.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.32, bars /61–65.....	221
Example 5.32.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 55–64.....	221
Example 5.32.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.32, bars 37–41.....	222



Example 5.32.3b. Chopin: Nocturne op.55 no.1, bars 16–20 .....	223
Example 5.33.1. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 18–22 .....	224
Example 5.33.2. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars /1–4 .....	225
Example 5.33.3a. Beethoven: Piano Sonata no.21, I, bars 14–15 .....	226
Example 5.33.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 38–42 .....	226
Example 5.33.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 1–8 .....	227
Example 5.33.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 1–8 .....	227
Example 5.33.5. Schubert: <i>Rosamunde</i> bars 1–5 .....	228
Example 5.33.6. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 16–18 .....	229
Example 5.33.7. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 75–77 .....	229
Example 5.34.1. Stanford: Prelude no.34, bars 1–12 .....	231
Example 5.34.2. Stanford: Prelude no.34, bars 77–89 .....	232
Example 5.34.3. Stanford: Prelude no.34, bars 35–38 .....	233
Example 5.35.1. Stanford: Prelude no.35, bars 27–33 .....	235
Example 5.35.2. Stanford: Prelude no.35, bars 22–26 .....	235
Example 5.35.3. Stanford: Prelude no.35, bars 10–13 .....	236
Example 5.36.1. Schubert: Impromptu op.90 no.3, bars 1–4 .....	239
Example 5.36.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 3–4 .....	239
Example 5.36.2b. Schubert: Impromptu op.90 no.3, bars 73–75 .....	240
Example 5.36.3. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 38–44 .....	241
Example 5.36.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bar 41 .....	242
Example 5.36.4b. Schumann: Piano Quintet, II, bars /1–9 .....	242
Example 5.36.5. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 48–64 .....	244
Example 5.37.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 1–9 .....	246
Example 5.37.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 10–21 .....	247
Example 5.37.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 39–41 .....	248
Example 5.37.2b. Bach: Fugue BWV 548, bars 13–15 .....	248
Example 5.37.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 61–62 .....	249
Example 5.37.3b. Brahms: Symphony no.4, IV, bars 9–14 .....	249
Example 5.38.1. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 1–7 .....	250
Example 5.38.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 17–24 .....	251
Example 5.38.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 45–52 .....	251
Example 5.38.3 Rachmaninov: Prelude op.3 no.2, bars /1–3 .....	252
Example 5.38.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 1–3 .....	252
Example 5.38.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 17–22 .....	253
Example 5.39.1. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 81–87 .....	255
Example 5.39.2. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 73–87 .....	256
Example 5.39.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 1–2 .....	257
Example 5.39.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 1–3 .....	257
Example 5.39.3c. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bar 1 .....	257
Example 5.40.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars /1–8 .....	260
Example 5.40.1b. Beethoven: Sonata no.8 op.13, 'Pathétique', bars 1–6 .....	261
Example 5.40.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars 4–6 .....	261
Example 5.40.2b. Beethoven: Sonata no.6 op.10 no.2, bars 9–12 .....	261
Example 5.40.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars /1–2 .....	263
Example 5.40.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars 43–45 .....	263
Example 5.40.3c. Chopin: Ballade no.1 op.23, bars 257–262 .....	264
Example 5.40.3d. Chopin: Etude no.5 op.10 bars 83–86 .....	264
Example 5.41.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.41, bars /1–2 .....	267
Example 5.41.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 84–87 .....	267
Example 5.41.2. Stanford: Prelude no.41, bars 7–13 .....	268
Example 5.41.3. Stanford: Prelude no.41, bars 23–26 .....	269

Example 5.42.1. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 14–20.....	273
Example 5.42.2. Brahms: Symphony no.2 in D major, I, bars 183–186 .....	274
Example 5.42.3a. Mussorgsky: ‘Il Vecchio Castello, bars 16–28 .....	275
Example 5.42.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 11–14.....	275
Example 5.42.4. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 11–22.....	276
Example 5.42.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 33–36 .....	277
Example 5.42.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 2–10.....	277
Example 5.43.1. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 1–12.....	279
Example 5.43.2. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 16–20.....	280
Example 5.43.3. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 35–37.....	280
Example 5.43.4. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 39–42.....	281
Example 5.44.1a. Chopin: Piano Sonata op.35 no.2, Finale, bars 1–3 .....	282
Example 5.44.1b. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.14, bars 1–6.....	283
Example 5.44.2. Stanford: Prelude no.44, bars 64–71 .....	284
Example 5.44.3. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.4, bars /1–11.....	285
Example 5.44.4. Stanford: Prelude no.44, bars 16–20.....	285
Example 5.44.5a. Brahms: Symphony no.4, I, bars 249–250.....	286
Example 5.44.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.44, bars 64–69.....	287
Example 5.44.6. Bach: Fugue BWV 855, bars 1–6 .....	287
Example 5.45.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars /1–8.....	288
Example 5.45.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 1–8.....	289
Example 5.45.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 62–67 .....	290
Example 5.45.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 45–47.....	290
Example 5.45.3. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 11–16.....	291
Example 5.46.1a. Alkan: Marche Funèbre, op.39, bars 1–7 .....	293
Example 5.46.1b. Chopin: Marche Funèbre, op.72 no.2, bars 1–9.....	293
Example 5.46.2. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 1–8.....	294
Example 5.46.3. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 57–61 .....	294
Example 5.46.4a. Brahms: <i>Alto Rhapsody</i> op.53, bars 1–2 .....	296
Example 5.46.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 1–4.....	296
Example 5.46.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 57–61 .....	297
Example 5.46.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 42–50.....	297
Example 5.46.5c. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 81–84.....	297
Example 5.47.1. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 73–78.....	300
Example 5.47.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 52–57 .....	301
Example 5.47.2b. Beethoven: Piano Sonata op.22, IV, bars 177–179 .....	301
Example 5.47.3. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 66–73.....	302
Example 5.47.4. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 23–25.....	303
Example 5.48.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars /1–4.....	306
Example 5.48.1b. Beethoven: Piano Sonata op.81a, ‘Les Adieux’, bars 1–5.....	306
Example 5.48.1c. Schubert: <i>Abschied Von Einem Freunde</i> , D.578, bars /1–5.....	306
Example 5.48.1d. Von Weyrauch: L’Adieu, bars /1–2.....	307
Example 5.48.2. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 47–49.....	307
Example 5.48.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 24–28.....	308
Example 5.48.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 32–36.....	309
Example 5.48.4. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 42–46.....	310

## Chapter 4 Preludes op.163

### 4.1 Prelude no.1



From a visual point of view the most striking thing about this prelude is the three-stave layout and it is the only one of Stanford's preludes for piano to be laid out in this fashion. Three-stave piano writing was not unusual in the early twentieth century, with other composers having opted for this layout, among them Debussy and Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji while Schumann earlier employed three staves.<sup>1</sup> Stanford's layout is different in that the texture of the third stave is thinner; the use of a third stave clearly

<sup>1</sup> One such piece by Debussy is 'Cloches a travers les feuilles' from *Images* 2ème Série which was composed in 1907. See Claude Debussy, *Images*, 2ème Série (Paris: Durand & Fils, 1908). Schumann's second of three *Romances* op.28 employs three staves for some sections. See Robert Schumann, *Three Romances*, op.28 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1881). English-born composer Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji (1892–1988) used three staves in his *Prelude Interlude and Fugue* from 1920 and seven staves in his *Piano Sonata no.5 (Opus Archimagicum)* (1934–1935), while his *Symphonic Variations* (1935–1937) employs a system of six staves. See Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji, *Prelude, Interlude and Fugue* (London: John Curwen & Sons Ltd., 1924); Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji, *Piano Sonata No.5, Opus Archimagicum* (Bath: Sorabji Music Archive, 1935); Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji, *Symphonic Variations* (Bath: Sorabji Music Archive, 2002).



facilitates the reading of the score. Furthermore, this three-stave layout suggests that the prelude may have conceived like a piece for organ.<sup>2</sup>

Of interest, however, is that the music in the upper staves of the opening section is written predominantly in minims and semibreves, with the first crotchet not appearing until bar 15 and functioning as an interpolation in the melodic line as the first accented dissonance with a resolution. Repeated at bar 19, the crotchets in the opening section are decorative in their appearance, while crotchets permeate the texture of the succeeding section, and play an important role in the melodic line.

**Example 4.1.1. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 14–20**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 1, bars 14–20, is presented in two systems. Each system consists of three staves. The top two staves are joined by a brace, and the bottom staff is also joined by a brace. The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The first system (bars 14-16) features a melodic line in the upper staves with minims and semibreves, and a bass line in the lower staff with minims and semibreves. The second system (bars 17-19) continues the melodic line with a crotchet in bar 17, and the bass line with minims and semibreves. The third system (bars 20-22) features a melodic line with a crotchet in bar 20, and the bass line with minims and semibreves. The score includes dynamic markings 'mf' and 'p'.

<sup>2</sup> The bassline could be achieved by adding a sixteen foot stop to the lower strand of the music. The tranquil middle section the writing is reduced to the standard treble and bass clef. This appears inconsistent, as a number of the bars in the contrasting section resemble the opening music, yet the music is written on two staves.

In terms of virtuosic technique this prelude does not make any great demands on the pianist in comparison to the piano writing of, for example, Rachmaninov. A well-constructed work, the writing is musical with a simple melodic vein throughout and modulations are handled with ease. Written for an amateur pianist, the work would be suitable for pedagogical purposes as some pianistic techniques feature here, namely double-octave playing in the left hand, the handling of different positions of chordal patterns and the use of the third stave.

Although Porte suggests that this prelude ‘is not the finest of the series’, any apparent lack of motivic or melodic interest should be compensated by the composer’s clever handling of the tonal palette as an expressive means to introduce the listener to the harmonic layout of the set of preludes. Furthermore, Porte’s damning description of ‘meaningless chords’ is unwarranted; a number of these chords play a pivotal role in the harmonic structure of the work, supporting the smooth transition by means of chromatic adjustment, for example, between different tonal regions.<sup>3</sup> The frequent tonicizations occur by means of chromatic adjustment and there are examples of enharmonic respelling throughout (bars 10–11, 54–55, 61 and 74–75), all of which are examples of mediant pivots. Stanford’s harmonic palette uses all twelve major chords, and interestingly, Michael Allis states that ‘the piece can be seen as a *précis* of the tonalities that are to follow.’<sup>4</sup> Harmonically there are also some points of interest in the work. The free-handling of dominant seventh chords, for example, indicates an emancipated use of the rising seventh and demonstrate Stanford’s breaking away from tradition (bars 5–6). Interesting interchanges between the notes d flat and c sharp in the final section (bars 67 and 71) leads to an unusual penultimate choice of key: F sharp major, before the music comes to a rest in C major. Indeed, the unorthodox choice of the key of the subdominant for the reprise at bar 45 is worth noting. Expecting the key of the tonic for the return of

<sup>3</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup> Allis, ‘Another 48’, p. 128.

the opening material, Stanford presents the opening material down a fifth. A similar handling of the reprise is found in the first movement of Mozart’s Piano Sonata no.16, K545 with other examples in Schubert’s music:<sup>5</sup>

Table 4.1: Unorthodox Tonicizations and Modulations in Prelude no.1

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality <sup>6</sup>
A	1–23	C major, d minor (5), F major (6), G major (7), A flat major (9), A major (11), C major (14)
B	24–44	C major, G major (25), a minor (26), E major (27), F major (32), c minor (34), A flat major (37), E flat major (38), c minor (40), F major (43)
A <sup>1</sup>	45–64	<b>F major</b> , D flat major (53), D major (55), F major (57), C major (59), e flat minor (60), e minor (61), C major (62)
Coda	65–78	C major, D flat major (66) <sup>7</sup> , C major (67), C sharp major (70), <b>F sharp major</b> (73), C major (75)

Allis relates this prelude to Bach’s C major prelude from Book 1 of the ‘Forty-eight’ Preludes and Fugues and believes that Stanford has been influenced by the harmonic and melodic contour as well as the opening of the baroque prelude. He identifies how ‘Stanford’s first chord contains exactly the same notes as Bach’s initial arpeggiation; not only that, but the same notes are assigned to the respective hands – the C and E for the left hand, and the G, C, E for the right.’<sup>8</sup> While Allis’s observation is interesting, an examination of Chopin’s Prelude op.28 no.1 detects a further similar connection. Written also in C major, the prelude is based on a single motif, and although the layout

<sup>5</sup> See bar 42 in the first movement of Mozart’s Piano Sonata K545. See Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Piano Sonata No.16 K.545* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1878). One notable example in Schubert’s output is bar 124 in the first movement of his Piano Sonata in A minor D.537. See Franz Schubert, *Piano Sonata in B Major D.537* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1888). Other examples include the first movement of Symphony no.2 and Piano Sonata in B major D.575. Charles Rosen had noted the subdominant return in the first movement of a keyboard sonata by Giovanni Marco Rutini from 1757. Rosen further described this type of recapitulation as lazy mannerism after 1800. See Rosen cited in James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> The notable key changes are shaded and marked in bold in the table.

<sup>7</sup> This reference to D flat major is the Neapolitan of C major.

<sup>8</sup> Allis, ‘Another 48’, p. 128.



is arpeggiated, it is essentially chordal in design with each bar maintaining this layout while Stanford's prelude sustains his chosen layout from the opening.

Marked *forte* the initial heavy block chordal texture of Stanford's Prelude no.1 accompanied by pronounced crotchets in the bassline gives a sense of rhythmic stability and makes a commanding start to the set of preludes. The main motivic seed, an arpeggiated figure labelled motif x, forms the nucleus of the bassline when presented in bar 2 and engenders intense motivic unification in the work which is noteworthy considering that it was a subordinate idea when first presented. In contrast to the dense opening, a more peaceful second section opens with a subdued version of motif x in the middle register of the piano, immediately imitated up a fourth in the melodic line (bars 24–25) and later imitated in sixths (bars 30–31):

**Example 4.1.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 1–2**

*Moderato maestoso e con moto*

**Example 4.1.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 24–28**

The rhythmical effect created by the offbeat presentation of motif x adds rhythmical interest to the piece while also being reminiscent of other works by Stanford. The first appearance of the prime motif is firmly rooted in the tonic key while a modal mixture involving the chromatic alteration of the second statement of the motif colours the music. The early appearance of the chromatic alteration hints at further examples of chromatic harmony throughout the set which is both non-functional and functional. Indeed, a later example of chromatic alteration brings the second section to a close (bars 41–42)

The prime motif undergoes much transformation throughout including intervallic expansion and contraction to fulfil a harmonic role, motivic transformation as it is registrally and intervallically distended (bar 63), while it is also fragmented in the closing bars of the prelude. The reshaping of the initial rising third facilitates a rising sequence in the right hand (see bars 73–75 in Example 4.1.3). This effect of rhythmic displacement in the final phrase is unexpected as a sense of resolution is anticipated. Reappearing frequently in the bass this prime motif functions as an echo to the steady melodic line. Most interesting are the versions of the motif in augmentation which herald the close of the first and final sections (bars 22–23, see also bars 76–78 in Example 4.1.3). The first section draws to a close with a massively extended cadence involving three repetitions of motif x, the final hearing played in augmentation below static harmony. Stanford's handling of augmentation, and coupled with the three-stave layout, are both strong indications of his training as an organist.

Structurally this cyclical piece is based on the opening germ which was initially introduced in the lower stave at bar 2. For the opening of the second and fourth sections (bars 24 and 65 respectively) the prime motif is presented in a different register on each occasion, changing from accompaniment to melody. By the middle of the final

section the prime motif begins a return to its original register (bar 69) and finally descending to the lowest register in augmentation:

**Example 4.1.3. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 70–78**



Like his literary contemporary Yeats, Stanford seems to have an interest in numerology, and the idea of a musical trinity has some significance in the collection of preludes. Introduced in the opening prelude, Stanford's possible interest in numerology is witnessed in a number of ways: the prelude is in ternary form with an extended coda; the music is written on three staves, the lowest staff often employing triple octaves; the opening motif comprises three notes, the first two notes forming an interval of a third, and it is presented in three ways: in single notes, doubling at the octave and in triple octaves.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, motif x is repeated three times (bars 20–22). Tonicizations involving keys a third apart, recall a practice commonly found in the music of Schubert among other Romantic composers.<sup>10</sup> Such musical unity runs through the chromatic passages, some spanning a third (e.g. bars 6–7), while others encompass three notes (e.g. bars 1–2):

<sup>9</sup> William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) was an Irish poet and playwright. He was fascinated by the numbers 7 and 9.

<sup>10</sup> Modulations and tonicizations a third apart permeate Schubert's and Beethoven's output for example.

## Example 4.1.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 1–15

**Moderato maestoso e con moto**

The musical score is written for piano and consists of three systems of staves. The first system (bars 1-5) begins with a piano introduction marked *f*. The second system (bars 6-10) features a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The third system (bars 11-15) includes a decrescendo (*dim.*) dynamic. The music is characterized by complex chordal textures and a steady bass line.



## Example 4.1.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.1, bars 45–58

Table 4.2a: Chromatic Movement Spanning the Interval of a Third in Prelude no.1

Bar	Chromatic Movement
6–7	c' – b – bb – a
12–13	d'♯ – e' – f'
25–27	f'♯ – g – g'♯ – a
49–51	a – ab – g – gb – f

Table 4.2b: Chromatic Movement Involving Three Notes in Prelude no.1

Bar	Chromatic Movement
1–2	e'' – eb'' – d''
10–11	d'' – eb'' – e''
12–13	d'♯ – e' – f'
14–15	g' – ab'' – a'
31–32	a – ab – g
39	bb – b – c'
45–46	a – ab – g
54–55	g' – ab' – a'
57–58	d – db – c

## 4.2 Prelude no.2



Set in c minor, this second prelude is a short movingly elegiac piece which marks a complete contrast to the opening bold chords of the preceding C major prelude. While Porte suggests that this prelude is one of the most expressive of the set, Dibble's summation of the work is much clearer as he considers the work to be an 'affecting threnody'.<sup>11</sup> However, there are no indications on the score – or in any of Stanford's personal correspondence – to suggest that this work was indeed composed as a memorial for someone who had died. There is, however, much evidence to suggest that Stanford was indeed deeply affected by the events of World War 1 and mourned the loss of many friends in his music.<sup>12</sup> Although this is an expressive prelude, the miniature has much more to offer than a strong presentation of mood. The motivic focus of Prelude no.2 is noteworthy as it introduces a number of distinctive figures and ideas which feature prominently throughout the remainder of the first set of preludes including motivic unity, semitonal writing, chromatic passages spanning a fourth and the progressions:  $\#4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  and  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ .

A second link between Stanford's set of preludes and those of Chopin is also noted. The homophonic opening of this prelude shares some characteristics with the start of Chopin's Prelude op.28 no.6 in b minor. Also in 3/4 time, Chopin's initial accompanimental figure, like Stanford's, is based on repeated tonic chords, the first of

<sup>11</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 122. See Dibble in Stanford, *Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priority Records, 449, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> Stanford's association with and commemoration of events of World War I is highlighted in Section 3.14.



which is in first inversion. While Chopin's steady quaver pulse is prominent throughout the work, as in Stanford's prelude, Chopin's accompaniment is presented in the treble clef, while Stanford chose to place the accompaniment underneath the melody:

**Example 4.2.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 1–3**



**Example 4.2.1b. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.6, bars 1–4**



A similar texture is employed in Chopin's Prelude op.28 no.4 with the opening repeated chords also heard in first inversion. The dirge-like qualities to which Dibble refers are introduced in the opening rising upbeat gesture which becomes the premise of the prelude; this semitonal writing permeates many of the succeeding preludes. Beginning as a two-note slur Stanford extends the motive downwards and transforms it into a three-note motive (bars 2–3) as the underlying harmony incorporates a series of descending chords. This semitonal motive undergoes transformation throughout the prelude. Lower strands of a contrasting contrapuntal passage (bar 4) are linked melodically to the opening motive, now presented in thirds and resulting in a unified opening four-bar antecedent. Further extension and inversion of the motive feature in the consequent, as the music momentarily hints at the subdominant key, f minor (bars 7–9).

Appearing originally as an upbeat motive, an unusual metric displacement of the rising semitone featuring the motive on the second beat of the bar, and combined with role reversal, brings the first section to a close (bars 11–12). This extension of the opening semitonal figure also introduces the first reference to a progression which filters through much of the writing in this set:  $\#4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ . The  $\#4$  could also be labelled as  $\text{vii}^{07}/V$  as a type of applied dominant. However, as there is a strong emphasis placed on the sharpened fourth degree throughout the collection it is worth noting at this point. Such rhythmic displacement is further developed at the beginning of the second section where the ascending semitone figure enters on each beat of the bar, forming a rising series of quaver pairs (bars 13–14). An accretion of musical tension is attempted as the pairs are modified texturally each time:

**Example 4.2.2. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 13–15**



Stanford's preoccupation with the idea of a musical trinity is once again evident beginning with his choice of time signature. However, it is more obvious in his treatment of this motif as the rising semitone from  $d' - e'\text{flat}$  is heard three times in different registers as the music moves away from the tonic towards the polar opposite G flat (bars 13–15). However, the result does not successfully intensify the emotion in this work, and a second attempt, with a sequential continuation reaching F flat (bar 19), once more fails to reach a sustainable climax. Instead, further rhythmic displacement results in the transfer of the anacrusis figure to the second beat of the bar for another extension of the opening gesture. As in bar 11, the melodic interest occurs below the repeated

chords as the composer steers the music temporarily towards the key of E flat, the relative major of c minor:

**Example 4.2.3. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 21–26**

The musical score for Example 4.2.3 shows two systems of music. The first system (bars 21–24) features a piano accompaniment with a rising semitone and falling fifth motif. The second system (bars 25–26) shows the piano accompaniment with a rising semitone and falling fifth motif. The score includes a 'dim.' marking and a note indicating a chromatic alteration from bar 22.

Stanford's musical trinity is again expressed by three statements of the rising semitone and falling fifth idea temporarily displacing the metre and producing a hemiola (bars 25–26), as each echo an octave higher until they reach an E flat pedal, the key of the relative major. Further three-fold patterns are heard throughout, some of which serve to signal the close of a section. One such example features an inversion of the opening gesture (bars 50–52). The E flat pedal (bars 27–28) has a salient structural importance here as there is a semitonal shift from E flat major to E major. This illustrates that the semitonal relationships in the prelude, although initially presented in the melodic material, also permeate the tonal process.

The loss of the repeated pulsating quaver movement brings this section gradually to a close (bars 27–28), as individual strands proceed chromatically in sixths through a perfect fourth to the distant key of E (bars 27–29). The most interesting connection with the music of his predecessors is witnessed through Stanford's use of the chromatic fourth. According to Williams this ingredient had two main purposes: 'as a motif in counterpoint ('objective') and as a motto for certain moods or meanings

(‘subjective’).<sup>13</sup> In Stanford’s case the use of the chromatic fourth here has both a subjective purpose and an important function: while adding to the mood of the work it also provides a link to the succeeding section. Indeed, Chopin includes an example of a chromatic descent spanning a perfect fourth in the twentieth prelude of op.28. While his example is heard in octaves, Stanford’s is somewhat more interesting as it is presented in parallel sixths:

**Example 4.2.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 27–28**

Chromatic descent spanning a perfect 4th under a tonic pedal

Chromatic descent presented in parallel 6ths with right hand,

**Example 4.2.4b. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.20, bars 15–16**

Chromatic descent spanning a perfect 4th

Further chromatic writing leads to some imitative dialogue in contrary motion between the left hand and top strand, which involves extension and inversion of the opening gesture, while quaver tonic chords pulsate regularly at the centre of the texture (bars 33–40). Of particular note within this dialogue passage involving a German augmented sixth which outlines a variant of the  $\sharp\hat{4} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  progression which is married with the upbeat gesture and chromatic writing in both hands (bars 37–38). The smooth handling of this dialogue facilitates an implied reference to the relative major, E flat (bar 40). Further single-line chromatic passages, some of which span a perfect fourth, are heard

<sup>13</sup> Peter Williams, *The Chromatic Fourth: During Four Centuries of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 5.



throughout (bars 38–40, 44–46 and 68–70 (LH) and bars 44–46 (RH)). While many of these chromatic lines are incorporated into the writing, some serve an important function as they mark significant structural moments in the work, demarcating points of closure in the prelude by leading into new ideas or highlighting a change in the writing. For example, the combination of two chromatic passages (bars 44–46) which recalls a favoured interrupted cadential progression used by Brahms, shows a development in his writing having evolved from single-line chromaticism to being wedge-like, not dissimilar in style to the opening of Bach's Fugue BWV 548,<sup>14</sup> and it reaches an extended opening gesture, now heard in parallel tenths (bar 47); here the quavers are unusually grouped in threes for the first time in the left hand in this prelude and marks the first and only departure from the steady quaver accompaniment of the opening motif. Grouping music originally written in 3/4 in 6/8 was not uncommon in the music of Chopin, Schumann or Brahms, and here it is just another example of a shift in the rhythm:

**Example 4.2.5. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 44–48**

The musical score for Example 4.2.5 shows bars 44–48 of Stanford's Prelude no. 2. The right hand (RH) features a 'Chromatic ascent' in bars 44–46, marked with a bracket. The left hand (LH) features a 'Chromatic descent' in bars 44–46, also marked with a bracket. In bar 47, the RH has a 'mf' dynamic marking and a 'cresc.' marking. The LH has a 'Change in grouping' marking, indicated by a bracket. The score is written for piano and includes a 7-measure rest in the LH in bar 48.

The skill with which Stanford modifies short melodic fragments is noteworthy as he varies the underlying harmony for repetitions of the same melodic material (bars 50–52). On this occasion the harmonic context is different as it involves a chromatically descending bassline. For the first time the composer expands the textural range as the

<sup>14</sup>

Johann Sebastian Bach, *Prelude and Fugue in E Minor*, BWV 548 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1867).

music reaches its only sustained climax. Although a dramatic silence follows (bar 53), a rich chordal link leads to a perfect cadence in c minor:

**Example 4.2.6. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 50–56**

Chromatically descending line

ii<sup>7</sup>b V i

From here a reprise of the opening appears, with the familiar steady quavers, extensions of the opening gesture and the progression  $\hat{4} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ . Here, however, the tonal direction is towards the Neapolitan key, D flat, before an immediate return to the tonic. This juxtaposition of tonalities a half-step apart could also be seen as being linked to the opening semitone slur. Stanford uses some enharmonic respelling, adjusting one note from D flat to C sharp in order to direct the music to F sharp (marked with \* in Example 4.2.7b):

**Example 4.2.7a. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 57–60**

$\hat{\#4} \hat{5} \hat{1}$



## Example 4.2.7b. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 61–64



We could praise Stanford's handling of chromaticism by commenting on the smooth return to c minor (bar 64). The approach to the final key from such a distant key is reminiscent of Rachmaninov's Preludes op.32 which contain a number of such instances.<sup>15</sup> For example, in Prelude no.6 in f minor, A major is approached before f minor, only ten bars before the close, while the distant tonal area of f sharp minor precedes a return to the home tonal region in the closing bars of the prelude. Another interesting example by Rachmaninov is evident in his op.32 no.12. The piece is written in g sharp minor and the composer introduces the remote key of e minor before dominant harmony in the tonic key, only six bars before the end of the prelude.<sup>16</sup> A further similarity with the music of Rachmaninov is suggested in the stepwise movement of some of the melodic material in the final section (bars 59–60 and 63–64). Passages or progressions in 'distant' keys immediately before the end of a movement or work are also found in Beethoven and Liszt. For example, a minor makes an appearance

<sup>15</sup> Rachmaninov, *Thirteen Preludes*.

<sup>16</sup> Rachmaninov's *Variations on a Theme of Corelli* contains several instances of approaching the return of the final tonic key through a distant key, although these are not as striking as the examples noted above. For example, in Variations III, VIII and XI, the composer approaches the final perfect cadence in D minor by passing through the distant chord/key of D flat major. See Sergei Rachmaninov, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, op.42 (New York: Charles Foley, 1931).

seven bars before the end in Liszt's Sonata in B minor, while a passage in G flat major begins ten bars before the close in his Prelude and Fugue on B–A–C–H.<sup>17</sup>

The coda at bar 66 begins in the tonic key and oscillates between tonic and dominant harmony as the melodic line is based on the opening figure. Encompassing VI – V over a tonic, this is not dissimilar to the end of Prelude no.6. The rising semitone makes a forlorn appearance over left-hand chords which slide chromatically beneath, while the work ends with an emptying out of the quaver pulse and the note values are lengthened for the final four bars of the work. The music has the effect of a written out *rallentando* as the opening motive appears in retrograde and augmentation. Similarly, the final hearing of the opening gesture in the first prelude in this set was also presented in augmentation outlining  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ :

**Example 4.2.8. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars /72–77**

The musical score for Example 4.2.8 shows the final bars of Stanford's Prelude no. 2. The notation is for piano (p) and piano-piano (pp). The right hand features a melodic line with a rising semitone (6-5-1) and a quaver pulse. The left hand features a chromatically sliding bass line. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The final bars (72-77) show a 'Return of opening gesture outlining' with notes 6, 5, and 1 (first inversion) in the right hand, and a piano-piano (pp) section with a quaver pulse in the right hand and a chromatically sliding left hand.

Stanford's choice of harmonic language is quite conventional in his approach, with all sections but one beginning in the tonic key, thereby confirming his grounding in traditional methods. His one deviation involves a modulation to the distant key of E major for the beginning of the third section. An unusual choice of key for a work which began in c minor, it is not exceptional in its use here. For example, the first movement of Beethoven's 'Waldstein' Sonata in C major involves a modulation to E major for the

<sup>17</sup>

Franz Liszt, *Sonata in B Minor*, S.178 (London: Chappell & Co., 1938); Franz Liszt, *Prelude and Fugue on the Theme BACH: For Organ* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1974).

second subject.<sup>18</sup> In his Second Piano Concerto, op.18 in C minor, Rachmaninov chose to begin the second movement in E major. Many believe that this shows Rachmaninov's affinity to Beethoven's Piano Concerto no.3 in C minor op.19 where the second movement is also in E major. Although Stanford did not choose the unrelated key of E major for the second movement of his own Piano Concerto in C minor, op.126 which was completed in 1911, he selects the key of E major for the initial statement of the second theme in the second movement and reintroduces the same key for a return of the opening theme from the second movement in the finale.<sup>19</sup> In this prelude the ease with which Stanford moves from E flat major to E major is linked to his interest in semitonal movement in this prelude. A simple ground plan of the tonal design of the work illustrates the sectional divisions in the work and the emphasis on tonic harmony at the beginning of each section while also highlighting tonicizations and modulations within the prelude:

**Table 4.3: Sectional and Tonal Analysis of Prelude no.2 Outlining the Predominance of the Tonic Key**

Section	Bar Number	Tonality
A	1–12	<b>c minor</b> , f minor (7), <b>c minor</b> (10)
B	13–28	<b>c minor</b> , G flat major (15), F flat major (19), E flat major (21)
A'	29–36	<b>E major</b> , B major (31), C flat major (33), B flat major (36)
C	37–55	<b>c minor</b> , E flat major (40), <b>c minor</b> (46)
D	56–65	<b>c minor</b> , D flat major (59), F sharp major (62), <b>c minor</b> (64)
Coda	66–77	<b>c minor</b>

Stanford's motivic unity in this prelude is praiseworthy as the opening rising semitonal figure permeates much of the writing. Making appearances in each section, the figure becomes the premise of the work and from this much of the harmonic and melodic

<sup>18</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.21*, op.53, 'Waldstein' (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

<sup>19</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Concerto No.3*, op.37 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

material grows. The ease with which the composer develops and varies the opening figure by means of sequences, extension, inversion, retrograde and augmentation and adds interest and variety to the writing. The melodic material makes extensive use of the interval of a second and the extension of the semitone figure adds melodic interest to the motif (bars 11, 21 and 37). It is clear that this piece was conceived organically as a sense of closure is gained through the reappearance of the opening motif at the end. Linked to this is the use of chromatic passages, both ascending and descending, which add harmonic colour to the music and allow for smooth tonicizations and quick shifts in tonal direction. As a prelude, no.2 displays many romantic qualities and demonstrates a closer relationship to the preludes of Chopin than to those of Bach. From a pedagogical perspective the work would serve as a useful study in interpretation and expression in bringing out of a melody over a chordal accompaniment using a sensitive touch while also managing the changing textures throughout.



### 4.3 Prelude no.3



Stanford's third prelude, in D flat major, is the first in the set to typify the character of a 'study' for piano and appears to be more concerned with a pedagogical design, although it could also serve as entertaining music for the recital room. Noting the work to be passionate and stormy in character, Porte suggests that this prelude is 'somewhat after the style of a Chopin *Etude*', believing the semiquaver motion to be very effective.<sup>20</sup> Chopin's *Étude* op.10 no.12 which features unrelenting semiquaver accompaniment could serve as a possible rhythmic model for the work (Example 4.3.1).<sup>21</sup> The undulating semiquaver bass which pivots on the dominant at the opening of Stanford's prelude is the first technical challenge presented to the pianist in this work. Elements of the repetitive figuration are presented in all but nine bars with all the notes of the chromatic scale represented.

<sup>20</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 123.

<sup>21</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Etudes*, op.10 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1879).

Example 4.3.1. Chopin: Etude op.10 no.12, bars 1–7

Allegro con fuoco ♩=160

*f* *legatissimo*

*f* *con fuoco*

*cresc.*

When the figured motif ventures into the upper registers of the piano giving a more ethereal effect (bars 48–49), its function here is to link the right-hand chords and close down the registral gap which the composer had opened which will help bring the piece to a finish as it spans over three octaves during its descent:

**Example 4.3.2. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 44–52**



By presenting the figure in this way Stanford adds to the demands made on the pianist as different hand and fingering positions as well as sparkling dexterity are needed to provide a smooth accompaniment in the work. A similar unaccompanied device opens Chopin's Prelude no.3 with an emphasis on chordal writing in the right hand:

**Example 4.3.3. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.3, bars 1–6**



In Stanford's prelude this figuration adds vigour to the melodic material which lacks any real impetus. In the words of Ralph Vaughan Williams, a former student of Stanford's at the Royal College of Music London, 'of course in Stanford's enormous

output there is bound to be a certain amount of dull music; but, after all, so there is in Beethoven and Bach'.<sup>22</sup>

Marked *Allegro Appassionato*, it is unusual that the piece lacks a sense of impetus. This could be as a result of the large amount of time which the music sits on the tonic chord. Having regained the home-key in bar 40, there is little of musical interest as the composer repeats the process and the approach to the final cadence moves at a slower pace than earlier examples. Also, the manner in which the left-hand semiquavers drop away when the right hand is rhythmically static does little to sustain the musical impetus in the music (bars 24, 34, 36, 38 for example).

In this prelude the initial upbeat melodic figure in the right hand is based on a descending semitone, in contrast to the rising semitone at the opening of *Prelude no.2* in terms of its dissonant treatment as the move here is distinctive harmonically. Here, Stanford inverts the motif to become a rising figure for the opening of the B section before returning to his opening idea for the C section. This structural use of the motif tied with the left hand semiquaver passages ensures a sense of motivic unity throughout. Featuring both in ascending and descending forms, the interval is made more interesting through the use of chromatic passages which include doublings in thirds, sixths and octaves. Indeed, demonstrating a connection with earlier preludes, two chromatic passages span a perfect fourth (bars 28–29 and 45–48), with both examples occurring at structurally important points in the music where Stanford deviates from the ostinato-like bassline.<sup>23</sup> For most composers of the seventeenth century the chromatic tetrachord which spans a perfect fourth, and in particular from the tonic down to the dominant,

<sup>22</sup> Vaughan Williams, 'Charles Villiers Stanford by Some of His Pupils', p. 195.

<sup>23</sup> The chromatic passage in bars 28–29 can only be seen as passing through the distance of a perfect fourth if the final chord is written enharmonically, changing the g''# to an a''b.



'was not only the chromatic line *par excellence* but the only chromatic line'.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, J.S. Bach features this chromatic figure prominently in Prelude no.20 in a minor from Book II of the 'Forty-eight' Preludes and Fugues. To highlight the intensity of the chromatic descent and ascent further, Stanford introduces two compositional and pianistic devices: bars 28–29 incorporate a cycle of fifths while bars 45–48 give rise to a series of rising arpeggiated chords.<sup>25</sup>

**Example 4.3.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 28–29**

**Example 4.3.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 45–48**

These examples demonstrate how Stanford was not tempted to abandon classical tradition and was comfortable modelling his music on the music of his artistic predecessors. Dunhill commented on the composer's fondness for clinging to the orthodox forms and noted that Stanford once said that, 'The road [of orthodoxy] may be sometimes dusty and heavy, but it was made by the experience of our forefathers, who found out the best directions for ensuring our progress.'<sup>26</sup> Here, Stanford adds nothing

<sup>24</sup> Peter Williams, 'Figurenlehre from Monteverdi to Wagner. 1: What Is "Figurenlehre"?', *The Musical Times*, 120 (1979), 476–479 (p. 477).

<sup>25</sup> A further example of a cycle of fifths occurs at another point in the music where Stanford omits the semiquaver pattern in the bass. Here a chordal passage based on the mediant pedal is presented before the rippling figure is introduced for the final time in the prelude (bars 52–54).

<sup>26</sup> Dunhill, 'Charles Villiers Stanford: Some Aspects of His Work and Influence', p. 49.

new and exciting to these two common formulas although the accumulation of tension achieved by the chromatic passages, both highlighted dynamically by being marked *forte*, do lend musical impetus to the prelude. However, he fails to reach a significant climactic point and sustain the momentum, as the music on both occasions calmly reintroduces the opening undulating arpeggio figure in the tonic and any expectation for an unexpected twist in the music is not fulfilled. The music is not adventurous enough to draw any emotion from the listener; instead the focus is on a careful and rhythmically correct presentation of a return to the figured accompaniment in the left hand.

Structural unity, as a premise, is evident as there are many threads which link all three sections of this third prelude, bringing a sense of organicism to the piece: firstly, each section begins in the tonic key and ends with the same motif.<sup>27</sup> Secondly, each section begins with an unaccompanied oscillating figure in the left hand which prepares for the upbeat orientated theme which opens, in each case, with the interval of a second. Stanford's structural unity betrays his penchant for tripartite form and mediant relations. While the use of three sections is not uncommon, a clear grounding in the tonal centre with the only modulations to keys a third apart demonstrates a further affinity to the musical trinity:

**Table 4.4: Sectional and Tonal Analysis of Prelude no.3 Outlining Mediant Relationships**

Section	Bar Number	Tonality
A	1–14	D flat major, f minor (9), F major (11)
B	15–32	D flat major (16)
C	33–56	D flat major (33), D major (34), D flat major (38), F major/minor (44), D flat major (47)

<sup>27</sup> In the printed music the first section ends at bar 14 on AAb in the right hand. This note should be read as FF when one examines the harmonic context and the structural unity of the work. This suggestion has been noted in the editorial commentary in the supplementary volume to this thesis.

Stanford's first departure from the tonic key involves a Schubertian and traditionally Romantic modulation to the mediant and demonstrates his familiarity with the work of Romantic composers. Although there are some piquant harmonies, for example, a dominant seventh with sharpened fifth (bar 47), Stanford's dissonances are resolved carefully which places him in the Romantic tradition of piano writing. The post-Romantic relationship with the mediant is revisited near the end of the prelude with the introduction of a mediant pedal in the treble (bars 52–53). Here, a brief phrase extension, incorporating a cycle of fifths with some modal colouring and chromatic movement, leads to the final appearance of the initial bassline figure before the prelude comes to a close on an open tonic. Stanford's command of harmony is demonstrated in this chromatic passage as he uses five different chords including the more adventurous chords of  $\text{IIM}^9$  and  $\text{V}^{13}$ , all of which share a note in common, combine a cycle of fifths and incorporate a descending chromatic line:

**Example 4.3.5. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 51–56**

Examples of threefold statements of short melodic figures include a chromatically rising idea repeated three times in preparation for the modulation to the mediant (bars 8–10). The first threefold repetition is highlighted by the change in harmonic speed which heightens the intensity of this modulation. Harmonically the first eight bars are static, with similar harmonic passages repeated. However, at bar 8, our expectations are

unsettled as the first significant harmonic shift occurs at bar 9. For its repetition, the speeding up increases tension as modal mixture facilitates a surprise tonicization to the mediant key, F major in bar 11. Furthermore, this intensity is not sustained as the rate of harmonic change slows down to the cadence in order to give the key some sense of stability. Further repetitions appear: later, a short figure, based on the contour of the initial unaccompanied bassline figure, is heard below a held chord in the right hand and repeated three times, an octave higher each time (bars 22–23). Further variants of this idea, which avoid strict repetition at the octave are also employed (bars 24–25 and 26–27):

**Example 4.3.6. Stanford Prelude no.3, bars 22–27**

The musical score for Example 4.3.6, Stanford Prelude no.3, bars 22–27, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 22–23) shows a right hand (R.H.) with a held chord and a left hand (L.H.) with a short figure. The second system (bars 24–25) shows the right hand with a short figure and the left hand with a held chord. The third system (bars 26–27) shows the right hand with a short figure and the left hand with a held chord. The score includes annotations for 'R.H.', 'L.H.', 'cresc.', and 'ii7'.

In the middle section, this idea is heard three times as the music oscillates between the major and minor form of the supertonic seventh chord. This second example of modal mixture between  $ii^7$  and  $V^7/V$  creates a momentary tonal ambiguity. Although the final example is in fact repeated four times, it is heard over three different octaves, once more highlighting Stanford's musical trinity (bars 48–51):



## Example 4.3.7. Stanford Prelude no.3, bars 48–51



Stanford's final unifying feature involves a thematic resolution of the opening figure in the final bars therefore completing a full circle in the work. The initial rising fifth in the bass is now resolved as a falling fifth from dominant to tonic while the opening right-hand intervals are also resolved (bars 49–50).

An example of Stanford's compositional style is his expert handling of an enharmonic suspension which enables a smooth return to the tonic (bars 37–38). The brief and unexpected departure to the distant key of D major adds a new colouring to the harmonic palette of the work. Further examples of enharmonic respelling unusually involve the opening motif but allow for alternative harmonic progressions to the opening music and facilitate smooth modulations to the remote key of D major (bars 33–34 and 42–43):<sup>28</sup>

28

Compare the example to the opening bars. Those notes which are written enharmonically are marked with an \*.

## Example 4.3.8. Stanford: Prelude no.3, bars 33–38



In terms of its pedagogical value, this prelude has many elements which would make the work a useful study for the amateur pianist. As much of the right hand is conceived in a chordal layout with a lot of writing in double octaves, the ‘study-like’ prelude could help focus the pianist’s attention on the correct voicing of the chords to acquire a clear melodic line. Such repeated figures in the left hand often features prominently in the studies of Carl Czerny.<sup>29</sup> In Stanford’s prelude this undulating semiquaver pattern may have been intended to achieve a balance between fingers, accomplish greater agility of the fingers, strengthening of the weaker fingers of the left hand and also to acquire a light thumb. It also serves as a miniature study for working on playing trills in the left hand. While this prelude would be suitable for pedagogical purposes, it also demonstrates the work of an assured composer in terms of his handling of form, structure and harmony.

<sup>29</sup>

One such example is no.7 from Carl Czerny, *The School of Velocity*, op.299 (New York: G. Schirmer, 1893).

Cyclical links with both earlier preludes are seen through the numerology, chromatic passages and the return of the opening idea at the end of the work. Additionally, the offbeat bass notes are reminiscent of the first prelude while there is a veiled reference to the piece through the introduction of block chords in the closing bars of the work. Later preludes in this set feature unrelenting figures, including Preludes nos 5 and 24. In each case, the repeated figure is sustained for the most part throughout the writing, but breaks suddenly from this towards the end. Here, the change from the repeated semiquaver pattern is not as dramatic as in later preludes; however, it is worth noting as a possible connection between the individual pieces.

## 4.4 Prelude no.4



The concise fourth prelude is particularly piquant in character, and the first to display such a playful character. This sense of mischief is underscored by the tempo marking *Allegretto grazioso* and the interpolation of rests in the opening melodic figures.

Like Chopin and Scriabin, Stanford employed traditional structures in many of his preludes: here in Prelude no.4, he writes this symmetrical prelude in rounded binary form as the B section ends with a return of the opening material from the A section. The absence of a perfect cadence in the tonic key at the end of the A section results in continuous binary form. Harmonically, Stanford's fondness for the Neapolitan tonal area is noticeable through his fleeting references to D major, noted in Table 4.5. A smooth transition to the key of the Neapolitan is facilitated when the tonic note acts as a leading note to the new key (bars 21–22). His treatment of harmony in this prelude is closely linked to the overall phrase structure of the work and speaks a traditional harmonic language with a clear sense of key:



**Table 4.5: Phrase Structure, Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining Neapolitan Harmonies in Prelude no.4**

Section	Bar Numbers	Phrasing	Tonality
A	1–18	2 + 3	c sharp minor
		2 + 2	E major (6)
		2 + 2, 3 + 2	B major (10)
B	19–37	3	c sharp minor (19), F sharp major (19), c sharp minor (21)
		6	<b>D major</b> (22), c sharp minor (23), F sharp major (23), c sharp minor (24), <b>D major</b> (26)
		2 + 3	c sharp minor (28)
		5	c sharp minor, A major (31), c sharp minor (32), b minor (34), c sharp minor (35)

Linked with his strong harmonic tendencies is the composer's use of the traditional cycle of fifths introduced in the preceding prelude (see bars 28–29 in Prelude no.2). Like chromatic passages they too appear at structural points: the change to homophonic waltz-like music (bars 6–7, 8–9, 10–11, 28–29 and 30–31) serves to demonstrate the composer's eclectic style.

Both the structural and melodic elements of the prelude are suggestive of traditional features of composition, while the overall design is indicative of a Bach two-part invention. Rachmaninov's Prelude in E major op.32 no.3 is also somewhat reminiscent of a Baroque invention.<sup>30</sup> Two main motifs making up theme A are presented in the opening bars: the first a semiquaver figure in the right hand (motif x), and the second consisting of a rising semitone followed by a falling fifth in the left hand (motif y). Forming the basis of the melodic material these rhythmic and melodic cells undergo different transformations throughout the piece: extension, sequential development and fragmentation which demonstrate Stanford's deft handling and manipulation of small cells. Additionally, motif y incorporates the familiar  $\#4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$

<sup>30</sup> Rachmaninov, *Thirteen Preludes*, op.32.

progression. This progression has both a cadential and tonal function, while also playing an important role in the melodic texture of the prelude appearing at strategic points including the ends of phrases (bars 21–22 and 36–37), while also serving as a link to bridge the gap between registers (bars 4–5):

#### Example 4.4.1. Stanford Prelude no.4, bars 1–5

Motif y features in a number of preludes in this set including Preludes nos 1 and 2. In the second prelude, for example, the motif appeared initially in bar 11 as a development of the prime motive. Eigeldinger believes that Chopin in his op.28 achieved unity in the twenty-four preludes by the presence of a linking figure between each work. According to Eigeldinger, this figure, which is made up of a rising sixth followed by a falling second, is not always obvious on the surface level of each prelude; however, as it exists in each prelude in the set, it is sufficient to link the set of preludes together.<sup>31</sup> Although not present in each of Stanford's preludes, this progression clearly outlines his fondness for the harmonic progression and as such provides a creative link between a number of the preludes.

The opening idea of Stanford's fourth prelude (bars 1–3) returns at the end of the miniature to give a circular design. Although the note values of motif x are

<sup>31</sup> Eigeldinger, 'Twenty-Four Preludes op.28', pp. 181–193.

identical to their initial appearance, a sense of augmentation is created as interjected tonic octaves heard two octaves below produce an effect of false endings (bars 33–35) before the final statement of motif y brings the piece to an unexpected quiet close. This ties in with the unanticipated moves in this prelude and it is only fitting that Stanford should continue the sense of unexpectedness to the end:

**Example 4.4.2. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 33–37**



While the humorous side of Stanford's character is clearly evident in this work through the use of unexpected turns and interpolations, his traditionalist tendencies are still clearly identifiable. This is not, however, the only work to display the humorous part of his personality: his *Nonsense Rhymes* published posthumously in 1960 under the pseudonym Karel Drofnatzki are humorous novelties, while many of his songs include many elements of humour.<sup>32</sup> In this prelude he chooses a popular compositional device as the basis of the opening material: the initial unaccompanied motif x is reminiscent of the familiar descending upper tetrachord which is filled out chromatically. While earlier examples of chromatically descending passages spanning a fourth simply outlined the

<sup>32</sup> Karel Drofnatzki, *Nonsense Rhymes by Edward Lear*, op.365 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1960). Stanford's witty personality was also evident in his *Installation Ode* (1892), the *Ode to Discord* (1908), the opera *The Critic*, op.144 (1915) and *Elegia Maccheronica* (1921).

notes in question, here, the six notes are decorated, giving a fuller texture to the chromatic passage. Although there are other short chromatic passages found throughout the piece (bars 4, 11–12 and 14), examples such as a chromatic passages used as a linking phrase (bars 16–20) and wedge-like examples building up to the climactic point in the prelude (bars 24–26), are more interesting as they highlight important moments in the prelude. A wedge-like chromatic passage had previously been employed in the second prelude (bars 44–46):

**Example 4.4.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 16–20**



**Example 4.4.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 24–26**



Stanford's effective application of the descending chromatic fourth is also striking as it calls to mind the character and design of a fugal subject. In his commentary on this prelude, Allis believes that the opening of the work is not unlike the initial statement of the subject in a fugal composition and to further his theory he suggests a continuation for the 'subject'. He acknowledges that 'Stanford's piece contains no such contrapuntal treatment, however, apart from a brief passage in contrary motion over a tonic pedal in bars 19–20; instead, Stanford asserts his individuality and introduces a very effective



element of surprise — the evocation of the popular waltz.<sup>33</sup> The absence of rigorous contrapuntal treatment is perhaps not that surprising when one considers that this prelude was written in the early twentieth century. Stanford was well-known for his sense of humour and many of his later compositions exhibit this side of his character.

A sense of unity is achieved in this prelude as the composer vigorously develops all elements of the opening motif. Repeated up an octave the opening theme is heard against a syncopated and chordal left-hand accompaniment (bars 3–4). When elements of motif x are employed singularly they undergo some changes: variation (bar 15), extension (bars 9 and 14), interval augmentation (bars 12, 14, 21, 22 and 23), inversion (bar 19 in left hand), fragmentation (bars 17 and 18), rhythmic displacement (bars 19 and 20) and octave doubling (bar 35). Such development of the prime rhythmic and melodic cell is part of Stanford's compositional process throughout the set of preludes and one can clearly witness the growth of his initial ideas through this prelude.<sup>34</sup> Of greatest significance are the fragmented and displaced versions of the motif, as these two variants add greatest interest to the writing; such compositional techniques filter through the set.

Motif y, the concluding motif, makes its first appearance in the left hand at bar 2 acting like a link between two statements of the opening theme.<sup>35</sup> In essence it is only a decoration of tonic harmony by means of a chromatic appoggiatura. Like motif x, it makes many appearances and it is expanded upon intervallically and texturally. At times this motif seems to be used for modulatory purposes when it is heard as a sequence (bars 4–5). While also appearing in inversion (bars 12 and 13), it is often heard in sixths and thirds (bars 7, 29 and 32) and in octaves (bars 26–27 and 36–37) this

<sup>33</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', p. 125.

<sup>34</sup> The term prime motif was coined by Rudolph Reti. See Nicholas Cook, *A Guide to Musical Analysis* (London: Dent, 1995), p. 99.

<sup>35</sup> The term concluding motif was coined by Rudolph Reti. See Cook, *A Guide To Musical Analysis*, p. 99.

being a common feature in Stanford's writing which supports a Brahmsian connection. An occasional application of the motif in a fragmented form results in quaver groupings which undermine the compound metre (bars 11 and 32) as the accented dissonances coupled with the resourceful use of notes lead to subtle changes of harmony.

A linking device between this prelude and others in the set is Stanford's penchant for numerology. Here it is noticeable in his utilisation of motif y; it is repeated three times (bars 4–5, 11, 26–28 and 32), sometimes featuring only a portion of the motif as paired slurs. It appears that the presentation of the motif three times acts like a link to the following thematic material as if to avoid an unnecessary jump in register, in a similar vein to the repetition of a related idea in the second prelude (bars 25–26), thereby outlining another subtle link through the set:

**Example 4.4.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 4–5**



**Example 4.4.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bars 25–26**



Dibble's summation of this tightly conceived prelude is noteworthy: he states that it has an 'epigrammatic quality common to so many preludes'.<sup>36</sup> With only thirty-seven bars of music and taking approximately one and a half minutes to perform, this

<sup>36</sup>

See Dibble in Stanford, Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: *Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).

monothematic miniature demonstrates a strong focus on traditional compositional devices enlivened by unexpected twists. The value of this prelude was recognized when it was placed on the Grade 7 syllabus for the Associated Board Piano Examinations in 1991 having been previously included in *More Romantic Pieces of Piano, Book V*.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Salter, *More Romantic Pieces for Piano*.

## 4.5 Prelude no.5



One of the shortest preludes to perform, Prelude no.5 is the only work in the set in compound quadruple time. Porte considers this work an 'exceedingly pianistic piece that rivals Chopin in his *Etudes*, except that it is necessarily smaller in construction'.<sup>38</sup> Unlike the third prelude, this unitary-style piece, focusing on broken-chord like figures, is similar as the unrelenting semiquaver pattern is played throughout until there is an abrupt change of texture in the closing bars of the piece. Here, a cadential progression is prepared with the expectation of a resolution; however, this is interrupted as the section is extended and left unresolved on a dominant thirteenth chord which is only finally resolved in the coda. The use of the dotted quaver figure which originally served an accompanimental purpose (bars 18, 29–30 and 35–36) is now heard in the soprano as this chordal phrase with chromatic colouring reinforces the tonic, D (bars 43–44). Indeed, Prelude no.24, also based on an unrelenting figuration, comes to an abrupt end with the introduction of a chordal passage in an effort to round off the piece conclusively:

<sup>38</sup>

Porte, *Stanford*, p. 124.



**Example 4.5.1. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 43–48**



Porte correctly describes the fifth prelude as a 'pianistic piece' which would serve as a useful study in training the pianist to voice a melody above a series of continuous semiquavers. Furthermore, this dynamic piece requires excellent balance to maintain smooth division between the hands and also to sustain precise rhythmic control throughout. The quiet prime rhythmic figure, shared between the two hands at the outset, sets up an energetic opening, which continues until the coda. As such, repetition is a prominent compositional feature in this musical miniature as elements of the rhythmic motif are presented in all but four of the forty-eight bars in the prelude, demonstrating a sense of cohesive unity throughout. Linked to the consistency of ideas is the tonal stability which is evident in this prelude; four of the five sections begin in the tonic key. Only the middle section begins in F major, the key of the flattened mediant, while all other modulations and tonicizations move in thirds, apart from fleeting references to other keys. Each departure to another key has a specific function in the harmonic structure of this work; for example, the movement through c sharp minor acts as the leading note for a return to the tonic key. Chromatic inflection produces an unexpected aural effect in bar 9 as the music modulates to the unrelated key area of F major (bars 10–12), while the mediant modulation to A major is approached by means of a dominant pedal and parallel sixths heard below the melody (bars 18–19):

Table 4.6 Structural Analysis Outlining Mediant Relations in Prelude no.5

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	1–8	D major, G major (3), D major (4)
B	9–20	D major, F major (11), G major (13), F major (15), a minor (17), A major (18)
C	21–30	F major (21), A flat major (26), c sharp minor (28), D major (29)
D	31–42	D major (31)
Coda	43–48	D major (43)

Further unity is achieved through the use of the melodic cell introduced at the outset of the prelude. The initial upbeat melodic figure which is based on a falling second is outlined in the upper registers of the opening rippling idea and each section (excluding the coda) opens with this figure, heard either as a major or minor second and echoed by a falling second in the accompaniment. Alternating between the tonic triad and the chord of  $\sharp ii^{o7}d$ , the first falling semitone of the work is presented in the lower strand of bars 1 and 2, a device typical of the compositional writing of Stanford in his preludes. Indeed, a final reference to this chordal progression is recalled in the closing bars where the use of chromatic chords adds harmonic interest. The shape of the opening phrase in the work is one of a gradual descent and the lower strand incorporates a descending line coloured with elements of chromaticism. The scale-like movement acts as a unifying agent to keep the phrase moving towards its tonal goal:

## Example 4.5.2. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 1–8

Allegro

*p*

scale-like movement

This musical score for Example 4.5.2 shows the first eight bars of Stanford's Prelude no. 5. It is written for piano in D major, 12/8 time, with a tempo marking of 'Allegro'. The score consists of three systems of staves. The first system includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. A bracket labeled 'scale-like movement' spans the first two measures of the second system. The music features a continuous eighth-note melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand.

## Example 4.5.3. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars /25–30

*mf*

*p*

This musical score for Example 4.5.3 shows bars 25 through 30 of Stanford's Prelude no. 5. It continues in D major, 12/8 time. The score consists of three systems of staves. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking. The second system features a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The music continues with the characteristic eighth-note melody and bass line, showing some melodic variation and phrasing.

Furthermore, the focus on the interval of the second permeates much of the writing with numerous lines in the left hand tinged with chromaticism (bars 2–7 and 31–36):

**Example 4.5.4. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 31–36**



A good example of motivic unity is the way in which Stanford varies the treatment of the melodic line by introducing a process of alternation between the hands (see for example bars 21–24). The rising second in the soprano is answered by a descending second in the tenor, while the bassline in turn completes the texture with three descending pedal notes. This demonstrates the composer's ability to add interest to the intervallic premise:

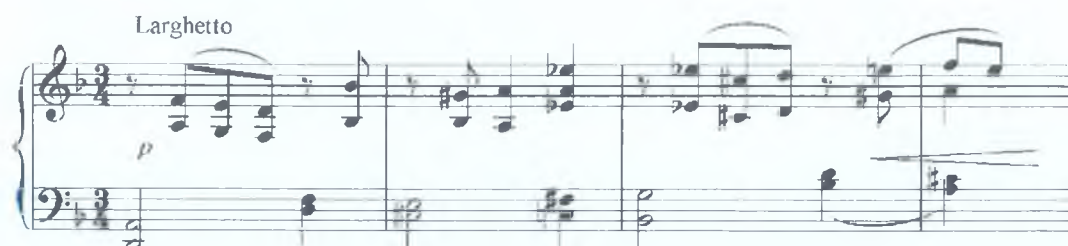


## Example 4.5.5. Stanford: Prelude no.5, bars 21–24

The image displays a musical score for two systems of piano music, spanning bars 21 to 24. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The first system (bars 21–22) begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The right hand features a continuous eighth-note pattern, while the left hand plays a slower, more melodic line with some rests. The second system (bars 23–24) starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic in the right hand, which then transitions to mezzo-forte (*mf*) by the end of the system. The left hand continues its melodic development. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

While unity is an important feature of the collection of preludes in this piece unity as a premise features strongly in this prelude in the form of intervallic, rhythmic and motivic unity, which results in a tightly conceived composition which would be suitable as a study-like piece.

## 4.6 Prelude no.6



Notwithstanding the numerous references to major tonalities in this prelude, the predominance of the home key and references to other minor tonalities combined with the tempo marking demonstrate a strong adherence to the prevailing elegiac mood and melancholic character of the work. Dibble proposes that it has the ‘gentle poise of a Schumannesque *Intermezzo*’.<sup>39</sup>

A basic four-part texture is set up at the beginning, and the ventilated right hand gives an offbeat feeling to the music. Although it does not continue in this fashion this is the first of the preludes of op.163 to introduce a four-part texture, contrasting greatly with the preceding prelude. The opening three-note prime motif (motif x), with an offbeat rhythmic sense, introduces the intervallic premise of the sixth, while the finishing motif which follows immediately, motif y, is more rhythmically disjunct and imparts an unstable rhythmic feel to the opening music. Featuring a descending three-note pattern, it foreshadows the opening of Prelude no.48:<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> See Dibble in Stanford, Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: *Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).

<sup>40</sup> Motif yo = motif y presented in different rhythmic values and motif yi = motif y in inversion.

**Example 4.6.1. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 1–4**

The prelude unfolds through the repetition and transformation of these two motives. The introduction of sixths in the initial bar is significant as this forms a link with others in the set in which the interval of the sixth features prominently (see for example Prelude no.11). Linked with this interval, repetition is a prominent compositional feature and combines elements of both exact and transposed repetition which form the structure of the work, as the motifs undergo sequential development. Additionally, the composer's use of repetition as a formal process ensures motivic unity throughout. For example, motif x is presented in five of the six sections in this prelude and a sense of cyclic movement and closure is executed when this prime motif recurs in the closing bars, this time placed in the bassline and heard an octave lower which balances the original presentation of the motif:

**Example 4.6.2. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 48–51**

The prime motif (motif x) undergoes transformation throughout this miniature. Much of the melodic content of the prelude is charged with elements of the finishing motif (bars

1–2), which is based on a falling diminished third followed by a rising minor second. This motif undergoes much transformation, the most common to be found in its adoption of the opening quaver rhythm (bars 3, 38, 39, 42, 43 and 44). Apart from intervallic augmentation and diminution, this figure, sometimes in inversion employs the opening quaver rhythm (bars 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 15, 16, 32, 34, 35, 40 and 41). Despite the brevity of the piece, the composer's treatment of the opening motives demonstrates a high level of development as the music unfolds through the composer's variations of these motifs.

Allis has already detected the links which this prelude has with the past and notes its affinities with the Baroque through (i) Stanford's use of imitation between the parts with a further example occurring at bar 45, (ii) the movement in sixths (the first example of which occurs in bar 1) and (iii) the contrapuntal sense throughout.<sup>41</sup> While these points are convincing, further features are worth noting in this regard: contrary motion between parts (bars 24, and 27–30), and sequences used for modulatory purposes (bars 9–14, 15–16 and 28–30) also point to Baroque influences.

The composer's use of chromatic colouring is also evident in the work. Allis, for example, comments on Stanford's chromatic bassline in the opening bars (bars 1–3) and the pedal which falls from D to B flat in the final section (bars 38–44), believing both to have links with the Baroque.<sup>42</sup> However, this prelude is not the only one to utilise chromatic basslines, with extended examples found in other preludes. Additionally, he acknowledges Stanford's fondness for the semitone and considers that he allows this interval 'which is so prominent at the opening, to permeate much of the harmonic content, producing some striking appoggiaturas and passing notes at cadence points; so again, although the reference towards Bachman counterpoint is a strong one,

<sup>41</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', p. 125.

<sup>42</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', pp. 119–137.



Stanford imbues this with a more contemporary approach to harmonic movement',<sup>43</sup> Admittedly, the semitone does feature prominently in this work; however, this interval also permeates much of the writing in earlier preludes (Preludes nos 2 and 5). The chromatic passing notes and appoggiaturas add musical interest, both melodically and rhythmically and their frequent appearances on the weak beats make their presence more striking. Additionally, the rising semitone undergoes intervallic augmentation, appearing as ascending and descending major seconds; semitones are also linked together to form short chromatic passages (bars 1–2, 17–18, 19–20, 27–30 and 38–40) which outline a development of the original interval. Chromatic alterations of chords facilitate the smooth movement from d minor to D flat and C by chromatic steps with augmented sixth and diminished seventh colouring in the sequential passage (bars 22–27). An important culmination of the sequential material from bars 26–32 results in an upward passage of keys: c minor – D major – E major – F sharp major – g minor – A flat major. Coupled with this ascent of keys is a rising chromatic passage spanning a perfect fourth outlined in the upper strand of the treble clef which is an extension of the original rising semitone (bars 28–30). This forges a link with other preludes in the set with similar chromatic passages. Alternatively the passage could be interpreted as a series of augmented sixth chords:

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<sup>43</sup>

Allis, 'Another 48', p. 128.

## Example 4.6.3. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 26–32

Chromatic ascent spanning a perfect fourth

*f* *p* *cresc.*

*p rall.* *a tempo*

*g-Ger<sup>6</sup>* *V<sup>7</sup>* *a-Fr<sup>6</sup>* *V* *b-Fr<sup>6</sup>*

*V* *G or g-V<sup>7</sup>* *Ab-V<sup>7</sup>*

While the focus of this chromatic passage is one of extended tonicization, the most interesting of all the chromatic writing in the miniature combines chromatic lines in contrary motion, both of which arrive on the tonic (bars 19–20):

## Example 4.6.4. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 19–21

Chromatic ascent

Chromatic descent

Stanford's expert handling of harmony and changes in tonal direction facilitated on occasions by smooth chromatic movement is also supported by means of sequences. Of importance is the palette of keys which are presented: nine out of a possible twelve major keys are used in a minor-key piece. In addition, the composer demonstrates his skill at harmonising the same melodic cell in two different ways for modulatory purposes, not unlike his use of sequential writing. After a sequential tonicization to F

sharp major (bar 30) the same melodic slur is harmonised differently by a dominant seventh chord on D to support a move to g minor. Similar examples involving a small alteration to the melodic cell involve the harmonisation of an inversion of the finishing motif from the opening section with a d minor chord alternating with a  $DM^7$  chord (bars 38–39 and 42–43). Such subtle changes explain Stanford's fluent movement between different tonal centres. So too, the final tonicization in the work witnesses the composer's handling of enharmonic adjustment and French augmented sixth chord (bars 35–37). To facilitate a direct return from D flat to the home key, Stanford leaps down an octave in the melodic line from  $ab''$ , dominant of D flat, to  $g\sharp'$ , its enharmonic equivalent and rising to A for a perfect cadence in d minor. Harmonically, the melodic progression  $\sharp 4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  links this preludes with other works in the set. Having featured prominently in Preludes nos 2 and 4, here it has a strong cadential function as it brings the second section to a close (bar 22):

**Example 4.6.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bar 22**

The musical notation for Example 4.6.5a shows a piano (p) in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. The left hand has three notes: a sharp 4, a 5, and a 1, which are bracketed together. The right hand has a whole note chord.

**Example 4.6.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.2, bar 11**

The musical notation for Example 4.6.5b shows a piano (p) in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. The left hand has three notes: a sharp 4, a 5, and a 1, which are bracketed together. The right hand has a whole note chord.

**Example 4.6.5c. Stanford: Prelude no.4, bars 2–3**

A further point of harmonic interest links Prelude no.6 with Preludes nos 2 and 3: the use of the flattened sixth falling to the fifth over the tonic chord ( $\hat{6}b - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ ) (bars 49–51). This dissonant effect adds tension in the closing bars of the work as the music begins to move towards a cadence (Example 4.6.2).

While not the strongest example of Stanford's engagement with numerology, there are some examples in the prelude which could tie with the number three. For example, both the prime and finishing motifs are based on three notes, while the third phrase sees a chain of changes of tonalities each to keys a third apart: from E flat major to C major and back to E flat major by means of sequential development and chromatic shifting of chords (bars 15–19):

**Example 4.6.6. Stanford: Prelude no.6, bars 15–19**

This work serves as an appropriate contrast to the preceding and succeeding preludes. Rather than fast fingerwork, the emphasis here is placed on the phrasing of the opening fragmented melody in the right hand. In the left hand rhythmic group three is very



prominent, maintaining a steady underlay which is then often inverted.<sup>44</sup> Not embracing romantic intensity, this prelude seems to bear more of a pedagogical function, and shows similarities to William Sterndale Bennett's *Capriccio* op.11 no.5, not surprising considering Stanford's knowledge of Bennett's repertoire.<sup>45</sup> Bennett's work opens with a descending three-note figure in the right hand with much use of chromatic notes for effect.<sup>46</sup> In the edition Sterndale Bennett's work is noted as being a useful study in phrasing and melody writing and Stanford's work certainly shares a similar character:

**Example 4.6.7. Sterndale Bennett: *Capriccio* op.11 no.5, bars /1–2**



Pointing specifically to Bachian influences in the writing, Allis does not refer to wider references in the music. The displacement of metre, resulting in a hemiola (bars 17–18), for example, is suggestive of the music of Brahms.<sup>47</sup> This is not an isolated occurrence in Stanford's music, having also featured in *Voyage of Maeldune* op.34.<sup>48</sup> It is important to note these features as such techniques coupled with his choice of harmonic language and his utilisation of the initial and ending gestures introduced at the outset of the prelude outline an example of Stanford's merging of two traditions: those of the Baroque and Romantic in his handling of the prelude genre, a central tenet in this thesis

<sup>44</sup> Cook, *A Guide to Musical Analysis*, p. 76. Here Cook discusses the five rhythmic groupings used by Leonard Meyer. Rhythmic Group Three, called the 'trochee', is based on the downbeat followed by the upbeat as seen in the left hand of bar 1 *et passim*.

<sup>45</sup> William Sterndale Bennett, *Six Etudes in the Form of Capriccios*, op.11 (London: Augener, 1905).

<sup>46</sup> This work has been given the title 'Phrasing and Melody Playing' in *First Series of Graded Pianoforte Studies, Grade 7* (London: Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music), pp. 24–25.

<sup>47</sup> For other instances of hemiola in the works of Johannes Brahms see the 'Scottish Lullaby', from Johannes Brahms, *Three Intermezzi*, op.117 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1892). See also the first movement of Brahms's Symphony no.2.

<sup>48</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford and Alfred Tennyson, *The Voyage of Maeldune*, op.34 (London: Novello, Ewer, 1889).

and an important strand in understanding his approach to the composition of the preludes.

## 4.7 Prelude no.7



Marked *Allegro marziale*, this prelude is suggestive of a military style, and the opening dotted note motif, which generates forward momentum in this epic and heroic-sounding prelude, is reminiscent of a dramatic call to attention in military practice. Since the sixteenth century many composers used march movements in longer works, while in the nineteenth century they were used programmatically. Most notably Schumann used marches in several of his collections of short piano pieces: *Four Marches* op.76, *Soldier's March* op.68 no.2 and 'Marche des "Davidsbündler" contre les Philistins' from *Carnaval* op.9.<sup>49</sup> Erich Schwandt believes that the march in art music in the twentieth century 'escaped from its formal military trappings and evolved into a more flexible, less stereotyped genre'.<sup>50</sup> Stanford's seventh prelude is the first prelude written in the style of a march.

When examining the practice of military allusion in the centuries before Stanford, Carew points to the prevalence of military-style and battle pieces during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which was not surprising, as for a substantial part of this period Europe was at war.<sup>51</sup> Carew proposes that military style pieces include

<sup>49</sup> Schumann, *Album for the Young*, Robert Schumann, *Carnaval*, op.9 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1879); Robert Schumann, *Four Marches*, op.76 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1881).

<sup>50</sup> Erich Schwandt, 'March', in *OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/40080>> [accessed 7 March 2009].

<sup>51</sup> Carew, *The Mechanical Muse*, p. 184.

martial dotted rhythms, arpeggiatic fanfares and swaggering chords'.<sup>52</sup> Of these features, the martial dotted rhythms and bold chords, which open and close Stanford's prelude, feature most prominently in this work. In addition to composers suggesting the war in classical composition, the folk tradition, including that of Ireland, was steeped in war songs, allusions with which Stanford was very familiar. Irish music is filled with examples of political nationalist songs associated with war and there are a number of Old Irish clan marches which had a political background.<sup>53</sup>

Music which is suggestive of the war and marching is usually written using a 4/4, 2/4 or 6/8 time signature and, although written with a triple time signature instead of the conventional quadruple metre for a march, this is not the only example of a march in triple time. Indeed, Dibble has made an engaging suggestion that the triumphal strains in this prelude are reminiscent of Schumann's 'Marche des "Davidsbündler" contre les Philistins' from *Carnaval* op.9.<sup>54</sup> Incidentally, this march is also written in 3/4 time. More importantly, though, this is not the first work in which Stanford alluded to march-like rhythms using a triple time signature: despite the lack of emphasis on dotted rhythms, the strong bold chords in the accompaniment of 'I've Sharpened the Sword' from *Shamus O'Brien*<sup>55</sup> and in the first subject of the third movement of his Second Piano Concerto from 1911 are suggestive of march-like rhythms (Example 4.7.1a).<sup>56</sup> Written before the onset of World War I, this concerto cannot be linked to the Great War; however, the heroic sound of this final movement with its successive accents on the first beat of the bar in a block chord texture is suggestive of march-like music and

<sup>52</sup> Carew, *The Mechanical Muse*, p. 184.

<sup>53</sup> Examples of Irish songs with overtones of war include 'Boo-lavogue', 'The Plains of Waterloo' and 'The Bonny Light Horsemen'. Interestingly, the American and English National Anthems are written in a triple metre.

<sup>54</sup> See Dibble in Stanford, *Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).

<sup>55</sup> See for example, bars 8–23 in 'I've Sharpen'd the Sword' in Charles Villiers Stanford, George Henry Jessop and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, *Shamus O'Brien a Romantic Comic Opera in Two Acts* (London: Boosey, 1896).

<sup>56</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Piano Concerto No.2*, op.126 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1916).



undoubtedly mirrors the political and social climate at that time. Interestingly, the block chord texture which Stanford uses resembles the opening music of *Phaudrig Crohoore* op.62, a choral ballad by Stanford which was completed in 1895 and *Six Short Preludes and Postludes Set 2* op.105 no.6<sup>57</sup>

**Example 4.7.1a. Stanford: Piano Concerto no.2 III, bars /15–22**



**Example 4.7.1b. Stanford, *Phaudrig Croohore*, bars /1–6**



In his account of the seventh prelude Porte noted that it ‘is typically Stanfordian in its bold, Hibernian martial spirit, expressed in this rousing figure (bar 1) and further in this

<sup>57</sup>

Charles Villiers Stanford, *Phaudrig Crohoore: Ballad for Chorus and Orchestra*, op.62 (London: Boosey & Co., 1896); *Six Short Preludes and Postludes for Organ: Set 2*, op.105 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1908). While the themes are heroic-sounding, there is also a strong hint of Irish folk music with the emphasis on small intervallic leaps in the melodic line. Indeed, one contemporary critic recognized how ‘the last movement [of the Second Piano Concerto] is openly Irish, and its color may lead to the christening of the composition as the “Irish piano concerto by the author of ‘the Irish Symphony.’” See *New York Sun* review in *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union*, Norfolk Historical Society and Museum. Another critic identified in the last movement ‘a characteristic rhythmic vigor and incisiveness and an unmistakable turn of tunefulness that clearly show their origin’. See *New York Times* review in *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union*, Norfolk Historical Society and Museum.

stirring song [semiquaver broken chord passage]'.<sup>58</sup> Suggesting two distinct ideas here, the 'stirring song' as described by Porte in fact leads to a third discrete idea (bars 21–22 which are then repeated at bars 27–28). Although semiquavers are the focus in both the second and third ideas, the layout is somewhat different. As such, this is the first prelude in the set to have three distinct ideas. If one probes further into the possible link to Irish folk music in this prelude, the swooping arpeggiated figures in the B and C sections are reminiscent of harp-like figures (bars 17–28 and 35–40). Stanford had previously included parts for the harp in his Irish rhapsodies and also in the *Irish Symphony*.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps representative of an idealistic view of Ireland or the prospect of peace, the harp-like figures are repeatedly interrupted by bold dramatic chords which reaffirm the heroic mood of the prelude. There are clear allusions to Stanford's surroundings and heritage in this music and his choice of material demonstrates traditional genres and ideals.

As a genre, marches did not always follow a set plan in terms of the form of the work; however, most American marches, for example, had three strains or sections. Due to their heroic content most marches were written in a major key with a strong emphasis on a modulation to the subdominant. Interestingly — or, perhaps, characteristically of Stanford — this prelude in E flat major is divided into three sections, with the first tonal departure to the flat side of the key; indeed, the B section introduces the opening melodic idea on the chord of the subdominant (bar 29). Furthermore, a solid sense of tonal stability is created through the emphasis placed on the tonic key at the beginning and ending of each section, also ensuring a degree of finality. As one would expect, Stanford's handling of tonal changes is expertly treated through the use of descending chromatic lines: the second phrase in the B section continues with the same broken-chord idea as the first phrase in the section and moves

<sup>58</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, pp. 124–126.

<sup>59</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Symphony No.3 'The Irish'*, op.28 (London: Novello, Ewer and Co., 1890).

sequentially in its three-chord progression over a chromatically descending line in the bass (bars 19–20), to facilitate a modulation to f minor (bars 20–21), while a descending chromatic bassline, based on bars 19–20 brings the music to rest on a brighter G major chord with an imperfect cadence in C major (bars 25–27). Interestingly, it is the second section, with its change in texture, dynamics and mood, which displays the richest harmonic palette in the prelude with modulations to a number of related tonal areas:

Table 4.7: Dominance of Tonic Harmony as a Unifying Feature in Prelude no.7

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	/1–17	<b>E flat major</b>
B	17–34	<b>E flat major</b> (17), f minor (20), D flat major (21), A flat major (22), c minor (25), f minor (27), A flat major (28), C major (31), <b>E flat major</b> (34)
C	/35–51	<b>E flat major</b> (35), f minor (39), <b>E flat major</b> (45)

Structurally and tonally all sections are complete despite the slight difference of cadences for the end of each. The unorthodox cadence at the end of the prelude including the unusual choice of IIIM<sup>7</sup> is worth noting as it is sandwiched between two tonic chords. The presence of the leading note in the mediant chord resolving to the tonic in essence suggests a degree of resolution:

Table 4.8. Use of Sectional Cadences in Prelude no.7

Section	Initial Key	Concluding Cadence	Bar Numbers
1	E flat major	V <sup>7</sup> – I in E flat major	Bars 16–17
2	E flat major	V <sup>7</sup> – I in E flat major	Bar 34
3	E flat major	IIIM <sup>7</sup> – I in E flat major <sup>60</sup>	Bars 50–51

<sup>60</sup> The use of the chord of IIIM<sup>7</sup> at the end of this work is notable as it is preceded and succeeded by tonic harmony. Andrews believes that ‘a very striking example [of the major common chord (and seventh) on the mediant] comes from Verdi’s *Requiem*. The chord is sandwiched between two tonic chords’: H. K. Andrews, *The Oxford Harmony*. Vol. 2. (Oxford University Press, 1950).

### Example 4.7.2. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 48–51

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, and ends with a quarter rest. The second system consists of two staves, both with treble clefs, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The melody is written on the upper staff, and the bass line is written on the lower staff. The melody includes a forte (sf) dynamic marking. The bass line includes a forte (sf) dynamic marking. The score is labeled with 'I' and 'III7' below the staves.

Structurally this prelude displays a sense of unity. Each section presents development of the opening upbeat figure which injects vigour into the work at salient structural points in the prelude; this fragment, consisting of a rising semitone, is presented in three ways: in unison octaves (bars 15–16), in contrary motion with chordal support (bars 33–34) and in a textural reduction in the C section when heard as octaves in the bassline (bars 41–42). Interestingly, in the first two occasions the idea was used to prepare for a perfect cadence in the tonic; for the final time the music lingers reflectively on the dominant in f minor, a subtle surprising development.

In addition to these possible links, this orchestral-sounding prelude exhibits unity in terms of its melodic, rhythmic and harmonic content; a full circle is completed by restating a fragment of the initial rhythmic motive in the concluding bars, while traits of this idea figure in the closing bars of each section as the opening rhythm is enlisted one last time for the bold and unconventional ending which reaffirms the over-arching heroic mood of the work. The decisive upbeat often functions as an anticipation to the dotted figure, injecting an element of vigour into the work: it is heard initially in rhythmic unison, marked *f*, and is characterized by widely-spaced chords with octave doublings:



**Example 4.7.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars /1–3****Example 4.7.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars /48–51**

Further traditional traits in the music are noticeable through Stanford's harmonic palette. Indeed, the first six bars are completely diatonic, and although some of the chordal progressions could be deemed unusual — IV– vi – ii– vib (bars 3–4) — the music is still strongly rooted in the tonic key. While the chord of the submediant features prominently, so too does the familiar chordal progression #IV – V – I which was introduced in earlier preludes. Here, the progression has a clear cadential function (bars 16–17), while it also in the writing appears in a truncated form, reduced from octaves accompanied by a single line to octaves and is left unresolved to introduce an element of surprise (bars 41–42 for example). He lingers reflectively on the dominant in f minor, a subtle surprising development, while reducing the dynamic level to *p* which is unusual as earlier in the work, (bars 15 and 33 for example), these chords had been very strong and sometimes marked with *sf*. However, an optimistic air is quickly established as Stanford reintroduced the syncopated rhythm from bars 31 to 33 to propel the music with an ascending chromatic line spanning a fourth in the melodic strand, while some enharmonic adjustment in the accompaniment allows a subtle return to the home

dominant. This recalling of this earlier gestures heard in fragmentation and texturally altered demonstrates formal integration in the prelude.

Throughout the opening section the dotted figure undergoes some variation, while still retaining the spirited mood (bars 4, 9, 11, 12 and 13). A syncopated chromatically descending figure in the left hand accompanies the dotted figure to lead the music to the first half-close (bar 7–8). This is the composer's first example of a chromatically descending figure at an important structural point in the prelude:

**Example 4.7.4. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 7–8**



Climactic moments are achieved through the use of sequences and by means of a migration into the upper registers of the piano and the ensuing descent in zigzag fashion (bars 12–14 and 31–33). Coupled with this Stanford employs a build-up of dynamics which increases the tension. After a passage of contrasting arpeggio writing, the opening motive, now harmonised by the subdominant A flat major, reminds the listener of the prevailing intensity of the work (bar 29). The timing of the dramatic re-entry of the march is unusual in c minor as the return of the home tonic and third section are some six bars away, while the dotted rhythms lurch with a syncopated feel as a descending chromatic bassline supports full harmonies in the left hand:

**Example 4.7.5. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 29–33**

musical score for Example 4.7.5, showing bars 29–33 of Stanford's Prelude no.7. The score is in G major, 3/4 time. It features a piano (p) dynamic with a crescendo (cresc.) leading to fortissimo (ff). The right hand has a descending chromatic line in the bass, and the left hand has a descending chromatic line in the bass. A bracket labeled "Descending chromatic line" spans the bottom of the right hand staff from bar 29 to bar 33.

A link to the idea of a musical trinity appears loosely in this prelude. Although the second and third sections share the same opening with descending chromatic lines featuring in the bass, Stanford avoids a direct repetition of the material by inverting the arpeggio-like idea, and extending the phrase from two to three bars in the third section.

The seventh prelude is rich in character and its heroic mood contrasts well with both the preceding and succeeding preludes. The rising syncopated passages are typically Brahmsian in their layout (bars 44–46) and are not dissimilar to a similar passage in the final section of the *Préambule* in Schumann's 'Marche des "Davidsbündler" contre les Philistins':<sup>61</sup>

**Example 4.7.6a. Stanford: Prelude no.7, bars 44–46**

musical score for Example 4.7.6a, showing bars 44–46 of Stanford's Prelude no.7. The score is in G major, 3/4 time. It features a forte (f) dynamic. The right hand has a chromatic ascending passage, and the left hand has a chromatic ascending passage. A bracket labeled "Chromatic Ascending Passage" spans the top of the right hand staff from bar 44 to bar 46. A bracket labeled "Enharmonic Adjustments" spans the bottom of the left hand staff from bar 44 to bar 46.

<sup>61</sup>

Schumann, *Carnaval*.

Example 4.7.6b. Schumann: *Carnaval* op.9, Prélude, bars 130–135



## 4.8 Prelude no.8



Although other preludes display qualities of a study, such as Prelude no.5, this musical miniature, the final prelude in the first series, is the only one in the set to be given the appropriate subtitle “Study” by the composer. Porte rightly acknowledges how this piece ‘calls for rather good pianoforte technic [*sic*] if it is to be played at the required speed, and with unblemished smoothness’.<sup>62</sup> As it clearly has a pedagogical focus, a skilful performance of the rippling accompaniment demands an even tone and, coupled with the incessant crossing of hands, requires great agility by the performer to articulate the melodic line in a *cantabile* style. The rippling triplet figures are connected by notes in common, while the first note of each group denotes a melodic strand characterized by dissonances such as auxiliaries, appoggiaturas and échappées. The distinctive layout involves two independent strands and although the prelude clearly tests the performer’s ability, Stanford also maintains musical interest in the work as it unfolds through the short isolated melodic fragments heard above and below the triplet figure. The crossing of hands adds a degree of difficulty to the work, making it more challenging to perform than earlier preludes. Many other composers favoured this layout in a number of their works, including Beethoven in his ‘Pathétique’ Piano Sonata no.8 op.13.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore,

<sup>62</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

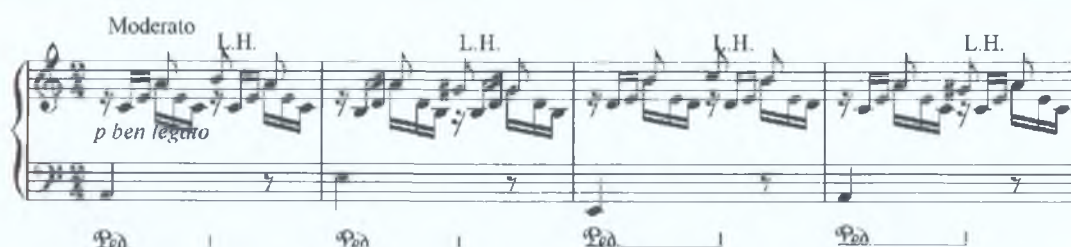
<sup>63</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.8*, op.13 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

a link in Stanford's prelude at bars 44–45, which sets up an idea and then breaks from it, combined with the triplet movement and the contour of each rising arpeggio figure calls to mind the first movement of Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Piano Sonata no.14, op.27 no.2.<sup>64</sup> The presence of an unrelenting triplet accompaniment to a single-line melody was common practice in nineteenth-century piano composition and numerous examples exist in the repertoire. There are also examples in the prelude repertoire, thereby confirming the status of the genre as a suitable study for pianists. Sterndale Bennett, for example, employs numerous examples of this figuration (Preludes nos 9 and 23), while examples by Bertini and Hennes featured in books of studies published by The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.<sup>65</sup>

**Example 4.8.1a. William Sterndale Bennett: Prelude no.9, bars 1–2**



**Example 4.8.1b. Hennes: Tone Gradation and Evenness of Note Successions, bars 1–4**



<sup>64</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.14, op.27 no.2, 'Moonlight'* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

<sup>65</sup> Bennett, *Preludes and Lessons, First Series of Graded Pianoforte Studies, Grade 3* (The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, n.d.), p. 7; *Progressive Pieces: A Series of Graded Pianoforte Albums* (The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, n.d.), pp. 14–15. While the tempo of the Hennes example may be different the similar figuration is worth noting.

**Example 4.8.1c. Henri Bertini: Prelude and Andante no.10 from *Douze petits morceaux*, bars 1–4**

Andante

The musical score consists of two systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The first system shows bars 1 and 2, and the second system shows bars 3 and 4. The right hand plays a continuous triplet semiquaver pattern, while the left hand provides a bassline accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Andante' and the dynamics are marked 'p' (piano). The key signature is one flat (B-flat minor).

Stanford's treatment of this idiom differs slightly from standard practice in that the two-bar introduction serves to initiate the unrelenting triplet semiquavers which only cease for the final three bars in the work. Five bars from the end, the six triplet figures of the opening reappear but are registrally displaced, sounding one octave lower than their original appearance; they lead to an abrupt change of texture and recall a similar change in Preludes nos 3, 5 and 24 which also feature unrelenting rhythmic patterns. This slowing down of the pulse to crotchet movement, with an emphasis on chordal texture, engenders a sense of completeness in this miniature as the prelude concludes in e flat minor giving a final sense of tonal resolution. Interestingly, the bassline accompaniment for the final two bars outlines the movement from submediant to dominant before resting on the tonic. This reference to the favoured  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  progression which was anticipated earlier in the prelude (bars 57–58 and 67–68), continues his use of repetition in the prelude (bars 67–70):

## Example 4.8.2. Stanford: Prelude no.8, bars 67–74

Harmonically this prelude exhibits Stanford's clever and smooth treatment of harmonic changes. Numerous chords are chromatically altered to facilitate a change of tonal direction. For example, the second last section witnesses a fluid change from  $\text{vii}^{\text{o}7}\text{d}$  in e flat minor to  $\text{V}^7\text{d}$  in G flat major (bars 48–50). An unexpected treatment of the chord of  $\text{ii}^7$  brings a six-bar phrase to a close (bars 15–16) in a similar style to works by Mozart and Rachmaninov.<sup>66</sup> Stanford also favours the use of the dominant ninth chord with a solo right-hand link to end both the third and fourth sections (bars 44–45 and 59). Two notable examples, which interestingly open and close the third section, demonstrate a smooth progression from a major chord to its tonic minor (bars 21–22 and 30–31). Other examples of this progression feature in the second movement of Stanford's Piano Trio no.1 (bars 121–126). This harmonic juxtaposition was favoured by nineteenth-century composers and has an important tonal role in this prelude: Stanford's use of modal mixture recalls Schubert's penchant for the juxtaposition of major and minor

<sup>66</sup>

See for example Rachmaninov, *Prelude* op.23 no.10 bar 44, and bar 2 in Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *String Quartet No.14 in G Major*, K 387 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1882).



chords on the same root (bars 21–22) with one notable example occurring at the opening of Schubert’s *String Quartet no.15* (bars 2–3).<sup>67</sup> Although not directly derived from his choice of chords, a second smooth modulation to the relative major G flat major is facilitated by the expansion of the initial intervallic cell of a semitone to that of a tone in the fourth section (bars 50–55) which results in a sequential repetition of earlier material (bars 32–36):

**Table 4.9: Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining Tonicizations and Modulations in Prelude no.8**

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	1–21	e flat minor, G flat major (11)
B	22–30	g flat minor (22), b flat minor (25), A flat major (27), D flat major (28)
C	31–45	d flat minor (31), a flat minor (35), G flat major (38), e flat minor (39)
D	46–59	e flat minor, G flat major (50), e flat minor (56), a flat minor (58)
E	60–74	a flat minor, A flat major (64), E flat major (65), e flat minor (68)

Stanford’s rich harmonic palette incorporating a number of diminished and chromatic chords leads to an interesting range of key-changes in the work. However, tonal clarity is achieved through the frequent use of perfect cadences and pedal notes: one superb treatment of a pedal is witnessed throughout the final section. Functioning as both a dominant and tonic pedal for the two keys of the section, its presence underlies the harmonic structure of the section (bars 62–71) and prepares for the final cadence in the tonic key (bars 73–74) (Example 4.8.2). Furthermore, a familiar Stanford progression ( $\hat{4} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ ) makes an appearance in the first section (bars 7–9) prompting further use of the sharpened fourth colouring throughout the prelude after the initial appearance of

<sup>67</sup> Franz Schubert, *String Quartet No.15*, D.887 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1890).

#4 in bar 3.

Structurally this prelude demonstrates an element of cohesion as the composer's use of repetition is a prominent compositional process. Repetition occurs on different levels: the continuous presence of the triplet figure and the use of a short melodic figure to open each section. Heard originally in bar 2, a variation of this 'sigh' motif is used to open each of the five sections. The motif is developed as the fragment becomes more continuous and a flowing melodic line is employed, demonstrating his development of the small fragment:

**Example 4.8.3. Stanford: Prelude no.8, bars 10–16**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 8, bars 10–16, is presented in three systems. The first system is labeled "Emergence of the First Continuous Melodic Line". The second system shows the melodic line becoming more continuous. The third system shows the melodic line becoming even more continuous, with a "mf" dynamic marking.

While much of the interest lies with the recurring semiquaver figure — and although the melodic line incorporates many wide leaps — the primary notes in the melodic line display a simple wave-like contour and cover a narrow range in each section.

Stanford had previously included a study in an earlier collection: Six Characteristic Pieces op.132. Written in 5/4 this work shares a similar focus on repeated triplet quavers and demands great agility from the performer as the quavers take on both an accompanimental and melodic role. Although the tightly conceived prelude appears to have been intended as a study, the musical interest is sufficient to make it a rewarding piece to perform. One single mood is clearly evident in the work and traditional formal structures are in place through the regularity in phrase structure and clear divisions of sections all of which share similarities. While suggestive of an *étude* through its study-like ideas, the formal clarity demonstrates Stanford's neoclassicism. Interestingly, it is worth considering that neoclassic composers often focused on shorter structures, in particular piano miniatures.

## 4.9 Prelude no.9



In comparison to the eighth prelude which was more rhythmically driven, the first prelude of the second series in op.163 shows a more humorous and witty side to Stanford and bears the subtitle 'Humoresque'. This light character piece demonstrates a composer who could successfully produce a work of high quality in terms of his development of ideas, while also displaying a more humorous side to his character. While Stanford teased the listener in the fourth prelude through the unexpected treatment of a fugue-like theme, this prelude goes a little further and is clearly the first to display a lighter side to his character.

Although Illing believes that the name 'Humoresque' has no special aptness for meaning',<sup>68</sup> as a genre of piano music it was popular during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and used by composers such as Dvořák, Grieg, Holbrooke, Humperdinck, Reger, Schumann, Sibelius and Tchaikovsky. Most widely associated with the piano, humoresques have also been written for other forces.<sup>69</sup> Humoresques

<sup>68</sup> Robert Illing, *A Dictionary of Music* (Penguin Books Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1950), p. 137.  
<sup>69</sup> The second of Schumann's *Phantasiestücke* op.88 for piano, violin and cello is a humoresque, Mahler originally called his orchestral cycle *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* 'Humoreske' and he often referred to his Fourth Symphony as a 'symphonic humoresque', while Carl Loewe composed *Fünf Humoresken* for male-voice quartet op.84 in 1842. Robert Schumann, *Phantasiestücke*, op.88 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1881); Gustav Mahler, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1905); Carl Loewe, *Fünf Humoresken*, op.84 (Berlin: Bote & Bock, 1842). Numerous other examples have been written for other instrumental combinations.



have been described as ‘good-humoured’ rather than ‘humorous’,<sup>70</sup> while Blom believed that the humoresque was ‘an expression of a certain capricious wistfulness’.<sup>71</sup> Kennedy agrees that most of the works were usually ‘lively and capricious’, he notes that, on occasion, the compositions were tinged with melancholy.<sup>72</sup> Elements of Stanford’s Humoresque certainly fit with these descriptions.

Stanford’s prelude is written in the key of E major, and the playful rhythms and memorable opening theme used by Stanford along with the joke-like quality of the work confirm Brown’s statement that the style of a humoresque ‘is not unlike that of the scherzo but is less grotesque and more melodious.’<sup>73</sup> Described as fanciful and ingenious by Porte, Stanford’s good-humoured nature is certainly evident in this work through the numerous unexpected moments.<sup>74</sup> However frivolous the work may be to Porte as he notes Stanford’s capricious capers, this prelude demonstrates Stanford’s ability to portray serious compositional devices through his expert handling of thematic fragmentation and development in a playful manner.<sup>75</sup>

Allis correctly acknowledges that the ‘blatant use of the technique of augmentation in this Prelude, along with shifts in *tessitura*, pauses and the tempo change in the last two bars, shows Stanford at his wittiest’.<sup>76</sup> Beyond that, however, there are additional examples of Stanford’s playful manner. The initial thematic idea, for example, is suggestive of a fugal subject:

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<sup>70</sup> ‘Humoresque’, in OCM, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3350>> [accessed 19 July 2010].

<sup>71</sup> Eric Blom, ‘Has Music Descriptive Power?’, *The Musical Times*, 64 (1923), 30–31 (p. 30).

<sup>72</sup> ‘Humoresque’, in ODM, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e5071>> [accessed 19 July 2010].

<sup>73</sup> Maurice J.E. Brown, ‘Humoresque’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/13549>> [accessed 19 July 2010].

<sup>74</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

<sup>75</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

<sup>76</sup> Allis, ‘Another 48’, p. 125.

### Example 4.9.1. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 1–5



Was this a deliberate aim of the composer to mix genres within the set in an attempt to confuse the listener or was it his intention to demonstrate his ability to write fugal subjects reminiscent of those by Bach? Whatever the rationale behind the choice of opening thematic idea, the listener is momentarily unhinged, waiting for the composer's further development of the fugal subject. Indeed, the intervallic shape of the opening bassline is also humorous in its presentation. However, no answer, either tonal or real, is presented, only a repetition of the opening material in a higher octave. This also may have been a humorous play on Bach's music; Stanford had successfully deliberately imitated the music of other composers in other compositions.<sup>77</sup>

In the reintroduction of the opening material Stanford distorts the initial motif which was made up of a leap of an octave followed by three rising steps and a rising third (bar 1) by adding disruptive pauses in the middle of the thematic statement in an attempt to tease the listener and the performer (bars 10–11). The second pause leads to a sequence based on motif x in the left hand accompanied by a descending sequence of playful quavers in the right hand which facilitates references to c sharp minor (bar 19), b minor (bar 19), A major (bar 20) and e minor (bar 21).<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Stanford, *Ode to Discord*.

<sup>78</sup> These pauses are marked with \* in Example 4.9.2.

## Example 4.9.2. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 18–22

After the light-hearted nature implied by the disruptive pauses, the listener is once more surprised by the change in mood. Stanford's prowess at improvisation is once more evident in this set as a version of the opening theme is presented in augmentation in the right hand played smoothly against a chordal accompaniment in the left hand (bars 22–23 and 25–26). These short drawn-out versions of the opening 'subject' momentarily alter the mood and halt the momentum until the continuity is broken as Stanford quickly reverts to the original time-values for a brief continuation of the theme (bars 24 and 27–31). As well as the augmented version of the 'subject' Stanford intervallically alters some of the material from bar 3 which allows the music to reach the melodic high point of the work (bar 26):<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup>

This is marked with \* in Example 4.9.3.

## Example 4.9.3. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 22–27

From this structural high point Stanford begins a gradual descent based on the opening material, interpolated with rests, which is eventually reduced to a single line, like its first appearance in the left hand, until it unusually and surprisingly settles momentarily on a half diminished seventh:  $ii^{\circ 7}$  in the home key (bar 31). Amidst the quirky events of the prelude, however, the composer achieved a sense of registral resolution with the repetition of a key melodic idea in a lower register, a trend found widely in the closing bars of Stanford's preludes. However, Stanford's musical humour is not quite spent as the sudden dynamic explosion quickly changes to *p* before an imaginative change of tempo brings the piece to a quirky close, a passage which calls to mind the concluding bars of the scherzo from Beethoven's *Symphony no.9*.<sup>80</sup> From a 'serious' point of view, however, the chordal progression at the end of this prelude,  $vi - V^7 - I$ , is similar to the final progression of the preceding prelude, thereby outlining a link within the set of preludes:

<sup>80</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No.9*, op.125 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1863).



## Example 4.9.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 27–33

Example 4.9.4b. Beethoven: Symphony no.9, II, bars 951–953<sup>81</sup>

Further links to earlier preludes are evident: the unaccompanied single-line subject at the opening points to the beginning of Prelude no.4 along with the chromatic content and sequential development of the prime motif in each case, while harmonically the typical Stanford progression #IV – V – I colours the music at cadential points (bars 4 and 21–22) (Example 4.9.2).

81

I have decided to include only the string section here for clarity.

Further unexpected twists in the music hint at the style of a humoresque. For example, unresolved dominant chords do not complete the expectation set up by their inclusion in the harmonic structure of the piece (bar 23). For its initial appearance, the opening thematic idea concludes with a perfect cadence (bars 4–5). However, an element of surprise is introduced with an interrupted cadence (bars 18–19). It is clear that there is an intentional tension between the serious and the trivial in this prelude. In addition, the tonal clarity in this prelude is worth noting and the ease with which Stanford handles enharmonic adjustments (Ger 6 (f natural) and dim<sup>7</sup> (e sharp) in bars 3 and 7, c natural and b sharp in bars 18 and 19) (Example 4.9.2). While two sides of Stanford's character, the serious and the playful are in direct opposition throughout this prelude, it is the trivial which wins in the end as the final perfect cadence demonstrates an atypical rise and drop of a seventh to the tonic (bar 33) (Example 4.9.4a). This descending leap of a seventh was an important interval in the fugue-like subject, initially introduced in the first two bars, and now adding to the sense of unexpectedness in the work. Unusually the drop of a seventh also features as an important structural interval in the succeeding prelude.

Putting the humorous elements of the prelude aside, Stanford's compositional skill is worth noting on account of his manipulation and development of the opening thematic idea. Allis rightly acknowledges that, although the thematic idea is similar to the opening of the fourth prelude, 'here the initial theme is longer and contains wide leaps with a startling choice of pitches.'<sup>82</sup> In addition to this, however unexpected the presence of this opening thematic idea is, it shows stylistic affinities with a Bachian fugal subject:

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<sup>82</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', p. 125.

**Example 4.9.5. Stanford: Prelude no.9, bars 1–5**

There are also echoes of Bach's inventions for keyboard in his development of short figures; in particular the opening theme calls to mind Bach's D major Sinfonia:<sup>83</sup>

**Example 4.9.6. Bach: Sinfonia no.3 BWV 789, bars 1–2**

As is characteristic of Bach's fugal subjects, the initial thematic idea of this prelude is made of small cells which are suitable for fragmentation development throughout the work. According to Allis 'the material, either as a whole or when broken down into smaller units, is subjected to imitation between the hands, including the device of augmentation.'<sup>84</sup> The opening theme chosen by Stanford in this prelude holds rich potential for melodic and rhythmic development. The most important element of the theme is the opening melodic cell (motif x), which undergoes transformation, by means of sequential writing, during the initial thematic statement itself (bars 3–4). A cell with

<sup>83</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Fifteen Sinfonias*, BWV 787–801 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1853).  
<sup>84</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', p. 125.

similar qualities to Stanford's subject was used by Dvořák at the opening of his second humoresque from op.101.<sup>85</sup>

**Example 4.9.7. Dvořák: Humoresque op.101 no.2 in B major, bars 5–6**



Similar to Dvořák's unfolding of this subject, Stanford repeats the figure three times, a development which is one of his characteristic trademarks and encourages structural unity within the set of preludes. Additional development of the theme is evident as it is shared between right and left hands (bars 5–8). Here the figure gives a sense of depth to the theme as it passes through G major (bar 8), adding another touch of humour to the prelude as the anticipated cadence doesn't occur. Stanford further develops the melodic cell (motif x) and, although it is quite short, it is further fragmented and the original intervals are expanded (see for example bars 18, 19, 24 and 27). In all it is a tightly woven piece as motif x or variants of it exist in all but three bars of this prelude.

A further tension is witnessed in this prelude: namely a Mendelssohnian combination of the Baroque and the Romantic traditions. Although the humoresque was a genre most commonly utilized in the nineteenth century, its treatment here by Stanford clearly imbues it with a distinctive Baroque flavour through his use of a fugal subject in the style of Bach. Marked with staccato notes, the deliberate and witty presentation of the fugue-like subject creates a tension between two traditions. This adds to the scherzo quality in the prelude, and as a composition it is organized and fits with Brown's classification of later examples of humoresques which he described as being 'more

<sup>85</sup>

Antonín Dvořák, *Eight Humoresques*, op.101 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1894).



formalized, involving strongly marked rhythms and the frequent repetition of short breathed tunes'.<sup>86</sup> Stanford's characteristic three sections ensure clarity of form and, coupled with the regular phrasing, outline the traditional formal concept of the prelude. Additionally, Stanford followed traditional harmonic structures in this miniature despite the element of tension in the writing. The prelude retains its tonality by means of recurring dominant-tonic cadences which help to ground the work tonally despite the abrupt tonicizations and key-changes.<sup>87</sup>

Table 4.10: Abrupt Tonicizations and Key Changes in Prelude no.9

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	1–13	E major, F sharp major (7), E major (7), G major (8), C major (10), F major (11), f sharp minor (12)
B	14–22	B major (14), F sharp major (15), b minor (16), A major (16), a minor (17), <b>c sharp minor (19), b major (19), A major (20), e minor (20)</b>
A'	22–33	E major (22), F sharp major (25), e minor (26), E major (27), e minor (28), E major (32)

This humoresque by Stanford has much in common with humoresques by other composers of the nineteenth century; the rhythmic qualities and melodic contour of his opening thematic idea shares similarities with the opening of the second movement of Schumann's Humoreske op.20.<sup>88</sup> While Tchaikovsky's Humoresque, op.10 no.2, involves numerous tempo changes, it appears that Stanford only changes the tempo once in the work (bars 32–33); however, his exploitation of augmentation conveys an

<sup>86</sup> Maurice Brown, 'Humoresque', in *GMO OMO*, [www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/13549](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/13549) <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/13549>> [accessed 19 July 2010].

<sup>87</sup> These are highlighted in Table 4.10.

<sup>88</sup> Schumann, *Humoresque*.

earlier change of tempo and mood in the work (bars 22–26) which contrasts with the original tempo marking of ‘Andante giusto’:<sup>89</sup>

**Example 4.9.8. Schumann: *Humoreske* op.20 II, bars 1–6**

sehr rasch und leicht



<sup>89</sup>

Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *Two Pieces*, op.10 (New York: G. Schirmer, 1896).

## 4.10 Prelude no.10



With its marking of ‘Tempo di Valse’ the tenth prelude imbues the sense of a Schubertian or Chopinesque waltz through the use of the familiar left-hand accompaniment figure. Having been noted as a ‘fragile valse’,<sup>90</sup> the delicate writing gives an ethereal quality which provides a light contrast to the intricate fugal-style of the preceding prelude. Although this work is not given the subtitle of waltz, in a similar fashion to the other subtitles used by Stanford, the composer indicated the prescribed tempo at the beginning of the work. The opening four-bar phrase has all the character of a waltz: the dance-like iambic paired slurs in the treble clef supported by staccato broken chords in the bass clef. His choice of opening is unusual as the upbeat consists of two crotchets. An examination of fifteen of Chopin’s waltzes reveals that none begin in this manner; seven begin on the first beat of the bar while eight have the usual upbeat of one crotchet.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

<sup>91</sup> Those works beginning with an upbeat include: op.64 no.2 in C sharp minor, op.69 no.1 in A flat major, op.69 no.2 in B minor, op.70 no.1 in G flat major, op.70 no.2 in F minor, op.70 no.3 in D flat major, op.posth in E minor and op.posth in E major. The four collections of waltzes examined were Frederic Chopin, *Waltzes*, op.34 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1878); Frederic Chopin, *Waltzes*, op.64 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1878); Frederic Chopin, *Waltzes*, op.69 (New York: G. Schirmer, 1894); Frederic Chopin, *Waltzes*, op.70 (New York: G. Schirmer, 1894).

While the character and style of the work are suggestive of a traditional waltz, a number of typical Stanfordian features are evident which add an element of individuality to the waltz writing and also show how once more, the preludes in this set are linked together through small motivic, intervallic and harmonic connections including the familiar progression  $\#4 - 5 - \hat{1}$ . Stanford unusually opens this prelude on the second beat of the bar with an atypical unaccented dissonance which resolves upwards. While it may be unusual that this is the first prelude to start with an unaccented dissonance, it is obvious that the composer is introducing an idea which permeates much of the melodic texture of the piece at the outset, as *échappées*, *appoggiaturas* and *under auxiliaries* occur frequently throughout. The two opening notes  $\#4 - 5$  do not resolve to  $\hat{1}$ , as one would normally expect of Stanford in this set. Instead, a sense of expectation and anticipation is set up, which is not fulfilled until the closing bars of the prelude as the familiar progression returns to its cadential function and is fully resolved to the tonic. By not resolving the progression until its final bars the piece creates a cyclical effect as the opening material is linked to the music of the closing section:

**Example 4.10.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars /1–4**

Tempo di Valse

$\hat{\#4} \quad \hat{5} \quad \hat{4}$



**Example 4.10.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars 59–63**

pp a tempo

#IV<sup>7</sup>      V<sup>7</sup>      i      ^ #4      ^ 5      ^ 1

Further features which link this prelude with other miniatures in the set include the descending and arch-like chains of parallel sixths which close off the first and second sections (bars 7–8 and 17–18: see for example Prelude no.6), the rising and falling sevenths (bars 5–6, 10–11, 12–13, 16, 24–25, 35–36 and 53–54: see for example Prelude no.9) and the passages of octave writing which add greater emphasis to the texture, presenting the material in a more emphatic way. Additionally, Stanford's preference for having a passing reference to a distant key in the closing section of the work is evident in this prelude through the reference to the distant chord of c minor, sandwiched between two statements of the tonic chord (bars 55–57) which adds harmonic interest before the final cadential progressions:

**Example 4.10.2. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars 54–58**

i      v      i

Once more examples of chromaticism feature in Stanford's writing of this prelude. While falling short of the span of a fourth, the two most interesting chromatic passages here are articulated in simple duple time resulting in hemiola (bars /19–20 and /27–28). Along with the rhythmic variety achieved here the melodic range is expanded towards the high point of the work. While both rising octave chromatic lines are identical, an

enharmonic adjustment offers harmonic interest to the work. The destabilisation of the triple metre in the right hand is only temporary as material reminiscent of the opening waltz-like rhythm is re-established:

**Example 4.10.3. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars /19–38**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 10, bars 19–38, is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 19–24) is labeled "Temporary destabilising of waltz-time" and shows a complex, syncopated melody in the right hand. The second system (bars 25–30) is labeled "Return of waltz-like time" and shows a more regular, waltz-like melody. The third system (bars 31–38) is also labeled "Return of waltz-like time" and shows a continuation of the waltz-like melody. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "poco rall.", "a tempo", "f", and "sf".

Further examples of Stanford's ability to give a number of harmonisations to the same melodic fragment are found later in the work (bars 47–49 and 51–53), with the bass accompaniment forming a three-note descending pattern as the music approached the key of the subdominant. These threefold patterns hint once more at the composer's preference for repeating melodic fragments three times:

## Example 4.10.4. Stanford: Prelude no.10, bars 47–53

Chord symbols for Example 4.10.4:

- Bar 47: i
- Bar 48: I<sup>7</sup>dM or a: V<sup>7</sup>d
- Bar 49: ivb ib
- Bar 50: V<sup>7</sup>
- Bar 51: V<sup>13</sup>
- Bar 52: VIM<sup>7</sup>
- Bar 53: I<sup>7</sup>cM or a: V<sup>7</sup>c/iv
- Bar 54: iv i

Indeed, this passage above produces interesting equivalent descents from e – d – C – B and C – B – A. The third and final representation of the crotchet minim pattern in the right hand (bar 53) abandons the familiar melodic line in favour of sequential rising leaps of a third before the music slows down and pauses momentarily on the chord of #IV<sup>7</sup> which sets up the final cadential progression, rendering both harmonic and structural closure to the work. Initially presented as an accompanimental rhythm, the crotchet-minim pattern is moved to the upper strand of the writing. Its presence in this work is not unusual as an examination of a number of Schubert's waltzes, German dances, Écossaises and Ländler reveals that the crotchet-minim accompaniment was a common rhythmic pattern used in these dance-like pieces.

### 4.11 Prelude no.11



After the dance-like nature of the tenth prelude, Prelude no.11, marked *Andante cantabile*, provides a calmer and more peaceful mood. In his account of the work Porte focuses too heavily on the character suggested by this work, and comments on the ‘tenderness and serenity’ of this prelude without giving any analytical insight into the work.<sup>92</sup> There is much more value in this miniature which demonstrates a unified work through the use of two important compositional ideas: the presence of a recurring motif (motif x) and the coherence achieved through the use of the interval of a sixth. Both of these ideas work as important premises ensuring a sense of unity characteristic of the prelude. Stanford’s initial intervallic cell is introduced in the first bar and permeates the accompaniment figure in the opening section. Suggestive of a rocking accompaniment, this intervallic premise incorporating falling sixths which form a descending scale in the bassline, contrasts with the smooth arch-shaped melodic phrase which frames the opening section; these sixths feature in all but two of the initial twelve bars:

<sup>92</sup>

Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

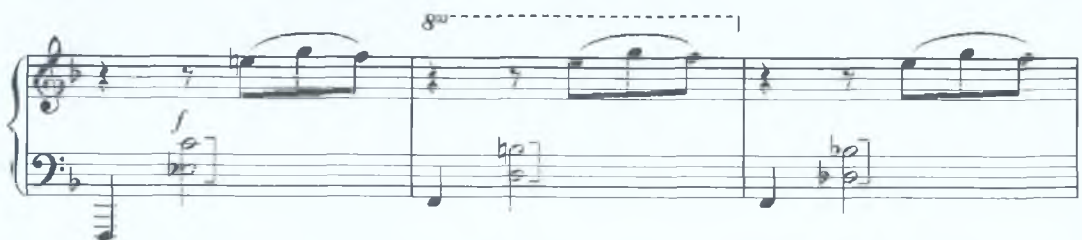


**Example 4.11.1. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 1–8**

Andante cantabile

The image shows the first eight bars of Stanford's Prelude no. 11. The tempo is 'Andante cantabile'. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The first system (bars 1–4) begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a bracketed interval of a sixth, labeled '6th'. The second system (bars 5–8) contains a bracketed motif labeled 'motif x'. The notation includes treble and bass staves with various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and slurs.

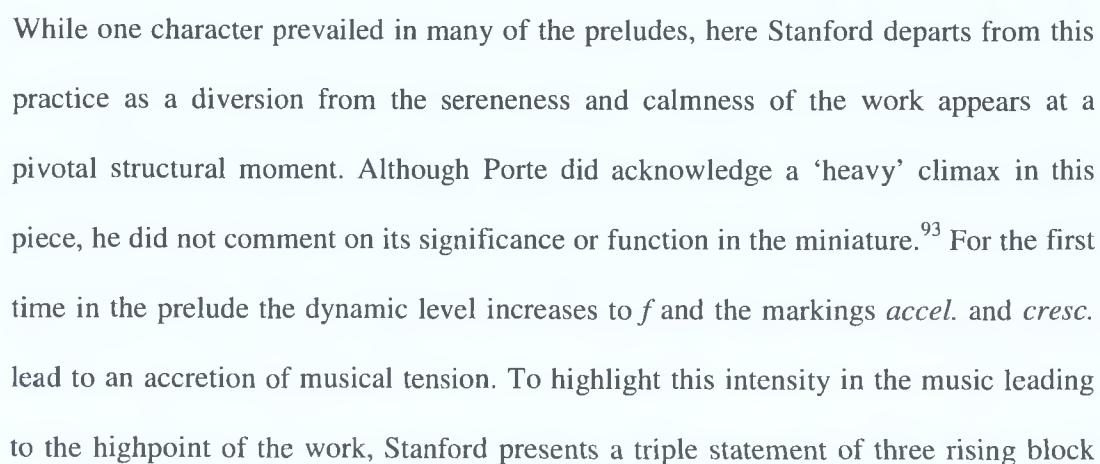
As the most important interval in the prelude, the sixth acts as a unifying device. Presented initially as falling sixths in the context of a descending scale, the music is developed by Stanford in a number of ways. Many of the appearances of the interval may indeed be part of the musical fabric of the work; however, others are certainly part of a deliberate attempt by the composer to unify the piece: vertical sixths on the beat are presented between right and left hand (bars 13–15 in Example 4.11.2a and bars 82–84 in Example 4.11.2e), a chain of rising sixths forms a new accompanimental idea (bars 32–33, 71–73 and 75–77), the initial falling sixths are inverted to form rising sixths and rising octaves (bars 34–38 in Example 4.11.2c), vertical sixths become a chain of rising thirds (bars 45–46), while some chordal positions are also presented in sixths (bars 28–29, 58, 60, 64–66 and 69). Like earlier preludes in this set, Stanford makes a clear link between the opening and closing bars of the work in terms of the motivic material in order to achieve a clear and definite sense of closure. This emphasis on sixths links this prelude to the preceding one (bars 7–8 and 17–18) and others in the set including Prelude no.6:

**Example 4.11.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 13–15****Example 4.11.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 32–33****Example 4.11.2c. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 34–38****Example 4.11.2d. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 64–66**

**Example 4.11.2e. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 82–85**

The second of the composer's unifying devices in this prelude is also introduced in the opening section: motif x (bar 5 in Example 4.11.1). In its initial form, motif x consists of a rising figure of three notes followed by a falling third. Indeed, the shape and rhythmic structure of this figure is reminiscent of a re-ordered version of a similar pattern in Prelude no.10 (bars 5–6). In Prelude no.11, however, it is clear that its shape is derived from the contour of the opening melodic phrase. Heard immediately in sequence (bars 5–8), the motif is transformed in a number of ways throughout: it is freely inverted (bars 10–11, 22–23, 34–35, 36, 68–69 and 70–71), the initial intervals are reduced and expanded (bars 17–18, 19–20, 30–31, 58–59, 62–63 and 80–81), the motif itself is extended (bars 25–26), it is truncated (bars 57, 59–60, 61–62, 63–64 and 74–75) while it is also heard in different registers throughout (bars 5, 7, 17 and 19 for example).

The tonal sense of this prelude is clear and the composer's means of modulation is smooth. For example, chromatic alteration of notes from the first section in the second section facilitates a modulation to the relative minor (bars 15–17):



92



chords, all spread over four octaves and initially harmonised by the major chord on the flattened mediant. Incorporating a descending chromatic bassline, the music dramatically comes to rest on  $V^7/IV$  (bars 39–45) which drives the prime melodic idea to new heights (bars 45–48):

**Example 4.11.4. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 37–49**

The structural positioning of the first threefold statement in this prelude adds to the dramatic tension of the section (bars 39–45). A further example of Stanford's interest in numerology is based on motif x (bars 58–63). After an enharmonic adjustment to facilitate a return to the tonic key (bars 54–55) with a pause on the dominant  $V^7$  (bar 57), the threefold wedge-like statement in the fifth section is all based on tonic and dominant harmony. Following this, a fragmented version of motif x is then repeated three times in succession, each time with a different harmonisation and demonstrating Stanford's ease at presenting three harmonisations of the one fragment and also his ability to incorporate a chromatic line into the harmonic progression (bars 64–66):

## Example 4.11.5. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 58–67

A final threefold statement is presented in the last section of the work, which acts as a culmination of the many ideas presented throughout. After a variant of motif x and perfect cadence in F major, the music slows down dramatically to dotted minim chords before the prelude ends with a plagal cadence. This cadential extension provides a summation of the prelude as the chain of parallel sixths is reminiscent of the opening falling sixths (bars 1–8) while also outlining  $\hat{5} - \hat{6} - \hat{1}$  which could be perceived as a development of the familiar  $\hat{4} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  progression:

## Example 4.11.6. Stanford: Prelude no.11, bars 82–85

An unexpected focus on the E flat undermines the tonal clarity of this work (bars 39–42): all but one of the six sections begins and ends in the tonic key with a predominance of tonic pitches. Indeed, there is a solid emphasis on the tonic with the placement of a tonic pedal in the upper strand of the treble for much of the closing section (bars 71–73,

75–77 and 81–84) The frequent use of strong cadential progressions imbues the work with this sense of tonal direction which helps to bring a sense of stability to the music. The familiar cadential progression of  $\#IV - V^7 - I$  also features in this prelude (bars 10–11 and 70–71). With such a stable emphasis on the tonic, the significance of the modulation to A flat major can scarcely be ignored, and although it is prepared properly, its strategic position, half-way through the prelude, is worth noting. Indeed, the presence of the key of the mediant is significant as it was favoured by composers from the beginning of the nineteenth century:

**Table 4.11: Mediant Relations in Prelude no.11**

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	1–12	F major
A'	13–27	F major, <b>d minor</b> (14), <b>F major</b> (18), <b>d minor</b> (20), <b>F major</b> (23)
A''	27–45	F major (23), <b>f minor</b> (36), <b>A flat major</b> (39), B flat major (43)
B	45–57	B flat major, F major (53)
C	57–70	F major, <b>B flat major</b> (63), <b>d minor</b> (67), F major (69)
D	71–85	F major, b flat minor (75), F major (77)

Perhaps not the most musically engaging of Stanford's preludes, this work certainly demonstrates the composer's ability to take small cells with both a melodic and intervallic purpose and develop them in different guises in order to achieve a sense of motivic and intervallic cohesion.

## 4.12 Prelude no.12



Bold and charging double octaves along with full chords and reminiscent of Brahms, lead off Stanford's big-boned martial-sounding twelfth prelude. Sharing a similar robust character to the seventh prelude, it is indeed orchestral in style, as suggested by Porte.<sup>94</sup> While he also notes that the twelfth prelude 'is closely relating to no.7, being bold and stirring', he comments on the composer's use of the opening rhythm at the end in both preludes; however, Stanford commonly repeated elements of the opening ideas of the preludes in the closing bars.<sup>95</sup> Of greater significance are the composer's intentions in composing this work and the character implied throughout. While a number of preludes open with a thinner texture, only filling out to include octaves later in the work (Prelude no.9, for example), here Brahmsian octaves are established at the beginning as opposed to being developed later on and set up the charging character from the outset.

Although the seventh prelude has a triple time signature and Prelude no.12 is written in common time, both have military overtones. Heroic in sound and marked *f*, the opening three bars of this prelude confidently introduce the exciting rhythm which uses lower auxiliaries to decorate tonic harmony. The consistent dramatic presence of the lower auxiliaries which function as anticipations propel the music forward and it is significant that even the final chord is decorated in this way:<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

<sup>95</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 126.

<sup>96</sup> The lower auxiliaries are marked with \* on Example 4.12.1.



## Example 4.12.1. Stanford Prelude no.12, bars 1–7



Coupled with the chords in the opening phrase, an arch-like pattern of five notes in octaves which portrays a martial sound, motif x, is introduced in the right hand at bar 2, and then reappears in different guises throughout the prelude. The combination of the block chords and octaves with the quaver figure and descending scale-like ideas is suggestive of military music.

After its initial statement in the opening phrase, the martial quaver idea opens each of the remaining sections and closes sections 1, 2 and 3; it is even heard in augmentation in the closing bars of the prelude, thereby adding a tight structural unity to the prelude and the use of short motivic fragments coupled with motif x make the prelude highly memorable. In each section motif x forms a type of ostinato bassline, above which are heard the familiar opening rhythm and melody decorated with lower auxiliaries (bars 9–11, 14–15, and 30–37). Always appearing in either double or triple octaves — in an attempt to emphasise the martial feeling — when they are accompanied by sustained tonic harmonies oscillating with modal seventh chords in root position harmonies this engenders change in texture of the accompanimental figure (bars 30–37).

Stanford's references to his homeland were not uncommon in his compositions,<sup>97</sup> and the suffusion of modal harmony through the oscillation between tonic harmony and the modal flattened seventh degree in the closing passages suggests a national influence in the writing (bars 30–36):

**Example 4.12.2a. Stanford Prelude no.12, bars 9–15**

<sup>97</sup>

See for example the *Irish Symphony* and *Irish Rhapsodies* nos 1–6.

## Example 4.12.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 30–37

mp

dim.

p

(8)

i bVII i bVII i bVII

i bVII i bVII

i bVII i

A significant appearance of this quaver idea represents a rhythmic displacement of the motif in the bar. Numerous examples are found in this prelude (bars 7–8, 18–19 and 28–29). Many scholars have engaged with the topic of metric displacement in the music of a number of composers including Brahms.<sup>98</sup> In the case of Brahms these displacements are normally resolved at tonally significant points. Here, Stanford metrically resolves the motif at the beginning of the closing section of the piece which is firmly rooted in the tonic:

98

See for example Harold Krebs, 'Some Extensions of the Concepts of Metrical Consonance and Dissonance', *Journal of Music Theory*, 31 (1987), 99–120; Walter Frisch, 'The Shifting Barline: Metrical Displacement in Brahms', in *Brahms Studies*, ed. by George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 139–163; Walter Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Yonatan Malin, 'Metric Displacement Dissonance and Romantic Longing in the German Lied', *Music Analysis*, 25 (2006), 251–288.

**Example 4.12.3. Stanford Prelude no.12, bars 7–8**

Stanford further exploited this motivic displacement idea in a later prelude which also involved an arch-like figure. Introduced in the opening bar of Prelude no.28, the idea recurs with a shift of accent later in the prelude (bars 1–2, 44–45 and 48–49). The presence of this idea in another prelude acts as a unifying feature within the collection and confirms that elements of Stanford's compositional style are evident across the set:

**Example 4.12.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 1–3****Example 4.12.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 44–49**

Interestingly, Prelude no.22 also explored a development of a similar arch-like figure which was introduced in the opening section and returned in the closing bars on a



different beat of the bar, although not creating the same metrical displacement (bars 27–28):

**Example 4.12.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 1–4**



**Example 4.12.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 27–28**



Stanford's displays his command of harmonic language in this prelude. A fluid shift of tonality from C flat major to f minor, for example, is facilitated by an enharmonic change (bars 23–24), while there is a smooth tonicization from F major to its flattened supertonic by means of chromatic shifting (bar 22). Interestingly, a hexachord of the descending melodic minor scale of f minor forms the bassline of the first phrase (bars 1–3), while the second phrase in the bassline continues with the hexachord of the descending scale of D flat major, producing an alternative harmonisation of the initial melody (bars 4–6). Each hexachord concludes with a leap of a third to the key-note of each respective scale reinforcing the tonal clarity:

Example 4.12.6. Stanford: Prelude no.12, bars 1–7



While the prelude begins and ends in f minor, nearly half is in a major key. This continued emphasis on a major tonality in a minor piece is more in keeping with the overall heroic nature. Additionally, a sense of intensity is created through the major harmonic saturation. Through the composer’s significant choice of harmony, this helps to define climactic and cadential points in the music while four short and closely related sections ensure that the tonality is firmly anchored to f minor:

Table 4.12: Predominance of Tonic Harmony in Prelude no.12

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	1–8	<b>f minor</b> , D flat major (6)
B	9–19	D flat major, c minor (15), <b>f minor</b> (19)
C	20–29	F major (20), G flat major (22), C flat major (24), <b>f minor</b> (25), D flat major (26), <b>f minor</b> (27)
D	30–38	<b>f minor</b>

As if not wanting to finish with a note of despair, a dramatic hiatus generates some tension before the composer boldly introduces a tonic chord decorated by its lower auxiliaries to end the prelude resolutely and heroically in a similar fashion to the

opening. Unusually, however, no clear cadence is heard at this point; the last definite reference to a plagal cadence was heard some bars earlier (bars 29–30):

**Example 4.12.7. Stanford Prelude no.12, bars 36–38**

Dramatic Rest

ff

(decorated with lower auxiliaries)

As a miniature, no.12 is valuable as a compositional construction in itself as it has a clear melodic purpose with a depth of feeling. The emphasis on pianistic devices such as double octaves and widely spaced chords which permeate much of the writing, imbues an orchestral timbre similar to that of Brahms, while also making it challenging to perform. As an example of a prelude, there is clearly a combination of different traditions. While the composer relies on Baroque devices such as ostinato and augmentation, the orchestral sound, coupled with distinctive harmonies, suggest a closer link with Romanticism. This is not uncommon in the set as a number of other preludes set up a similar juxtaposition of the two traditions, for example Prelude no.9. While demonstrating his awareness and ability to handle such compositional devices as ostinato and augmentation, Stanford makes his own stamp on the prelude tradition by adding unusual or unexpected twists.

### 4.13 Prelude no.13



With the subtitle ‘In the Woodland’, this is the first of Stanford’s preludes to immediately encourage listeners to conjure up a visual image.<sup>99</sup> Just past the half-way point in the first set of preludes, it seems unusual that the composer would overtly make this suggestion; however, it is not the only one in the set to be given a subtitle. ‘In the Woodland’ is therefore one of the more interesting of the preludes so far presented, as one is more sure of what the composer’s intentions were when composing the piece. As nostalgia features prominently in those works completed late in the composer’s life it is plausible to consider whether this hints at a place of particular importance to the composer. More poignantly, does it recall a location which had particular memories for him from his childhood days in Ireland?

Porte believes that although ‘the presence of the woodland and its birds is impressed on the listener, [...] [it is] solely by the aid of melody and harmony, and not in any way by programme effects.’<sup>100</sup> These bird calls are associated especially with embellishments of the dominant degree in the prevailing tonality. However, melody and harmony alone do not fully portray a woodland scene. It is the deliberate and clever use

<sup>99</sup> See Tables 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 for a list of those preludes which have subtitles.  
<sup>100</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 127.



of embellishments and decorations, along with the use of the full range of the keyboard, which help to create a sense of open space and nature. Even without this picturesque subtitle the listener would automatically be moved to think of such a scene. Dibble too recognizes the pastoral quality of the work and refers to it as a 'Griegian lyric piece.'<sup>101</sup> Stanford also invokes a pastoral idyll in a number of his part songs.<sup>102</sup> While it is widely known that he did not approve of many of the modern compositional techniques being employed by his students, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that Stanford was interested in aspects of the pastoral tradition and absorbed them in his composition.<sup>103</sup>

Looking at Stanford's decision to include one such work in the collection may also be useful in the context of its date of composition. A number of composers found themselves writing in the pastoral tradition in response to the war which was ravaging Europe at the time. The influence of the war is clearly evident in a number of the preludes: the march-like music of some preludes allude to those who went off to war to serve their country (Preludes nos 8 and 22), while others are more of a contemplative and mournful mood, reminiscent perhaps of the futility of war and whose elegiac mood mourns for those who lost their lives (Preludes nos 2 and 22). The representation of the woodland could indeed evoke the English countryside before it was ravaged by war. In

<sup>101</sup> See Dibble in Stanford, *Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).

<sup>102</sup> A number of composers are synonymous with English pastoral music in the first half of the twentieth century: Bliss, Frank Bridge, Butterworth, Elgar, Finzi and Vaughan Williams. Representing a younger generation of composers whose music was being performed more regularly than Stanford's in notable venues across England, they were all English by birth and many had studied at the Royal College of Music in London. In his assessment of composers whom he classifies as being part of the pastoral tradition, Frank Howes describes them as having 'escaped the German bondage of the two previous generations, they have drunk at English springs in the shape of madrigals and folk-song, they have been strengthened by the Bach revival, have been sensitive to English poetry and kept clear of foreign influences (some might say to their loss). See Frank Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance* (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), p. 262. in Eric Saylor, "'It's Not Lambkins Frisking At All": English Pastoral Music and the Great War', *Musical Quarterly*, 91 (2008), 39–59 (p. 39).

<sup>103</sup> Although Stanford was not acknowledged as being part of the English pastoral tradition, his portrayal of Ireland in such works as his orchestral rhapsodies, the *Irish Symphony* and a number of his song cycles demonstrates similar characteristics as those of works with a pastoral topic. Additionally, works falling into this tradition were widely performed in England at the time and would have been inescapable for him as conductor and concert-goer.

his study “‘It’s Not Lambkins Frisking At All’: English Pastoral Music and the Great War’, Eric Saylor identifies the lack of ability by musicologists to describe English pastoral music as a ‘long outstanding problem’ and is concerned that their descriptions of the music ‘often engage in impressionistic generalities about what it allegedly represents or make vague allusions to “the English folksong school” or “national styles”’.<sup>104</sup> Most significant is Saylor’s consideration of one ‘particular manifestation of pastoral music that bears characteristically modern connotations: the artistic response of English composers during the first two decades of the twentieth century to the horrors of the Great War’.<sup>105</sup> This is particularly apt in the case of Stanford’s preludes, due to their date of composition. Vaughan Williams suffered losses during the war and ‘the repercussions of that strife can be heard’ in his Pastoral Symphony.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, Stanford clearly understood a parent’s fear as his son Guy served at the Somme in 1915, only a few short years before the composition of the preludes. Composers at this time including Vaughan Williams were fearful of the impact which war was having on their life, fears which Saylor believes represent a modernist composer, driven by the need to make sense of an alienating post-war world while armed only with pre-war artistic experience.<sup>107</sup> Although not all pastoral works engage with the futility and despair of war, it is plausible to suggest that given the circumstances and date of composition for these preludes that the war influenced composers in their works. Saylor suggests that ‘antimodern’ music is a reactionary mishmash of escapism, sentimentality, and nostalgia’ and directs the reader to a number of examples.<sup>108</sup> To borrow Geoffrey

<sup>104</sup> Saylor, ‘It’s Not Lambkins Frisking At All’, pp. 39–59, p. 39.

<sup>105</sup> Saylor, ‘It’s Not Lambkins Frisking At All’, p. 41. See Section 3.14 for details on the impact of the war on Stanford and his compositions.

<sup>106</sup> Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Symphony No.3, ‘Pastoral’* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1924).

<sup>107</sup> See Ursula Vaughan Williams, RVW, 132 in Saylor, ‘It’s Not Lambkins Frisking At All’, p. 49 and Saylor, ‘It’s Not Lambkins Frisking At All’, p. 49.

<sup>108</sup> Saylor, ‘It’s Not Lambkins Frisking At All’, p. 40. For representative examples see Hughes and Stradling, *The English Musical Renaissance*, Music and Society Series, eds Peter Martin and Tia DeNora (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 99, 191, 208, 265 & 269. It is also present in other surveys of English music; for examples see Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance*, pp. 258–261 & 270, Peter J. Pirie, *The English Musical Renaissance: 20th Century*

Chew's words the prelude could be a 'symbol of the ideal to which the artist vainly aspires' and 'the idealized surroundings may only heighten the sense of loss'.<sup>109</sup>

A number of key characteristics are representative of the English pastoral style. These include: a compound metre, a slow tempo, a drone bass, simple melodic contour which is suggestive of the folksong tradition, impressionistic textures, use of modal scales or modally inflected harmonies, rhapsodic thematic material, limited dynamic range and smoothly flowing rhythms.<sup>110</sup> While Stanford's prelude does not epitomise English pastoralism, the atmosphere and soundworld created and sustained throughout certainly alludes to this tradition. Geoffrey Chew recognizes that the pastoral not only 'depicts the characters and scenes of rural life', but that it is also 'expressive of its atmosphere'.<sup>111</sup> The impressionistic and rhapsodic nature suggested from the outset in this prelude immediately sets this work apart from the others presented thus far in the set and acts as an interesting departure at the mid-point in the set. Additionally, a sense of freedom which prevails in this work suggests a momentary deviation from traditional structures by the composer; it is music which epitomises English pastoralism, both stylistically and atmospherically. This prelude demonstrates a number of the key characteristics of pastoral music: the 'Andante' tempo, simple melodic contour, folksong-like modal inflections, use of pentatonic scale, fragments of melody passed around the registers of the piano, and the tranquil nature and soft dynamic all suggest a

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*British Composers and Their Works* (London: Gollancz, 1979), pp. 46–48, 109–110, 120 & 131–132; Michael Trend, *The Music Makers: The English Musical Renaissance From Elgar to Britten* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1985), pp. 177–178 & 192.

<sup>109</sup> Geoffrey Chew, 'Pastoral', in *GMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/40091>> [accessed 26 July 2009]. Chew cites Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* as one such example.

<sup>110</sup> Stanford had an interest in Irish folk music and he is noted for his use of Irish folk material in his compositions. In addition to writing an article on the topic of folk song and nationality, Stanford compiled *The New National Song Book* which was a collection of the folk-songs, carols and rounds as suggested by the Board of Education in 1905. See Stanford, *National Song Book*. See also Charles Villiers Stanford, 'Some Thoughts Concerning Folk-song and Nationality', *Musical Quarterly*, I (1915), 232–245.

<sup>111</sup> Geoffrey Chew, 'Pastoral', in *GMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/40091>> [accessed 26 July 2009].

rural simplicity in the music. The hint of the English countryside or reminiscences of an Irish landscape and an idyllic paradise free from the destruction and anguish of war is poignantly portrayed through the musical elements.<sup>112</sup>

A notable example of a piece written in the pastoral tradition is Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*, as the solo violin clearly depicts the lark in flight.<sup>113</sup> Hughes and Stradling claim that in *The Lark Ascending* 'the listener is meant to find a commingling of the spirits of liberty and community.'<sup>114</sup> It would be imprudent to claim that Stanford's prelude is as akin to the pastoral tradition as this work by Vaughan Williams; however, as each of the composer's forty-eight preludes exhibits a range of features and characteristics of his compositional style and influences, it is plausible to suggest that here he attempted to include an aspect of the English tradition in his collection.

The rhapsodic nature of this prelude, suggested by the fleeting arch-like figures introduced in the opening phrase immediately evokes the freedom and expanse of the countryside. In addition, the filigree-like writing incorporating trills, auxiliary notes, acciaccaturas and appoggiaturas, all of which recur throughout the work, embellishing both short and long notes, also delicately suggest bird-like sounds.<sup>115</sup>

Pentatonic scale-like ideas feature prominently in the melodic material of the opening bars of Prelude no.13 (bars 1–12) and, after a number of brief episodes and

<sup>112</sup> See for example Stanford, *Irish Skies*. The text includes the following: 'In London here the streets are grey, and grey the sky above; I wish I were in Ireland to see the skies I love Pearl cloud, buff cloud, the colour of a dove'.

<sup>113</sup> Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The Lark Ascending* (London: Oxford University Press, 1925).

<sup>114</sup> Hughes and Stradling, *The English Musical Renaissance*, p. 191.

<sup>115</sup> Stanford was not the first composer to depict birds in their piano music; a notable example includes Daquin's *Le Coucou* (1735) from Louis-Claude Daquin, *Pièces De Clavecin* (London: Faber Music Limited, 1982). Other examples include Edvard Grieg, *Lyric Pieces*, op.54 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1897); Franz Liszt, *Deux Légendes: St François d'Assise: La Prédication Aux Oiseaux*, S.175 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1927). Grieg's 'Little Bird' is no.4 from Grieg's *Lyric Pieces*.



references to this sound throughout the work, an explicit sense of pentatonicism recurs more definitely in the closing section of the prelude. The pentatonic elements hint at modal harmony throughout and the first change in harmony does not take place until bar 10, forming an inverted perfect cadence which is then repeated. While it could be read that bar 3 is in fact an enrichment of the tonic with an added sixth (marked on following example), taken as a whole, however, the opening melody hints at a pentatonic soundworld. Such added sixths were commonly used by Dvořák as a means of enhancing the harmonic sound of his music:<sup>116</sup>

**Example 4.13.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 1–13**

Andante

1b with added 6th

1b with added 6th

1b with added 6th

<sup>116</sup>

See bar 179 in the first movement of Antonín Dvořák, *String Quartet No. 12*, op. 96 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1896). See also bars 5–16 in the finale of the same work.

## Example 4.13.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 53–64

The musical score for Example 4.13.1b, Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 53–64, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 53–56) features a right-hand melody with a dashed line and asterisks indicating a specific interval, and a left-hand accompaniment. The second system (bars 57–64) continues the right-hand melody and includes a 'rall.' marking. Annotations below the staves include 'Ic with added 6th', 'Ib with added 6th', and 'I with added 6th'.

The lack of modality in this piece is striking despite his engagement with modal harmony which colours the music through the use of the flattened seventh (bars 51 and 52), while tonal interest in the opening section of the prelude is limited to a momentary reference to the relative minor (bars 16–17) and the sharpened fourth (bars 20–21).

In addition to the hints at pentatonicism at the opening, parallel sixths also feature prominently, initially presented in a descending fashion (bars 1–3, 4–5, 6–7 etc.) and later as an ascending scale (bars 39–40). Although presented in a different context, these passages immediately remind the listener of the opening of Preludes nos 6 and 11, while similar passages of sixths were heard in the left-hand music of Prelude no.10. Initially heard as open sixths, these are further developed and filled out to provide a fuller underlay to the decorative and delicate writing in the upper strand (bars 19–20 and 43–44). The ideas are not sustained here, however, as each chordal passage is interrupted by a brief interjection of earlier material incorporating short decorative gestures. These fragments hint at an impressionistic texture as the ideas are short and fleeting and add to the rhapsodic and fluid nature of the writing. Interestingly, the final appearance of the sixths demand a role reversal of hands as the parallel sixths, heard in

the right hand, fall from the mediant to the tonic, recalling their initial appearance (bars 62–64). These alterations to the initial representation outline Stanford's ability to vary the handling of the material, while their presence at the end of the prelude lend unity to the prelude.

This parallel movement is reminiscent of the parallel chords which are prominent in piano music by Debussy at the turn of the twentieth century, one such example being the French composer's tenth prelude in his first set of twelve preludes, *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, published in 1910. This link may be coincidental rather than deliberate considering Stanford's opinions on Debussy's music.<sup>117</sup> Stanford's use of parallel movement permeates much of the texture of the remainder of the prelude and provides a fitting contrast to the fleeting rippling figures. Indeed, an unusual progression of parallel perfect fifths adds to this movement (bars 42–43). Further contrast is achieved through the juxtaposition of a wide variety of rhythms, irregular divisions of notes, rests and embellishments in the right hand which enhance the melody with the simple chordal accompaniment below (bars 14–25):

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<sup>117</sup>

See opening bars from Debussy's *La Cathédrale Engloutie* from Debussy, *Préludes*. See Sections 3.11.2 and 3.11.3 for a discussion on Stanford's familiarity with Debussy's music and his views in relation to Debussy's music.

**Example 4.13.2. Stanford: Preludes no.13, bars 14–25**

These chords, which now include a quicker rate of harmonic change than the opening music, help to maintain a steady pulse in this work, while further elements of contrast are heralded in the third section (bars 26–38) as a more chordal homophonic design is introduced which continues into the fourth section (bars 39–50). The combination of short bursts with brief chordal ideas (bars 26–64), continues to the end of the prelude, as the music passes through some related keys: C flat major (bars 44–45) and D flat major (bars 46–47) before returning to the tonic key:



**Example 4.13.3. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 26–38**

The use of pedals contributes to the harmonic stability and the tonal organisation: the presence of the dominant pedal to accompany the opening left-hand descending idea introduces tension, while the return of this material, heard below a tonic pedal in the final section of the work, denotes a sense of closure to the work (bars 51–52):

**Example 4.13.4. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars 51–53**

With so much emphasis in this prelude on tonic and dominant harmony the use of embellishments appearing on these degrees is of special significance. Furthermore, there are three unorthodox uses of a perfect cadence in this work, each heard in a different context and each of which subverts the completion of the cadence while also highlighting his penchant for the tonic chord in second inversion (bars 27–28, 50–51

and 62–63). The continued oscillation between dominant and tonic harmony continues to the end before the prelude closes with a final reminder of the descending parallel sixth figure heard three times (bars 56, 58 and 62–64), announcing that the prelude has indeed come full circle:

**Example 4.13.5. Stanford: Prelude no.13, bars /56–64**

The image displays a musical score for the final section of Stanford's Prelude no. 13, specifically bars 56 through 64. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems of staves. The first system covers bars 56 to 58, and the second system covers bars 59 to 64. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A *pp* (pianissimo) marking is present in bar 56. A *rall.* (rallentando) marking is present in bar 62. The score concludes with a final chord in bar 64.

## 4.14 Prelude no.14



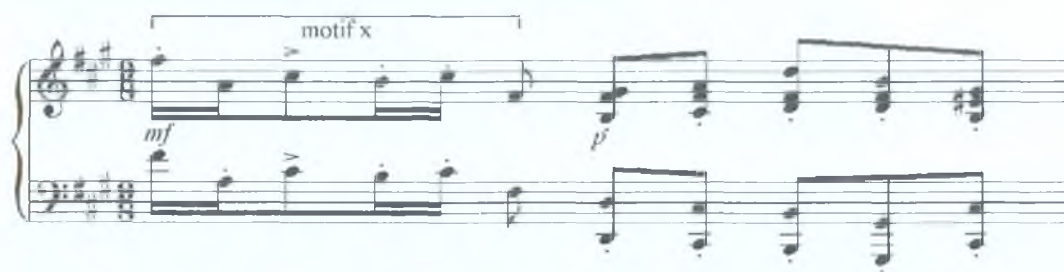
The fourteenth prelude of op.163 is the first and only prelude from the first set of preludes composed in 9/8 time.<sup>118</sup> It is the shortest of the preludes, with only twenty-three bars of music, and, while not as short as some of those preludes by Chopin or Scriabin, this concise and succinct prelude clearly exhibits an ‘epigrammatic quality’ as noted by Dibble.<sup>119</sup>

In its early reception this prelude was critically written off by Porte as he claimed that it ‘is not very interesting on the whole’, although he does compliment the concluding passage in the work, observing the striking clashing octaves.<sup>120</sup> Why Porte was dismissive about this prelude is unclear; when examined as both a single prelude and as part of the set, the piece has a number of interesting qualities to be noted and demonstrates the composer’s clever use and exploitation of one short figure to achieve a sense of motivic cohesion. The triadic-based motif x is introduced in unison in the opening bar and forms the main building block of this prelude:

<sup>118</sup> Prelude nos 29 and 45 are also in 9/8 time.

<sup>119</sup> See Dibble in Stanford, *Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).

<sup>120</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 127.



The use of motif x in its full form or in a fragmented version in sequential development (bars 3, 6, 9–10, 20 and 21), heard as three-fold statements of the motif (bar 12) coupled with small changes to the intervallic shape of the motif facilitate smooth modulations and make the miniature memorable to the listener. Indeed, the unison octaves of motif x contrast with the chordal response of the second half of the opening bar.

116



**Example 4.14.2. Stanford: Prelude no.14, bars 16–19**

ostinato-like bassline

Decorative chromatic colouring features prominently in the form of appoggiaturas (bars 8–14 and 16–19). Further chromatic interest is gained through the familiar progression  $\sharp 4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  which concludes the first section (bar 8). Additionally, Stanford's penchant for descending chromatic scales spanning a fourth makes a single appearance in this prelude (bars 3–4). Combining this idea with the ostinato figure highlights his familiarity with and commitment to using traditional compositional devices, while also demonstrating his creative facility by showing how a number of musical devices including repetition, alternation on a number of different levels (bars 8 and 21) and development (bar 12) can fit together in such a relatively short piece. Despite its brevity and focus on one primary motif, Stanford adds drama and excitement to the piece through the bravura ending of double octaves:

## Example 4.14.3. Stanford: Prelude no.14, bar 20–23

Bar 20: *f* *sf* *cresc.*  
Chord symbols: *i* *#IV°7* *V7* *i* *#IV°7* *V7*

Bar 21: *ff* *sf* *8va*

Bar 22: *ff* *sf*

Bar 23: *i* (decorated with lower auxiliaries)

## 4.15 Prelude no.15



This monothematic prelude, with a scherzo-like character is one of the more light-hearted compositions in the set. As in the preceding prelude, two contrasting ideas are introduced at the opening which frame the piece. The humorous nature of the work which is set up by the off-the-beat chords is acknowledged by Porte who noted that it ‘is singularly contented and jovial in character’.<sup>121</sup> With dance-like qualities, the work is more of an upbeat march than earlier preludes in the set suggestive of marching music and evincing a certain child-like innocence to it. Dibble describes the work as a *Moment Musical*; Rodmell goes one step further to suggest its likeness to Schubert’s *Moment Musical* no.3 op.94 in F minor.<sup>122</sup> The prelude certainly has similarities with Schubert’s piano work: in particular its time-signature, oom-pah bassline and comparable contour of the melodic line. More interesting perhaps is the allusion at the opening of the third of Schubert’s *Ellens Dritter Gesang*, op.52 no.6 more commonly referred to as *Ave Maria*.<sup>123</sup> Although a different mood and tempo marking are detailed by Stanford, these do not disguise the discrete reference to the harmonic structure of the work:

<sup>121</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 127.

<sup>122</sup> Franz Schubert, *Six Moments Musicaux*, D.780, op.94 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1888). See Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 321.

<sup>123</sup> Franz Schubert, *Ellens Gesang*, D.838, op.52 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1894).

## Example 4.15.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 1–4

Allegretto grazioso

I    #IV<sup>7</sup>b    Ic    V<sup>7</sup>    I

Example 4.15.1b. Schubert: *Ellens Dritter Gesang III* D839 op.52 no.6, bars 3–4

A    ve    Ma    ri    a!

I    #IV<sup>7</sup>b    Ic    V<sup>7</sup>    vi

Of interest is that Schubert's *Ave Maria* received special mention in Stanford's article on Joseph Robinson where he noted that Robinson's performance of the work 'indelibly impressed'.<sup>124</sup> While it may be accidental, the inclusion of an obvious reference to the harmonic structure of this well-known Schubert song is not surprising as Stanford had

124

Charles Villiers Stanford, 'Joseph Robinson', in *Studies and Memories* (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1908), pp. 117–127 (p. 120). It is interesting to note the strong references to Schubert throughout the collection of preludes. Stanford's knowledge of Schubert's music was enhanced during a trip to Vienna in 1881. During this visit Stanford undertook some archival work in the library of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde helping Grove with some queries he had in relation to a number of Schubert manuscripts in preparation for an article which Grove was writing for the *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Although Stanford was unsuccessful in his search for a lost symphony, this examination of material in the library proved very useful in his interest in and reverence for the Austrian composer's music. This intimate knowledge of Schubert's music is evident in Stanford's interesting account of Schubert and his music in *A History of Music*, pp. 261–265, a book which Stanford co-authored with Cecil Forsyth in 1916. Stanford only wrote five out of the sixteen chapters in the book while Cecil Forsyth also compiled the list of names and the index in the book. Further evidence of the impression which Schubert's music made on Stanford is clearly outlined in his treatise on musical composition and the advice which he gave to young composers. He commented that 'the best possible studies in rhythm are the songs of Schubert, which provide an amazing series of all sorts and kinds of figure in a short space'. See Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 27. Additionally, Stanford commented on Schubert's musical organism noting that he was 'bubbling with invention'; See Stanford, *Pages From an Unwritten Diary*, p. 271. Greene recounted a time when Stanford looked at a newly composed song by the young composer C.S. Lang. Stanford's comments were less than favourable and in a fit of fury, threw the manuscript into the corner and condemned the composition. He did suggest, however, that Lang study some Schubert. See Greene, *Stanford*, p. 104.



included a quotation from Schubert's 'An Die Musik'<sup>125</sup> in his *Ode to Discord*, a satirical work on the modernisms of the day, earlier in 1908. The lengthy analytical remarks preceding the score frequently refer to the music of Schubert.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, the use of such a quotation is not surprising when one considers the inclusion of this song in his treatise on musical composition as a melody which has 'a bass as perfect for its purpose as the theme itself'.<sup>127</sup> It seems unlikely that Stanford could have escaped the influence of Schubert as the music of Stanford's composition teacher, Reinecke, was characteristically Schubertian in their lyricism. Reinecke's piano output includes a number of works written in simple forms which were popular at the time, many of which have charming melodies, and he was known as a master of the so-called 'Hausmusik'.<sup>128</sup>

Stanford's dance-inspired character piece evinces a scherzo-like spirit which is aided by the rhythm, contour, attack, vamping accompaniment and unpredicted harmonies, all of which are initiated at the outset. As a means of variety, the vamping accompaniment is played in both hands, sometimes shared as an exchange between the hands, is heard in all but three bars so that a clear and definite pulse is maintained throughout. This rhythmic consistency forms a solid rhythmic underlay, adding to the dance-like sense of the piece. Interestingly, the initial walking-bass idea returns in the closing bars and functions like an epilogue as it recalls the opening (bars 1–4) (Example 4.15.1a):

<sup>125</sup> Franz Schubert, *An Die Musik*, D.547 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1894).

<sup>126</sup> Stanford, *Ode to Discord*. (There are no page numbers in the preface).

<sup>127</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 39.

<sup>128</sup> Reinhold Sietz, 'Reinecke Carl', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23128>> [accessed 6 August 2009].

## Example 4.15.2. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 59–67

Return of opening walking bass idea

Final return of opening notes

The jocular-like spirit is aided by an archetypical Schubertian change in harmonic direction (bars 10–12) and unusual departures from the tonal centre of the work (bars 13–14, 41–48, 52–53 and 55–56) which provide for an appealing harmonic palette where tonicizations and modulations move to the flat side of the fundamental key (marked in Table 4.13). Interestingly, Stanford did commend Schubert as one of the best composers of scherzos while also referring to the composer as a genius:<sup>129</sup>

**Table 4.13 Tonicizations and Modulations to the Flat Side of the Key in Prelude no.15**

Section	Bar-Number	Tonality
A	1–8	G major
A'	9–17	G major, <b>B flat major</b> (12), <b>d minor</b> (14), G major (15), D major (16)
B	18–25	D major, <b>a minor</b> (19), G major (23)
C	26–37	<b>C major</b> (26), G major (30)
D	38–47	C major, G major (39), <b>c minor</b> (41), <b>B flat major</b> (41), <b>d minor</b> (42), <b>F major</b> (47)
E	48–58	<b>F major</b> , <b>d minor</b> (49), <b>a minor</b> (50), <b>F major</b> (52), <b>d minor</b> (53), <b>a minor</b> (54), <b>F major</b> (55), G major (57)
A''	59–67	G major

<sup>129</sup>

Stanford, *Musical Composition*, pp. 77–79. Also included in this list were Dvořák and Beethoven. Further comments are made about Schubert's chamber compositions and a range of his songs. See pp. 136–138 & 140 for example. See also Stanford, 'The Composition of Music', p. 57 for a further reference to Schubert's genius.

This was not the first of Stanford's works to exhibit Schubert's influence. Dibble has noted the influence of Schubert's music in a number of works, the earliest being 'The Minstrel's Song'. Rodmell also identifies Schubertian traits.<sup>130</sup> While Schubert's lieder were popular in British nineteenth-century musical circles, Stanford was certainly familiar with Schubert's music having performed, conducted and attended performances of his works.<sup>131</sup>

While the harmony tends to gravitate towards the subdominant side of the key in a similar vein to Schubert, a number of important harmonic features are noted. The progression #IV – V – I has been noted for its cadential properties throughout the set; here #IV<sup>7</sup> including #IV<sup>o7</sup> permeates much of the harmonic writing with a resolution to the tonic in each position. Both the root position and first inversion of #IV<sup>7</sup> are sandwiched between two tonic chords in second inversion (bars 30–32 and 34–36) being a variant of the opening chordal progression. Interestingly, the sharpened fourth degree is the only chromatic note in the first phrase. Used for modulatory purposes on occasion here, it provides colour to the writing:

<sup>130</sup> Dibble states that 'the dialogue between piano and voice, the harmonic piquancy and melodic simplicity all point to Schubert as a predominant influence'. See Dibble, *Stanford*, p. 34. Furthermore, Dibble suggests that in Stanford's waltzes for piano (1876), he was drawing on the tradition of the waltz and Ländler cycles of Schubert among other composers; Dibble, *Stanford*, p. 78. In the Magnificat of Morning, Evening and Communion Service in G op.81 Dibble suggests that the 'organ accompaniment immediately recalls the imagery of Schubert's 'Gretchen am Spinnrade''; See Dibble, *Stanford*, p. 352. Rodmell, *Stanford*, pp. 60–61, 269, 375 and 378–380.

<sup>131</sup> During his travels in Leipzig in 1876/1877 Stanford heard Schubert's opera 'Häusliche Krieg', Schubert's 'Great' C major symphony was performed at Cambridge in 1881, Stanford had accompanied Plunkett Greene in a performance which included songs by Schubert in Cambridge as part of the 'Wednesday Pops' series on 14 November 1887, the Bach Choir gave the first English hearing of Schubert's *Offertorium* and *Tantum Ergo* in 1891, while Stanford conducted Schubert's Ninth Symphony at Leeds in 1897. Schubert's music was also represented at Leeds in 1901.

**Example 4.15.3. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 1–4**

*Allegretto grazioso*

*p*

#IV<sup>7</sup> b

#IV<sup>7</sup> b

While there is much repetition in this prelude, off-beat chords (bars 1–4) contrasted with a flowing and more elegant line (bars 5–8) add to the humour of the work. Chromatic changes (compare bars 2 and 11) and intervallic expansion and contraction of the main thematic line maintain melodic interest in the work (compare bars 5, 26, 42 and 63). This focus on chromaticism is deepened through the non-diatonic descent in the upper strand of the right hand which briefly adds an extra layer to this mostly homophonic-style prelude (bars 48–51):

**Example 4.15.4. Stanford: Prelude no.15, bars 48–51**

Chromatic descent spanning a perfect 4th

*mp*

This light-hearted prelude once again displays Stanford's reliance on and development of small ideas while providing subtle references to Schubertian traits.



## 4.16 Prelude no.16



After the strict and regimented rhythm of the preceding prelude, the sixteenth prelude imbues a spirit of freedom from the outset, not least because of the marking *con Fantasia* at the head of the score. The presence of this musical indication is an interesting addition to a work which explores a range of styles, moods and characters. While this may have been a typical performance direction requesting the performer to play the piece with imagination, the design and choice of melodic material also suggest that the composer was drawn towards the idea of composing the work in the style of a fantasia.

One definition of the fantasy describes a piece which is of quasi-improvisatory character with several sections in different tempos and textures.<sup>132</sup> During the Baroque period the fantasia, prelude or toccata, three similar improvisatory pieces,

<sup>132</sup>

John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music: An Historical Survey of Music for Harpsichord and Piano* (Courier Dover Publications, 1972), p. 431. Variants in spelling include *fantasia*, *phantasie*, *fantasia* and *phantasy*.

featured prominently preceding fugues in keyboard suites. On occasion the fantasia included elements from and took on the style of both prelude and toccata.<sup>133</sup> Interestingly, Stanford has included a fantasia-style piece in his set of preludes, thus forging the link between these two genres.

A number of composers experimented with the fantasia, with whom Stanford would have been familiar: these include Bach, Chopin, Haydn, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Schubert and Schumann. Although early fantasias were short, by the mid-to late nineteenth century the fantasia offered composers 'greater freedom in the use of thematic material and virtuoso writing' and grew into larger compositions.<sup>134</sup> Additionally, Schumann used the general title of *Phantasiestück* (fantasy piece) to denote 'his flights of fancy, his epigrammatic flashes of inspiration'.<sup>135</sup> Stanford clearly was familiar with this style of pieces as he composed *Charivari in Dresden, Fünf Phantasis-stücke* for piano duet in 1875; so that his sixteenth prelude was not his first example of a fantasy-style piece for piano while he had also completed some fantasias for organ.<sup>136</sup>

In terms of its fantasia-like qualities the prelude presents a number of features. It is not the first prelude to be described as being fantasy-like: Bach's Prelude

<sup>133</sup> Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music*, p. 45. See also Eugene Helm, 'Fantasia', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/40048>> [accessed 4 August 2009]. Other genres included capriccio, invention, variation, toccata and sonata movement.

<sup>134</sup> William Drabkin, 'Fantasia', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/40048>> [accessed 4 August 2009]. Virtuoso pieces also emerged which were based on popular themes – indeed a number were written on Irish folk melodies; one such work was Mendelssohn's *Irish Fantasy* opus 15 – which was based on 'The Last Rose of Summer'. This was not the only fantasia by Mendelssohn; his opus 28 was *Fantasy in F sharp minor*, a three-movement work. Schubert, Schumann and Beethoven followed a similar plan with their fantasy pieces including Beethoven's Sonata opus 27, no.2 in C sharp minor '*Sonata quasi una fantasia*'.

<sup>135</sup> Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music*, p. 216. Some examples by Schumann include: Robert Schumann, *Phantasie*, op.17 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1881). See also Schumann *Phantasiestücke*.

<sup>136</sup> See for example, Charles Villiers Stanford, *Fantasia and Fugue*, op.103 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1907); Charles Villiers Stanford, *Three Preludes and Fugues for the Organ*, op.193 (London: Novello, 1923).

in c minor from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, has been noted as fantasy-like in its design.<sup>137</sup> Stanford's prelude work is also suggestive of an improvisatory style, and although a certain freeness is evident, the work is clearly based on a formal structural plan. Flourishes permeate much of the melodic writing in the opening three sections of Stanford's prelude (bars 1–24) and return in a more condensed form in the final section (bars 33–43). Framing the most sustained melodic section of the piece allows for the 'repeated hearing of the free music' within a structured plan.<sup>138</sup> These flourishes, using irregular note-groupings, lend an improvisatory nature to the work, and are reminiscent of the early organ toccatas of the Italian composer Frescobaldi as well as the opening of Czerny's *Systematic Introduction to Improvisation on the Pianoforte*.<sup>139</sup> This character is not sustained, however, with the departure to a more sensitive and peaceful contrasting section (bars 25–32). Although there is a certain amount of freedom generated through the variety of irregular groupings, a clearly defined formal sense is imparted in this work as the overall mood, character, melodic line and tonality suggests an arching ternary form, with the middle section (bars 25–32) featuring only major keys, although the first two sections are each subdivided in two, producing five sections in total. Additionally, Stanford's use of tonality is quite conventional in this prelude, with the music only modulating to nearly related keys, apart from the oscillations between the key of the submediant E flat major to f minor and its relative major, A flat, providing harmonic colouring on the flat side of the key. Stanford generally avoids the keys of subdominant and dominant, here preferring their relative majors:

<sup>137</sup> Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music*, p. 133.

<sup>138</sup> Carew notes that 'the fantasy is the quintessential nineteenth-century expression of the *extempore* enshrined in the repeatable. The aim is to convey the impression of a free improvisation but in a manner that will allow for repeated hearings and playings as with other "normal" music. Thus the piece is founded on some formal plan'. See Carew, *The Mechanical Muse*, p. 451.

<sup>139</sup> Carl Czerny, *A Systematic Introduction to Improvisation on the Pianoforte*, ed. by Alice L. Mirchell, Opus 200 (New York: Longman, 1983).

**Table 4.14: Shifting Key Changes in Prelude no.16**

Section	Bar-Number	Tonality
A	1–8	g minor, B flat major (6)
B	9–16	g minor, E flat major (11), A flat major (12), <b>E flat major</b> (13), <b>f minor</b> (13), <b>E flat major</b> (14), <b>f minor</b> (15), <b>E flat major</b> (15)
C	/17–24	<b>f minor</b> , g minor (19), F major (20), E flat major (20), g minor (21)
D	/25–32	B flat major, F major (26), E flat major (27), B flat major (28), F major (30), B flat major (31)
E	33–43	B flat major, g minor (35), E flat major (35), B flat major (36), F major (38), g minor (38)

The dominant is exploited in a different fashion as it features prominently in the melodic material. The opening four-bar phrase, for example, involves much decoration on the dominant note, and is supported predominantly by tonic and dominant harmony.

The style of the opening bears the hallmarks of a slow introduction. The introductory ‘lead-in’ heralds the improvisatory quality. Although the music is written out for the performer, the flourishes contrasted with full chords enable the performer to assess the instrument’s touch and sonority by alternating these two contrasting aspects of keyboard performance. The range explored at the opening allows the performer to explore the different registers of the instrument, while stress marks and dynamic markings demonstrate the changing sonorities of the instrument. Coupled with the multiple modulations, Stanford’s fantasia is reminiscent of both J.S. Bach and C.P.E. Bach. The elegiac sound of this opening section coupled with the heavy chords which avoid a downbeat suggests concealed funeral references, as if symbolising a funeral cortège. Indeed, the succeeding section shares a similar lightness to the trio of Chopin’s ‘March funèbre’.<sup>140</sup> While the opening passage in Stanford’s prelude bears many of the hallmarks of an introduction, the music which it introduces is short; however, the end of

<sup>140</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Marche Funèbre*, op.72 no.2 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1879).



the improvisatory passage is marked with a pause as if to signify a new section; indeed, it is the only section in the work to be written using major tonalities exclusively. Only eight bars in length, this middle section explores ideas utilized in the introductory passage. For example, the progression  $i\ 6/4\ 5/3$  heard at the close of the opening section (bar 24) appears in the second phrase of the middle section (bar 29 in Example 4.16.1), while similar contours are shared between the two sections (bars 14–15 and 25–26), despite a dissimilar context and rhythm. Notwithstanding the connection such introductory passages and the testing of an instrument have with the Baroque period, Porte suggests that the work is akin to an Irish lament due to the expressive sadness of the opening.<sup>141</sup> A similar sound is evoked in the second movement of the Clarinet Sonata with its subtitle ‘Caoine’ and in the Lento passage in the Finale of Act 1 in *Shamus O’Brien*.<sup>142</sup> However, much more than the opening suggests a hint of Irishness: the central section with its warm-hearted lyricism is reminiscent of an Irish melody or lament (bars 25–30) and the contour of a number of Irish folk melodies. Although it has not been possible to locate an Irish source upon which Stanford’s melody could be based, it is worth noting that a number of composers wrote fantasias on well-known Irish melodies:<sup>143</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 127.

<sup>142</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Sonata for Clarinet (or Viola) and Pianoforte*, op.129 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1919).

<sup>143</sup> One such example is Mendelssohn’s *Irish Fantasy* opus 15.

## Example 4.16.1. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /25–32



Although the composition suggests a number of influences, the prelude is clearly the work of an assured composer, and a number of compositional devices utilized in earlier preludes recur, namely fondness for sequences and some unifying devices. For example, a number of sequences infuse the writing (bars 5–6, /9–12 and 16–20) which help to move the music forward, both tonally and registrally. The particular sequence in f minor (bars 16–19) recalls similar melodic material from earlier works: Preludes nos 7 and 9.<sup>144</sup> Interestingly, this sequential process is extended as a descending four-note idea is heard three times as the music passes through a cycle of fifth harmonies, unified by a descending chromatic line in the lower strand of the right hand, before a return to the home key is defined at bar 21 with a Brahmsian Augmented 6<sup>th</sup> to ib progression:

<sup>144</sup>

See Prelude no.7 bars 18–19, 20–21, 24–25 and 26–27 and Prelude no.9 bars 18 and 19.

**Example 4.16.2. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /20–21**

Aug 6th ib

A further sequential passage is heard three times in the final section, producing perfect cadences in B flat major, g minor and E flat major respectively (bars /35–36). The tonal goal of this passage is further strengthened by the descending hexachord in E flat major in the bassline:

**Example 4.16.3. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /35–36**

Bb: V<sup>13</sup>d      Ib      g: V<sup>13</sup>d      i      Eb: V<sup>13</sup>d      Ib

Descending hexachord of E flat major

From here a strong feeling takes over the prelude as the music appears to descend gradually down the piano until the opening note of the initial right-hand melody is reached at bar 40 giving a sense of rest and arrival to the work.

Like many of the earlier pieces in this set, Stanford's favoured progression,  $\#4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  makes several varied appearances (bars 8 and 16) while his keenness for the number three features once more, here at different registral pitches. A turn is heard three times, an octave higher each time (bar 16), acting as a link bar to a significant sequential passage in the work:

**Example 4.16.4. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bar 16**

The final threefold statement in the piece, involving a turn on the pitch of the first note, answered by oscillating supertonic and tonic chords, suggests that closure is imminent (bars 41–42). However, unexpected triumphant tonic chords rhythmically not dissimilar to the ending of the seventh prelude bring this essay in fantasy-writing to a dramatic close:

**Example 4.16.5. Stanford: Prelude no.16, bars /40–43**

ii<sup>7</sup>c   i                      ii<sup>7</sup>c   ic                      ii<sup>7</sup>b   i

This piece is an interesting addition to this set of preludes, as it encompasses an assortment of influences, most significantly the element of fantasy and the suggestion of an Irish folk melody, but also Stanford's excellent handling of sequences and the cycle of fifths (bars 19–21).



## 4.17 Prelude no.17



With its performance direction *Allegro maestoso*, this prelude leads off the third series with a lively gallant theme. As in the seventh prelude of the set, the majestic theme here sounds almost march-like despite the triple time-signature; the varied distribution of accents also enhances the regal sense. Similarly, both preludes use bold chords which imbue an orchestral style, in a similar manner to ‘Capaneo’, the third of Stanford’s *Three Dante Rhapsodies* op.92. In his commentary on the prelude, Dibble describes the work as an ‘eccentric Ländler’,<sup>145</sup> while Rodmell likens the prelude to the ‘Davidsbündlermarsch’ from Schumann’s *Carnaval* op.9.<sup>146</sup> Indeed, both works certainly share a common heroic chordal opening and are in the same key.

In addition to the ambiguity arising from the metre of the prelude, Stanford surprises the listener with his use of a traditional compositional device. The prelude opens with an unaccompanied ostinato, and this suggests that the ostinato, based on a falling fourth, may become the main unifying feature of the prelude:

<sup>145</sup> See Dibble in Stanford, *Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).  
<sup>146</sup> Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 321. See Schumann, *Carnaval*, op.9.

## Example 4.17.1. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 1–10

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 17, bars 1–10, is presented in two systems. The first system shows the right hand with a 'motif x' in bars 3–5, which is a descending eighth-note figure. The left hand features an 'ostinato involving a falling fourth' in bars 1–10, which is a descending eighth-note figure. The tempo is 'Allegro maestoso'. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'f' and 'cresc.'.

This is not the only example of ostinatos in Stanford's piano writing; for example, the third movement of the Second Piano Concerto op.126 from 1911 features a descending ostinato, beginning at bar 346.<sup>147</sup> Indeed, the ostinato in this prelude also foreshadows the composer's more complete use of an ostinato in Prelude no.25, introduced in bar 1 of the prelude although it is probably more likely that Prelude no.25 looks back to his earlier use of ostinato as a conscious attempt to unify them. However, its purpose as an ostinato is unclear as it only features in the first eight bars before a strong cadential progression concludes the opening section. Interestingly, the second movement of Mahler's Symphony no.1, written in the style of a ländler, opens in a similar fashion and does not sustain the ostinato figure for the complete duration of the movement (Examples 4.17.2 and 4.17.3).<sup>148</sup> Stanford's ostinato also undergoes a process of transformation: it is transposed, intervallically compressed, metrically displaced, inverted, appears in diminution and rhythmically altered, while also appearing in both right and left hands.

<sup>147</sup> Stanford, *Piano Concerto no.2* op.126.

<sup>148</sup> Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No.1* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1906).

**Example 4.17.2. Mahler: Symphony no.1, II, bars 1–6**

*Kraftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell*

Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Violoncello  
Contrabass

*f*

ostinato involving a falling fourth

The ostinato returns at strategic moments including the reprise of the opening at bar 285:

**Example 4.17.3. Mahler: Symphony no.1, II, bars 285–290**

*Tempo primo*

Flute  
Oboe  
Clarinet in A  
Bassoon  
Horn in F  
Horn in F  
Horn in F  
Horn in F  
Violin I  
Violin II  
Violoncello  
Contrabass

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

return of ostinato



Although the second section begins with a variant of the ostinato in the supertonic minor, the left hand's departure from the ostinato ensures that it plays a more active role as a foundation for the harmonic plan. It is clear that this figure, coupled with motif x which was introduced in bar 3, are the two main motifs which are developed and varied in this heroic-sounding prelude to ensure a clear structural sense throughout. For example, motif x undergoes a number of alterations throughout including transposition, extension, intervallic expansion and compression, rhythmical displacement, syncopation and registral displacement. As a compositional device it forms part of rising sequences (bars 13–16 and 17–19) which aid the modulation process here:

**Example 4.17.4. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 13–19**

The most interesting variation of the opening figure involves an unusual rhythmic displacement which also features a filling in of texture in both hands:

**Example 4.17.5. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 31–34**



In a comparable vein the recapitulation of the opening material in Rachmaninov Prelude in G minor op.23 portrays a similar idea though the presentation of the initial idea is fuller: <sup>149</sup>

**Example 4.17.6a. Rachmaninov: Prelude op.23 no.5, bars 1–6**

*Alla marcia* (♩=108)

**Example 4.17.6b. Rachmaninov: Prelude op.23 no.5, bars 72–77**

The ostinato in Stanford's prelude also undergoes a process of transformation: it is transposed, intervallically compressed, metrically displaced, inverted, it occurs in diminution and rhythmically altered, while also featuring in both right and left hands.

A musical trinity makes some fleeting appearances in this prelude: thirds feature prominently throughout. The original fourth in the ostinato appears frequently as a third (bars 11–12, 22, 24, 43, 45 and 47: see Example 4.14.7). The composer's fondness for the repetition of an idea in threes is once again evident (bars 35–37), while falling fifths are repeated which are reminiscent of the opening ostinato (bars 52–53). Of note is the prominent pause on the mediant, at the high-point of the prelude (bar 49), before a chromatic adjustment allows for a smooth return to the tonic to lead the prelude to a resolute close with a varied form of motif x. The brief appearance of the mediant so late in the piece (bars 50–52) is significant with the addition of a pause on the mediant note (bar 49): while the mediant key, C flat major featured earlier in the prelude (bars 25–29), a reference to the first note in the melodic strand which opened with the mediant degree produces a cyclical effect. A possible link to Prelude no.7 in E flat major which included a dramatic pause on the mediant three bars from the end is also worth noting (bar no.49 in Prelude no.7):

## Example 4.17.7. Stanford: Prelude no.17, bars 43–56

The references to the musical trinity link this prelude with others in the set, so too does the closing cadential progression in bare octaves: a developed form of  $\#4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ . Further links to ‘Capaneo’ are evident through the rhapsody placing emphasis on the musical trinity as a structural premise in the work with a number of the sections concluding with three repeated chords (bars 37–38, 57–58, 88–90, 172–173 and 221–223), while a modulation from C major to E flat major and the mediant pedal in the E flat major section (bars 153–155) of ‘Capaneo’ also herald an interest in numerology.

## 4.18 Prelude no.18



With the subtitle ‘toccata’, this prelude sets up expectations of virtuosity and technical difficulty. However, the quirky and light melodic opening provides a welcome contrast to the heavy orchestral style of the preceding prelude. With this playful mood throughout, once again, the humorous side of Stanford’s character is evident. Appearing first in the early sixteenth century, in its earliest days the toccata was an opportunity for performers to display their touch ‘through rapidity and delicacy.’<sup>150</sup> Like the prelude, the toccata has a somewhat indefinable character so it is suitably appropriate for inclusion within a set of preludes: Lalage Cochrane describes the toccata as being ‘in a free and idiomatic style [...] and often in several sections and incorporating virtuoso elements

<sup>150</sup> ‘Toccata’, in ODM, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e10298>> [accessed 11 August 09]. Examples by Frescobaldi, Buxtehude and Bach displayed great rhythmic complexity in their passage-work; however, as a keyboard genre, the toccata fell out of favour in the classical period. Caldwell describes the similarities between the term and other popular genres: ‘its characteristics of display are found in such forms as the exercise and study, while its rhythmic and formal freedom are embodied in the capriccio and rhapsody. Its one more or less stable characteristic, that of continuous movement in short note values, is shared with the *moto perpetuo* as well as with numerous works and movements that have no special title’. See John Caldwell, ‘Toccata’, in GMO OMO, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/28035>> [accessed 11 August 2009].



designed to show off the player’s “touch”.<sup>151</sup> Some toccatas display a rhapsodic element while others contain fugal sections. Due to the technical nature and insistence on a particular type of figure or movement, they are often useful as pieces of exercise and study.

This is the fourth of five toccatas which Stanford wrote for solo piano.<sup>152</sup> Here a clear sense of structure is defined, with three sections in the short miniature of fifty-four bars, presenting an overall ternary form:

Table 4.15: Structural Analysis of Prelude no.18

Section	Bar Numbers
A	1–13
B	/14–30
A	31–54

Rodmell identifies the influence of Bach in the choice of this genre in the set of preludes.<sup>153</sup> John Caldwell finds justification in Bach’s use of the title of toccata for a number of his works through the composer’s use of the ‘continuous semiquaver movement by means of which the tension is built up’. He further suggests that ‘this was to become a cardinal feature of the modern toccata, the rhapsodic and fugal elements being almost entirely abandoned’.<sup>154</sup> Stanford’s example clearly exhibits continuous semiquaver passagework, which drives the music forward; however, this prelude is also

151 Cochrane, Lalage, ‘Toccata’, in *OCM*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e6814>> [accessed 11 August 2009].

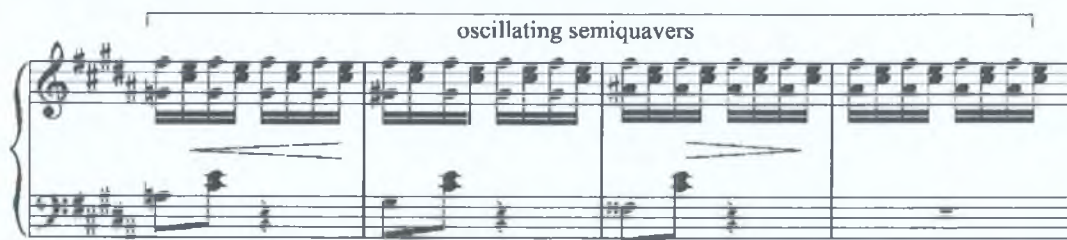
152 Stanford’s earliest toccata for solo piano, Toccata in C from 1875, exhibits continuous semiquavers, and, although his toccatas from 1894, 1913 and 1919 lack the incessant semiquaver passages, these multisectional works test the technical capabilities of the performer through the use of repeated figures and quaver patterns. The final works in both *Six Concert Pieces* op.42 and *Six Characteristic Pieces* op.132 were toccatas while his final toccata was his Toccata in C major. Of these three works only the toccata from op.132 has been published.

153 Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 321.

154 John Caldwell, ‘Toccata’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/28035>> [accessed 11 August 2009].

reminiscent of Schumann's *Toccata* op.7.<sup>155</sup> Although it is written on a much smaller scale than the more virtuosic and demanding piece by Schumann, one passage of oscillating semiquavers hints at the German composer's example. The subtitle 'toccata' is clearly represented in this repeated passagework:

**Example 4.18.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.18, bars 35–38**



**Example 4.18.1b. Schumann: Toccata op.7, bars 3–6**



Carew notes that this choppy texture, which involved repeated and alternating notes, featured in a number of toccatas and toccatinas, and cites examples by J.B. Cramer, Schumann, Cipriani Potter and Czerny. It is interesting that Stanford followed this tradition here.

While this work presents technical challenges to the performer, it is also a playful and light-hearted piece. In addition to following the style of toccata utilized by a number of composers, the minor key, left-hand pattern and right-hand rhythm of the light, delicate opening mirrors the initial texture of the 'Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy' from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*.<sup>156</sup> This transparent texture is consistent all the

<sup>155</sup>

Robert Schumann, *Toccata*, op.7 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1881).

<sup>156</sup>

Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, *The Nutcracker Suite*, op.71a (Moscow: P. Jurgenson, 1892). Tchaikovsky and Stanford had met at Cambridge after Stanford initiated the awarding of an honorary doctorate to the Russian composer in 1893, and Stanford was familiar with much of Tchaikovsky's music through his work as a conductor: *Francesca da Rimini* was performed for

way through, and no fugal passages are evident, as was common with a number of toccatas throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>157</sup>

Although Stanford employs a number of traditional compositional devices in this prelude including cycles of dominant seventh harmonies (bars 2–3 and 33–35), sequences and writing in thirds, a number of similarities can be noted with preludes in this set and some others of Stanford's piano compositions. For example, the opening dominant note decorated by its lower auxiliary, motif x, was a common feature at the opening of a number of piano works by Stanford and other composers. Stanford's opening calls to mind the Intermezzo in g minor from Stanford's Six Concert Pieces op.42 from 1894. Interestingly, each of the three surviving works from Six Concert Pieces, op.42 begins on the dominant decorated with its lower auxiliary, making a striking connection between the three works:

**Example 4.18.2a. Stanford: Toccata op.42 no.6, bars 1–3**

Dominant decorated with lower auxiliary

Allegro vivace

the jubilee celebrations in 1893 at Cambridge, while Stanford later conducted the work at Leeds in 1901, obviously having been impressed by it in 1893. Additionally, he conducted Tchaikovsky's Third Piano Concerto in E flat at the Brahms Commemoration Concert at the Royal College of Music on 8 June 1897.

An example of a toccata without fugal passages is Schumann's *Toccata* op.7.

**Example 4.18.2b. Stanford: Intermezzo op.42 no.4, bars 1–8**

Dominant decorated with lower auxiliary  
Allegretto con moto e con grazia

The musical score for Example 4.18.2b shows the first eight bars of Stanford's Intermezzo op.42 no.4. The piece is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The tempo is 'Allegretto con moto e con grazia'. The dynamics are marked 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The score consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows the initial melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic development with some rests in the left hand.

**Example 4.18.2c. Stanford: Mazurka op.42 no.5, bars 1–2**

Dominant decorated with lower auxiliary  
Allegretto con grazia

The musical score for Example 4.18.2c shows the first two bars of Stanford's Mazurka op.42 no.5. The piece is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The tempo is 'Allegretto con grazia'. The score consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows the initial melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic development with some rests in the left hand.

There are many other examples of this idea, used by an array of composers, the most famous being Beethoven's *Für Elise*, but it is also found in the second movement of Haydn's Sonata no.40 in E flat major, Beethoven's Minuet in G, the beginning of the third movement of Mendelssohn's Symphony op.90 no.4 in A major and the *Mazurka Caprice* op.69 in G minor by Xaver Schwarvenka:<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup>

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Bagatelle No.25*, WoO 59 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1888); Joseph Haydn, *Piano Sonata No.40*, Hob.XVI:25 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1937); Felix Mendelssohn, *Symphony No.4*, op.90 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1877); Xaver Schwarvenka, *Mazurka Caprice*, op.69 (New York: The John Church Company, 1894).



**Example 4.18.3. Xaver Scharwenka: *Mazurka Caprice* op.69, bars 6–7**

Dominant decorated with lower auxiliary  
Moderato

Interestingly, William Sterndale Bennett, who had been Stanford's idol as a student, begins his Toccata op.38 in c minor with the dominant decorated by its lower auxiliary:<sup>159</sup>

**Example 4.18.4. William Sterndale Bennett: Toccata op.38, bar 1**

Dominant decorated with lower auxiliary  
Allegro leggiero

*mf* sempre legato

Related examples of this idea start on the tonic or mediant, for example, Beethoven's Six Bagatelles op.126 no.1,<sup>160</sup> Hummel's Caprice in F major op.49<sup>161</sup> and Brahms's Intermezzo in e flat minor from op.118 no.6<sup>162</sup> while Prelude no.17 begins in a similar fashion, with the mediant decorated by the upper auxiliary.

The oscillating movement permeates much of the writing, forming sequences, both in complete and fragmented form (bars 10–11, 26–27, 28–29 and 32–34), in direct repetition with chromatic adjustments (bars 22–24) and in augmentation (bars 49–52), while lower auxiliaries invert as upper auxiliaries which vary the melodic lines. Additionally, Allis notes that 'the right-hand part consists of an inner texture of

<sup>159</sup> William Sterndale Bennett, *Toccata*, op.38 (London: Leader & Cock; Addison & Hollic, 1859).

<sup>160</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Six Bagatelles*, op.126 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

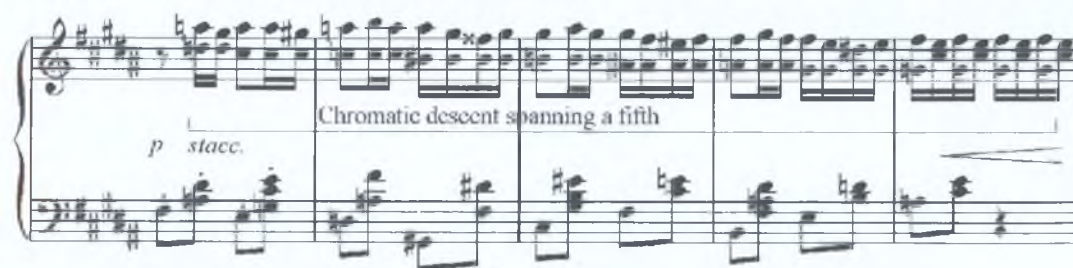
<sup>161</sup> Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Caprice*, op.49 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1895).

<sup>162</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Six Klavierstücke*, op.118 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1893).

repeated notes plus an outer stepwise movement rather like a slow trill, while the left hand leaps between single bass notes and chords.<sup>163</sup> This emphasis on semitonal writing, in addition to the repetitive nature of the intervals, maintains a strong sense of interval cohesion throughout.

The quaver support in the left hand was a common accompanimental device used by many composers. Here, it supports cycles of dominant sevenths and forms descending scales. Stanford was fond of including scales in the preludes; although some are quite short there are a number used throughout, with many spanning a fifth (bars 11–13, 15–17, 18–20 and 45–47), all of which take the same duration of two bars. In the scale passages Stanford's penchant for chromatic passages is evident; this is not unusual here due to the semitonal inflections throughout and the use of Neapolitan harmonies (bars 25–26). Like the diatonic equivalent, his chromatic scale also spans a fifth (bars 31–35):

**Example 4.18.5. Stanford: Prelude no.18, bars 31–35**



The emphasis on the span of the fifth is closely linked with the cycle of dominant seventh harmonies, heard beneath a portion of this scale, also with the emphasis on the dominant note (bars 32–35). Even near the end the melodic line features a falling fifth (bars 49–50) before the final hint of the opening motif.

A more direct link with Stanford's earlier works, and in particular the preludes in this set, is the reusing of motivic material: for example, the opening motif of

<sup>163</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', p. 124.

Prelude no.17 (bar 3) is used as the melodic basis of the contrasting B section of this prelude (bar 14). While the motivic figure is related to the opening of Prelude no.18, it clearly has its roots in the opening melodic figure of the seventeenth prelude. Here it is heard in double notes, (see for example bars 14 and 16), single notes (see for example bars 18–19) accompanied by a variety of accompanimental figures (bars 14, 18 and 26), while it also features in the left hand (bars 22 and 24). The final bar makes a veiled reference to this figure, now heard in augmentation:

**Example 4.18.6. Stanford: Prelude no.18, bars 14–29**

Additionally, the opening texture and presentation of rhythmic material of Prelude no.15 is suggested (bars 41–42). This oom-pah rhythmic device permeates much of the writing, appearing in a number of guises (bars 1–5, 13–16, 18–19, 22–25, 35–37 and 41–42), all of which add variety and interest to the simple melodic style.

## 4.19 Prelude no.19



An unaccompanied tonic arpeggio with a decorative added sixth opens the A major prelude, hinting at sweeping harp arpeggios. Indeed, as Dibble has suggested, the mood and gentle nuances suggest ‘an *Irish Song* replete with “harp” accompaniment’.<sup>164</sup> An earlier allusion to Irish melodies in this set of preludes was made in the middle section of Prelude no.16. This arpeggio figure permeates much of the melodic texture and demonstrates Stanford’s development of an arpeggiated cell. Coupled with the rising arpeggio, a dotted figure creates a sense of balance. Interestingly, the dotted figure appears in two different guises: it rises a step and falls a third. Both the first and final sections of the work begin with the arpeggio beginning at bars 1 and 41 respectively, albeit on a different beat of the bar, and although both middle sections use the arpeggio beginning at bars 12 and 26 respectively, the mood is more resolute, as bold chords

164

See Dibble in Stanford, Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: *Twenty-Four Preludes Set 1*, op.163 and *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132, Peter Jacobs (Priory Records, 449, 1996).



permeate the writing and the dotted rhythm is now absent from the texture.<sup>165</sup> A sense of classical balance is suggested through the symmetrical use of particular idioms and figures and also in the cyclical form of ABCA'.

Initially introduced as an ascending seven-note arpeggio on the first beat of the bar, the presentation of this material is subsequently varied. Appearing most frequently in its ascending form, with only two occurrence of inverted arpeggios, both acting as phrase endings (bars 13 and 16), the length of the arpeggio varies with the appearance of short three-note arpeggios (bars 4 and 7), six-note arpeggios (bars 13, 18 and 20), extended eight-note arpeggios (bars 25, 29, 33, 34, 39 and 42) in addition to repetitions of the original length of seven notes (bars 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 16, 24, 27, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 49 and 50). More interesting than the length of the arpeggio is the rhythmic shifting of the arpeggio to different beats of the bar; for the return of the opening material at the beginning of the final section (bar 42), the rhythmic feel is altered fractionally as the arpeggio is displaced to the second beat of the bar, creating a momentary unsettled feeling. A number of figures used by Stanford are displaced to different beats of the bar as a means of development, a technique also employed in the succeeding prelude for example:

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<sup>165</sup>

Although a dotted rhythm features in bar 23, this creates a distinct effect and has a different purpose to the use of the dotted rhythms introduced at the outset.

**Example 4.19.1. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars 41–45**

This monomotivic prelude achieves a clear sense of organic unity through the composer's engagement with and development of the opening arpeggio. Despite the variations of the original arpeggio, a restatement of the opening rhythmic arrangement restores the sense of symmetry in the piece. However, an unexpected rest recollects the concluding phrase of the opening section which suggests a possible veiled reference to Parry's 'And did those feet in ancient time' before the original arpeggio is once more restored, before it fades away and echoed an octave higher, as the prelude comes to a quiet conclusion:<sup>166</sup>

**Example 4.19.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars 47–51**<sup>166</sup>Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, *Jerusalem* (London: J. Curwen & Co., 1916).

**Example 4.19.2b. Parry: Jerusalem 'And did those feet in ancient time', bars 37–41**

The musical score is for a vocal and piano piece. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It begins with a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking. The lyrics are 'lem In Eng-land's green and pleas-ant land.' The piano accompaniment is in bass clef, also with a key signature of two sharps. It begins with a 'rit.' marking and ends with a 'ff' (fortissimo) dynamic and a fermata. The page number '8' is at the bottom right of the piano part.

While some adventurous modulations exist in earlier preludes, the harmonic palette used in this prelude is static and predictable and the writing is almost completely diatonic with fewer touches of chromaticism than in many other preludes. All departures from the tonal centre are to nearly related keys. Furthermore, this sense of static movement is also evident in some of the chordal progressions. For example, in the first section alone, the progression from subdominant to dominant harmony and vice versa is heard seven times in the tonic key. Further examples of this progression recur in the second section while examples in b minor are heard in the final section before the close. This oscillation from two chords a step apart filter through into the harmony in this section as the tonality fluctuates between A major and the supertonic minor, b minor:

**Example 4.19.3. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars 1–11**

Andante

Chord symbols: I, V<sup>7</sup>, IV<sup>b</sup>, I<sup>7</sup>, IV<sup>b</sup>, V<sup>7b</sup>, I, IV<sup>b</sup>, V<sup>7b</sup>, I<sup>c</sup>, V<sup>7</sup>, IV<sup>b</sup>, V<sup>7b</sup>, IV<sup>b</sup>, V<sup>7b</sup>, IV<sup>b</sup>, V<sup>7b</sup>, IV<sup>b</sup>.

Unconventional progressions exist which represent Stanford's free handling of harmony: two adjacent second inversion chords weaken the harmonic structure (bar 28), while an unusual resolution occurs in the rising right-hand thirds when one would expect a descending resolution (bar 9):

**Example 4.19.4. Stanford: Prelude no.19, bars /8–10**

Chord symbols: IV<sup>b</sup>, V<sup>7b</sup>, iii<sup>7c</sup>, V<sup>9</sup>/ii, ii, V<sup>6</sup>, V<sup>7</sup>, I.

The opening of the third section of this prelude (bars 26–31), written in the minor, evokes a war-like sound through the suggestion of solemn lines. Its position in the set may in some way be a preparation for Prelude no.22, which contains the most direct



reference to war. This further strengthens the case that there are intentional links among these pieces and that Stanford conceived the preludes as a set.

# 4.20 Prelude no.20



An unaccompanied animated melodic line opens this prelude, the final prelude with an unaccompanied opening in this set. While introducing the initial motivic cell which comprises a rising fifth followed by a falling second, two further developments are presented in the opening four-bar phrases before the piece reaches its first full close with the initial cell heard in diminution and retrograde, foreshadowing the repetition and unity which are sustained throughout. This ‘turn’ figuration brings this first phrase to a close, a device used by Stanford at other cadential points in this miniature:

## Example 4.20.1. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 1–8

While the turn primarily has a cadential function in a similar way to its appearance in Prelude no.23, later occurrences of the turn figure are altered (bars 28 and 41).

Modal harmony is alluded to through the use of the flattened seventh note G on the strongest beat of the bar (bar 4). Both Porte and Allis have commented on the Irish character of this prelude: Porte believes that the ‘character is somewhat after the

style of an Irish dance', while Allis notes that the composer's use of the flatted seventh evokes the opening of Stanford's *Irish Symphony*.<sup>167</sup> This strong allusion to an Irish character may have been prepared by the harp-like arpeggio figures in the preceding prelude.

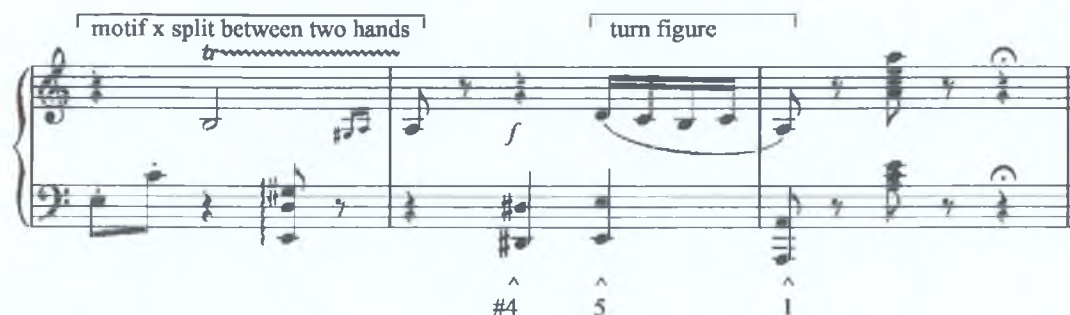
The initial intervallic cell is extended to form motif x (bar 3). The melody and rhythm of this one-bar unit remain relatively invariant throughout the work. It appears in the opening bar of each section, with few examples which alter the initial intervallic shape (bar 27) to facilitate a modulation to F major. The beginning of both sections three and four involves a metrical displacement as the music begins on the second beat of the bar (bars 20 and 27), while the opening of the third section also introduces a fragmented version of motif x (bar 20). This metric displacement of a principal idea had been used in earlier preludes as a means of development (see Prelude 19 for example). Throughout the prelude both the initial intervallic premise and motif x undergo a series of transformations and demonstrate Stanford's deft handling of small figures while sustaining interest in the miniature. A range of compositional devices are utilized by Stanford to subtly change the sound and appearance of the figure: registral displacement (bars 5–7, 18–19, 23, 33–34 and 40), intervallic expansion (bars 14–16, 18, 20, 23, 33–34 and 40), intervallic contraction (bars 29 and 38–39), fragmentation (bars 16, 20 and 23) and imitation (bars 37–38) while the melodic contour is altered (bars 33–34). To add further interest, the accompaniment to the motif is varied, including descending scales (bars 9–11), steady crotchets (bars 14–16) and oom-pah quavers (bars 20–21). Furthermore, the decorative grace notes also undergo a degree of variation. Heard initially as two diatonic rising notes, they appear with tinges of chromaticism (bars 14, 16, 29, 33, 38 and 39) and also in a descending fashion (bars 15, 19, 33 and 40) which adds a subtle change to the melodic line. Most interesting, though,

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<sup>167</sup> See Porte, *Stanford*, p. 129 and Allis, 'Another 48', p. 125.

is the splitting of the motif between both hands (bars 40–41) before the work ends triumphantly in a minor:

**Example 4.20.2. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 40–42**



Despite the use of pedal notes to solidify the harmonic structure of this work (bars 9–12 and 14–16), the harmony in the opening section is quite static — reminding us of the preceding prelude. Indeed, the final passage of Prelude no.19 also involved much fluctuation between the supertonic and tonic key, while the opening section here fluctuates between supertonic and tonic harmony, suggesting a further link between these two preludes. Furthermore, the choice of tonal areas is expected and smooth progressions facilitate the moves. Tinges of chromaticism help to colour the writing, however; indeed, a chromatic accompaniment coupled with the modal seventh are suggestive of a Russian influence, recalling Tchaikovsky (bars 10–11):

**Example 4.20.3. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 9–11**

Stanford also uses a number of recurring chords which through their presence add interest to the writing: the closing section of the work features all three versions of the augmented sixth (see Example 4.20.5). The chord of  $\sharp\text{IV}^7$ , for example, resolves to  $\text{Ic}$



(bars 11–12, 13–14, 15–16 and 17–18). When heard as a diminished chord, however, it proceeds unusually to a French augmented 6<sup>th</sup> (bar 39). Most interesting, however, is the presence of this sharp subdominant chord in the closing cadence (Example 4.20.2). The cadential function of this chord has been exploited by Stanford in a number of other preludes. By this point in the set the chordal progression of #IV – V – I has been firmly established as a Stanfordian progression.

While the shifting of the opening intervallic cell to the second beat of the bar (bar 20) has been noted as a means of varying the presentation of the opening premise — a trait exploited by Stanford in this set of preludes — the oom-pah accompaniment in this brighter and more delicate-sounding section unifies the passage; it is heard in both hands at different times, while also glancing back to Prelude no.15. Although the character and mood of this music sounds somewhat different, there is much to link it with the preceding bars: trills, the turn figure (bar 22) and initial intervallic cell. What makes this section interesting is the use of canonic imitation (bars 20–25) which demonstrates the ease with which Stanford used the technique:

**Example 4.20.4. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 20–27**

A final example of imitation in the concluding section recalls this device (bars 37–38):

**Example 4.20.5. Stanford: Prelude no.20, bars 37–39**

It Aug 6th                      Ger Aug 6th    Fr Aug 6th

This prelude is a unified composition, focusing primarily on one motif, and although the writing is infused with much repetition, repeated appearances of some features do not always function in an identical fashion to their initial presentation. For example, in contrast to their function in the first section, and acting as a link to the second section (bars 7–8), the cluster of trills in the final section (bars 34–35) reaches a point of rest before the dominant acts as a link to and preparation for the final section.

## 4.21 Prelude no.21

(Carillons)



This is the fifth prelude with a subtitle, and as in Prelude no.13 the subtitle is more explicit than some of the earlier attributions as it sets up clear expectations for the listener. The term ‘carillon’ has a number of meanings; the common factor between each, however, being that of a bell-like sound.<sup>168</sup> Michael Kennedy describes the music played on carillons as tunes with simple accompanying harmonies.<sup>169</sup> Stanford’s association with the carillon most likely came from his experience as an organist as bell-like effects are achieved on the organ using an organ stop called the carillon. Although there are slight differences in sound across Europe, in a number of cases the carillon on the organs is a mixture of three ranks: a twelfth, a seventeenth and a twenty-second.<sup>170</sup> Although the organ at Trinity College, Cambridge where Stanford served as organist did

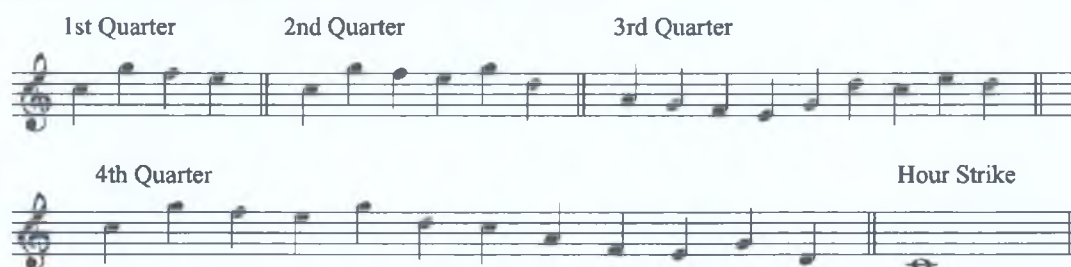
<sup>168</sup> See for example, Luc Rombouts, ‘Carillon’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/04929>> [accessed 19 August 2009]. Modern concert carillons encompass at least four chromatic octaves. A typical European carillon has forty-nine bells, while in North America the number of bells is usually fifty-five or more and the instrument is then known as a *Grand Carillon*.

<sup>169</sup> Michael Kennedy ed., ‘Bell’, in *ODM*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e1055>> [accessed 19 August 2009].

<sup>170</sup> Peter Williams and Barbara Owen, ‘Organ Stop’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/20446>> [accessed 19 August 2009].

not have a carillon, this stop was popular on organs.<sup>171</sup> Additionally, Stanford had experience writing for chimes: in 1905 he composed the *Whittington Chimes* to strike the quarters and the hour at the church of St Mary-le-Bow in London.<sup>172</sup> Described as an ‘excellent’ set of chimes by Starmer as they ‘bring into use eleven out of the twelve bells’, he faults them for requiring ‘a diatonic sequence of twelve notes as this will only permit [...] their being used in a few churches’.<sup>173</sup>

**Example 4.21.1. Stanford: *Whittington Chimes***



On account of the significance of bells and chimes to mark important events and time in daily life, a number of composers wrote pieces which had associations with bells, with many popular examples emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some included reference to bells in their titles or subtitles: Elgar, for example, entitled his 1914 recitation with orchestra op.75 *Carillon*.<sup>174</sup> A number of piano compositions make explicit reference to bells: the title of Grieg’s final lyric piece of op.54 is ‘*Klokkeklang*’ (‘Bell Ringing’), while the subtitle of the second piece in Saint-Saëns’s *Album* op.72 and the third piece in Sibelius’s *Thirteen Pieces for Piano* op.76 is ‘*Carillon*’.<sup>175</sup> Each of these works is reminiscent of bells tolling as repeated notes,

<sup>171</sup> ‘Trinity College Organ’, <<http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/index.php?pageid=65>> [accessed 18 August 2009].

<sup>172</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Whittington Chimes*. ‘Church Bells of the City of London’, <[http://london.lovesguide.com/mary\\_le\\_bow\\_gillett.htm](http://london.lovesguide.com/mary_le_bow_gillett.htm)> [accessed 18 August 2009]. This was reported on in Ireland in 1905: Anon., ‘Bow Bells’, *The Irish Independent*, 15 September 1905, p. 4. The music of the piece was annotated in W. W. Starmer, ‘Chimes’, *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 34 (1907), 1–24 (p. 5).

<sup>173</sup> Starmer, ‘Chimes’, p. 5. Furthermore, Stanford had used bells in his opera *The Critic* in 1915.

<sup>174</sup> Edward Elgar, *Carillon*, op.75 (London: Elkin & Co., 1914).

<sup>175</sup> Edvard Grieg, *Lyric Pieces*, op.54 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1897); Camille Saint-Saëns, *Album*, op.72 (Paris: Durand, Schoenewerk & Cie, 1884); Jean Sibelius, *Thirteen Pieces for Piano*, op.76 (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1922).



recurrent intervallic patterns and progressions feature prominently. Porte believes that ‘Stanford gets his bell effects solely by melody and harmony in the purist sense, and no programme effects are used.’<sup>176</sup> Stanford’s use of rhythm, however, also plays an important role in portraying bell-like tones as percussive quavers on either the first, last or both of these beats resonate throughout the work. On occasion the upbeat is omitted from the writing (bar /16, /17, /30 and /38) which lends an element of variety. Additionally, the tolling of bells is suggested by repeated tonic notes (bars 19–20 and 37–39). While Stanford may not have been familiar with change ringing, the strong bass tonics hint at an allusion to this style of ringing:

**Example 4.21.2. Stanford: Prelude no.21, bars 19–20**



In his Prelude op.3 no.2 Rachmaninov includes bell-like effects in the opening bars and later in the work (bars 45–48).<sup>177</sup> Interestingly, another piece by Stanford which hints at the sound of tolling bells is also written in compound time: ‘Beatrice’ from *Three Dante Rhapsodies* op.92.

However, it is the presence of sixths heard initially as a chain of second inversion chords which shapes the basis of this prelude (bar 1). This rocking motif x permeates the whole prelude and features in each bar in the first section transformed by process of extension, inversion and fragmentation, while a descending sequential series of paired slurs, based on the opening of motif x, facilitates tonicization to the related keys of E flat and F major (bars 7–8). The emphasis on the tonic and dominant notes is

<sup>176</sup>

Porte, *Stanford*, p. 129.

<sup>177</sup>

Sergei Rachmaninov, *Morceaux De Fantaisie*, op.3 (Leipzig: Bosworth & Co., 1896).

facilitated by the percussive octaves played in the bassline and marked with accents and the arresting sense of the detached quavers is exploited to great effect in this section as they contrast with the smoothness of motif x:

**Example 4.21.3. Stanford: Prelude no.21, bars 1–8**

(Carillons)

Andante moderato

motif x

The musical score for Example 4.21.3 shows the first eight bars of Stanford's Prelude no. 21. The tempo is 'Andante moderato' and the key signature has two flats (B-flat major). The time signature is 8/8. The score is written for piano, with a treble and bass staff. The treble staff features a series of chords, mostly triads and dyads, with a bracket labeled 'motif x' over the first four bars. The bass staff contains a series of eighth notes, mostly beamed in pairs, with accents and a 'p' (piano) marking in bar 5. The score ends with a 'dim.' (diminuendo) marking in bar 8.

The use of sixths forms a clear link between this prelude and other preludes (Preludes nos 2, 4, 6, 10, 11 and 30). The sixths in this prelude are presented through a variety of means: for example, a change of texture is achieved by the introduction of new melodies above and below the chains of sixths (bars 9–10, 11, 15–16, 28–29 and 35–37):

## Example 4.21.4. Stanford: Prelude no.21, bars /9–19

Heard initially as four-note melodic passages (bar 9), unusually the music does not assume a real melodic direction until these are extended (bars 28–29 and 35–37). To add some interest and variety, a new rhythmic idea is introduced in the second section. Featuring repeated chords with intervening bass notes, and initially sequentially (bars 13–14), each return only lasts for one bar (bars 21, 25 and 32).

As the music progresses, sections three and four exploit motif x as elements of the figure are found both ascending and descending. Often repeated in two adjacent bars (19–20, 26–27, 30–31 and 33–34), the figure also appears sequentially (bars 22–24 and 28–29), while the sixths which had originally appeared as vertical chords, now appear as broken chords (bars 28–29). Interestingly, it is in the third section where the music begins to gather some momentum. Combined with a rising chromatic passage heard in octaves in the left hand, a sense of tension is created in the music (bars 25–26). After the varied exploitation of the opening cell, the fourth section compliments its

preceding section as it conveys a gradual descent. Returning to the prominence of tonic and dominant notes as in the opening section, and now introducing sustained notes (bars 33–34), thinned out versions of motif x, repeated over a tonic pedal, fade away in the lower reaches of the keyboard.

As a composition, this prelude cleverly suggests bell-like tolls and makes the work attractive for that reason. Another interesting feature of the piece is that it could be performed on the organ with the detached quavers suited to the pedals. By focusing on the interval of the sixth throughout, the prelude remains unified with a final occurrence of the interval before the proud and resolute ending. Structurally the prelude is balanced while the emphasis on tonic and dominant notes gives the music a clear sense of harmonic direction with smooth modulations. Despite these qualities, however, an unorthodox chain of consecutive seventh chords adds a modernist touch as they produce virtual parallel octaves (bar 18). Examples of parallel octaves can be found in other works by the composer including *Suite of Ancient Dances* op.58,<sup>178</sup> *Three Intermezzi* op.13 no.2,<sup>179</sup> *Gloria and Credo from Mass in G* op.46<sup>180</sup> and *Songs of the Sea* op.91 no.3.<sup>181</sup> The final section displays oscillating tonal regions, as was a feature of a number of earlier preludes; here the tonality fluctuates between the tonic and its subdominant key.

<sup>178</sup> Stanford, *Suite of Ancient Dances*.

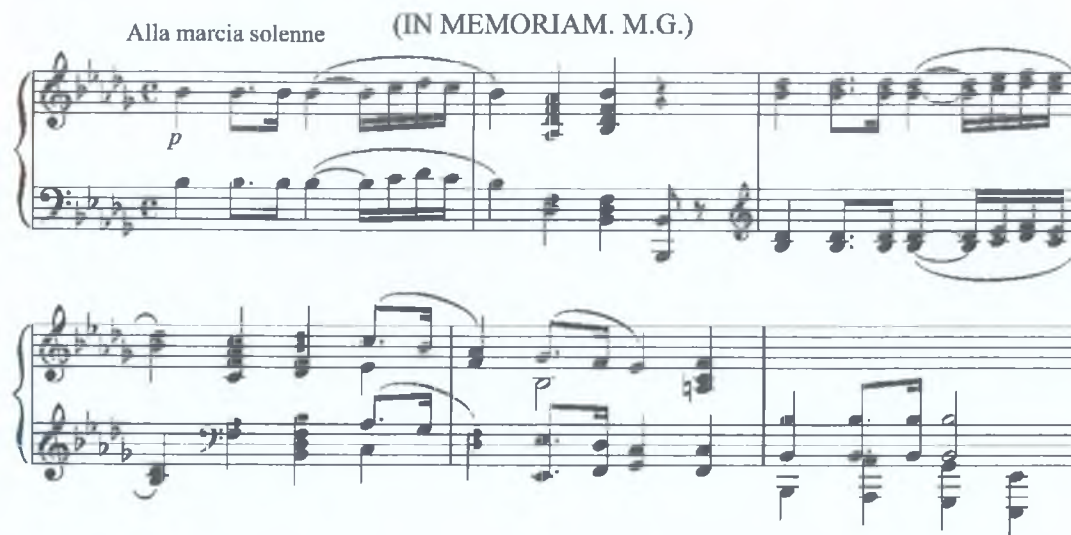
<sup>179</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Three Intermezzi*, op.13 (London: Novello, 1880).

<sup>180</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Mass in G Major for Soli, Chorus, Orchestra and Organ*, op.46 (London: Novello, Ewer, 1893).

<sup>181</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Songs of the Sea*, op.91 (London: Boosey & Co., 1905).



## 4.22 Prelude no.22



With a metronome marking of ‘Alla marcia solenne’, it is clear that the third movement of Chopin’s Piano Sonata no.2 op.35 provides the inspiration for this minor-keyed prelude.<sup>182</sup> Interestingly, Stanford draws further inspiration from Chopin’s sonata as the texture of Prelude no.44 is similar to that of the fourth movement of Chopin’s sonata op.35 no.2. The opening dotted rhythm also suggests an allusion to Chopin’s Prelude op.28 no.9. The composition of funeral marches was popular among composers, and Erich Schwandt believes that the funeral march is probably the most important category of non-military uses of march music.<sup>183</sup> With examples from the seventeenth-century composers such as Purcell and Lully, numerous composers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries added funeral marches as movements within larger works in addition to composing single works. Notable examples were composed by Alkan, Beethoven, Berlioz, Grieg, Wagner and Mahler.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>182</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Piano Sonata No.2*, op.35 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1840).

<sup>183</sup> Erich Schwandt, ‘March’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/40080>> [accessed 24 August 2009].

<sup>184</sup> See for example, The *Marche funèbre* from Charles-Valentin Alkan, *Twelve Etudes in All the Minor Keys*, op.39, ‘Symphonie pour Piano Seul’ (Paris: Simon Richault, 1861). The second movement of Beethoven’s Third Symphony is a funeral march: Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No.3*, op.55 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862). The third movement of

Worth noting, however, is that this was not Stanford's first engagement with the *marche funèbre* rhythm having earlier used it in the Sanctus movement of his *Festal Communion Service* op.128.<sup>185</sup>

Stanford suitably chooses the opening of Chopin's 'Marche funèbre' as this prelude is dedicated to the memory of M. G. (Maurice Gray). Although earlier preludes hint at the darkness and gloom of life in England after the war, this is the first prelude to overtly remember one who was lost to the fighting in World War I.<sup>186</sup> Stanford's modelling on the work by Chopin raises an interesting question about Stanford's decision to directly borrow from Chopin's music.<sup>187</sup> In the case of Charles Ives's borrowings, Burkholder lists a number of questions which are useful to consider when using his typology.<sup>188</sup> Burkholder suggests that the borrowed music may have served a musical function,<sup>189</sup> while borrowed music is also explicitly associated with neoclassicism.<sup>190</sup> Here, the restructuring of Chopin's opening serves as a motive in the prelude. This borrowed material evokes a particular mood. The use of the opening of Chopin's 'Funeral March' as the basis for the opening passage of Prelude no.22

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Beethoven's Piano Sonata no.12 is a funeral march: Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.12*, op.26 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862). A *Funeral March* is used for the Final Scene of Berlioz' *Hamlet*: Hector Berlioz, *Marche Funèbre Pour La Dernière Scène d'Hamlet* (Paris: Costallat & Cie, 1848). Grieg composed a funeral march in memory of a friend: Edvard Grieg, *Funeral March in Memory of Rikard Nordraak* (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1907). Liszt composed his funeral march in memory of Maximilian I, the Emperor of Mexico: Franz Liszt, *Années De Pèlerinage*, III, S.163 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1916). Examples in Mahler's music include the third movement of his First Symphony and the first movement of his Fifth Symphony: Mahler, *Symphony No.1*; Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No.5* (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1904). Wagner included Siegfried's Funeral March in *Götterdämmerung*: Richard Wagner, *Götterdämmerung*, WWV86D (Leipzig: B. Schott's Söhne, 1876). This list is not exhaustive and numerous other examples are found throughout the repertoire.

<sup>185</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Festal Communion Service for Voices and Orchestra in B Flat*, op.128 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1912).

<sup>186</sup> For a longer discussion on the effect of World War I on Stanford's lifestyle and compositional choices see Section 3.14.

<sup>187</sup> I have chosen the term 'modelling' as suggested by Burkholder's typology of musical borrowings. See J. Peter Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field', *Notes*, 50 (1994), 851–870 (p. 854). Modelling as a compositional tool has been a subject of discussion in relation to other composer's works. See for example Petrus J. Van Der Westhuizen, 'Modeling as Compositional Tool in the Piano Works of Francis Poulenc' (unpublished DMA, University of Cincinnati, 2007).

<sup>188</sup> Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music', pp. 867–868.

<sup>189</sup> Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music', p. 864.

<sup>190</sup> See Section 3.11.3 for a discussion on Stanford's possible affinity with neoclassicism.

obviously held some poignancy for Stanford as Chopin's own work has the metronome marking 'Marche funèbre'. A tragic tone is implied in both works which are in b flat minor as they use the familiar dotted rhythmic figure which is repeated a third higher. In addition, each is harmonised by tonic harmony and uses successions of simple chords. In Stanford's prelude the familiar dotted rhythm serves as the main thematic material and leads into a turn-like idea, all played in bare octaves; the first two-bar phrase sets the sombre mood for this funeral march as it concludes with an unusual cadence (bar 2). The restatement played in double thirds heightens the tension slightly as the two-bar phrase finishes with a perfect cadence darkened by the dominant minor chord (bars 3–4):

**Example 4.22.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 1–4**

Repeated tonic dotted rhythm  
Alla marcia solenne

Dotted rhythm up a 3rd

**Example 4.22.1b. Chopin: Piano Sonata no.2 op.35, III, bars 1–6**

Repeated tonic dotted rhythm  
Marche Funèbre

*pp pesante e sostenuto*

*p*

Dotted rhythm up a 3rd

*poco cresc.*

Porte detects Stanford's overt reference to Chopin's work and describes the opening as being 'in a hackneyed manner'.<sup>191</sup> However, he does appreciate that Stanford turns this into his own work, and acknowledges that 'after a time the composer's individuality asserts itself, and the music becomes quite impassioned'.<sup>192</sup> Interestingly, Scriabin's Prelude no.16 also resembles Chopin's work.<sup>193</sup> Stanford uses a familiar tune but adds a more modern twist to the music as modal inflections in the writing add an individual sense and loosen the extent of the borrowing from Chopin's opening music (bars 2, 4 and 5). Additionally, when the opening music returns this sense of modality is once more hinted at (bars 22, 24 and 27–28) incorporating an interesting false relation (bar 22), while an imperfect cadence is heard in the home key with the naturalised leading note (bar 23):

**Example 4.22.2. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars /22–28**

With the use of both A flat and A natural, a sense of tonal ambiguity is created, made more indefinite by the placing of both the flattened seventh and naturalised seventh against each other (bar 22). The writing is infused with numerous chromatic scales (bars

<sup>191</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 129.

<sup>192</sup> Porte, *Stanford*, p. 129.

<sup>193</sup> Scriabin, *Twenty-Four Preludes*. Scriabin's work in B flat minor uses the repeated-note dotted rhythms and features an ostinato rhythmic pattern.



13–16, 16–21, 29–30 and 31–32): the most interesting example involves a descending scale consisting of twelve chromatic pitches which is cleverly worked into the harmony, as the music, beginning at bar 13 in e flat minor, suggests the tonalities of f minor, g minor and f minor before coming to rest in the remote key of e minor (bar 16), and the music continues to outline a chromatic descent (bars 16–21). For one section of the scale an ascending chromatic scale is added in the upper strand of the right hand (bars 14–15) which joins two statements of the opening theme, while also providing an additional element of chromatic interest in the writing:

**Example 4.22.3. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 13–21**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 22, bars 13–21, is presented in three systems. The first system shows a chromatic descent in the left hand and a chromatic ascent in the right hand. The second system features a crescendo and a chromatic descent in the left hand. The third system includes a chromatic descent in the left hand and a chromatic ascent in the right hand, with a final chord marked '8'.

Other compositional devices employed in the prelude include numerous sequences which drive the music forward into both new tonal and registral areas (bars 7–12).

Structurally, this prelude consists of three sections, each beginning with the familiar dotted figure which unifies the whole movement. For the return of the opening idea in the final section, however, a new accompanimental figure in quavers is introduced, which, when combined with the right hand written in a higher register, distracts from the graveness of the prelude (bars 22–25). However, bold chords in D flat major accompanied by a broken-chord idea in quavers in the left hand (bars 25–26) leads to a perfect cadence in the home key which is decorated with the turn from the opening bar (bars 27–29). Descending chromatic scale passages which reinforce the cadential progression bring back the dark reminder of the opening and the familiar outline of  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  returns for the closing statement:

**Example 4.22.4. Stanford: Prelude no.22, bars 27–35**

Turn figure

Chromatic descent

dim.

Chromatic descent

*p*

*pp*

$\hat{6} \ \hat{5} \ \hat{1} \ \hat{6} \ \hat{5} \ \hat{1}$

The coda makes for an interesting conclusion. Here the chromatic passage used by Stanford shares some similarities to the descending chromatic passage repeatedly played in the coda of the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, despite the addition of an ascent in Beethoven's example:<sup>194</sup>

<sup>194</sup>

Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9*.

## Example 4.22.5. Beethoven: Symphony no.9, I, bars 510–515

Stanford had written an article on the work which was subsequently published in *Studies and Memories*.<sup>195</sup> Although the focus of the article ‘Beethoven’s Ninth (Choral) Symphony and Some Common Misreadings of Its Pace’ is on the variances in tempo taken by performers, it displays Stanford’s intimate knowledge of the work. Additionally, Stanford had conducted the work at the Leeds Festival in 1907 and he included a quotation from the opening of the symphony in *Ode to Discord*. Dibble notes the association between the finale of the symphony and *The Critic*.<sup>196</sup> It has not, to date, been identified in the prelude.

A marching idea in octaves in the bassline which concluded the first phrase of the prelude reappears to close the prelude and is the last figure which links the final section with the opening music. Coupled with the familiar dotted rhythm, the music clearly suggests a march-like ambience and mirrors the other preludes in the set which hint at this sound. Further connections with earlier preludes include the emphasis placed on chromatic colouring, while the thickening of an idea initially presented in single notes associates this Prelude with no.9. Notable examples of this thickening of texture involve the addition of thirds in both hands (bar 3), full chords (bar 7), octaves with

<sup>195</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, ‘Beethoven’s Ninth (Choral) Symphony and Some Common Misreadings of Its Pace’, in *Studies and Memories* (London: John Murray, 1922), pp. 39–49.

<sup>196</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *The Critic; or, an Opera Rehearsed: Opera in Two Acts* (London: Boosey & Co., 1915). See Jeremy Dibble, ‘Stanford’, *The Musical Times*, 133 (1992), 441 (p. 441).

chromatic underlay and inner line (bar 13) and full chords with chromatic underlay (bar 15). A full chordal presentation of the opening idea (bar 9), however, produces a very weak doubling effect resulting in parallel movement which is another unusual harmonic choice by Stanford in this set of preludes. Interestingly, only two bars previously the music includes an unusual handling of the chord VIc as it resolves to the chord of ib here being preceded by ic (bars 7–8).

This prelude is certainly worthy of inclusion in the repertory of funeral marches. Although it lacks a contrasting trio section, a clear march-like feeling is implied from the solemn tone at the outset and the deliberate movement suggested by the opening dotted rhythm passage.



## 4.23 Prelude no.23

### En Rondeau



The penultimate prelude of op.163 is subtitled ‘En rondeau’. Further clues about the mood and character of the piece are given in the metronome marking of ‘Andante moderato’ which is also followed by ‘alla marcia’, reminding the listener of the preceding prelude. However, the jovial mood and spirit of this march contrasts with the sombre tones of no.22. Described as a ‘quirky march’ by Dibble, this rondo-style piece makes for an interesting study in playing octaves in either one or two hands as there is a strong presence of ascending and descending octaves throughout the writing.<sup>197</sup>

Unusually Stanford chose the French subtitle ‘en rondeau’ for this prelude. As a form in France the rondeau featured prominently in a wide range of genres, including solo instrumental, chamber and orchestral works. In addition, ‘composers appended the qualification “en rondeau” to any dance title: gigue, minuet, gavotte, loure’.<sup>198</sup> Indeed, the rondeau was also one of the three *formes fixes* used for French song and poetry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>199</sup> However, it is more likely that the inspiration for this work came from the instrumental rondo as a form, normally consisting of a refrain and a number of secondary sections.

<sup>197</sup> Jeremy Dibble, ‘Piano Music of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Twenty-four Preludes Set 1, op.163, *Six Characteristic Pieces*, op.132’, sleeve notes for Priory PRCD 449, 1996 [1992].

<sup>198</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, ‘Rondo’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

<sup>199</sup> Nigel Wilkins, ‘Rondeau’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23782>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

With the emphasis on the dominant for subsidiary themes in a number of forms during the classical period, many of the first episodes in rondeaux and rondos appear in the key of the dominant. Later, episodes were placed in related keys until the number of tonal options was increased. Stanford's example is unusual as each statement of the principal theme and each subsidiary section begins and ends in the tonic key. Although the principal material nearly always returned in the tonic key, in examples from the nineteenth century, the return of the refrain could be in a key different to that of the tonic. One such exponent of this was Schubert. Many rondos featured a modulation to the dominant for the first episode while the music would commence in a minor key, usually to the flat side of the tonic, for the second episode. Stanford's second episode clearly begins in the tonic key:

**Table 4.16: Tonal Recurrence in Prelude no.23**

Section	Bar-Numbers	Tonality
A	1–12	<b>B major</b> , F sharp major (5), <b>B major</b> (6), c sharp minor (8), g sharp minor (9), <b>B major</b> (11)
B	13–20	<b>B major</b> , E major (17), g sharp minor (18), <b>B major</b> (20)
A'	21–27	<b>B major</b> , E major (23), <b>B major</b> (26)
C	28–38	<b>B major</b> , f sharp minor (28), A major (30), c sharp minor (34), f sharp minor (34), c sharp minor (35), <b>B major</b> (38)
A''	39–49	<b>B major</b> , g sharp minor (41), <b>B major</b> (43)
Coda	50–57	<b>B major</b> , E major (50), <b>B major</b> (51), E major (52), <b>B major</b> (53)

Despite the emphasis on the tonic key, however, the five sections in the simple rondo form ABA'CA'' with coda sustain harmonic interest as the music explores a range of tonal areas. Although the sections in classical rondos were normally of strict duration, usually in multiples of eight bars repeated and sometimes featuring binary units, Stanford's example moves beyond this rigid structure with sections of uneven and

varied lengths.<sup>200</sup> After the initial six-bar phrase is heard twice, the third statement of the initial phrase is extended to a seven-bar phrase (bar 21) while the third statement exhibits a sense of structural freedom. Further variation is achieved for subsequent statements of the opening phrase: accompanied initially by the tonic chord in root position, the second is harmonised by the tonic chord in first inversion while the two final statements of this phrase use the curious choice of the tonic chord in second inversion. This is interesting for two reasons: firstly, each position of the tonic chord accompanies the opening bar and secondly, this use of the chord of *Ic* is unusual as it is more stable when used for cadential purposes. Additionally, different accompaniment figures are employed for each return of the principal theme. Indeed, an accompaniment strand (bars 21–22) is strongly redolent of the first of Schubert's *Marches Militaires* op.51 (bars 7–8).<sup>201</sup>

**Example 4.23.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 1–2**

*Andante moderato. (alla marcia.)*

I                      vi                      vii<sup>7</sup>                      I

**Example 4.23.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 7–8**

I<sub>b</sub>                      V<sup>7</sup>                      I

<sup>200</sup>

G. M. Tucker & Nicholas Temperley, 'Rondo', in *OCM*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787> [accessed 25 August 2009].

<sup>201</sup>

Only the primo part is included here. Franz Schubert, *Three Marches Militaires*, D.733 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1888).

## Example 4.23.1c. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 21–22



## Example 4.23.1d. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 39–40

Example 4.23.1e. Schubert: *Marche Militaire*, D.733, op.51 no.1, bars 7–8

While this is an interesting point in harmonic terms, in metrical terms an unusual bar periodicity is presented as the lead into the B section (bar 12), which is the only point in the piece where the music is momentarily unhinged, apart from the dramatic rests in the closing bars of the work. Apart from that, however, the two main characteristic cells are introduced in the first phrase of the principal theme: short rising ideas and turn figures, while in the consequent phrase octave writing is heard in each bar except the first. This motivic material saturates the writing in both episodes B and C, while accompanimental turn-like figures from the refrain (bar 2) are registrally displaced and feature in diminution and inversion in the first episode (bars 13 and 16). Indeed, the opening five notes (bars 1–2), heard an octave lower, return as a lead into the first episode (bars 12–13). While many pieces written in rondo form feature contrasting music in each episode



by altering the texture, register, dynamics or by adding in more animated figuration, various examples exist whereby some similarities can be noted between all sections. Interestingly, however, this contrasting material was often derived from the refrain in some way and included transposition, free continuation of the refrain motif, inversion or tonal answer of refrain motifs.<sup>202</sup> For example, the B and C episodes of the five-section rondeau by Rameau called *Les tendres plaintes* start with the rhythm that characterizes the principal theme.<sup>203</sup> Rondos by C.P.E. Bach have also been described as ‘leisurely compositions built sometimes on a lyrical theme, sometimes on a characteristic motif’ and a number of works explored ideas rather than themes’.<sup>204</sup> Additionally, the episodic material in a rondeau has often been described as ‘non-thematic, consisting of arpeggiated figuration, sequential passages and chains of chords that serve to prepare refrain statements in related keys’.<sup>205</sup>

Stanford’s prelude is built on motifs as opposed to one long lyrical theme and he transforms the primary motivic material by a number of means to achieve variety in the piece. Heard initially in double thirds, the three-note rising figure is heard most commonly in octaves throughout, while the texture is also thickened as the motif is heard in chord formations including a chain of six-three chords (bars 6–7). This short scale passage develops into a series of rising and falling scales, the most interesting which is outlined in the left hand accompaniment and spanning a twelfth (bars 6–9):

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<sup>202</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, ‘Rondo’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

<sup>203</sup> William Cole, *The Form of Music* (London: The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 2005), p. 25.

<sup>204</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, ‘Rondo’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009]. See also Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Les Tendres Plaintes* (London: Chester, 1956).

<sup>205</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, ‘Rondo’, in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

## Example 4.23.2. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 6–11

Descending scale spanning a 12th

Additionally, the turn figure repeatedly appears throughout the prelude, most interestingly in the closing bars of the final statement of the principal theme and opening bars of the coda with a slight contraction of intervallic structure. While this variant has a strong cadential function here, its purpose at cadences is not unique to this prelude as the composer has previously utilized the idea in Prelude no.20 (bar 41). Combined, these two motives make a final disguised appearance in the lower strand of the writing in the opening bar of the coda where the rising motif having is fragmented and presented in diminution. Consequently the original opening is not recapitulated exactly; it never reappears with either the same texture or dynamic: Stanford only used the original material in a developed way. However, some contrast between the episodes and the principal theme is evident: the unusual temporal change at the opening of the first episode and a registral change in the second episode introduce an arch-shaped cello-like melody in the right hand which is accompanied by a marching bass pattern in octaves.

Composers in the classical period writing rondos often infused their refrains with the rhythms, thematic character and phrase regularity of the dance while both folk

and popular songs provided stimulus.<sup>206</sup> Indeed, this example by Stanford, written in duple time, a metre favoured by Brahms in his rondos, has the character of a quick dance in two-time. Carew states that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries ‘the free-standing rondo became the basis of a veritable industry’ and, in addition to using programmatic titles, composers drew ‘on the fame and popularity of established tunes by using them as the basis of their works’.<sup>207</sup> Additionally, Cole has suggested that in some of the pieces it was the composers’ intentions to ‘simulate national flavour, [...] exploit a popular tune, or capture a mood (pastoral, sentimental, military)’.<sup>208</sup> With the absence of a lyrical theme, it is difficult to compare Stanford’s piece to a folk tune; however, the definite pulse maintained by the steady pulsating quaver bassline which has links to the opening rising and falling scale-like ideas, at times renders a march-like effect. This is prominent in the second episode:

**Example 4.23.3. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 28–38**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 23, bars 28–38, is presented in two systems. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The left hand (bass clef) features a strong, steady pulsating quaver bassline, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic at the beginning and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking towards the end. A bracket under the first few bars of the bassline is labeled "Strong pulsating bassline". The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody consisting of various intervals and rests, including some beamed eighth notes. The overall texture is rhythmic and dance-like.

<sup>206</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, 'Rondo', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

<sup>207</sup> Carew, *The Mechanical Muse*, p. 241.

<sup>208</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, 'Rondo', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

While a mixture of styles and moods is suggested in this miniature, the influences of Stanford's predecessors are also evident in his compositional practices. For example, the melodic material of bar 2 is repeated in bar 3, a practice employed by Brahms with a notable example occurring at the beginning of the third movement of his Symphony no. 1 op.68, while additional examples are found in some of his piano music.<sup>209</sup> Other examples of this technique are found in Stanford's writing: for example, the second theme from the second movement of his first piano trio features this repetition:

**Example 4.23.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 1–3**

*Andante moderato. (alla marcia.)*



<sup>209</sup>

Brahms, *Symphony no.1*. See for example the opening of Johannes Brahms, *Scherzo*, op.4 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1854).



**Example 4.23.4b. Brahms: Symphony no.1 op.68, III, bars 1–3**

Un poco Allegretto e grazioso

2 Flute

2 Oboe

2 Clarinet in B $\flat$

2 Bassoon

2 Horn in E

2 Horn in F

2 Trumpet in B $\flat$

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

**Example 4.23.4c. Stanford: Piano Trio no.1 in E flat, II, bars 52–55**

p

p dolce

A number of the codas in rondos by classical composers were lengthy in design and featured the ‘injected development of a humorous character, marked by unexpected

rests, tempo fluctuations, scoring and dynamic contrasts'.<sup>210</sup> Despite the brevity of Stanford's coda, it clearly has a cadential function. After the familiar turn figure is presented in dialogue with an emphasis on tonic harmony, decorated by subdominant colour, this prelude contains an unexpected hiatus which initiates a striking change in dynamics, texture and style as a rising series of chords leads the prelude to a dramatic and triumphant close:

**Example 4.23.5. Stanford: Prelude no.23, bars 50–57**

dim.

ff

Rising chords

1  $\frac{6}{4}$  1  $\frac{5}{3}$  IV<sub>b</sub> I<sub>c</sub> 1  $\frac{6}{4}$  1  $\frac{5}{3}$  IV<sub>b</sub> III<sub>b</sub> V<sup>7</sup> I<sub>b</sub> I

Coupled with the unified structure of this prelude, Stanford turns to traditional compositional devices such as the cycle of fifths (bars 4–6 and 24–26) and sequences (bars 28–35 and 43–44) as a means to display wide and varied harmonic progressions and to facilitate modulation. Touches of harmonic colour are also achieved through interesting chordal choices and added notes (bar 12). A flattened seventh placed under a tonic pedal has echoes of Russian music and Tchaikovsky in particular (bars 50 and 52). A thickening texture in the left-hand chords and contrary motion scales in the right hand

<sup>210</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, 'Rondo', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].

generate a feeling of climax as the music dramatically approaches the home key for a return of the opening. This return of the opening material is made by means of enharmonic adjustment producing the chord of the flattened submediant with a sharpened fifth (bars 34–38), recalling Grieg and reminiscent of a passage in Stanford's *Beati Quorum Via* op.38 no.3.<sup>211</sup>

Stanford's 'En rondeau' is an attractive contribution to the rondo in the twentieth century. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, rondos were composed in smaller numbers and the returns of refrains were often heard in keys other than the tonic while episodes became long and tonally complex. Common from the nineteenth century onwards independent rondos were 'noted by Czerny as one of the few forms that can stand independently'.<sup>212</sup> Indeed, many became virtuoso pieces with examples by Dussek, Hummel, Weber, Kalkbrenner, Moscheles, Herz and Thalberg. Cole attests that the rondo has been used by twentieth-century composers who have been influenced by the traditions of the Classical period, Prokofiev being an obvious example.<sup>213</sup> In light of Stanford's preference for traditional genres and forms, his choice is not surprising here. Furthermore, for compositional purposes Stanford rated the rondo as next in order of difficulty to the minuet and trio and he noted that the rondo was 'the musical equivalent of the rondeau in poetry, with its threefold repetition of the main theme'.<sup>214</sup> Stanford writes that the composition student:

will have to add a third contrasted subject, and will also be able to practise the experience he has derived from variation writing by modifying in different ways the three repetitions of the first subject as they reappear; while

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<sup>211</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Three Motets*, op.38 (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1905).  
<sup>212</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, 'Rondo', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].  
<sup>213</sup> Malcolm S. Cole, 'Rondo', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/23787>> [accessed 25 August 2009].  
<sup>214</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 77.

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the episodes or bridges between the subjects will give him his first practice in the development of fragments of his themes and in the mixing of them.<sup>215</sup>

Notwithstanding that Stanford's piece is short and less complex than other examples, it nonetheless demonstrates his skilful treatment of the form in a miniature of only fifty-seven bars in line with the guidance he gives his composition students. Although the simple, light opening melody imbues a popular character, it has much in common with character pieces of the Romantic period. Stanford achieves unique unity, variety, and contrast in the work through his handling of motives while also incurring elements of surprise as patterns are interrupted unexpectedly, and combined with the allusion of a march. The mix of the different genres of rondo and march here in a piece designated as a prelude makes it interesting, if somewhat unusual. Of significance is that all three genres are strongly rooted in tradition, but the linking of the march and rondeau within a prelude adds to the strength of Stanford's noteworthy contribution to the prelude tradition in the twentieth century.

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<sup>215</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 78.



## 4.24 Prelude no.24



The impassioned final prelude of op.163 recalls the relentless motion of Preludes nos 3, 5 and 8. Focusing heavily on unremitting arpeggio figures which accompany short melodic bursts, this energised prelude is reminiscent of Liszt as short-note cantilena style music is heard against harp-like figuration. Although written in b minor, there is a strong sense of harmonic ambiguity as the music fluctuates between the tonic key and its relative major in the opening five bars before settling in the tonic key by bar six. Harmonically Stanford demonstrates his departure from conventional harmonic procedures with a number of unusual progressions in this last prelude of the set: the freedom of the resolution of the dominant seventh lends a modern feel to the music (bars /14–15) while the unusual use of the minor submediant chord sandwiched between two tonic chords, in first and second inversion respectively, add interest to the harmony of this prelude (bar 3).

Descending demisemiquaver broken-chord figures shared between the two hands provide an undercurrent in this prelude as they accompany the opening, simple, bleak two-bar melody which is heard in the upper strand of the right hand. Each of the first two melodic phrases has a focal point: the dominant note, f sharp, in the first phrase and the tonic in the second phrase. Both phrases share the same rhythmic pattern and also the melodic shape of their opening four notes:

**Example 4.24.1. Stanford Prelude no.24, bars /1–4**

*Andante appassionato*

A more pronounced variation of the opening melodic motif is also heard in the bassline as the original descending broken-chord figures are replaced by ascending patterns. This dual reversal brings the first section to a close (bars 8–10). The second section opens similarly to the first section with a restatement of the initial melody and features further sequential passages (bar 10). Despite the focus remaining on the notes f sharp and b, as the b functions as the mediant in the new tonal area of G major (bar 12), this displaces

the tonic-dominant emphasis and moves the tonal focus of the music in another direction.

Despite the seemingly relentless nature of the demisemiquaver accompaniment figure which shares an affinity with the hammered octaves of Schubert's *Erkönig* or the circular semiquaver motive of *Gretchen am Spinnrade*,<sup>216</sup> here the continuous repetition is broken as the texture is reduced to a solo melodic line for the first time in the work, producing unusual silences as two different harmonisations of the same brief melodic figure are heard, and giving an unusual feel to the rhythmic pulse of the piece (bars /18–19). Notwithstanding the attempts which are made to reinstate the familiar accompaniment figure, further breaks at the end of the section herald the composer's first use of a four-part chord in this prelude (bars 21–22), preparing for the chordal passage which will close the prelude:

**Example 4.24.2. Stanford: Prelude no.24, bars /18–23**

1st four-part  
R.H. chord in the prelude

R.H.

<sup>216</sup>

Franz Schubert, *Erkönig*, D.328 op.1 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1894); Franz Schubert, *Gretchen Am Spinnrade*, D.118 op.2 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1894).



While this sudden stop may seem unusual, when compared to those other preludes which focused on unceasing figurations, they too came to a sudden and abrupt halt in their closing bars (see Preludes nos 3, 5 and 8 for example). Similarly, the continuous semiquaver movement in Bach's Prelude no.6 in D minor BWV 851 comes to a dramatic halt in the closing bars.<sup>217</sup> Additionally, the broad chordal theme in Stanford's example gives a definite sense of closure to the prelude and to the set as a whole. While Stanford had attempted to add modern twists to his harmonic language, the harmonisation of a rising third recalls the music of Brahms. This progression also features an unusual example of a false relation between the two hands (bar 26):

**Example 4.24.3. Stanford: Prelude no.24, bars /25–28**



The momentary deviation from the unceasing demisemiquavers provides a link to a passage of cycle of fifths (bars 20–21) which incorporates a descending chromatic line in the upper texture of the writing accompanying the familiar arpeggio-like figures and recalling traditional compositional devices exploited throughout this set of preludes. The focus on tonic and dominant harmonies which was highlighted in the first section of the work is evoked through the cycle of dominant sevenths (bar 20) as the music prepares for a passage written under a tonic pedal (bars 23–24). Despite composing this piece in seemingly grounded harmonic terms, Stanford appears at his most contemporary in this prelude through his unusual resolutions of the dominant seventh coupled with Fauré-inspired resolutions of the dominant to the submediant (bar 14),

<sup>217</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Das Wohltemperirte Klavier, I*, BWV 846–869 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1866).



unresolved dominant *thirteenths* (bars 9–10) and unusual chords such as the submediant minor which provide an interesting contrast from the tonic minor (bar 3).

Compared to the opening prelude in the set, Prelude no.24 displays a sense of urgency through the unceasing demisemiquavers; a state of calm and repose is only restored for the closing statement which ends in the tonic major for a conclusive end to op.163.

## Chapter 5 Preludes op.179<sup>1</sup>

### 5.1 Prelude no.25



Continuing the tonal scheme of his first set of preludes, Stanford's first prelude in op. 179 in C major sets up a descending four-note ostinato figure which permeates much of the writing throughout as it undergoes variation and transformation. Stanford's use of the descending tetrachord is reminiscent of a Bach passacaglia, recalling Bach's Chaconne from Violin Partita no.2 in D minor:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As the published edition of the prelude gives the title of Prelude no.25 to the first prelude in op.179, I have decided to maintain this numbering here despite any confusion which may arise from the first prelude being labelled as no.25.

<sup>2</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Violin Partita No.2 in D Minor*, BWV 1004 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1879).

## Example 5.25.1. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 1–7

The musical score for Example 5.25.1, Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 1–7, is presented in two systems. The tempo is marked 'Andante e largamente'. The first system shows the piano introduction with a four-note descending figure in the left hand labeled 'ostinato figure' and a four-note ascending figure in the right hand labeled 'motif x'. The second system continues the piece with the same figures.

Although the four-note figure reappears in the final bars bringing closure to the prelude, the ostinato function of the four-note descending figure is not maintained. Indeed, Stanford's use of an ostinato idea here is somewhat different to a later application in Prelude no.38 where a descending four-note figure clearly functions as an ostinato figure and is maintained for the first forty-two bars in the piece (the prelude is only fifty-six bars long). Here, instead, Stanford alters the figure to facilitate changes in tonal direction (bar 19): it appears in the upper strand and it undergoes sequential development (bars 8–11); it is extended to form a continuous scale (bars 24–27) while it is also omitted from the texture. This omission does not unsettle the music as contrasting rhythmic material engages in a playful exchange between the hands to add interest to the writing as the music prepares for a return to the tonic key (bars 12–16 for example). Expanding into a continuous scale with chromatic inflections (bars 31–35) this supports a strong chordal passage interjected with swooping arpeggios reminiscent of other preludes which culminate in the climax of the piece (bars 31–37).

The most interesting depiction of the four-note figure, however, appears in the closing section which supports a restatement of the opening ostinato and includes

three presentations of the figure: it is rhythmically displaced (bars 38 and 39), tonally altered and spread over two registers in the final two bars. The deliberate positioning of the third note of the four-note descending figure produces an unusual final appearance of the four-note figure:

**Example 5.25.2. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 38–42**

The musical score for Example 5.25.2 shows a four-note descending figure in a piano. The figure is rhythmically displaced in bars 38 and 39. In the final bars (41 and 42), the figure appears again, with an octave shift indicated by an '8'.

While a four-note descending figure returns as an ostinato figure in Prelude no.38, the opening bars of Prelude no.25 are hinted at in the closing bars of Prelude no.26 which links this pair of preludes, ensuring a sense of cohesion within this set of preludes:

**Example 5.25.3. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 65–72**

The musical score for Example 5.25.3 shows a four-note descending figure in a forte. The figure is used as an ostinato figure. In the final bars (71 and 72), the figure appears again, with an octave shift indicated by an '8'.

This isolated representation of a four-note descending ostinato figure had previously been used in the third movement of Stanford's Second Piano Concerto op.126 (1911), a figure which soon evaporates.<sup>3</sup>

While the premise of this piece is based on an ostinato, there are clear links between this prelude and other preludes in both the first and second set. These include

<sup>3</sup> See Section 4.17 for further references to Stanford's use of ostinato in his Second Piano Concerto.



(i) the shifting of a principal motif to the second beat of a bar, (ii) the composer's fondness of plagal cadences which is reminiscent of the music of Brahms (bars 41–42) and (iii) the use of elided progressions in the music. The appearance of an elision in the first prelude in this set serves as an introduction to later examples of elisions which occur throughout the set (see Preludes nos 26, 36 and 39). Here in Prelude no.25 two examples suggest the omission of a crucial chord which is needed to complete the progression (bars 16–17 and 40–42). The resolution in each case is implied despite the unusual treatment of the sharpened fourth in each case.

Stanford presents an idea three times in a number of preludes, including this one (bars 20–22); the statements are often voiced over three different octaves. Here, however, a descending arpeggio is heard over four octaves functioning as a link passage (bars 29–30):

**Example 5.25.4. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 29–30**



## 5.2 Prelude no.26



The first of two preludes in this set written in 3/8 time, Prelude no.26 provides a lively contrast to the opening prelude in the set. While it may provide contrast in terms of character and tempo marking, this prelude also shares a number of similarities to the preceding piece (and others in both sets of preludes) as it exhibits a number of stylistic Stanfordian traits found in this collection. Both preludes end with plagal cadences, while another example of elided progressions brings the first phrase to an emphatic close - a strategic point at which to present an augmented fourth through the omission of the orthodox resolution of the sharpened fourth (bars 7–8).

In the opening bar of the piece motif x features a rising third followed by a leap of a fourth and the repetition of the second beat encompassing a decoration of the tonic by its upper auxiliary:

## Example 5.26.1. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 1–8

This placing of the emphasis on the second beat of the bar in the melodic cell unsettles the music from the outset as it disturbs the meter. Furthermore, the quaver accompaniment in the left hand followed by a quaver rest suggests an accompaniment of a quaver followed by a crotchet which, coupled with the slur on the melodic figure in bars 7–8 and the placing of a crotchet on the second beat of the accompaniment, confirms that the repetition of the second beat of the bar was a deliberate attempt to unsettle the metre. While attempts are made to regularize the beat (bars 19–22 for example) this practice is maintained throughout.

Heard initially in a melodic role, this cell undergoes a series of transformations which include a reversal of role, sequential development and a thickening of texture. Two of the more interesting presentations of the motif include the descending sequential passage spanning four octaves (bars 47–52) and the shortening of the cell to provide a hemiola passage suggesting a Brahmsian influence (see bars 9–12 in Example 5.26.3). Coupled with the earlier emphasis on the second beat of the bar, this hemiola passage (bars 53–54) also destabilizes the metre:

**Example 5.26.2. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 47–55**

Indeed, the presentation of motif x in double octaves, thereby providing a link to the concluding sections of the work is a technique commonly used in a descending fashion by the composer:

**Example 5.26.3. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 9–12**

Further examples of the composer's use of octave writing in a similar layout are found in Preludes nos 27, 37, 45 and 47. A sense of conclusion is achieved through the return of the opening cell in an accompanimental role heard three times (bars 60–63) in what appears to be the closing section of the work as the approach to the tonic key via the Neapolitan key incorporates an unusual chromatic harmonic progression (bars 57–58) before leading to a perfect cadence (bars 58–59):



## Example 5.26.4. Stanford: Prelude no.26, bars 55–72

Chord symbols and dynamics indicated in the score:

- System 1 (Bars 55-60): N6, Db-ivm, cmin- V7, i, *dim.*
- System 2 (Bars 61-72): *p*, *f*, *ff*, VI, IIIM, iv, i, 8, 8

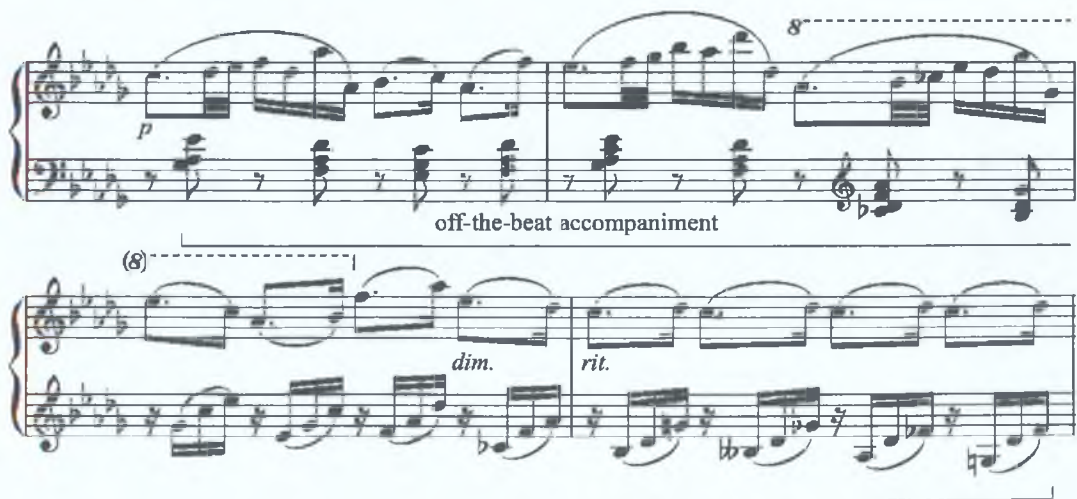
Surprisingly, a dramatic full-bar rest leads to a less common chordal passage which conclusively ends this prelude (VI – IIIM – iv – i). The positioning of a rest at such a strategic point was a familiar device utilized by the composer in the closing section of a work (see for example Prelude no.19): here, its function is to highlight the link to the preceding prelude.

### 5.3 Prelude no.27



Unlike the preceding prelude, the third in this set is not unified by a single idea. Instead, it is the portrayal of the mood and character which is the more interesting aspect of the work. The tempo is *moderato scherzando*, and the initial leaps spanning different registers make a grand gesture which sets up a jocular mood in a similar style to the opening of Prelude no.9 which bears the subtitle ‘Humoresque’. Added to this is the emphasis on off-the-beat accompanimental figures (bars 3–4 and 17–20 for example) and the presence of dissonances on the third beat in a number of bars (bars 1 and 2 for example) which infuses a sense of playfulness into the work:

**Example 5.27.1. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 17–20**



However, Stanford is clearly not donning his clown's hat in this work, for underneath the surface a number of interesting features are revealed. While the prelude may not display Stanford's prowess at thematic development, it demonstrates the ease at which the composer can modify direction in the music, incorporating changes in tonal areas. This is facilitated through his expert handling of sequential development, enharmonic adjustment and chromatic shifting while also exhibiting his resourcefulness as a composer: he presents four different harmonisations of the same melodic figure while incorporating a chromatically descending line (bars 13 and 20). The latter device features in later preludes in this set:

**Example 5.27.2. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bar 20**

The musical notation for Example 5.27.2 shows a piano score for two staves. The right staff features a melodic line with four measures, each containing a half note and a quarter note, with a 'rit.' marking above the first measure. The left staff features a chromatically descending line of eighth notes. Below the staves, four chords are labeled:  $\text{Db-}\#IVb$ ,  $ivbm$ ,  $icm$ , and  $\#IV^o7$ .

The composer's ability to manage such devices ensures a solid harmonic foundation in this prelude. A rich palette of chords including chromatically altered chords, adds harmonic colouring to the work. Indeed, Stanford's favoured chromatic colouring of the sharpened fourth features as the first chromatic note in the work (bar 1), the first prelude in the set to include this colouring. The use of the minor subdominant chord (bar 6) is reminiscent of its presence in the preceding prelude (bar 57) where it provided Neapolitan colouring. On its second appearance, here in Prelude no.27, it adds chromatic interest, thereby providing a small tonal change from the previous bar:

**Example 5.27.3. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 5–6**

Db-IVM                      lbM                      db-ivm                      ibm

Harmonic grounding in this prelude is a clear focus and from the outset the music is clearly united through the descending scale of a thirteenth beginning on the tonic key which underpins the opening texture:

**Example 5.27.4. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 1–5**

Moderato scherzando

Descending scale of a 13th

Other scales with chromatic inflections, aid the return of the tonic key in the closing sections (bars /20–21 and /23–24) before a vii<sup>o7</sup> – I cadence brings the music to a resolute close:



**Example 5.27.5. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 19–26**

dim. rit. *f a tempo*

*p*

*pp* *sf*

vlt i

Linking this piece to earlier preludes threefold repetition of ideas is further explored in this piece with fourfold repetitions of a number of figures (bars 9–10 and 15):

**Example 5.27.6a. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bars 9–10**
**Example 5.27.6b. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bar 15**

## 5.4 Prelude no.28



Prelude no.28 is one of the most adventurous pieces in terms of his use of time signatures as changing time signatures feature in over half of the bars, thereby producing an irregular metre throughout. Although the prelude begins in 3/4, the metre fluctuates between two, three and four beats in the bar giving an idea of nine crotchet beats before settling on a time signature of 4/4 fifteen bars before the end. Indeed, sixty-five percent of the work is in 4/4 time despite the opening time signature. A metrical pattern appears to be established at the outset; however, this is discontinued by bar 10 and the music follows no strict pattern of alternating time signatures.<sup>4</sup>

The reason for Stanford's choice of time signatures in some bars is not always clear. One clear instance, for example, is the passage bars 31–35 which involves four changes of time signature from 3/4 to 4/4 to 3/4 and finally to 4/4. As the lower strand of music reveals a return of the opening material it is understandable why he chose to use this pattern of time signatures despite the suggestion of a duple meter in the right-hand music. A closer examination of the upper strand which is built on a sequence

<sup>4</sup> A 2/4 time signature features for eleven per cent of the piece while a 3/4 time signature features for twenty-four per cent.

incorporates a falling scale and coupled with the irregular metrical construction highlights an adventurous treatment of material by the composer:

**Example 5.28.1. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 31–35**

Descending scale



In addition to this irregularity of time signatures, the unusual placing of accents distorts the metrical balance in the work and undermines any sense of a regular pulse. The insertion of the accents is frequently heard on the second beat of the arch-shaped figure which is unaccompanied in the opening bar, reminiscent of Prelude no.26. This figure forms the basis for much of the melodic material in the prelude and suggests an obsessive streak in the composer. It appears in a fragmented version (bars 10 and 27 for example), in sequence (bars 11–18), placed against triplets (bars 31–35 in Example 5.28.1 above), it is texturally amplified (bars 36–39) and it is altered to form a cambiata figure (bars 22–23):

**Example 5.28.2. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 22–23**

The most interesting presentations involve a rhythmic displacement of the figure which is linked closely to the irregularity of the pulse (bars 44–45 and 48–49) and a final reference to a fragmented version heard in augmentation (bars 50–51). It was not uncommon for Stanford to reserve augmentation for the closing bars of the piece (see for example Preludes nos 1 and 12):

**Example 5.28.3. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 48–54**

This final reference to a fragmented version of the opening is followed by the auxiliary figure initially voiced as a right-hand response to the initial arch shaped figure (bars 2–3), and now heard in the bass it brings the prelude full circle. The pattern links this prelude to a large number of works in the set in which Stanford achieves motivic unity by restating principal ideas (albeit in varied forms at times) in the closing bars of the piece. While it is not an unusual melodic figure, the stepwise movement of the opening three notes, here using the first three degrees of the scale, links this prelude with others



in the set (see Preludes nos 10, 23, 31 and 40). Indeed, patterns in the bassline (bars 15 and 17) link this prelude to a number of others in which the same sequence of notes (i.e.  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ ) is employed. This prelude also confirms Stanford's interest in particular harmonic sounds as the first non-diatonic note in the prelude is the sharpened fourth; it appears frequently throughout as chromatic colouring. A further harmonic device utilized in the opening bars presents a link to Prelude no.26: in each case, on the second appearance of the opening idea an important note is chromatically altered which helps to propel the music to a different tonal region; such an applied dominant facilitates a tonicization to the key of the dominant minor (bar 5). Such chromatic alteration is utilized to great effect in the piece to direct the music back to the home tonal region from the unusual key of C major (bars 8–12):

**Example 5.28.4. Stanford: Prelude no.28, bars 8–12**

Further harmonic ideas suggest the soundworld of Rachmaninov: the progression of a dominant ninth resolving to the chord of III major in first inversion (bar 35) and the approach to the home key via the distant key of a minor and chord of F (bars 40–45).

## 5.5 Prelude no.29



Prelude no.29 is the first of two preludes in this set in 9/8 time.<sup>5</sup> Despite the off-beat accompaniment of the opening bars, the piece regularizes a solid sense of metre after the irregular metrical patterns of the preceding prelude. The prelude is full of figurative work and reveals few clean melodic lines. Opening with florid passagework in semiquavers which incorporates much emphasis on lower auxiliaries, the accompaniment introduces a short scale passage which hints at the many scales which will feature throughout. The emphasis on such elaborate passages requires nimble fingerwork and skill to voice each of the lines appropriately. While the interval of a third is of importance in the opening bars, these rolling thirds expand to become sixths by bar 4, a practice which is repeated for the return of the opening material (bars 15–18). With little stress placed on long melodic lines, much of the writing evolves from the composer's development and variation of a number of short figures through the use of sequences, fragmentation and intervallic expansion.

The short scale accompaniment introduced in the opening bar appears in a number of guises throughout, mostly in a descending fashion. Performed initially in

<sup>5</sup> The other prelude in 9/8 is Prelude no.45.

octaves, it is heard in thirds for its repeat in the second bar thereby stressing the interval of a third in the opening bar. Some scales incorporate chromatic inflections (bar 4); others form passages of parallel sixths and thirds with the upper strand (bars 8, 15, 16, 18 and 21) while the two most notable of the scale passages appear firstly pivoting under a tonic pedal (bar 15) and secondly above a dominant pedal B flat incorporating a chromatic scale (bar 22). While a number of the chromatic passages span a perfect fourth both in ascending and descending form (bars 12–13 and 22 with a diminished fourth in bar 24), the most significant chromatic passage follows a descent of crashing octaves. Here, the music slowly rises from the lowest note in the piece, spanning a sixth, and leading to the highest note in the work before an abrupt pause marks a perfect cadence in the home key. The use of chromatic passages presents an interesting underlay to the music:

**Example 5.29.1. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 27–35**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 29, bars 27–35, is presented in three systems. The first system shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a pedal point. A bracketed section in the treble staff is circled. The second system continues the melodic line, with a 'Chromatic ascent' labeled in the bass staff. The third system shows the final bars, ending with a perfect cadence marked 'V7' and 'I'.

With this intense build-up of registers and perfect cadence suggesting the culmination of ideas, a sense of completion is attained. However, another section begins at bar 35 with the reintroduction of the principal idea, now displaced to the second beat of the bar which destabilizes the music momentarily, a favourite developmental device of Stanford's (see Preludes nos 19 and 28 for example). Despite the unhinging, a greater sense of harmonic stability is achieved in this section with the tonic pedal providing a strong foundation. Interestingly, two familiar cadential formulas return here: firstly, a flattened sixth degree falls to the fifth and resolves to the tonic (bars 36–37 and 38–39) with the flattened sixth eventually replaced by the natural sixth (bar 42):

**Example 5.29.2. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 35–43**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 29, bars 35–43, is presented in four systems. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The first system shows a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic line with a 'dim.' marking. The third system shows a melodic line with a 'dim.' marking and a bass line. The fourth system shows a melodic line with a 'dim.' marking and a bass line. At the bottom of the fourth system, there are three labels: 'vii°d over tonic pedal', 'vii°d over tonic pedal', and 'vii°d over tonic pedal', followed by a final 'I' marking.

Secondly, the concluding cadential progression involves the familiar sharpened fourth degree of the scale resolving upwards before finally progressing to the tonic. This makes for an interesting connection between the opening and closing bars of the work



as the first and last accidentals used are those of the sharpened fourth, further confirming the composer's interest in this colouring:

**Example 5.29.3. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 43–46**

#IV<sup>7</sup>      V<sub>3</sub><sup>6</sup>    V<sup>7</sup>    I<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup>    I

While there are clearly a number of aspects of the language which are strong favourites in the composer's harmonic palette, Stanford also demonstrates his influences in this prelude. A passage in this prelude (bars 9–10) is suggestive of one in the first movement of Brahms's *Symphony no.3* (bars 7–10), as both share a similar harmonic structure and ending on the tonic chord in second inversion, while the two passages also include a striking rising sixth:<sup>6</sup>

**Example 5.29.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.29, bars 9–10**

#I<sup>o7</sup>d    V<sup>7</sup>d    #ii<sup>o7</sup>    I<sub>b</sub>    #IV<sup>7</sup>    I<sub>c</sub>

Rising 6th

<sup>6</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Symphony No.3*, op.90 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1884).

210

## 5.6 Prelude no.30



Suggestive of a Griegian lyric piece, the lightness in this prelude is portrayed through the opening detached accompaniment and the infusion of staccato notes in the melodic line. The emphasis placed on grace notes, a rarity in this set of preludes, adds to the delicate nature of the writing: only Prelude no.13 included this level of decoration in the writing. Here, the composer uses a mixture of acciaccaturas and appoggiaturas grouped in twos. In most cases the grace notes resolve upwards by means of a semitone or tone; however, on two occasions the acciaccaturas involve a leap of a seventh for the first tonicization to a minor tonality (bars 17–18). Other dissonances, both accented and unaccented, decorate the writing and add harmonic interest to the prelude:

Example 5.30.1. Stanford: Prelude no.30, bars 12–22

Table 5.1: Key to Grace Notes Annotated in Example 5.30.1

Letter	Description
a	Single note acciaccatura resolving up a semitone
b	Lower auxiliary (g') with both f' and g' then functioning as a two-note appoggiatura resolving up a tone and semitone
c	Single-note acciaccatura resolving up a seventh

While the tonicization provides only a fleeting reference to f minor (bar 17) before the music settles in the key of the relative major for the remainder of the phrase, this practice is similar to one utilized by Haydn and Mozart in a number of the pianoforte sonatas: a brief reference to the minor key prepares the introduction of a major key statement of the second subject.

Notwithstanding the light mood and character portrayed, the formal structure of this prelude is clearly defined, with six sections and a coda, all of which are approximately the same length and underpinned by the clear phrase structure preserved throughout. Indeed, the prelude is somewhat symmetrical in design. A four-bar link (bars 38–41) leads to a return of the opening music (bar 42) which includes a role reversal for the hands and change of direction for the opening melodic figure, a practice which is continued for a further entry (bar 50):



## Example 5.30.2. Stanford: Prelude no.30, bars 38–49

Table 5.2: Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining Mediant Relations in Prelude no.30

Section	Bar-Number	Tonality
A	1–11	d minor
A <sup>1</sup>	12–22	d minor, <b>E flat major</b> (15), <b>C major</b> (16), f minor (17), F major (18)
B	23–37	F major, c minor (24), B flat major (26), <b>E flat major</b> (29), <b>g minor</b> (31), d minor (32)
Link	38–41	d minor
A <sup>2</sup>	42–49	g minor, B flat major (47)
A <sup>3</sup>	50–62	C major, <b>c minor</b> (52), <b>E flat major</b> (53), <b>C flat major</b> (56), <b>b minor</b> (57), <b>G major</b> (59), g minor (61), d minor (62)
C	63–76	<b>d minor</b> , <b>B flat major</b> (67), <b>d minor</b> (69), G major (72), d minor (73)
Coda	76–86	d minor

While the prelude shares a range of features with other preludes, a clear link is evident with the preceding prelude. The first and final accidentals in both are the sharpened fourth, with the final and subtle reference to the familiar progression  $\sharp 4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ . While it may not sound as convincing a treatment of the progression as in earlier examples, it is obvious that Stanford intentionally included the chromatic note here:

## Example 5.30.3. Stanford: Prelude no.30, bars 81–86

The musical score for Example 5.30.3 shows bars 81–86 of Stanford's Prelude no. 30. The notation is in G major, 3/4 time. The right hand plays a continuous eighth-note accompaniment. The left hand has a melodic line that begins with a half note G, followed by quarter notes A, B, and C. Dynamics include *dim.* (diminuendo) at bar 81, *mf* (mezzo-forte) at bar 83, and *pp* (pianissimo) at bar 85. A bracket below the staff indicates a fingering sequence: ^ #4 ^ 5 1.

Indeed, the ending points back to the opening material with a varied restatement of the initial quaver accompaniment figure now heard in retrograde and fragmented. Coupled with the return of the opening melodic figure, this recapitulation bolsters the sense of symmetry in the work.

## 5.7 Prelude no.31

Andante (largamente.)



The first prelude in the fifth series is yet another example to begin with a rising three-note pattern, from submediant to tonic, reminiscent of Preludes nos 10, 23 and 28. This cell has an important structural function in that it is used at the start of each phrase in the opening and final section while also being used at the start of the first and closing phrase of the middle section ensuring a sense of motivic unity. On occasion a number of the entries are textually augmented including doubling at the sixth and octave in a style reminiscent of Brahms (bars /4, /7, /8 and /32). The first three significant appearances of the figure are heard a third higher each time (bar /1, /7 and /13) giving a sense of forward motion to the piece while also making reference to his penchant for a musical trinity:

**Example 5.31.1 Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 1–14**

Andante (largamente.)

Rising three-note figure

Rising scale

The most interesting presentation of the rising figure functions as a lead-in to the closing section for a return of the opening material in augmentation (bars 35–38):

**Example 5.31.2. Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 35–38**

The use of this figure at the beginning of a number of the phrases is similar to the treatment of a three-note rising figure in a later prelude. Although Prelude no.43 does not open with a three-note rising figure, a number of the phrases thereafter begin with an upbeat lead-in to a phrase comprising three rising notes.

While the rising figure has an important structural function through its unification of a number of the phrase openings, this small scale-like cell also expands to



become longer scales (bars /3–4, /9–11 and /39–40) which lengthen and extend the melodic line and demonstrate the composer's ability to expand and develop a short melodic cell. Despite the opening in E flat major, the first octave scale begins on c' (bars /3–4) while a modulation to c minor produces a scale starting on E flat (see bars /9–11 in Example 5.31.1).

Step-wise movement permeates much of the writing, with both the melodic strand and accompaniment moving in this fashion. The opening accompaniment begins with the tonic decorated by its lower auxiliary which on occasion is varied as an upper auxiliary (bar 6). Despite making the initial appearance in the opening section and undergoing intervallic expansion, it is not until the final section that the cell makes a strong appearance by underpinning much of the melodic material. Indeed, it is this cell which provides the final reference to the opening material in the closing bars of the prelude (bars 42–45 and 48–49) bringing the piece to a rounded conclusion. This repeated accompaniment figure (bars 42–45) reappears in a varied form in the closing section of Prelude no.33 (bars 81–84) with both preludes featuring four statements of the figure thereby maintaining a close link between the concluding sections of each work:

**Example 5.31.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 42–50**

The musical score for Example 5.31.3a shows two systems of staves. The first system (bars 42–45) is marked *p* (piano). The second system (bars 46–50) is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and includes a *rall.* (rallentando) marking. The bass line features a recurring eighth-note accompaniment figure. Roman numerals *V7*, *i*, and *i* are marked below the bass staff in the second system.

**Example 5.31.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 81–86**

Further links with earlier preludes are formed through the composer's choice of harmonic palette. The progression from dominant seventh to tonic involves the unusual resolution to the tonic in second inversion before the more stable root position. The most notable example of this forms part of the concluding cadential progression in the prelude, at a point when one would expect a more stable progression (bars 47–48). Earlier examples are variants of the same idea (bars 6–7 and 41–42), the former example providing an extended variant of the progression. Similar progressions were featured in two earlier preludes (Preludes nos 28 and 29), and reappear in a number of the remaining preludes. The delayed resolution to the tonic in root position presents an idiosyncratic variant to the standard resolution from dominant to tonic.

## 5.8 Prelude no.32



The first prelude of op.179 to feature unrelenting passagework is reminiscent of a number of preludes in Stanford's first book as they form a distinctive underlay accompanying a single-note melodic strand. Although the initial semiquavers are varied, becoming a passage of demisemiquavers (bars 25–33, 45 and 47) which provide the accompaniment to a more marked and pronounced melodic line in the bass (bars 25–33), the incessant nature of the arpeggio-like figures retains a sense of momentum in the work. In a similar vein to the preludes utilising a related figuration, the closing bars introduce an abrupt change of texture to prepare for a conclusive finish (bars 63–65). Despite the momentary halt on the last beat in bars 41–44 and also the two bars of crashing ascending octaves in a bravura Chopinesque style (bars 46 and 48), these changes do not make any significant alteration to the overall sense of urgency. Instead, the rising octaves in particular increase the impetus:

## Example 5.32.1. Stanford: Prelude no.32, bars 41–49



As the abrupt change of texture for the closing bars creates a sense of repose, Stanford does not waste the opportunity to exhibit his skill. While augmentation of the principal motif was used in the preceding prelude as a means to link the contrasting middle section to a return of the opening material, here augmentation of a familiar cadential progression with the submediant falling to the dominant before finally resolving to the tonic initiates a different type of rhythmic interest in the closing statement and makes for a dramatic conclusion. Despite the placing of the chordal texture in the lower registers, the striking leap for the last chord achieves registral resolution with the first and last notes of the prelude played in the same register. A similar cadential arrangement is used in the closing bars of Prelude no.36 (bars 55–64):



## Example 5.32.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.32, bars /61–65

$V^{13}$   $i$   $V^{13}e$   $i$   $V^{13}e$   $VI$   $ic$   $i$   
 Outlining  $\hat{6}$   $\hat{5}$   $\hat{1}$   $\hat{6}$   $\hat{5}$   $\hat{1}$   $\hat{6}$   $\hat{5}$   $\hat{1}$

## Example 5.32.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 55–64

Continuous reference to the melodic outline  $\hat{6}$   $\hat{5}$   $\hat{1}$   
 $ii^c$   $V_4^6$   $V^7$   $V^7$   $i_4^6$   $i$

Other points of harmonic interest include the statement of the tonic chord in second inversion before it is heard in root position (bars 64–65) which likens the work to other preludes in which cadential progressions featured a weaker version of the tonic chord before the stronger root position. Coupled with the cadential formula is the use of the unusual dominant thirteenth in fifth position (bar 60) which was initially introduced for a perfect cadence earlier (bars 58–59). The unconventional use of the dominant thirteenth is an example of the composer's daring and adventurous treatment of harmony. While it is atypical of the rest of Stanford's harmonic palette in this prelude which demonstrates a fondness for traditional progressions, some other moments also demonstrate bold moves. The brief reference to G major (bar 44) is an unusual choice,

being the only key in the prelude with sharps in its key signature, and lies at a distant remove from the tonic, despite the smooth passage from a flat minor which passed through C flat major and g flat minor which is facilitated by means of enharmonic adjustment and chromatic adjustment (bars 38–44). However, this brief tonicization to G major provides tonal contrast and colour to the writing.

While the bravura octaves can be compared to Chopin's style, so too can one of the harmonic progressions used in an earlier passage (bars 37–41). The approach via an augmented sixth recalls a comparable passage in Chopin's Nocturne no.1 from op.55 (bars 16–20) with both following a similar harmonic progression and modulating upwards to a key a third higher:<sup>7</sup>

**Example 5.32.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.32, bars 37–41**

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Stanford's Prelude no. 32, bars 37–41. Each system consists of a piano (left) and right-hand (right) part. The notation includes various chords and melodic lines, with specific harmonic annotations below the piano part of each system:

- System 1 (bars 37–38):** The piano part is annotated with "abm Aug 6th" (augmented sixth chord) and "V7" (dominant seventh chord).
- System 2 (bars 39–40):** The piano part is annotated with "V7b" (dominant seventh flat) and "i" (tonic).
- System 3 (bars 41):** The piano part is annotated with "V7b" (dominant seventh flat) and "I" (tonic).

The right-hand part of each system features a series of rapid octaves, characteristic of the "bravura octaves" mentioned in the text.

<sup>7</sup>

Frederic Chopin, *Nocturnes*, op.55 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1905).

## Example 5.32.3b. Chopin: Nocturne op.55 no.1, bars 16–20

Harmonic symbols below the staff:

Aflat- VI    It Aug 6th    V<sup>7</sup>    V<sup>7</sup> b    cmin-VI    #ii<sup>7</sup>    vii    I<sup>7</sup>M

For the pianist, this prelude requires a secure command of the instrument to maintain control over the swooping arpeggios, while ensuring that the main melodic line is not lost among the descending and ascending lines. It would make for an excellent study and demands a high degree of accuracy for the arpeggio figures.

## 5.9 Prelude no.33



The commanding and lively march-like prelude is the first piece in this set which is suggestive of military music. Of the forty-eight preludes, five include reference to a march in either tempo marking or subtitle, this being the fourth.<sup>8</sup> The music is written in a duple time signature, and a steady beat is maintained throughout through the positioning of rhythmic figures on the beat. In addition, the frequent descending scale passages — heard both in the treble and bass, suggestive of a walking-bass figure when placed in the bass — instil a definite march-like sense to the music:

### Example 5.33.1. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 18–22



The use of a fanfare motif in the opening bars acts as a call to attention functioning as dominant preparation for the main thematic material (bars 1–4). Spread over four

<sup>8</sup> Preludes nos 7, 22, 33 and 46 all refer to a march in their tempo markings while Prelude no.23 has the subtitle 'alla marcia'.



octaves and followed by two-and-a-half beats rest, it adds to the dramatic sense of the introductory material:

**Example 5.33.2. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars /1–4**



While the opening fanfare acted as dominant preparation for the first presentation of the principal theme heard in the tonic, the return of the principal thematic material is introduced by a tonic fanfare (bars 36–38), thereby providing a sense of balance in the work. Interestingly, both tonal forms of the fanfare are restated in the closing bars of the work which produce a definite perfect cadence to round off the piece (bars 85–91). While the principal theme is not reaffirmed in the closing section, the return of the fanfare motif at this point is a convincing unifying device to round off the prelude while also maintaining a sense of motivic unity and resolution, while the prolonged emphasis on tonic harmony in the preceding bars (bars 81–85) confirms a clear sense of tonal resolution. The emphasis placed on dominant and tonic in the opening bars is one which is continued throughout, ensuring a stable sense of tonality. Descending scales heard over a tonic pedal, heard initially as a linking device (bars 18–19 and 73–74) become a more stable layer in the texture, providing harmonic support to chordal passagework based predominantly on tonic harmony (bars 20–22, 24–26 and 77–78). Oscillating patterns are used as a variant of the principal theme (bars 39–41 and 43–45). This oscillating pattern is reminiscent of a similar passage in the first movement of

Beethoven's Piano Sonata no.21 'Waldstein' which is preceded by the chord of the dominant (bars 14–15):<sup>9</sup>

**Example 5.33.3a. Beethoven: Piano Sonata no.21, I, bars 14–15**



**Example 5.33.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 38–42**



Despite the clear sense of beat articulated from the outset, an air of ambiguity is created at the beginning in assessing the actual start of the principal thematic material. The clear emphasis on dominant preparation by the fanfare idea (bars /1–3) followed by the two-and-a-half beats rest could suggest that the principal thematic material commences in bar 4 immediately after the silence (Example 5.33.4a). However, the next fanfare idea (bars 4–5) could be an extension of the opening suggesting then that the principal thematic material only begins at the piano dynamic level (bar /5 in Example 5.33.4b). The placing of the rests also makes a strong case for having a demarcation between the initial fanfare and principal thematic material:

<sup>9</sup> Beethoven, *Piano Sonata no.21*.

**Example 5.33.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 1–8**
**Example 5.33.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 1–8**

In the second of these examples the principal theme opens with an upward rising movement, reminiscent of those other preludes by Stanford where the principal thematic material begins with three rising notes. However, marking the start of the principal theme at /bar 5 (as in the first example above) strengthens the case for the layout which suggests that bars 2 and 3 of the principal idea are identical. A technique utilized by Brahms, this practice was mirrored by Stanford in the second theme in the second

movement of his First Piano Trio in E flat (bars 52–55).<sup>10</sup> Either option subscribes to strategies typical of the composer.

What makes the interpretation of the opening eight bars all the more interesting is the connection between this theme and the ballet music from Schubert's *Rosamunde*. Here, the principal thematic material shares similarities in terms of its rhythmic character followed by the triadic figure emphasising tonic and dominant. Coincidentally, the second and third bars of Schubert's theme are also identical:

**Example 5.33.5. Schubert: *Rosamunde* bars 1–5<sup>11</sup>**



Despite the clear reference to the music of Schubert, this work is also linked to a number of Stanford's other preludes in the set. The most significant connection occurs after the final reference to the principal theme where prolonged emphasis on the tonic through the repetition of tonic chords is accompanied by a figure similar to that used at a related point in Prelude no.31 (compare bars 81–84 here with Prelude no.31 bars 42–45 and 48–49, in Examples 5.31.3a and 5.31.3b). Interestingly, this passage also includes a favoured progression of the composers'. Here, the music progresses from V<sup>7</sup> to 1c before resolving on the stronger position of the tonic chord (bars 80–81), presenting a less strong resolution of a familiar cadential progression. Despite this weaker presentation of a perfect cadence, Stanford's awareness of harmonic stability is clearly witnessed in the prelude. For example, a cycle of fifths ensures a closely woven harmonic texture leading to a cadential point (bars 31–33). Other conventional

<sup>10</sup> Keighary-Brislane, 'The Piano Trios of Stanford', p. 30. Charles Villiers Stanford, *Piano Trio No.1*, op.35 (London: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1889).

<sup>11</sup> Only the top lines are reproduced here in this musical example, with the other parts missing.



progressions are used at strategic points, vii<sup>07</sup>/V–V6/4–I, which also incorporates the familiar #4̂ – 5̂ – 1̂ progression (bars 16–18) and #IV<sup>7</sup> – V<sup>7</sup> – I (bars 75–77), both of which once more highlight the composer's interest in the sharpened fourth degree of the scale:

**Example 5.33.6. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 16–18**

Outline of melodic shape

**Example 5.33.7. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 75–77**

While the march-like rhythm and fanfares may suggest the soundworld of military music, the upbeat atmosphere implies a more optimistic mood.

## 5.10 Prelude no.34



It is interesting to note that of the forty-eight preludes, only two have the marking ‘Tempo di Valse’, both of which are no.10 in their respective sets of preludes and in the same key. While an examination of the two preludes highlight differences, some similarities also emerge. An assessment of all of Stanford's works for piano reveals that eleven are waltzes, the highest proportion of one genre, confirming this to be a favoured style for the composer. Indeed, op.178 was a set of three waltzes, the only other works by the composer published by the same publishing house that issued the two sets of preludes.

While the first accidental introduced in the prelude governs the leading note, the first foreign note in the tonic key is the sharpened fourth.<sup>12</sup> Although it does not appear in the first bar - as was the case in Prelude no.10 - it makes an entry at a strategic point, before the end of the first phrase adding colour to the cadential progression (bar 8), while also enriching the harmonic palette of the second phrase while the music is still in the tonic key (bar 11):

<sup>12</sup> The two natural signs in bars 5 and 6 are unjustified as the two notes in question were not sharpened in the preceding bars.

## Example 5.34.1. Stanford: Prelude no.34, bars 1–12

Tempo di Valse

Descending tetrachord

Despite the strong presence of the sharpened fourth in the opening section, the composer does not include any reference to one of his preferred cadences which uses the sharpened fourth in this prelude. Instead, Stanford is a little more adventurous in one of his choices of cadential progression. After a sequential passage of modulations incorporating a cycle of fifths (bars 16–21) the music appears to settle momentarily in the unusual key of d minor (bar 25) before a chromatic adjustment facilitates a return to the tonic key with what suggests a perfect cadence in the home key using  $\text{vii}^{07} - \text{i}$  (bars 27–28). However, this effect is soon overturned as further chromatic alteration incorporating the Neapolitan brings the first section to a more subdued close (bars 29–34), evoking an earlier use by Stanford in his *Elegiac Ode*.<sup>13</sup> Links to Brahms are apparent in this prelude. Harmonically, the presentation of the progression  $\text{vii}^{07}\text{c} - \text{ib}$  is suggestive of Brahms while a further link occurs in the closing bars of the piece. In a similar vein to a number of preludes Stanford abruptly changes the direction or texture of the music in the final bars, often denoted by the insertion of a rest or pause. In this prelude the music abruptly comes to a halt (bar 83) after a soaring passage culminating in an extended trill. From here the coda introduces a new chordal theme marked *più lento*, of which the melody of the second and third bars is identical, thereby linking this

13

Charles Villiers Stanford, *Elegiac Ode*, op.21 (Leipzig: C.G. Roder, 1884).

prelude to the preceding one. This closing phrase contrasts with the main thematic material and gives the prelude a sense of finality:

**Example 5.34.2. Stanford: Prelude no.34, bars 77–89**

The musical score for Example 5.34.2 consists of two systems of music. The first system covers bars 77 to 86. It features a melodic line in the right hand with trills and a descending tetrachord in the left hand. The second system covers bars 87 to 89, marked 'Più lento', with a descending tetrachord in the right hand and a descending tetrachord in the left hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

Structurally this prelude is well-balanced in ternary form, with a contrasting middle section. This section unhinges the steady metre introduced at the opening as a number of bars start with a rest. Beginning in e minor, a descending upper tetrachord is outlined in the left hand of the opening four bars in the piece which permeates much of the lower strand in the opening section (see Example 5.34.1) and which reappears for the return of the opening music (bar 59), thus forming a link with Preludes nos 25 and 26 for example. By contrast the middle section, beginning in C major, features an ascent of the upper tetrachord in the new key (bars 35–36). The tetrachord ensures unity between the opening of both sections and it also achieves balance. Indeed, the appearance of the ascending tetrachord in the opening bars of the middle section (bar 35) is not an isolated occurrence with three further entries (bars 37, 44 and 46) and other appearances of the descending form in the opening section (bars 9–12 and 13–16) further strengthening the unified sense throughout the prelude:



**Example 5.34.3. Stanford: Prelude no.34, bars 35–38**

The prominent use of the tetrachord maintains a strong harmonic stability in the prelude. Additionally, the harmonic progressions demonstrate Stanford's penchant for strong orthodox key changes while the palette of keys chosen for the first section outline a cycle of fifths. Despite its absence save for the initial bars in the reprise beginning at bar 59 and the final use of the descending tetrachord (bars 84–85), the tonality in this section is more stable in comparison to earlier sections in which the composer explores a variety of tonal areas including a striking shift from c minor to B flat major:

**Table 5.3: Structural and Tonal Analysis Outlining a Ternary Form and Orthodox Shifts in Harmony in Prelude no.34**

Section	Bar Numbers	Tonality
A	1–34	e minor, A major (16), D major (17), G major (18), C major (19), F major (20), d minor (25), e minor (27)
B	35–58	C major, G major (37), c minor (44), B flat major (46), E flat major (47), A flat major (55), F major (57)
A'	59–83	e minor, G major (66), e minor (68), G major (70), e minor (74)
Coda	84–89	G major, e minor (86)

On the whole, this prelude unveils the influence of Brahms, but Stanford also demonstrates his ability to present a well unified piece which exhibits a number of traditional characteristics including repetition and the use of sequences to alter tonal direction. He presents a range of scale-like ideas which provide a stable harmonic underlay while also unifying the composition.

## 5.11 Prelude no.35



While this prelude is written on two staves, the work demonstrates that Stanford's experience as an organist informs the music as the lowest strand in the bass clef is suggestive of a pedal line in organ music, reminding the performer of the layout of the first prelude which was written on three staves and which was suited to performance on both piano and organ. Here the persistent tonic octave pedal provides a profound underlay to the music and only strays from the tonic for two notes in the closing bars to provide cadential support (bars 29–30) outlining the familiar  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  progression in the bassline. The dominant bass note provides an underlay for the  $\#IV^{o7} - V^7 - I$  cadence, highlighting a combination of the composer's two favoured cadential progressions. Most significant here, is that the combination occurs in those bars in which he temporarily alters the tonic pedal:

## Example 5.35.1. Stanford: Prelude no.35, bars 27–33

The musical score for Example 5.35.1 shows two systems of music. The first system is marked *mf* and consists of two staves. The second system also consists of two staves. Below the second system, there is a bracketed section labeled "over dominant pedal" with Roman numerals *I*, *#IV<sup>ov</sup>*, *V<sup>7</sup>*, and *I* underneath. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with a descending chromatic passage in the right hand of the second system.

The tonic pedal provides a strong harmonic underlay in this work and ensures a tightly woven piece. Above the pedal, Stanford presents a predominantly chordal texture which is mostly derived from the melodic material of bar 1 accompanied by octaves in the left hand. When the roles are reversed the melodic figure and its derivatives from bar 1 are accompanied by a descending chromatic passage which spans a ninth (bars 22–25) which leads the music to the lower registers of the piano as the music prepares to close:

## Example 5.35.2. Stanford: Prelude no.35, bars 22–26

The musical score for Example 5.35.2 shows two systems of music. The first system is marked *ff* and consists of two staves. The second system is marked *dim.* and also consists of two staves. The first system is labeled "Descending chromatic passage". The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with a descending chromatic passage in the right hand of the first system.

There are the clear momentary references to a passage in the second movement of Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*.<sup>14</sup> Both works share a similar pedal layout (compare bar 1 *et passim* in Stanford to bar 40 *et passim* in Brahms). References to the supertonic major, G major, and the flat submediant, D flat major follow (compare bars 3 and 13 in Stanford to bar /45–46 in Brahms and bar 10 in Stanford to bar /49–50 in Brahms). The final link between the two works is the use of F as the dominant seventh and ninth respectively of b flat minor (compare bar 11 in Stanford to bars 53–54 in Brahms). What is most significant about these connections is that they appear in the same order in the two works and all within close proximity to each other. Interestingly, the first movement of Stanford's String Quartet no.3 in D minor op.64 also has echoes of the Requiem.<sup>15</sup> Stanford was familiar with Brahms's Requiem, having conducted performances of the work.<sup>16</sup>

**Example 5.35.3. Stanford: Prelude no.35, bars 10–13**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 35, bars 10–13, is presented in two systems. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The first system begins with a key signature change to D-flat major, indicated by two flats (B-flat and E-flat) on the bass staff. Below the staff, the text 'D flat major' is written. A 'Pedal F' marking is placed below the first measure. The second system shows a key signature change to G major, indicated by one sharp (F-sharp) on the bass staff. Below the staff, the text 'G major' is written. Another 'Pedal F' marking is placed below the first measure of this system. The music features arpeggiated chords and moving lines in both hands.

<sup>14</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, op.45 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1926).

<sup>15</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *String Quartet No.3*, op.64 (London: Augener Ltd., 1897).

<sup>16</sup> Stanford directed a performance of the work on 23 May 1876 with the Cambridge University Musical Society, while Richter conducted the work in June 1884 in Cambridge. Various performances of the work took place on 23 March 1898 and in April 1898 with the Bach Choir. Stanford conducted the work at the Leeds Festival in 1910.



The thick chordal writing is also reminiscent of Brahms, with a number of 8 6 formations (bars 3, 5, 23, 29 and 30). From the outset, the writing is texturally expansive; the doubling at the octave further intensifies this characteristic which then remains a feature of much of the accompaniment (from bar 5). This intensification reaches a climactic point (bar 22) where the music is marked with the loudest dynamic marking in the piece to emphasise the descending chromatic passage which then dispenses with the octave accompaniment but incorporates a thicker chordal arrangement in the right hand (bars 22–25). For the closing statement of the prelude a strand is omitted from the texture as the same melody is presented an octave higher with a slight alteration to the harmonic underlay, a technique often employed by Stanford to highlight harmonic contrast in the work (bars 27–30). This omission of a strand reveals a sense of symmetry in the work as the music returns to a chordal texture in both hands for the closing bars, a less obvious instance of where the composer links the closing bars to the opening bars of the music in this set of preludes as a clear motivic link is absent. However, along with the textural link, this prelude clearly outlines the composer's attraction to the sharpened fourth degree with its early entry (bar 2) and colouring for the final cadential progression (bar 30).

## 5.12 Prelude no.36

Allegretto moderato ma con moto.

The musical score for Prelude no. 36 is presented in three systems. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a tempo marking of 'Allegretto moderato ma con moto.' The melody in the right hand is supported by a semiquaver accompaniment in the left hand. The second system continues this texture. The third system introduces a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a section marked 'L.H.' (Left Hand) with a single-note melody. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major.

Reminiscent of the eighth prelude with its incessant semiquaver accompaniment figure supporting a single-line melody at the opening, this prelude incorporates a range of styles as the music progresses. While it is suggestive of a Schubertian Impromptu at the outset, references to a number of composers are also evident through Stanford's choice of melodic and harmonic devices. Although the texture of Schubert's Third Impromptu in op.90 is thicker, the simplicity of the melodic strand heard over the rocking, triadic semiquaver accompaniment is similar.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Franz Schubert, *Four Impromptus*, D.899 (op.90) (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1888).

**Example 5.36.1. Schubert: Impromptu op.90 no.3, bars 1–4**

A more interesting connection between the two works, however, is the use of a similar descending passage based on a scale passage. Heard in the opening section in Stanford's case, it displays his tonal manipulation of similar descending steps heard in the opening bars (bars 1–2) into a whole-tone scale to direct the music momentarily towards the unusual key of the supertonic minor, g flat minor:

**Example 5.36.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 3–4**

## Example 5.36.2b. Schubert: Impromptu op.90 no.3, bars 73–75

The image shows three systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. Each system has a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The right hand plays a continuous eighth-note scale, while the left hand plays a single note. The first system has a 'cres -' marking. The second system has 'en-' and 'do' markings. The third system has a 'tr' marking. A bracket labeled 'outline of scale' spans the first two systems.

In addition to the whole-tone scale, Stanford incorporates a variety of ascending scales into the writing, the first of which, beginning on the sixth degree of the scale of D flat major (bars 11–12), acts as a link between the first and second sections and leads to an abrupt change of texture and style as the music suggests an unusual grouping before a return of the opening passage is heard a third lower (bar 16). Interestingly, after an extended presentation of the opening material, another unaccompanied scale, this time in C major (bars 32–33), functions as a link to the second hearing of the unusual grouping. More significant, however, are the final two scales incorporated into the writing. Both rising chromatic scales span two octaves and accompany altered and rhythmically displaced statements of the opening melodic strand, the first of which is heard three octaves higher than its original entry while the second is heard in octaves. The coupling of the familiar opening figure with the chromatic scale adds interest to the simplicity of the opening descent of a fifth:



## Example 5.36.3. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 38–44

Opening scale registrally and rhythmically displaced

opening figure

*p*

Chromatic scale spanning two octaves

*f*

8va

Opening scale registrally and texturally augmented

opening figure

A number of links to Brahms and Schumann are evident in this prelude: for example, cross rhythms suggest a Brahmsian influence (bars 34–35).<sup>18</sup> Echoes of Schumann are also heard in an unusual vertical positioning of leading note against tonic. The clash of a minor second creates a harmonic tension here as the leading note is heard below the tonic. A similar example is heard in the opening bars of the second movement of Schumann's *Piano Quintet* (bar 7) as the leading note is heard in the piano part below a repeated tonic note played in the first violins.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Further examples of cross rhythms are found throughout Stanford's output including his *Mass in G*.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Schumann, *Piano Quintet*, op.44 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1881).

## Example 5.36.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bar 41

## Example 5.36.4b. Schumann: Piano Quintet, II, bars /1-9

In modo d'una Marcia  
Un poco largamente.  $\text{♩} = 66$

Throughout both sets of preludes, it has become increasingly clear that the cadential progression involving submediant, dominant and tonic degrees was favoured by the composer. Prelude no.36 highlights this particularly well as all but two of the final seventeen bars of the piece include these notes. Introduced as early as bars 5 and 6 it is initially presented as a single strand in the bassline in the closing bars (bars 48 and 50) before being gradually texturally augmented and heard in octaves in both hands which heightens the tension (bar 52). However, as in a number of earlier preludes, the music in the closing bars comes to a dramatic halt as the upper strand of the right hand outlines the descent from  $\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  recalling the recurring statements of the submediant to dominant progression heard repeated over three octaves (bars 55–58). While not directly quoting the initial melodic strand in the closing bars, the melodic descent places significant emphasis on the degrees of the scale which feature prominently in the closing bars, therefore suggesting a cyclical effect of sorts in this prelude. The persistent emphasis placed on this progression in the closing bars, however, does ensure a strong cohesive and close harmonic structure in spite of an atypical shift to E major (bars 53–54). The approach to the home key via a perfect cadence in a distant key recalls similar shifts in the music of Rachmaninov and represents a technique employed by Stanford earlier in his piano writing (see Prelude no.2 for example). The continual emphasis on submediant and dominant degrees of the scale here confirms the composer's preference for this progression and marks the strongest presentation of the progression throughout the set of preludes:

## Example 5.36.5. Stanford: Prelude no.36, bars 48–64

6 5 6 5 1

melodic outline of 6 5 1



### 5.13 Prelude no.37



One of the central research questions of my thesis is why Stanford did not choose to pair each of his preludes with a fugue in his two sets of unattached preludes. In his composition of the preludes, however, Stanford chose to include an array of genres and forms within the controlling genre of the prelude. Although there are no fugues paired with the preludes, there are some fugal references within the forty-eight preludes. This coupled with the numerous fugues which he wrote for organ denote that Stanford was capable of writing in this genre.<sup>20</sup> While Preludes nos 4 and 9 are suggestive of this style of writing in their opening sections, the highly intricate contrapuntal style synonymous with that of a fugal composition is not maintained throughout either, and it is not until Prelude no.37 that Stanford more fully engages with this style of writing within the preludes; indeed, the subtitle of this work, 'fughetta', clearly implies that he was aiming at a prelude more akin to the style of a fugue than any other prelude in the set. The 'fughetta', however, does not commence until bar 10. The preliminary material presented in the opening nine bars functions more like a prelude to the fugue, while introducing the main material from the fugue, thereby demonstrating the composer's clever inclusion of one pairing of a 'prelude' with a fugue, however short the 'prelude'

<sup>20</sup>

Stanford wrote a number of fugues including prelude and fugue and fantasia and fugue combinations. Some examples include Stanford, *Fantasia and Fugue* op.103, Stanford, *Fantasia and Fugue*; Stanford, *Three Preludes and Fugues for the Organ*.

might be. The choice of the genre of the fughetta for this prelude emphasises Stanford's strong preference for traditional forms. However, the inclusion of a short prelude of nine bars preceding the fugue results in the renegotiation of the generic contract established at the outset of these preludes as it may not be expected to include such a combination and the inclusion of the fugue represents an interesting addition to the prelude in this collection. While not a prominent feature of prelude and fugue sets by Bach, some composers have included references to the material of the fugue in their preceding preludes, with notable examples written by Bruckner (*Vorspiel und Fuge* in C minor WAB 131)<sup>21</sup> and Albrechtsberger (no.5 from his second collection of eighteen fugues).<sup>22</sup> In Stanford's case the fugal subject is introduced in the opening bar accompanied by a standard quaver accompanimental figure and for the opening nine bars the music solidly remains in the tonic key, affirming a clear tonal sense before the beginning of the exposition and first entry of the fugal subject (bar 10):

**Example 5.37.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 1–9**

**'Prelude' material**

<sup>21</sup> Anton Bruckner, *Vorspiel Und Fuge Für Orgel*, WAB 131 (Augsburg: Franz Philipp, 1929).

<sup>22</sup> Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, *Douze Fugues Pour Le Clavecin Ou l'Orgue: Oeuvre Premier* (New York: Performers' Facsimiles, 1996). Some works have a thematic connection. Grace notes connections between fugue subjects and themes of preludes by Bach. See Harvey Grace, 'The Organ Works of Bach IV The Later Weimar Preludes and Fugues (Continued)', *The Musical Times*, 61 (1920), 807–810 (p. 810).

## Example 5.37.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 10–21

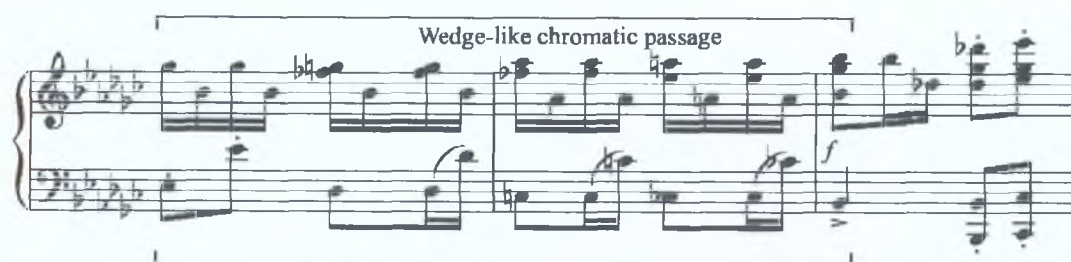
## Exposition of fugue

This fugal style demonstrates Stanford's skilful handling of the contrapuntal form, with all sections of a 'traditional' fugue present. These include entries of the fugal subject in both tonic and dominant keys in the exposition, the first answer being a real answer in the dominant (bars 14), modulatory episodic material employing much sequential development and a closing section which presents the subject in the tonic key over a dominant pedal (bar 48). A coda steers the music towards a final cadence, presenting one concluding hint of the fugal subject, now rhythmically altered, in the closing bars (bars 63–64). It is in the coda that a familiar compositional technique is explored by Stanford in order to heighten the drama: an arpeggio-like figure is played in octaves over three octaves (bars 59–60); this provides a link to a strong chordal passage which recalls the opening figure and which brings the short fugue to a triumphant close. The use of octave writing was a prominent texture utilized by the composer for the purpose

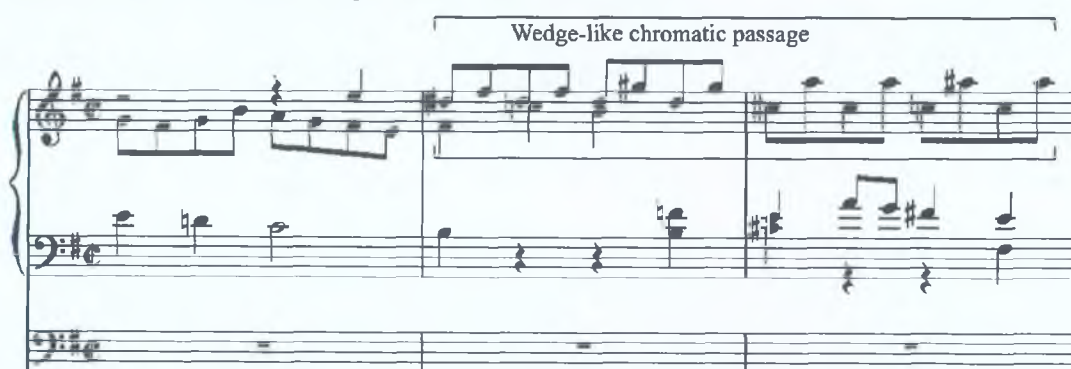
of providing links and features in the first episode (bars 21–24) and also for linking the ‘prelude’ to the fugue, here as a single strand (bars 8–9).

This fughetta illustrates some compositional devices which show the influence of the Baroque on Stanford’s style. While the character of the fugal subject is reminiscent of a Bachian theme, chromatic passages in a wedge-like fashion display a closer link to the German composer. Indeed, one passage is reminiscent of Bach’s fugue BWV 548 in terms of layout and design:<sup>23</sup>

**Example 5.37.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 39–41**



**Example 5.37.2b. Bach: Fugue BWV 548, bars 13–15**



Despite the strong emphasis on and relationship to the Baroque in this prelude, the music of Brahms is still close in the composer’s memory as a harmonic progression in the closing bars recalls a similar movement in Brahms’s Fourth Symphony involving the supertonic major and the tonic chords:<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Bach, *Prelude and Fugue in E minor BWV 548*.  
<sup>24</sup> Brahms, *Symphony no.4*.



**Example 5.37.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 61–62**

The first system of musical notation for 'The Rose Tree' is shown. It consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The first measure of the melody is a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a quarter note B4. The bass line starts with a half note G3, followed by a half note F3. The system ends with a double bar line. Below the staff, the chord symbols II<sup>7</sup>M, Ib, and #IV<sup>7</sup> are indicated.

**Example 5.37.3b. Brahms: Symphony no.4, IV, bars 9–14**

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

*f* *pizz*

*f* *pizz*

*f* *pizz*

*f* *pizz*

*f* *pizz*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*II<sup>o</sup>M*

*I b*

**Allegro energico e passionato**

Due to its two-in-one form, Prelude no.37 is unusual and unique in comparison to the other forty-seven preludes. However, despite this combination, the music still clearly exhibits characteristics typical of Stanford's style of writing which are witnessed throughout the preludes. One of the closest links to other preludes is the presence of the sharpened fourth in bar 1 as the first chromatic degree; this affirms his interest in the tonal colouring of the note.

## 5.14 Prelude no.38



Through the subtitle 'Basso Ostinato' Stanford's intentions are immediately obvious. In a similar vein to his demonstration of a contrapuntal style in the preceding prelude, he displays here his command of writing a piece woven around a four-note descending ostinato figure. Indeed, the descending four notes call to mind the opening figure of Prelude no.25 which acted like an ostinato-like figure due to its prominence in the work:

### Example 5.38.1. Stanford: Prelude no.25, bars 1–7



In Prelude no.38, Stanford varies the presentation of the four-note figure from the steady march-like descent in Prelude no.25, with an unusual placing of the notes on the first and third beats of the bar in a work which is in triple time. Although rhythmic alteration occurs, the effect remains the same with the notes still heard on first and third beats (bars 17–44). Additionally, the figure undergoes textural reduction (bars 17–26) and registral displacement (bars 35–43) which adds both contrast and depth to the

music. A concealed presentation of the ostinato figure is reserved for the closing section when it is heard in augmentation as an upper strand in the texture as the music passes through the Neapolitan before a smooth return to the tonic key:

**Example 5.38.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 17–24**

Filling in of texture and textural reduction of original ostinato figure

**Example 5.38.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 45–52**

Augmentation of descending tetrachord and registral displacement

G-V<sup>7b</sup>   I   V<sup>7b</sup>   I   V<sup>7b</sup>   I

f<sup>#</sup>-V<sup>7b</sup>   IM   V<sup>7b</sup>   IM

The opening of Prelude no.38 calls to mind the opening of Rachmaninov's Prelude op.3 no.2, despite the different metre chosen, as the descending bass-line accompanies the arch-like chordal figure:<sup>25</sup>

**Example 5.38.3 Rachmaninov: Prelude op.3 no.2, bars /1–3**



In addition to the omnipresence of the ostinato figure, a rhythmic figure permeates the writing featuring in all but eighteen bars in the piece, fourteen of which are in the final section. This maintains a strong rhythmic sense throughout despite the emphasis placed on accented dissonances coupled with notes from the ostinato figure placed on the last beat of the bar which unhinge the regular pulse. While other preludes exhibit Stanford's use of accented dissonances, it appears more systematic in its presentation and the suspensions, auxiliaries, appoggiaturas and échappés add both melodic and rhythmic interest to contrast with the steady beat outlined by the ostinato figure. A number of dissonances are highlighted in the succeeding examples:

**Example 5.38.4a. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 1–3**



<sup>25</sup>

Rachmaninov, *Morceaux de Fantaisie*.



**Example 5.38.4b. Stanford: Prelude no.38, bars 17–22**

While Stanford's use of dissonances is prepared and deliberate, these notes add tension to the music. Furthermore, there is a deliberate link between pitch and dynamics. While they add symmetry to the prelude, combined with the continued use of dissonances, they also help the music to build up towards a highpoint creating an expansive range on the instrument. Indeed, the deliberate placing of the dynamic marking *ff* at the point at which the hands lie over three octaves apart - coupled with the steady build up in the music as the right hand gradually ascends and the left hand descends - adds to the tension in the work which was introduced in the first bar.

Despite the constraints imposed on a composer through the use of a melodic ostinato figure, Stanford presents a prelude rich in harmonic interest. Unusually, however, all tonal areas chosen steer clear of any reference to the dominant, with much of the music hovering around the tonic and staying on the side of the subdominant which lends a different harmonic sense to that of other preludes.

### 5.15 Prelude no.39



Beginning with a strong chordal theme accompanied by double octaves in the left hand, this prelude introduces no note value shorter than a crotchet despite the tempo marking *Allegro con fuoco*. Coupled with a firm sense of pulse is the regular four-bar phrasing employed for the first forty-three bars in the piece which affirms the strong rhythmical sense before a momentary change to three-bar units unhinges the rhythmic sense temporarily (bars 45–50). While four-bar units return to stabilise the pulse, the music comes to an unexpected halt (bar 85) before the piece hastily ends with a short melodic unit (bars 86–87). An abrupt change of style in the closing bars of the preludes was not an unusual feature of Stanford's writing; a number of the preludes share this gesture (see for example Preludes nos 5, 8, 34 and 36). Featuring as a pause or a rest, it allows for a quick change from a rhythmic or melodic pattern which was employed throughout the writing before the final cadential progression is heard. In this case, the rest prepares for a textual reduction as the final cadential progression brings an element of simplicity to the music and unison chords employing root position chords employ a simple IV – V – I cadence:

**Example 5.39.1. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 81–87**

While signifying a change to a more simple texture after the dominance of Brahmsian scoring which pervaded the thick texture and was also infused with passages in octaves and thirds, it also denotes a regularisation of the subdominant. As in a number of preludes, Stanford's fondness for the harmonic colouring provided by the sharpened fourth permeates this piece. Indeed the early use of the chromatic fourth degree is played simultaneously with the flat third. The presence of the sharpened fourth degree at an early point in a number of the preludes is mirrored here (bar 1). Appearing initially as  $\#IV^{o7}c$  (bar 1) the sharpened fourth appears in a variety of chordal positions including the standard  $\#IV^7$ .  $\#IV^{o7}d$  (bar 17) and  $\#IVb$  act as a pivot chord for modulatory purposes (bars 23 and 25), while the sharpened degree also features in a number of augmented sixth chords in both the French and German forms (bars 57 and 76). Of particular note is the abrupt halt on the chord of  $\#IV^7$  (bar 84). Stanford eventually regularizes the subdominant in the closing statement (bar 86). This brings closure to the prelude and resolves any ambiguity surrounding the subdominant:

## Example 5.39.2. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 73–87

Ger Aug 6th

#ii°7b I #ii°7b I #IV7 IV V I

Also of harmonic interest in the closing bars is the elided cadence. On occasions Stanford omitted the chord of resolution and disturbed the expectation of the listener. Anticipating a resolution to  $V^7$ , instead Stanford progresses immediately from  $\#ii^{\circ 7b}$  to the tonic chord, therefore omitting the dominant (bars 80–83). Coupled with the pause on the sharpened fourth, this makes this final statement all the more unstable and the need for subdominant resolution with a standard cadence in the closing bars. The omission of the correct chord of resolution also featured earlier in the prelude with an augmented sixth instead of the expected  $Ib$  (bars 76–77). Interestingly, the augmented chord included the sharpened fourth, and the lack of the expected chord of resolution further highlights this harmonic colouring.

While the inclusion of the sharpened fourth in the opening statement is important as it sets up the harmonic premise of this prelude, it is also worth noting for its link to other preludes. Connections to earlier preludes include the sharpened fourth as the first chromatic note and the shape of the melodic strand in the opening bars bear a close resemblance to the opening contour of Preludes nos 27 and 37, both of which



outline a melodic strand involving the following degrees of the scale:  $\hat{3} - \hat{\#4} - \hat{6} - \hat{5}$ .

This similar melodic figure ensures a degree of unity between three preludes in op.179:

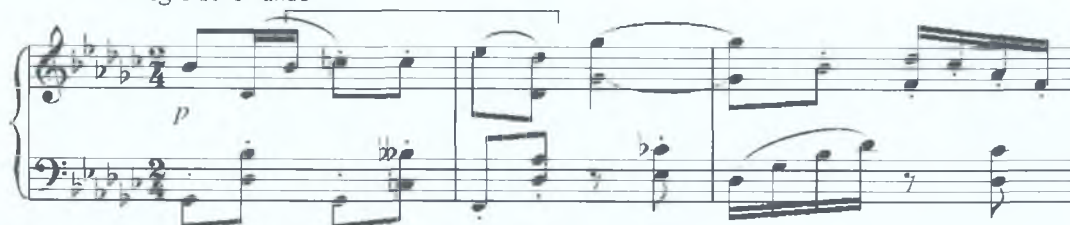
**Example 5.39.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 1–2**

*Allegro con fuoco*



**Example 5.39.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.37, bars 1–3**

*Allegro scherzando*



**Example 5.39.3c. Stanford: Prelude no.27, bar 1**

*Moderato scherzando*



As well as the emphasis on the introduction and resolution of the sharpened subdominant degree, other compositional devices feature which make for a unified composition, many of which are used for modulatory purposes as the music passes through a variety of keys including references to the distant F major and B flat major (bars 39–42): sequences, scale passages (the longest and most interesting of which occurs in bars 37–41), the repetition of material an octave lower (bars 73–80) and the alteration from minor to major (bars 28–29). Additionally, the opening melodic strand is

varied for each of its presentations and undergoes intervallic contraction and expansion (bars 5–8, 25–28 and 63–66) and truncation (bars 45–47 and 48–50).

## 5.16 Prelude no.40



The subtitle 'Quasi Recitativo' immediately reminds us of Stanford's interest in opera. He openly proclaimed his passion for writing opera and during his lifetime produced nine such works. Indeed, this prelude bears a number of the hallmarks of traditional free recitative style: short melodic strands accompanied by a rich chordal accompaniment, long swooping arpeggios, unaccompanied melodic fragments and an element of freedom which is created by the irregular phrasing, the absence of the left hand on the first beat of a number of bars and the lack of a formal structure. In the first twenty-five bars of the piece, the left hand is only sounded on the first beat of the bar in three of the bars, distorting the steady sense of beat. Additionally, a mix of styles and compositional ideas is introduced which adds much variety to the writing.

While it is not technically the most difficult of the preludes to perform, it displays an emotional depth making it challenging to execute. On account of its tempo marking *Andante rubato*, it is important for the performer to pay careful attention to each indication on the score. Each rest and rhythm must be carefully measured, despite the slow pace, and must be judged accordingly, while each dynamic and articulation marking must be observed to ensure that the expressive nature of the prelude is

conveyed. The presentation of the material is similar to recitative style passages in a number of Beethoven's piano sonatas and works by C.P.E. Bach (see for example, Piano Sonata no.17 op.31 no.2, I and Piano Sonata no.31 op.110, III).<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, there is a suggestion of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata no.8 op.13 'Pathétique' where the opening Grave employs a range of rhythmic values and rests which must be counted carefully to manage the intentions of the composer.<sup>27</sup> A similar chordal structure is employed in the opening bars of both works followed by runs in Stanford which echoes Beethoven's work. More noteworthy is the placing of a diminished seventh chord within the first six bars in both pieces which disrupts the feeling of the calm recitative style:

**Example 5.40.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars /1–8**

Andante rubato      QUASI RECITATIVO

Vmb    It6    V    vii7

ib    ii7c    ic    V7    i    vii7c

vii7c    C-Ib

cresc.

<sup>26</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.17*, op.31 no.2, 'The Tempest' (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862); Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.31*, op.110 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862). However, it is not clear how much of C.P.E. Bach's music that Stanford would have been familiar with.

<sup>27</sup> Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.8*.



**Example 5.40.1b. Beethoven: Sonata no.8 op.13, 'Pathétique', bars 1–6**

**Grave**

Similarly, there is a hint to the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F in which a similar contour is introduced in the opening bars:<sup>28</sup>

**Example 5.40.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars 4–6**
**Example 5.40.2b. Beethoven: Sonata no.6 op.10 no.2, bars 9–12**

28

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.6, op.10 no.2* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

Due to the number of clear links between each of the pieces, it is plausible that Beethoven's piano sonatas served as a model for the material and style of this prelude. While the Grave section in Beethoven's 'Pathétique' Sonata functioned as an introduction into his Allegro di molto e con brio, Beethoven's movement moves in a different direction to Stanford's work which maintains the same tempo and style throughout.

Familiar Stanfordian traits are evident in this piece: the familiar sharpened fourth is once again present as the first chromatic note (bar 2) and makes many appearances colouring the harmonic texture of the piece as a number of progressions feature the chromatic note: it is heard in an Italian augmented sixth chord (bar 2), as  $\#IV^{o7}$  in the key of f minor (bar 11), as positions of  $\#IV^{o7}$  in g minor (bars 19 and 26), in the chord of  $II^7bM$  (bar 38) with a final appearance in the German augmented sixth chord (bar 41). With an emphasis placed on the chromatic colouring in this and preceding prelude, it is unusual therefore that neither employs the familiar cadential progression  $\#IV^7 - V - I$ . The absence of any reference to the dominant links this prelude harmonically to Prelude no.38, with all modulations in Prelude no.40 being to the flat side of the home key. Despite this favouring of flat-side modulations, sufficient harmonic interest is maintained in the prelude with a varied harmonic palette.

In spite of the free style which results from the lack of distinctive melodic motives and themes, Stanford cleverly links the opening and closing sections of this prelude. The initial rising three-note figure on the mediant in the right hand, which is reminiscent of Beethoven's 'Pathétique' Sonata, is balanced by a descending three-note figure in the left-hand octaves commencing on the flattened seventh. The rising figure is utilized at the beginning of a number of key phrases in the prelude and recalls other preludes which share a similar contour. However, it is not until the closing section that

the descending three-note accompanimental figure makes a return appearance at the end of the dramatic Chopinesque passage of crashing octaves (bars 42–45) reminiscent of Chopin's *Ballade* no.1 and *Etude* no.5 op.10,<sup>29</sup> which is highlighted by the Lisztian trill before the final resting point on the dominant. The reference to the descending melodic minor idiom heard at the opening provides a cyclical effect to the piece and links this prelude with those which employ a similar unifying mechanism:

**Example 5.40.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars /1–2**



**Example 5.40.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.40, bars 43–45**



<sup>29</sup>

Chopin, *Etudes* op.10 and Frederic Chopin, *Ballade*, no.1 op.23 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1878).

accele - ran - do



## 5.17 Prelude no.41



Originating as a French dance the gavotte was commonly found in suites with examples featuring in *Orchestral Suites* nos 1, 3 and 4 by Bach (BWV 1066, BWV 1068 and BWV 1069).<sup>30</sup> Bach also included gavottes in some of his keyboard suites including four of his six *French Suites* (BWV 814–817) while other composers wrote gavottes for solo piano including Hiller (op.115), Beethoven (*Gavotte for four hands in F major*), Brahms (*Gavotte for piano in A after Gluck's Iphigenie en Aulide*, Anh.1a/2), G.B. Martini (*Gavotte*) and Benjamin Godard.<sup>31</sup> With notable examples by Couperin, Rameau, Purcell, Pachelbel and Fischer on which to model his use of this form, it is not surprising that Stanford includes reference to the dance form when one considers the other strong Baroque references throughout this set of preludes. Indeed, other composers did not specifically compose gavottes, only referring to its characteristics in their compositions: Corelli's op.2 no.8 is entitled 'Tempo di gavotta', while Bach's

<sup>30</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Orchestral Suite*, No.1, BWV 1066 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1885); Johann Sebastian Bach, *Orchestral Suite*, No.3, BWV 1068 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1885); Johann Sebastian Bach, *Orchestral Suite*, No.4, BWV 1069 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1885).

<sup>31</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Six French Suites*, BWV 812–817 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1865); Ferdinand Hiller, *Gavotte, Sarabande, Courante for the Pianoforte*, op.115 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1867); Johannes Brahms, *Gavotte Von Christopher W. Gluck* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1926); Giovanni Battista Martini, *Gavotte* (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1891); Benjamin Godard, *Gavotte No.2*, op.81 (Boston: Arthur P. Schmidt, 1894).

Sixth Keyboard Partita BWV830 includes a 'Tempo di gavota' as the sixth movement.<sup>32</sup>

While a number of pieces from the nineteenth century suitable as drawing room music were written in gavotte style, a number of composers included specific references to the dance form. Examples include Johann Strauss's 'Gavotte der Königin' from *Das Spitzentuch* (1880), Richard Strauss's Suite for 13 wind instruments op.4 (1884), Saint-Saëns's Gavotte for piano solo op.23 (1872), Orchestral Suite op.49 (1877) and Suite op.90 (1892) and Prokofiev's Classical Symphony op.25 (1916–1917).<sup>33</sup>

This prelude is not designated specifically as a gavotte, instead using the marking 'Alla Gavotta' at the head of the score. For Stanford this was not his first engagement with the Baroque dance. Earlier in his youth he produced a Suite for Piano op.2 (1875), which consisted of a Courante, Sarabande et Gigue and Gavotte. The gavotte contained a grand two-bar introduction and a number of tempo and key changes. Although the prelude represents a smaller contribution to the genre, regular, clear phrasing and simplicity of texture and an awareness of Baroque practices are observed; these include sequential development and an ending with the Bachian cadence  $ii^7b - V^7$  – I. The traditional gavotte usually began with an upbeat of two crotchets, a trend continued by Stanford in this prelude which is written in simple quadruple time, a metre usually employed in gavottes.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Partitas for Keyboard*, BWV 825–830 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1853). See also Arcangelo Corelli, *Trio Sonatas*, op.2 (London: John Johnson, 1740).

<sup>33</sup> Sergey Prokofiev, *Symphony No.1*, op.25 (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1963). Johann Strauss, *Das Spitzentuch Der Königin* (Hamburg: Aug. Cranz, 1881); Richard Strauss, *Suite in B Flat Major*, op.4 (Berlin: Adolph Fürstner, 1911); Camille Saint-Saëns, *Gavotte*, op.23 (Paris: Durand, 1872); Camille Saint-Saëns, *Suite Pour Orchestre*, op.49 (Paris: Durand, Schoenewerk & Cie, 1876); Camille Saint-Saëns, *Suite Pour Le Piano*, op.90 (Paris: Durand & Fils, 1892); Prokofiev. Meredith Ellis Little, 'Gavotte', in *GMO OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/10774>> [accessed 5 August 2010].

<sup>34</sup> In the first half of the eighteenth century the gavotte was one of the most popular instrumental forms derived from a dance, usually appearing after a serious movement in a suite. Meredith Ellis Little, 'Gavotte', in *GMO OMO*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/10774> [accessed 5 August 2010]. Stanford's gavotte-style piece follows a prelude in the style of a recitative.

As he was writing within a Baroque framework, Stanford is somewhat less ambitious in his handling of this prelude. While the sharpened fourth appears in the first bar, it is immediately replaced by the flattened fourth to confirm the key. Three further references to the chord of the sharpened fourth all occur in root position and resolve correctly (bars 19–20, 22–23 and 23–24). The immediate replacement of the sharpened fourth with the standard fourth in this prelude recalls a similar procedure in the closing bars of Prelude no.39:

**Example 5.41.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.41, bars /1–2**



**Example 5.41.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.39, bars 84–87**



Also following the traditional Baroque model, Stanford's harmonic palette is much narrower than that utilized in other preludes, exploring instead the related keys of E flat major, f minor and b flat minor with only one unusual tonal area reached. The forward-looking composer added a harmonic twist to his contribution to the genre through his adroit enharmonic adjustments for the purposes of tonicization, modulation and unusual key changes. Examples include: two enharmonic adjustments provide a shift from A flat major to the unrelated key of E major (bars 8–9) and from here to the related key of E flat major (bars 12–13):

## Example 5.41.2. Stanford: Prelude no.41, bars 7–13



In keeping with the traditional framework of a gavotte, the piece ends with a bar's rest which upon initial inspection is unusual. This final bar, however, has an important structural function, placed here to regularize the phrase structure of the last four-bar phrase. Similarly, Beethoven added a full bar's rest at the end of the first movement in his Piano Sonata op.7.<sup>35</sup>

Despite his debt to tradition in the harmonic handling of this prelude, Stanford reverts to include the tonic chord in both first and second inversion which creates a weakness in some of the harmonic progressions. His choice of progressions at the end of phrases also causes some weakness in a major key (see for example  $\text{vii}^7\text{c} - \text{Ib}$  in bars 7–8 and 11–12). Additionally, the progression  $\text{V}^7 - \text{Ic} - \text{I}$ , which Stanford introduced earlier in the set of preludes (see for example Preludes nos 32 and 33), is an unusual choice for three sectional endings as it lessens the definite sense created at the end of the sections (bars 5–6, 25–26 and 30–31):

<sup>35</sup>

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.7*, op.10 no.3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).



## Example 5.41.3. Stanford: Prelude no.41, bars 23–26

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, specifically bars 23–26 of Stanford's Prelude no. 41. The score is written for piano (p) and includes a dynamic marking *ad lib.* (ad libitum) above the final bar. The notation is in G major, indicated by one sharp (F#) on the treble clef. The key signature is G major. The time signature is 3/4. The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff contains the melody, and the bass staff contains the accompaniment. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a half note B4. The accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand. The final bar is marked *ad lib.* and features a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. Below the final bar, the Roman numerals V<sup>7</sup>, Ic, and I are written, indicating the harmonic structure of the final chord.

## 5.18 Prelude no.42



A small bagpipe which was popular in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the musette was often used to accompany rustic dances but went into decline from about 1760. Dance-like pieces of a pastoral character which included persistent drones on the tonic and which were suggestive of the sound of the musette popularly became known as musettes. Featuring as both orchestral and keyboard pieces, they were popular throughout the Baroque period with prominent examples by Couperin, Bach and Handel. A notable keyboard example by the latter is the *Gavotte ou la Musette* in the English Suite no.3 (BWV 808) which demonstrates his understanding of the two genres.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, Michael Kennedy claims that the musette is a variety of gavotte in which a persistent drone bass suggests the French bagpipe.<sup>37</sup> It is noteworthy, therefore, that Stanford positioned these two preludes side by side in his collection, obviously observing links between the two works as he placed the following interesting inscription at the head of the score: 'to be played as an alternative to XLI'. What makes this inscription somewhat unusual is that if a performer chose to perform Prelude no.42 in place of Prelude no.41 when performing the set of preludes, this would leave the second

<sup>36</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *English Suites*, BWV 806–811 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1865).  
<sup>37</sup> Michael Kennedy, 'Musette', in *OMO*, <<http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.dkitlibs.dkit.ie/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e7075>> [accessed 5 August 2012].

book as a set of twenty-three preludes instead of twenty-four. This instruction could also be a mistake in the edition.<sup>38</sup> The performance direction is ambiguous as a further one is placed at the end of Prelude no.42: 'D.C. XLI Senza ripetizione'. This instruction, however, clearly demonstrates that the composer intended these two preludes to be performed as a set. This supports the theory that Stanford intended the collection of preludes as a set and not only as individual pieces. While his interest in historic forms is clear, it is also interesting to note that Stanford made particular reference to old rhythmical dance-forms in his treatise on composition in his chapter on melodies and their simple treatment.<sup>39</sup>

An initial inspection of the key signature might suggest an omission of the A sharp with an accidental placed in front of each required A sharp. This, however, demonstrates Stanford's awareness of such a practice by Baroque composers. In his Toccata and Fugue BWV 565, Bach omitted the B flat from the key signature, appearing instead as an accidental, thus giving the impression that the work was in the Dorian mode.<sup>40</sup>

Later composers in the nineteenth century wrote gavottes in Scherzo and Trio form, in which the 'trio' section was labelled 'Musette'. On occasion these works were called 'Gavotte' while at other times both genres were placed in the title of the piece. One such example is by the composer Eugen d'Albert (1864–1932) in his Suite in D minor for piano op.1 of 1883.<sup>41</sup> Following the traditional model of a Baroque suite with an Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue, he also includes a Gavotte und Musette as the fourth movement in the suite. Both sections begin on the third beat of the

<sup>38</sup> The unintentional inclusion of this performance direction is plausible considering the large number of errors in the edition which are noted in the supplementary volume to this thesis.

<sup>39</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 47.

<sup>40</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*, BWV 565 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1867).

<sup>41</sup> Eugen d' Albert, *Suite in Five Movements*, op.1 (Berlin: Bote & Bock, 1883).

bar, in the style of a gavotte, while the bass maintains a repeated tonic note in the musette. Gavotte op.14 for piano by the Italian composer Giovanni Sgambati (1841–1914) follows a similar model as the contrasting middle section of the work with the marking ‘Musette’ features a repeated dominant pedal before a reprise of the opening music.<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, neither section begins with the traditional upbeat which was a common feature of gavottes. In Stanford’s case, Preludes nos 41 and 42 could be paired to form a ternary design as per the performance directions, following a similar plan to the preludes of d’Albert, as both Preludes nos 41 and 42 begin on the third beat of the bar in keeping with the origins of the gavotte style.

Additionally, the lower strand of the bass part features a prolonged pedal point for the duration of the full prelude, which is reminiscent of the drone of a bagpipe. Sounded on the third beat of all but four of the thirty-six bars in the piece, this effect maintains a close link to the emphasis placed on the third beat of the bar in a traditional gavotte. The upper strand features the dominant note embellished with upper auxiliary decoration. Sounded regularly on the third beat of each bar, this rocking figure is subjected to a minimal variation for a passage in c sharp minor (bars 15–20) and a two-bar phrase in the closing section before registral displacement of the initial left hand material accompanies a return of the opening melodic strand (bar 21):

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<sup>42</sup>

Giovanni Sgambati, *Gavotte*, op.14 (New York: Carl Fischer, 1912).



## Example 5.42.1. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 14–20



Functioning primarily as a tonic pedal, the G sharp pedal becomes a mediant pedal during a brief modulation to E major. Found commonly in the music of Brahms, one such example being the first movement of *Symphony no.2* in D major (bars 183–186),<sup>43</sup> a mediant pedal is included by Stanford in the third of his *Three Dante Rhapsodies*, ‘Capaneo’ (bars 153–155) with the two passages involving the same chordal pattern, alternating between Ib and vii<sup>o7</sup> in both cases, and also in *Last Post*.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Symphony No.2*, op.73 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1878). Flute and oboe have been omitted from this musical example as both instruments are silent during this excerpt.  
<sup>44</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Last Post*, op.75 (London: Boosey & Co., 1900).

## Example 5.42.2. Brahms: Symphony no.2 in D major, I, bars 183–186

Clarinet in A

Bassoon

Horn in E

Horn in D

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

*p*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

More pointedly, the brief alternation from tonic to mediant pedal in this g sharp minor prelude calls to mind Mussorgsky's 'Il Vecchio Castello' from *Pictures at an Exhibition*.<sup>45</sup> Also in g sharp minor with a repeated tonic pedal in the bassline, for a brief reference to E major (bar 22) the G sharp functions as a mediant pedal before a return to the tonic key (bar 24). A similar sound is evoked here to Tchaikovsky's 'Arabian Dance' from *The Nutcracker Suite* (bars 23–32):

<sup>45</sup>

Modest Mussorgsky, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1886).

## Example 5.42.3a. Mussorgsky: 'Il Vecchio Castello, bars 16–28

Repeated tonic pedal

Tonicisation to E major

Return to G sharp minor

G sharp now functioning as mediant pedal

G sharp functioning as tonic pedal

## Example 5.42.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 11–14

Tonic Pedal

Mediant Pedal

Above the simple and somewhat fixed bassline, the melody is enriched by thirds and sixths, with the first reference to seconds and sevenths in bar 13 signifying a change to the subdominant key of c sharp minor, while a further reference to the interval of a second signals a return to the opening music (bar 20). The prevalence of such intervals gives the music a feeling of space, while textural augmentation including much reference to Brahmsian layout (bars 20–27) is presented as a variation of the opening material for its return (bar 21). The presentation of these intervals in this way confirms the deliberate choice of each with the emphasis on thirds and sixths reminiscent of Bach

and the origins of the genre, while the inclusion of Brahmsian textures introduces a later style:

**Example 5.42.4. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 11–22**

While the augmentation of texture evinces a gradual thickening as the prelude proceeds, the melodic strand is reduced to a chain of thirds heard over an extended left hand accompaniment as the music is brought to a calm close before a lively return to the gavotte of the preceding prelude. The reduction to thirds in the closing bars also highlights the significance of the linear third in the melodic strand of the prelude where each section commences with the leap of a third in addition to its presence throughout the melodic line, recalling Stanford's interest in numerology:



**Example 5.42.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 33–36***D.C. XII.  
Senza ripetizione.***Example 5.42.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.42, bars 2–10**

Links have been noted between a number of preludes in this set in terms of their opening bars and specific melodic material. Whether it was the composer's intention to deliberately link some of these preludes is not always clear. However, references in the score explicitly point to a link between these two preludes. The rate of harmonic change in Prelude no.42 is much slower than in others, with on average one chord change per bar. Coupled with the minimal number of modulations — the music only moves to E major and c sharp minor — this prelude alludes to the Baroque origins of the genre.

### 5.19 Prelude no.43



Opening the final series of preludes, with its tempo marking ‘Alla Sarbanda’, the forty-third prelude alludes to the Baroque sarabande. Such stylistic allusion adds to the reflective sense and introspection of the collection of preludes. Succeeding the gavotte and musette (Preludes nos 41 and 42), it is somewhat surprising that these preludes are placed in different series, as performed in succession they are reminiscent of a group of dances from a Baroque suite. Due to the lack of documentary evidence it is impossible to definitively state whether this was his intention or not. While following the two dances in this way reveals the composer’s strong tendencies towards the Baroque style, this prelude is also imbued with a number of Stanfordian harmonic traits while also referring to the music of his predecessors. Why each set of preludes is not broken up into the same number of series is unusual; however, in the case of op.179, the separation of the twenty-four preludes into four series of six preludes appears like a deliberate and regular division. Unfortunately, this division led to a separation of the sarabande-style piece from the other Baroque dances for publication purposes, a separation, however,

which is avoided should one choose to perform groups of preludes together or indeed all of op.179 in succession.

Written in triple time, the rhythm of this slow-moving prelude marked 'pesante' is reminiscent of the distinctive sarabande sound. As is the case with the gavotte in Prelude no.41, this is not Stanford's first engagement with the sarabande: the second movement in his Suite for Piano, op.2 was composed as a sarabande while the dance also featured as the sixth of his *Ten Dances Old and New for Young Players* op.58. All three examples begin on the downbeat; however, a sense of ambiguity surrounds the start of this prelude. The opening eight-bar theme is made up of a four-bar phrase followed by another phrase which begins on an upbeat of two descending pitches. The next statement of the opening phrase begins with an upbeat of two ascending pitches, while each further occurrence of this theme begins with the two rising notes (bars 8, 16 and 28) with the two-note upbeat figure permeating much of the melodic texture (bars 10, 18, 20, 26, 27, 30, 35 and 37):

**Example 5.43.1. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 1–12**

Alla Sarbando (*pesante.*)

This inclusion of an upbeat figure in each subsequent presentation of the opening thematic material is a deliberate addition to the original downbeat theme, where the placing of dynamic markings on the upbeat figure confirms a change of direction at the beginning of the phrase (bars 16, 26 and 28). Surprisingly, the addition of the upbeat figure does not destabilize the metrical sense; instead it adds momentum to the regular phrase structure:

**Example 5.43.2. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 16–20**



Harmonically, this prelude incorporates some Stanfordian traits with the familiar sharpened fourth making an appearance in the first bar. While a later example displays a delayed resolution of the sharpened fourth to the dominant (bars 29–30), a more interesting presentation of the sharpened fourth involves a descending chromatic passage in the bassline (bars 36–37):

**Example 5.43.3. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 35–37**



Further delayed harmonic progressions involve the dominant and its offshoots ( $\text{vii}^{\text{o}7}\text{d}$ ) resolving to the tonic in second inversion before proceeding to the tonic in root position



(bars 15–16 and 40–41). Similar progressions feature in ten other preludes in this set suggesting the composer's strong interest in the effect produced. Indeed, the resolution outlines a favoured melodic contour  $b\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  (bars 40–41):

**Example 5.43.4. Stanford: Prelude no.43, bars 39–42**

The musical score for Example 5.43.4 shows four measures of music. The right hand plays chords, and the left hand plays single notes or dyads. The Roman numerals and figured bass notation below the staff are as follows:

Measure	Right Hand Chord	Left Hand	Figured Bass
1	f#-VIc		
2	D-V7d		
3	Ib=A-IVb		
4	vii°7d		
5	Ic		
6	I		

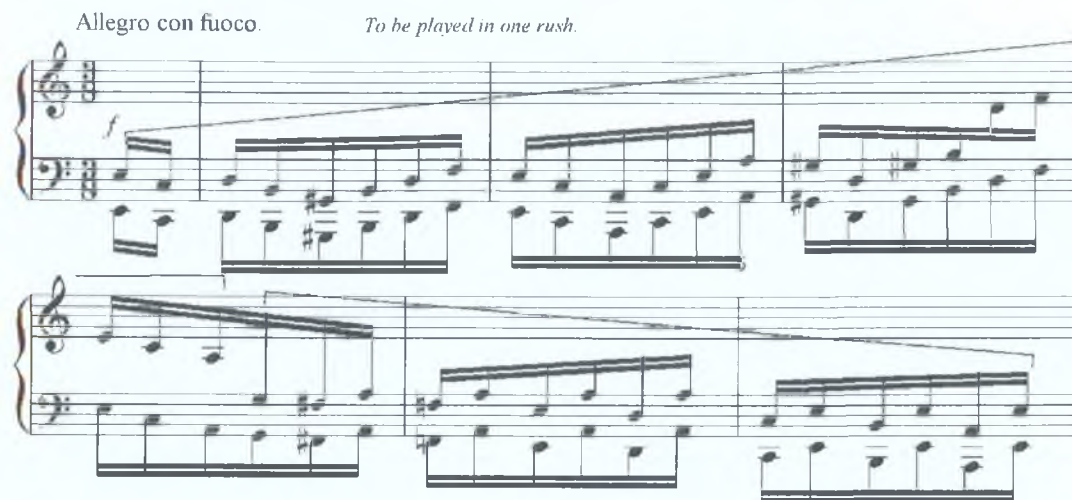
A bracket under the last three measures (Ic, I, and the final measure) indicates the melodic contour  $b\hat{6} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$ .

The sarabande was revived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by composers such as Debussy and Satie.<sup>46</sup> Stanford's unitary prelude, whilst showing a preference for the Baroque genre, imbues a Romantic soundworld with much emphasis on chromatic harmony. A favourite device of Stanford's is the harmonisation of the same note or melodic fragment with different solutions (bars 21–22 and 26–28). From a performance perspective the music explores a wide range on the instrument, while the rich chordal arrangement achieved through the thick Brahmsian scoring places demands on the performer in terms of the voicing of the melody and maintaining a smooth line throughout.

<sup>46</sup>

Claude Debussy, *Pour Le Piano* (Paris: E. Fromont, 1901); Erik Satie, *Three Sarabandes* (Paris: Rouart, Lerolle & Cie., 1911).

## 5.20 Prelude no.44



It is apparent that Chopin's Piano Sonata no.2 op.35 held great significance for the composer as it provided the direct model for Stanford's Prelude no.22.<sup>47</sup> The finale of Chopin's sonata may also have provided the inspiration for Prelude no.44: the layout of the prelude with hands playing an octave apart closely resembles Chopin's layout. Indeed, another model may have been Chopin's Prelude no.14 in which the hands play an octave apart.<sup>48</sup> This unusual choice of layout provides an interesting contrast to the ponderous chords of the preceding prelude:

### Example 5.44.1a. Chopin: Piano Sonata op.35 no.2, Finale, bars 1–3



<sup>47</sup> Chopin, *Piano Sonata no.2 op.35*.

<sup>48</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Preludes*, op.28 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1839).

**Example 5.44.1b. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.14, bars 1–6**

*Allegro  
pesante*

Chopin's nineteen-bar prelude continues the repetitive rhythm and pattern until a dramatic crotchet brings the prelude to a close, where the introduction of rests in the final three bars of the finale of his piano sonata brings the continuous pattern to a halt. Stanford's prelude more closely resembles the piano sonata as he breaks away from the persistent pattern for the final four bars to initiate the first reference to a chordal texture in the work to finish with one of his favoured cadential progressions:  $V^7 - ic - i$ . Indeed, while this may mirror the ending of the finale in the piano sonata, an examination of those preludes by Stanford which engage in the continuous repetition of a particular rhythmic device demonstrates that an abrupt shift from the rhythmic premise to bring the work to a halt was a common device utilized by Stanford to close the works (Preludes nos 5, 8, 24 and 32):

## Example 5.44.2. Stanford: Prelude no.44, bars 64–71



The incessant semiquaver pattern ensures a slow rate of harmonic change with most semiquaver groupings sounding the chord in a triadic format. However, within this layout, a number of scale-like formations including chromatic lines are heard, which further dramatise the simple semiquaver layout, the most interesting example featuring the combination of ascending and descending chromatic scales almost in wedge-style formation (bars 45–49). A number of chromatic passages span a perfect fourth, an interval commonly exploited by Chopin in his chromatic descents. A striking example in Chopin's Preludes op.28 is found in the repeated left hand quavers which incorporate three different strands of a chromatic descent:



**Example 5.44.3. Chopin: Prelude op.28 no.4, bars /1–11**

The musical score for Chopin's Prelude op.28 no.4, bars 1–11, is presented in three systems. The first system is marked 'Largo' and 'p' (piano), with the instruction 'espressivo'. The right hand plays a series of half notes, while the left hand plays a dense semiquaver chromatic descent. The second system continues the chromatic descent in the left hand. The third system shows the right hand playing a series of half notes, with a slur over the passage. The left hand continues the chromatic descent. The score is in G major, 4/4 time, and the tempo is 'Largo'.

Similarly, the finale of Chopin's Second Piano Sonata includes a number of such descents (bar 50 for example). Many of Stanford's chromatic passages span intervals of a fourth and larger, but also include reference to the striking perfect fourth descent with two notable examples heard below a pedal point (bars 16–17 and 29–30):

**Example 5.44.4. Stanford: Prelude no.44, bars 16–20**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no.44, bars 16–20, is presented in two systems. The right hand plays a series of half notes, while the left hand plays a dense semiquaver chromatic descent. The score is in G major, 4/4 time, and the dynamic is 'p' (piano). The first system shows the right hand playing a series of half notes, with a slur over the passage. The left hand continues the chromatic descent. The second system shows the right hand playing a series of half notes, with a slur over the passage. The left hand continues the chromatic descent.

Some patterns also emerge within the semiquaver layout. These include: pivots on the first, third and fifth semiquavers (bars 16, 17, 29, 30, 31, 33 and 34) and pivots on the

second, fourth and sixth semiquavers (bars 5, 6, 32, 37 and 38), many of which incorporate ascending or descending chromatic scales (bars 16–17, 29–30 and 36–38); the pivot gives each of these bars a clearer sense of structure. The chromatic progressions played with both hands an octave apart create a dramatic effect which is accentuated by the consistent semiquaver patterns.

Admittedly, Stanford's debt to Chopin is the most interesting aspect of this prelude. Indeed, the inclusion of the diminished fifth chord in the style of Chopin also suggests his influence on Stanford when writing this prelude (bar 62).<sup>49</sup> Despite the overt reference to Chopin's music, the soundworld of Brahms is still audible as the repetition of the Neapolitan chord with added sixth note G flat, repeated over three octaves as it refers to Stanford's preference for this musical sound is reminiscent of a passage in the first movement of Brahms's Fourth Symphony (bars 249–250):<sup>50</sup>

**Example 5.44.5a. Brahms: Symphony no.4, I, bars 249–250**

<sup>49</sup> See bars 1–2 in Nocturne no.1: Frederic Chopin, *Nocturnes*, op.27 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1878).

<sup>50</sup> Brahms, *Symphony no.4*.

**Example 5.44.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.44, bars 64–69**

Despite the strong Romantic influences, the opening of the prelude is somewhat reminiscent of Baroque practices with strong links to Bach's Fugue BWV 855. Both works are written in a minor key with incessant semiquaver movement in both parts and recurring chromatic shading.

**Example 5.44.6. Bach: Fugue BWV 855, bars 1–6**



## 5.21 Prelude no.45

Allegro

A four-bar introduction made up of an unaccompanied recurring triadic figure opens this prelude. Acting as a call to attention before the main thematic material is introduced it recalls the fanfare-style opening of Prelude no.33 which acted as a lead into the main thematic material:

### Example 5.45.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars /1–8

Allegro Marcia

Introduction

8.

Principal theme



**Example 5.45.1b. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 1–8**

The musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 45, bars 1–8, is presented in three systems. The first system, labeled 'Allegro', covers bars 1 and 2, starting with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system, labeled 'Introduction', covers bars 3 and 4, marked with a crescendo (*cresc.*). The third system, labeled 'Opening thematic material', covers bars 5 and 8, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score is written for piano in 8/8 time, featuring a right-hand melody and a left-hand accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor).

Throughout the prelude there is much focus on this triadic figure as it opens a number of the principal phrases in the work, while also playing an important role in the accompaniment. The most significant appearance intensifies the closing section, as rising tonic triadic figures in unison lead to the final cadential progression before an unaccompanied variant of the opening triad closes the prelude in the lower registers of the piano. The presence of this figure in the closing bars is noteworthy as it is another example whereby Stanford returns to the opening idea at the end of a work to create a cyclical effect:

**Example 5.45.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 62–67**

Familiar chromatic passages return in this prelude with wedge-like patterns reminiscent of Bach (bars 45–47). Incorporating the familiar  $\#IV^7 - Ic$  progression the passage provides the link to the succeeding section:

**Example 5.45.2b. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 45–47**

The sharpened fourth retains a focal point in the harmonic language of this prelude, appearing as the first chromatic note in the work, albeit in the eighth bar on this occasion, with a quick return to the flattened fourth in the chord of resolution in a similar way to Prelude no.41. Interestingly, some later appearances of the sharpened fourth tend to resolve downwards to the flattened fourth in the dominant seventh chord instead of an expected upward resolution (bars 48–49 and 50–51); not all resolve in this way, with standard resolutions also utilized (bars 47–48, 52–53 and 54–55). Indeed, the Brahmsian cadential progression  $\#IV^{o7}c - V$  incorporates this chromatic colouring (bar 12). The following bars breathe a Brahmsian air with the expansive writing outlining

chromatic linear motion reminiscent of Brahms's Second Piano Concerto, a work also written in B flat major:

**Example 5.45.3. Stanford: Prelude no.45, bars 11–16**

The image displays a musical score for Stanford's Prelude no. 45, bars 11–16. The score is written for piano and includes dynamic markings *f* and *mf*. The key signature is B-flat major. The harmonic analysis below the staff identifies the following chords:  $\sharp iv^{o7}d$ ,  $Vc$ ,  $\sharp iv^{o7}c$ ,  $V$ ,  $I$ , and  $\sharp iv^{o7}b$ . The chromatic outline for the first system is indicated by a bracket labeled "Chromatic outline" above the staff, showing a descending line:  $g^{ma}$ ,  $f$ ,  $e$ ,  $d$ ,  $c$ ,  $b$ . The second system of the score includes a measure marked with a circled 8. The harmonic analysis for the second system identifies the following chords:  $\flat VIIIM$ ,  $vii$ ,  $V^7c$ ,  $Ic$ ,  $\sharp iv^{o7}b$ ,  $\flat VIIIM$ ,  $vii$ , and  $vii^7b$ . The chromatic outline for the second system is indicated by a bracket labeled "Chromatic outline" below the staff, showing an ascending line:  $c$ ,  $d$ ,  $e$ ,  $f$ ,  $g$ ,  $a$ ,  $b$ .

## 5.22 Prelude no.46



As in the first set of preludes, here too Stanford alludes to a funeral march at the same structural point in the set of preludes as op.163.<sup>51</sup> Reference to a funeral march was not uncommon in the work of a number of composers with many examples written in memoriam of a particular person as in Stanford's Prelude no.22. In this set, however, there is nothing to suggest a particular event or person whom Stanford may have had in mind while composing the work as the piece simply bears the marking *Alla marcia funebre*. Without the familiar dotted rhythm as was customary in a number of funeral marches by Beethoven and Chopin, the contour of the opening melody bears some resemblance to the opening of Alkan's *Marche Funèbre* op.39, while the descending passage (bars 2–3) shares similarities with the opening of Chopin's *Marche Funèbre*:<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Prelude no.22 from op.163 was also a funeral march.  
<sup>52</sup> Alkan, *Twelve Etudes in All the Minor Keys*.



**Example 5.46.1a. Alkan: Marche Funèbre, op.39, bars 1–7**

**Andantino**  
♩=88

*p*  
*Sostenutissimo*  
Descending line  
*poco cresc.*

**Example 5.46.1b. Chopin: Marche Funèbre, op.72 no.2, bars 1–9**

**Tempo di Marcia.** ♩= 84

*p sostenuto*  
Descending line  
*cresc.*  
*mf*

Stanford's prelude begins in the customary minor mode for funeral marches, and the strong presence of D flat major harmony results in tonal ambiguity as there is a constant conflict between the flattened and naturalised seventh. Indeed, the flattened seventh makes an appearance before the naturalised form (bars 2–4 in right hand), while an Aeolian scale of B flat which also passes through the naturalised seventh is heard in the opening section and further upsets the tonal sense of the opening (bars 5–8):

**Example 5.46.2. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 1–8**

*Alla marcia funebre (non troppo lento.)*

Flattened 7th      Naturalised 7th

Acolian Scale

*p*      *cresc*

Of the sixty-one bars in the piece — save for the references to b flat minor in the opening section — the home key only makes fleeting appearances (bars 33–35, 44–46 and 51) and it returns with an inconclusive cadential progression (bars 57–61), all of which unsettles the tonal centre:

**Example 5.46.3. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 57–61**

ii<sup>7</sup>b i

In comparison to Stanford's other funeral march-style prelude, which maintained a more constant texture and style throughout, this prelude dispenses with the opening thematic material, texture and layout as a more contrasting cantilena style is introduced for the middle section. This technique is quite similar in presentation and intention to Prelude no.24 as swooping arpeggios accompany a single-line melody in the upper strand of the right hand in a somewhat virtuosic Lisztian style which contrasts with the thick Brahmsian textures of the opening section. Full chords and octave passages denote a change in approach as it concludes with a figure repeated over four octaves acting as a

link passage to a return of the opening melody. This is now accompanied by an oscillating bassline and includes a number of accented dissonances which disturb the harmonic pulse (bars 46–52). The return to the opening material portrays a loose ternary structure in the piece. While Stanford's two funeral-style-pieces may differ in this way, some typical ideas in addition to particular compositional devices clearly link this prelude to others in the set. For example, the lack of a struck downbeat in the left hand is reminiscent of Prelude no.40 which marks the first beat of the bar in the left hand with a rest in a number of the bars. Some of Stanford's favoured chordal progressions are utilized at important strategic points: for example,  $\#IV^7 - V^7 - I$  brings a strong chordal passage in A flat to a close before a return to D flat major (bars 31–32). Additionally,  $V^7$  proceeds to  $Ic$  maintaining a constant bassline which weakens the tonic in both cases (bars 22–23 and 51), while the chordal progression  $vi - V - I$  is also recalled (bar 29). In addition to the many typical Stanfordian touches, an unusual progression suggests the influence of Brahms. A juxtaposition of mediant and tonic ( $IIIc - I$ ) (bar 3) resembles a similar move in Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*.<sup>53</sup>

53

Johannes Brahms, *Alto Rhapsody*, op.53 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1926). The Cambridge University Musical Society gave the English premiere of Brahms's work on 22 May 1877 while it also featured in concerts at the Royal College of Music in 1898.

Example 5.46.4a. Brahms: *Alto Rhapsody* op.53, bars 1–2

**Adagio**

2 Bassoon

2 Horn in C

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

*sf* *p*

*con sord*

*iiiic* *i*

Example 5.46.4b. Stanford: *Prelude no.46*, bars 1–4

**Alla marcia funebre (non troppo lento.)**

*p*

*iiiic* *i* *iv* *vm*

More interesting in terms of links between this prelude and others in the set is the connection between the closing bars and those of two other preludes: Preludes nos 31 and 33. In each of these three preludes a similar accompanimental figure with an emphasis on lower auxiliary notes fills in the texture below held notes in the right hand:



**Example 5.46.5a. Stanford: Prelude no.46, bars 57–61****Example 5.46.5b. Stanford: Prelude no.31, bars 42–50****Example 5.46.5c. Stanford: Prelude no.33, bars 81–84**

The most adventurous reference in this prelude is the possible link to Wagner. The rising figure incorporating a repeated note is reminiscent of the Valhalla motive from Scene Four of the Rheingold March from Wagner's *Das Rheingold*.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup>Richard Wagner, *Das Rheingold*, WWV 86A (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1985).

## 5.23 Prelude no.47



This is the most adventurous of Stanford's preludes in terms of his choice of time signature, and it is interesting that he reserved this daring choice for the penultimate prelude. Historically, it was not uncommon for composers to include alternating time signatures in their compositions, an early example being Bach's D major Prelude from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* Book II which juxtaposes a time signature of alla breve with 12/8.<sup>55</sup> However, it is quite unusual here in Stanford's output.

Stanford's time signature is notated as 2/4 3/4 and coupled together they express a quintuple metre. This compound of two time signatures, duple with triple, creates the effect of two accents and an unequal division. Although it is not always consistent in its alternation from one time signature to the next, the constant change of metre unhinges the metrical feel to the work. Furthermore, Stanford adds one bar of common time (bar 39) after a bar in 2/4 which prolongs the leading note to facilitate a return to the tonic key. Despite these changes, this adventurous inclusion of alternating

<sup>55</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Das Wohltemperirte Klavier, II*, BWV 870–893 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1866).

time signatures displays an awareness of those prominent works which utilized a similar idea. For example, the Intermezzo from Hiller's Trio op.64 employs a quintuple rhythm by alternating bars of 2/4 and 3/4, while the time signature of the third movement of Brahms's Piano Trio in C minor, op.101 is notated as 3/4 2/4, one bar of 3/4 followed by a bar in 2/4, and a later change of time signature to 6/8 9/8.<sup>56</sup> In addition, Stanford had previously used polymetres in *The Voyage of Maeldune*.

Opting for an alternative strategy, a range of works are notated with time signatures of 5/4 and 5/8 to express a quintuple metre and historically there appears to have been a fascination with quintuple time. This was not Stanford's first engagement with such an irregular metre as his 'Study' from Six Characteristic Pieces op.136 and the lament from Act IV in *Much Ado About Nothing* is written in this metre.<sup>57</sup> Works with which Stanford may have been familiar with include the third movement of Chopin's First Piano Sonata op. 4, the second movement of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique Symphony* and 'Mars' and 'Neptune' from Holst's *The Planets* all of which are scored in 5/4 while Rachmaninov's symphonic poem *Isle of the Dead* op.29 is written in 5/8.<sup>58</sup> Favoured by Russian composers, this choice of time signature was a progressive move in metrical terms on Stanford's part.

Further links to Russian music are found in the folk-like melody which opens this prelude: constructed of small intervals and a narrow range, it is reminiscent

<sup>56</sup> Ferdinand Hiller, *Serenade*, op.64 (Leipzig: Fr. Kistner, 1856); Johannes Brahms, *Piano Trio No.3*, op.101 (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1887).

<sup>57</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Much Ado About Nothing*, op.76a (London: Boosey & Co, 1901).

<sup>58</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Piano Sonata No.1*, op.4 (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1879); Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, *Symphony No.6*, op.74, 'Pathétique' (Moscow: P. Jurgenson, 1901); Gustav Holst, *The Planets*, op.32 (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1930); Sergei Rachmaninov, *Isle of the Dead*, op.29 (Moscow: A. Gutheil, 1909). Arensky uses this idea in the Scherzo-finale from his Piano Concerto. See Anton Arensky, *Piano Concerto*, op.2 (Leipzig: D. Rahter, 1897). Tchaikovsky uses alternating time signatures in three of his folk songs: nos 28 45 and 47. See Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, *Fifty Russian Folk Songs* (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1949). Ravel includes alternating time signatures in his 'Danse Générale' from *Daphnis Et Chloé*. See Maurice Ravel, *Daphnis Et Chloé* (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1913). Alternating time signatures of 4/8 and 5/8 feature in Scriabin's Prelude no.21. See Scriabin, *Preludes*.

of a number of folk-like melodies used by Rachmaninov in compositions such as his *Prélude et Danse orientale* op.2 and Prelude op.23 no.4.<sup>59</sup> Stanford's unaccompanied opening theme convincingly sets up the tonality with much play on the tonic triad, while rhythmic interest is maintained through the dotted figure and triplet. Throughout the prelude, fragments of this opening theme appear in different guises and are treated in a variety of ways to achieve contrast in the prelude apart from the expected sequential development, key changes and addition of an accompanimental strand. Some of these changes include textural expansion by means of an extra strand (bars 11 and 13), intervallic expansion (bars 30–33), a modification through octave doubling (bars 49 and 51) and rhythmic alteration (bars 75–77). Indeed, the final appearance of the prime theme, which stabilised the tonic at the outset, is all the more interesting due to the rhythmic modifications especially the dramatic bar's rest which precedes the final entry and the only *ff* marking in the prelude in a similar style to Prelude no.39. The final statement of the principal theme in the closing bars links this prelude with those others which include references to the opening material in the closing bars in an attempt to achieve unity in the work:

**Example 5.47.1. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 73–78**



While allusions to the Russian school of composition are evident, the Austro-Germanic tradition is never far from Stanford's compositional choices. In addition to the progressive choice of time signature, metrical effects demonstrate a daring use of

<sup>59</sup> Rachmaninov, *Preludes*, op.23 and Sergei Rachmaninov, *Two Pieces*, op.2 (Moscow: A. Gutheil, 1909).



rhythm. While a convincing performance of this prelude demands a strict sense of pulse to execute the composer's intentions, the combination of regular rhythms against triplets (bars 22, 24, 55 and 57) places extra demands on the performer. Similar examples are found in Beethoven and Brahms.<sup>60</sup>

**Example 5.47.2a. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 52–57**



**Example 5.47.2b. Beethoven: Piano Sonata op.22, IV, bars 177–179**



The two later examples in Stanford are particularly demanding on the performer due to the placing of trills in the left hand (bars 52–61), which serve to heighten the tension for a dramatic return to the final section of the prelude (bar 62).

<sup>60</sup> See for example Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No.11*, op.22 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862).

What makes the final section in the prelude interesting and worth noting is the strong presence of the sharpened fourth. While Stanford's tendencies towards this chromatic note have been identified in relation to a number of preludes, it is not until this prelude that his use of such colouring is brought to greater heights. As in other preludes, it is the first chromatic note to be introduced, as an unaccented passing note here (bar 6). Despite its fleeting appearance here in a chromatic passage, a function it repeats (bar 9), progressions featuring this colouring, i.e.  $\#IV^7$  to a form of the dominant and  $\#IV^7 - Ic$ , appear throughout (bars 22–23, 42–43, 45–46, 55–56 and 57–58) before the oscillating  $I - \#IV^{o7b} - I$  harmony permeates much of the closing section as the music reaches a final climax (bars 66–73). Although the progression  $\#IV^{o7b} - V^7 - I$  returns in Prelude no.48 (bars 44–46), this is the final prelude to place such a strong emphasis on the colouring and one of the composer's favoured progressions:

**Example 5.47.3. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 66–73**

The musical score for Example 5.47.3, Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 66–73, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 66–73) shows a progression from I to  $\#iv^{o7b}$ , then I to  $\#iv^{o7b}$ . The second system (bars 74–81) shows a progression from I to  $\#iv^{o7b}$ , then I to  $\#iv^{o7b}$ , then I to  $\#iv^{o7b}$ , and finally I to I. The score includes dynamic markings (p, f) and articulation (accents).

Another feature of this prelude is the strong presence of the home key. Unlike the preceding prelude, where the use of the tonic key was minimal, and despite modulations to the related keys of E major, d sharp minor, f sharp minor, F sharp major, b minor and

D major here, the music centres around the tonic, with thirty-six of the final thirty-nine bars hugging the tonic closely.

Notwithstanding his awareness of strong chordal progressions and smooth modulations, he shows a preference for secondary chords in the harmonisation of the first repeat of the principal theme (bar 11). The parallel fifths in bars 23–24 recall examples in the music of Bach, Chopin, Mozart, Berlioz and Verdi who included such movements in compositions. Indeed, Piston believes that as ‘parallel fifths achieve a greater degree of freedom in Chopin’s works than anywhere else until the late nineteenth century’ they became ‘a minor aspect of his style’.<sup>61</sup>

**Example 5.47.4. Stanford: Prelude no.47, bars 23–25**



Such fifths were never intended by Stanford to be an aspect of his style as he despised the use of consecutive fifths in modern compositions: ‘Fifths were prohibited because they were ugly and they are as ugly now as they every have been, and as they ever will be, world without end.’<sup>62</sup> It is intriguing that he allowed these examples and his inclusion of such fifths were obviously allowed as they added to the beauty of the work, in line with his comments in 1911 in which he noted that a composer could ‘write them if he is convinced of their appropriateness, and can convince the hearer of their beauty’.<sup>63</sup> Despite his disdain for such progressions, other examples can be found throughout Stanford’s output including the Credo from Mass in G op.46 and *Songs of*

<sup>61</sup> Walter Piston, *Harmony* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1962), p. 287.

<sup>62</sup> Stanford, ‘On Some Recent Tendencies in Composition’, (1920–1921), pp. 39–40.

<sup>63</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 3.

*the Sea* op.91 no.1.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, Margaret Nosek noted that if a student wrote a passage of consecutive fifths Stanford would change them into a passage of consecutive sixths as he believed they ‘produced a far more satisfying effect on the ear’.<sup>65</sup> Interestingly, a number of passages of sixths permeate much of the texture in Stanford’s writing for the piano.

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<sup>64</sup> Stanford, *Mass in G* and Stanford, *Songs of the Sea*.

<sup>65</sup> Margaret Nosek, ‘No Title’, *The R.C.M. Magazine*, 1984, pp. 32–36 (p. 35).



## 5.24 Prelude no.48



With its subtitle 'Addio', a certain sense of poignancy is felt as the end of both the second set and Stanford's forty-eight preludes is reached. Interestingly, no such indication was given at the end of the first set of preludes, suggesting an intention of farewell on composing his second set and complete set of forty-eight preludes. Despite the composition of short collections of works for solo piano after the completion of this second set of preludes in 1920, the completion of this monumental composition may have been the summation of all Stanford had to say in pianistic terms.<sup>66</sup> When examined as a whole, the two sets of preludes display such a variety of styles, a rich harmonic palette and an array of compositional devices; in essence a synopsis of many of his stylistic traits. Despite links between individual preludes, each piece represents a dissimilar mood and character and exploits different aspects of Stanford's sound world.

<sup>66</sup> Works for piano completed after the preludes include *Three Nocturnes for Pianoforte Solo* (1921) and *Three Fancies for Pianoforte Solo* (1923). See Charles Villiers Stanford, *Three Nocturnes for Pianoforte Solo*, op.184 (Unpublished); Charles Villiers Stanford, *Three Fancies* (Edward Arnold & Co., 1924).

While a number of composers offered works which included references to a 'farewell', many were not completed in the later years of the composers' lives. Whatever Stanford's choice for including such an apt subtitle, it is also intriguing to note that the opening three-note descending figure recalls the opening of 'farewell' works by Beethoven, Schubert and von Weyrauch.<sup>67</sup>

**Example 5.48.1a. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars /1–4**

**Example 5.48.1b. Beethoven: Piano Sonata op.81a, 'Les Adieux', bars 1–5**

**Example 5.48.1c. Schubert: Abschied Von Einem Freunde, D.578, bars /1–5**

<sup>67</sup>

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonata No. 26*, op. 81a (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1862); Franz Schubert, *Abschied Von Einem Freunde*, D. 578 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1894); August Heinrich Von Weyrauch, *Adieu!* (Brunswick: Henry Litolf's Verlag, n.d.).

**Example 5.48.1d. Von Weyrauch: L'Adieu, bars /1–2***Andante sostenuto*

In Stanford's prelude the three-note descending figure fulfils an important structural role throughout the work. The most significant reappearance in the closing bars demonstrates a deliberate inclusion of the figure in an attempt to unify the prelude: harmonically, there is no need for the insertion of the c sharp in the inner strand of the chordal texture in the final bar; however, its presence here is a clear attempt by the composer to make reference to this important figure in the closing bars thereby, creating cyclical effect:

**Example 5.48.2. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 47–49**

Interestingly, the use of a descending three-note figure is in direct contrast with those preludes which opened with an inviting three-note ascending idea. Here, it signifies a sense of closure and inward motion. Further deliberate, if somewhat unusual, inclusions are worth noting in this prelude: while Stanford displayed an adventurous side in the previous prelude with his alternating time signatures, in this prelude his unusual decision to change key signatures within the piece should be considered. Beginning in b minor, the music introduces new key signatures to mark harmonic sections in E flat

major (beginning at bar 18), b minor (beginning at bar 27) and B major (beginning at bar 38) in the score. The brief tonicization to E flat major leads to G flat major (bar 23), following the Romantic tradition of modulating to keys a third apart, and remains there for four bars before the return to the tonic at bar 27; the passage in G flat major, however, does not receive a new key signature. No other prelude in this set changes key signature during the piece to signify a new tonal area. Surprisingly, the passage in G flat major seems somewhat exotic as its enharmonic equivalent F sharp major is the home dominant. An examination of this prelude, however, demonstrates that Stanford's harmonic tendencies are at their most adventurous as eleven keys are explored throughout. In this respect the prelude may be a summation of some tonalities utilized in the set. Furthermore, Stanford has a solid command of his harmonic language here with enharmonic adjustments used to provide a smooth transition from one tonal region to the next (bars 25–27) and an effortless shift from C major to c minor (bars 34–35), while the repeat of the progression  $\text{vii}^7\text{c} - \text{ib}$  is heard fluctuating from minor to major as both  $\text{vii}^7\text{c} - \text{ib}$  and  $\text{vii}^7\text{c} - \text{Ib}$  (bars 32–35):

**Example 5.48.3a. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 24–28**



## Example 5.48.3b. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 32–36

D: vii<sup>c</sup>    I<sup>b</sup>    b: vii<sup>7c</sup>    i<sup>b</sup>

C: vii<sup>7c</sup>    I<sup>b</sup>    c: vii<sup>7c</sup>    i<sup>b</sup>

Being the final prelude in the set, it is not unusual to find ideas utilized earlier in the set repeated. Stanford's preoccupation with particular cadential progressions in this set has been noted earlier. Here, in the closing bars, some of these progressions are combined as if it was his intention to recapitulate progressions used in the set. Two rhythmically displaced opening figures, emphasised by the insertion of a rest directly before each hearing to mark its presence, are followed by punctuated chords:  $\#IV^{o7b} - Ic_m - \#IV^o - V^7 - Ic - I$  which has the impression of the final cadential progression in the work through the anticipation of the tonic chord and dramatic rhythm:

## Example 5.48.4. Stanford: Prelude no.48, bars 42–46

Harmonic analysis labels for the first system:

#IV<sup>7</sup> Ic II<sup>7</sup>cM ivm<sup>7</sup> Ic Aug<sup>6</sup>

Harmonic analysis labels for the second system:

#iv<sup>o7b</sup> icm #iv<sup>o7d</sup> V<sup>7</sup> Ic I

An epilogue of three bars incorporating the final presentations of the opening motif boldly brings both the prelude and the set to a close with an unusual cadential progression: ii<sup>o5b</sup> – Ic – I, ending resolutely in the tonic major.

In conclusion this prelude includes many compositional devices which were utilized to great effect throughout op.179: augmentation (bars 27–28), octave doubling (bars 28–29), writing in thirds (bar 22), scale-like formations outlined in the accompanimental strand (bars 10–13, 19–20 and 36–39), sequential development (bars 1–3 and 32–34), the same melody harmonised differently (bars 13–14), major to minor adjustment (bar 5), displacement (bars 42–43) and oscillating movement in the bassline (bars 16–17). In this sense, this prelude acts like a summing up of the material presented in the twenty-four preludes while also maintaining a reference to material and devices utilized in op.163.

## Chapter 6 Aspects of Stanford's Style as Exemplified in the Preludes

### 6.1 Introduction

He had catholicity of taste, but he regarded with fierce loathing the style of the most prominent modernists of the day, the men who dealt in harmonies which did not conform to the older standards of relationship between discords and concords, and who sought to extend the boundaries of music at the expense, as he felt, of clear intentions and recognisable forms.<sup>1</sup>

Stanford's collection of preludes is a compilation of various styles and genres reflecting the essence of his creative output through his stylistic synthesis from two traditions of the prelude. While the works also include typical Stanfordian stylistic traits, they make an important contribution to the evolution and development of the European prelude tradition with particular significance for the British prelude tradition. As this is the first in-depth study of all forty-eight of Stanford's preludes for piano, my aim was to provide a comprehensive account and examination of the features of the preludes. Stanford was uneasy about the onset of modernism, and in this period of revival the validity of such composers' methods and their place in the musical canon justifies the need to examine and recognise them.

If Stanford had decided to follow the Romantic tradition of completing unattached preludes, why then did he not follow the tonal model of the Romantic composers? Stanford's interesting contribution to the prelude tradition in England at the beginning of the twentieth century is noteworthy for his marriage of both the Baroque and Romantic traditions of the prelude, thus romanticising Bach's models. On a surface level Stanford's preludes differ from Bach's contribution to the genre as Bach's preludes have a prefatory function whereby he coupled each prelude with a fugue in the same key, while Stanford's works appear to follow the model of the unattached prelude of the nineteenth century. However, within this framework his preludes owe something

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<sup>1</sup> Anon., 'The Work and Influence of Charles Villiers Stanford', p. 259.

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to both traditions, principally in the choice of genre, but also through his skilful assimilation of stylistic traits of composers synonymous with both traditions.

Of his generation Stanford was certainly the most prolific in terms of his piano output, in both size and quality and he made an important contribution to the British prelude tradition as he was the first Irish-born composer to complete a set of twenty-four preludes. Yet despite this achievement, his preludes have failed to gain any recognition by an Irish pianist. His blending together of Baroque and Romantic traditions within his collections of preludes sets Stanford apart from other British composers. While Stanford's preludes are not completely original in their musical content as they demonstrate his penchant for outdated characteristics, the significance of his composition should not be overlooked despite his choosing to follow traditional models in terms of the tonal design. What is particularly interesting in terms of Stanford's contribution to the prelude tradition is that he was an Irish-born composer living in England during the height of the British Musical Renaissance following German traditions.

Both the collections of Bach and Chopin hold a permanent place in the performer's canon. This is due largely to the unique character of each. However, Stanford's preludes have failed to gain a lasting position in the repertoire of either amateur or professional performers. Although many features in Chopin's collection suggest the influence of both the collections of Bach and Hummel, this has not affected perceptions of Chopin's collection, and reception of his preludes remains strong and steadfast. While Stanford has been equally if not more dependent on a number of his predecessors in his piano music, this has tainted the reception not only of his collections of preludes but also the whole body of his piano music. This is reflected in the lack of performance opportunities as well as the paucity of musicological discourse on the



preludes. Acknowledging that Chopin's preludes are better than Stanford's my analysis has shown that Stanford's piano works are, however, worthy of examination on account of their inherent intrinsic value and the composer's treatment of musical ideas. Such an examination will in turn raise awareness of these relatively little-known preludes.

The aim of this chapter is to summarise the key analytical features that have emerged through the detailed critical analysis of the preludes and demonstrate a number of typical Stanfordian features which are clearly represented throughout the collection.

## **6.2 Conventions and Characteristics in Stanford's Collection**

As a genre the prelude evolved over time and, while many collections maintain a strong interest in tonality, most do not follow a particular structure or form. However, similar features exist between preludes from different eras. Most preludes are known by their brevity which then impacts on the possibilities for motivic and thematic development and the mood content of the works. Stanford's preludes demonstrate many conventions associated with the various prelude traditions including the application of a particular tonal design and retaining the brevity characteristic of the prelude as a genre. Indeed, most of the preludes are monothematic/monomotivic, display a uniform mood, contain some improvisatory-style passages and include a variety of idiomatic keyboard figurations. The emotional content for each prelude is clearly indicated by the performance directions. It is plausible to suggest that the composer perceived each prelude as an individual character piece conveying a specific mood. Indeed, one of the historical functions of the prelude was to establish a mood, a trait maintained by Stanford throughout his set of preludes. While some of the preludes exhibit differing degrees of increased intensity, a uniform mood is maintained by most of the preludes. Tables 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 highlight the changes in performance directions annotated on each of the preludes representing the composer's attention to such details. Excluding the

brief changes in tempo which allow for some flexibility of speed, few preludes demonstrate a dramatic change in character or alteration to the tempo (Preludes nos 8, 32 and 35).<sup>2</sup> Despite the focus on a single affection which is kept uniformly throughout many of the preludes thereby ensuring a homogenous sense, this further strengthens their suitability for performance in various groupings or indeed as a whole set and represents a challenging and marketable way of assembling sets of character pieces.

Reminiscent of one of the earliest functions of the preludes, Stanford's pieces exhibit fewer improvisatory traits. While some of his rapid scale passages, links, cadential extensions, changes of tempo and time signatures may reflect the spontaneous rhythmic flexibility of improvisation, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that Stanford intended these as improvisatory-style pieces. Indeed, only one prelude engages in a continuous pattern of fluctuating time signatures (Prelude no.47).

### 6.3 Intentions and Function of Stanford's Preludes

One of the central concerns of this thesis was to consider Stanford's intentions when deciding to write his preludes. While the idea of lateness has been examined in relation to Stanford's composition of these pieces (see Sections 3.12 and 3.13), it is also worth considering that he arrived too late with his collection of preludes. For Stanford, the decision to make a contribution to the prelude tradition was a declaration — whilst having significance late in his life — which came too late in his career. It must also be acknowledged that it may never have been the composer's intention for the works to receive significant exposure. These pieces may have held more private than public significance, and this is somewhat reflected in the musical intentions of each work. Choosing not to include fugues with his preludes evidently suggests that he did not

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For example, many preludes included a *ritardando* which was cancelled in the following bar (in most cases) by a *tempo*. See Tables 3.6.1 and 3.6.2.

intend the miniatures to have a prefatory function. My detailed analytical engagement with each prelude illustrates that Stanford's preludes are functional in a number of ways and serve as useful pedagogical works from two different perspectives as they continue to explore different pianistic textures, articulations, dynamics, keyboard sonorities and a range of technical possibilities.

### 6.3.1 A Dual Pedagogical Function?

Some of Stanford's preludes provide an important pedagogical basis for the study of specific aspects of piano technique as they are concerned with technical and pianistic exploration at varying levels of difficulty. Bach and Chopin both included study-like pieces in their collections of preludes, a tradition continued by Stanford, while preludes by Scriabin and Rachmaninov also display challenges which make them suitable for pedagogical study. While many of Stanford's pieces display an *étude*-like conception of technique, they are not as virtuosically demanding as Chopin's *Etudes*. The forty-eight preludes produce numerous effects, making them idiomatic as they explore a variety of pianistic and technical idioms. Among the challenges are leaping basslines, wide leaps, the negotiation of crossing hands, study-like passagework for the right hand, the execution of rhythmic passages with rigour, sustained melodic lines, the presentation of clear melodic lines, octave passages, chromatic lines, melodies with varied accompaniment patterns including broken chords and octaves, ostinatos, rapid semiquaver figuration, cross-rhythms, balancing a melody with accompaniment, part-playing, chordal passages, voicing chordal textures, passages in thirds, articulating fast notes, arpeggio passages and oscillating chords. At times the rising passages cover numerous octaves in a fast tempo. This presents a challenge to the performer which may demand separate practice in order to manage the distance and ensure absolute precision. Many of the preludes involve rapid alternation of techniques and touch and require an

interpretive skill as they explore different pianistic possibilities and sonorities. Interest is maintained for the performer through the variety of textures, styles and techniques presented. Additionally, many of the preludes exploit a large span of the instrument. While their suitability for teaching elements of piano technique is acknowledged, many of the preludes also provide studies in tone colour and sonority. Indeed, this exploitation of the timbre and sonority of the instrument reflects one of the initial functions of the prelude. Secure and proper pedalling is of great importance in a number of the preludes in order to sustain the harmonies. The technical and artistic difficulties presented throughout the collection demonstrate Stanford's thorough knowledge of the instrument, while his rhythmic and harmonic treatment represents his ability to present his ideas as a miniaturist. However, while challenges have been noted, these works are not as virtuosic as Stanford's *Three Dante Rhapsodies* written for the virtuoso pianist Percy Grainger which echo Liszt in some of their rapid passages.<sup>3</sup> Here in his preludes Stanford follows closely Brahms, Schumann and Mendelssohn of the Leipzig school of composition.

The secondary pedagogical focus of these works is their value as a teaching tool for compositional purposes. Many of the guidelines from Stanford's treatise on musical composition are exemplified in these preludes, and as a collection of works they could be used in conjunction with his treatise as a teaching tool. As a suite of pieces, Stanford's preludes demonstrate a variety of styles and compositional devices. They include a number of passages highlighting a multiplicity of harmonic possibilities suitable for the study of tonicization, modulation, handling of chromatic passages, writing harmony above a tonic pedal, composing melodies over an ostinato, the inclusion of rests, achieving unity within a collection of pieces, handling a variety of

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<sup>3</sup> For a brief assessment of Stanford's *Three Dante Rhapsodies* see Adele Commins, 'Charles Villiers Stanford's Experiences with and Contributions to the Solo Piano Repertoire', in *Maynooth Musicology*, ed. by Brian Carty, Pat O'Connell and Barbara Strahan (Maynooth: NUI Maynooth, 2009), II, 139–171.



cadential progressions and the organic growth of motifs. Interestingly, he did not observe best practice in the omission of consecutive fifths, as a number of these appear throughout (see for example Preludes nos 13 and 47). Admittedly this may not have been the intended use of the collections; however, their suitability in this regard should not be ignored.

### 6.3.2 Stanford's Preludes' Suitability for Salon Entertainment

In addition to their appropriateness as pedagogical tools, Stanford's preludes successfully function as music suitable for amateur performers aimed at the domestic market. An examination of much parlour music which was composed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrates a number of trends in terms of the titles used for such pieces and the inspiration behind the works. Arthur Minton, for example, provides a list which, when considering Stanford's preludes, demonstrates many of the characteristics of his works which fit this market. These include pieces suggestive of birds (Prelude no.13), strains of melancholy (Prelude no.2), reference to bells (Prelude no.21), pieces celebrating events or persons of war (Prelude no.22), titles dealing with flowers and nature (Prelude no.13) and works which included dance titles, many in foreign languages which was an attempt to obtain an exotic and elevated effect (Preludes nos 10, 33, 41 and 43).<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the allusion to popular genres within the host genre of the Prelude represents the social function of the music. Collections of pieces were a common staple of the amateur repertoire with one such example being Mendelssohn's forty-eight *Songs without Words*. Many of these compilations included character-style miniatures. The variety of materials, styles, genres and idioms presented throughout Stanford's two sets of preludes represent an elevation of parlour music through his education of audiences with a range of styles.

<sup>4</sup> Despite Minton referring to American publications in his examination, similarities can be drawn to British compositions at this time. See Arthur Minton, 'Parlor Music', *American Speech*, 13 (1938), 255–262.

## 6.4 Stanford's Classical Persona as Characterized through the Preludes

Stanford clearly sought to explore the expressive possibilities of the prelude genre. The two sets of preludes reveal a composer who successfully demonstrated his command of many brilliant technical aspects of pianism and pianistic figurations with a style that exhibits both lyricism and a wide range of moods. On a deeper level, however, it seems possible that the preludes have an extra-musical meaning for the composer as these effective miniatures reflected his intimate personality. While Stanford's possible preoccupation with reflections on death has been alluded to earlier in this thesis, the witty and humorous side of his personality also emerges in these private pieces. This is evident through his quirky and unexpected changes of direction and mood in a number of preludes (Preludes nos 4, 9, 15, 18, 27 and 30). Coupled with the elegiac mood and remembrance of those who died also reflecting the effect war had on his life (Preludes nos 2, 22 and 47), the forty-eight preludes give a solid insight into his persona, and they form in part a musical diary.

### 6.4.1 References to a Native Tradition

While these pieces bear the hallmarks of a fusion of Baroque and Romantic traditions, subtle hints at Stanford's Irish heritage feature throughout the collection which are perhaps more accidental than deliberate and represent his subconscious coming to the fore. Modal inflections hint at an Irish soundworld, while some melodic lines, with their straight-forward rhythms, stepwise and other simple intervallic leaps, have a distinctly folk-song quality and show an influence of Irish folk music (Preludes nos 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 20 and 46).<sup>5</sup> Admittedly, the link to Ireland is much less pronounced than in other

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<sup>5</sup> In each of these cases, the whole prelude does not embrace an Irish soundworld.

works, and despite numerous references to several dance metres, Stanford chose not to write any prelude as an Irish jig or reel, for example.<sup>6</sup>

## 6.5 Aspects of a Stanfordian Style

The examination of Stanford's forty-eight preludes has highlighted a number of features of the composer's compositional style in addition to the influence of a number of composers on his tonal language, his use of chromatic passages, his choice of structural devices and the pianistic style employed. It was not the intention of the analysis to present a conclusive report on any one aspect of Stanford's musical style or technique, but rather to highlight some observations on his treatment of a range of his compositional tendencies as discovered during my analytical engagement with the music which include his approach to harmony, structure, rhythm and motivic development. Stylistic traits found to exist in many of the preludes lend unity to the collection.

While Stanford's preludes follow closely both Bach's and Chopin's collections of preludes, both structurally and tonally, Stanford's works also display a typical style in terms of organic development and handling of thematic material, integration of musical figures and his particular use of harmonic colour. These striking characteristics demonstrate both elements of his original voice and his affinity with the work of earlier composers. The influence of Brahms is visible in his ability to generate musical ideas from small motivic cells demonstrating his motivic resourcefulness. Despite their brevity, each of the pieces clearly has a distinctive defining character. The styles exemplified throughout the collection emanate from all of the diverse influences on Stanford. Due to the mix of styles and genres found within the collection — as he borrows a range of archaic musical elements — it would be appropriate to label the

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<sup>6</sup> Stanford had previously explicitly referred to Irish dance metres in *Four Irish Dances* in 1907.

collection as being polystylistic as he engages with a number of different styles, making for a varied yet distinctive contribution to the prelude tradition. On the whole, each of the preludes demonstrates Stanford's fondness for vocally-inspired clear melodic lines representative of the lyrical melodies found in his song repertoire. Indeed, it is worth noting that some of his compositional tendencies appear more frequently in the second set compared to the first, and this may be seen to represent a development of style.

### 6.5.1 Typical Harmonic Devices

Stanford's preference for a strong sense of tonality is evident in his writing, and his use of harmony clearly acts as a unifying device throughout the collections. The preludes exhibit his tendency towards traditional progressions, with most dissonances resolving in an appropriate manner with a clear handling of explicit and implied modulations. While the harmonic language is derivative and strongly redolent of the soundworld of Schumann and Brahms, Stanford's application of this harmonic language unveils an engaging facility. Many progressions utilized by the composer nod to particular Leipzig composers: for example, the IVc – I plagal cadence is a favourite of Brahms. At the same time, however, his penchant for chromatically inflected chords is also clearly visible, and chromaticism is both a melodic and compositional premise in the preludes. Stanford believed that 'chromatics are [...] colour and not drawing. If we use in excess the only means we have of heightening effect, we have nothing further to fall back upon for intensifying contrast'.<sup>7</sup> The essence of his chromaticism is witnessed through his use of chromatically inflected harmony which fits seamlessly into the harmonic structure, and the frequent use of both descending and ascending chromatic passages highlights important structural points in the preludes; other more elaborate chromatic passages appear in wedge-like design, recalling an earlier use by Stanford in 'The Radiant Dark'

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Stanford, *Musical Composition: A Short Treatise for Students*, p. 44.



from *The Spanish Gypsy* op.1 no.8.<sup>8</sup> Many of the chromatic sections span a perfect fourth, recalling a favoured device of a number of composers including Bach and Chopin. While much of the writing is tinged with chromatic dissonance, the music maintains tonal clarity throughout each work. Stanford embellished chromatic harmony through his careful integration of non-harmonic notes and the abundant use of appoggiaturas, suspensions and passing notes, often for dramatic effect as the chromatic inflections enrich the harmonic notes and drive the music forward, thereby add chromatic shading, contrast and unity to the writing.

Indeed, one of Stanford's favoured cadential progressions utilizes the chord of the sharpened fourth, adding a chromatic twist to an established standard cadential progression. The use of #IV at important structural points in the piece demonstrates a personal Stanfordian fingerprint and adds a unique sound to the collection. On occasions, however, the melodic contour may outline the shape of  $\hat{4} - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  as opposed to containing this favoured chordal progression (see for example bars 82–86 in Prelude no.30). Variants of the progression include  $\#IV^7 - V^7 - I$  and  $\#IV^{o7} - V^7 - I$ . Indeed, this progression is not only found in his piano writing; it also permeates much of his organ works, with one example found at the end of the first fugue of *Three Preludes and Fugues for the Organ* op.193 (bars 70–80) and *Idyll for Organ* op.121 no.2 (bars 213–218). Indeed the #IV colouring infuses much of the writing in both the first and second of the preludes and fugues. Linked to his preference for the use of the sharpened fourth at important structural and cadential points is the presence of the sharpened fourth as the first chromatic note in a number of preludes. In many of these pieces the sharpened fourth returns for the final cadential progression in the prelude, thus ensuring harmonic unity. Interestingly, on a number of occasions, the chromatic note is left unresolved until the closing bars of the piece, giving an unsettled sense to the

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<sup>8</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *The Spanish Gypsy*, op.1 (London: Chappell, 1877).

harmony and demonstrating a long-range resolution (see Prelude no.10 for example). Over thirty of the preludes feature the sharpened fourth in a functional and strategic role, demonstrating the composer's fondness for this colouring. Appearing as the first chromatic note in a work, the sharpened fourth was clearly a favoured colouring by the composer, and examples are found in the first and second movements of his Courante from Suite for Piano op.2 (bar 2), *Une Fleur de Mai* (bar 7), in the second movement of String Quartet no.3 in D minor op.64 (bar 6), Idyll for Organ op.121 no.2 (bar 1), *Last Post* op.75 (bar 5), Three Intermezzi op.13 no. 1 (bar 4) and *Songs of the Sea* op.91 no.4 and no.5 (bars 1 and 10 respectively).<sup>9</sup> Noteworthy examples of the progression in the preludes include Prelude no.17 (bars 53–56) and Prelude no.35 (bars 30–33), while a significant example of the sharpened fourth for chromatic colouring is found in Prelude no.15 (bar 1). While a number of other progressions require raised fourths and are often commonly used as cadential progressions,<sup>10</sup> the frequent repetition of  $\#4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  coupled with the harmonic progression using the sharpened fourth and the appearance of the raised fourth as the first chromatic note in a number of the preludes creates unity within the collection. Additionally, his use of such chromatic colouring represents his novel approach to harmony.

Chromatic movement often facilitates tonicizations and modulations, while other smooth transitions are negotiated by means of enharmonic adjustment. This is a favoured method of modulation used by Stanford throughout his output.<sup>11</sup> Such harmonic transition points are reminiscent of the Romantic tradition with numerous examples found in the work of Beethoven and Liszt, for example. In terms of modulations there is a preference for flatward keys as the first departure in many of the

<sup>9</sup> Stanford, String Quartet no.3 op.64.

<sup>10</sup> Some progressions include  $V^7b/V - V - I$  and  $vii^{o7}/V - V - I$ .

<sup>11</sup> Further examples found in many of his works: 'Francesca' from *Three Dante Rhapsodies*, all movements from String Quartet no.3 in D minor op.64, *Songs From the Sea* op.91 no.4, Three Intermezzi op.13 no.2, and Gloria, Credo and Agnus Dei from Mass in G op.46.

preludes in a similar fashion to *The Veiled Prophet*. While the music does not often move to remote keys, he often approaches the final tonic by means of a distant key, in a manner reminiscent of Rachmaninov (see Preludes nos 2, 10, 28 and 36, for example) while other preludes display a multiplicity of modulatory turns.

Alternative favoured cadential progressions include VI – V – I (Preludes nos 2, 6, 9, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36 and 46) and IVc – I (Preludes nos 16 and 47), the second progression recalling Brahms, as mentioned earlier. Like Stanford's penchant for #IV – V – I, the outline of these progressions is sometimes merely suggested as opposed to appearing in a full chordal version, along with variants of the progression VI – V – I which is altered to VI – Ic – I, therefore still maintaining the soundworld of VI – V – I. On other occasions the chordal pattern may not feature the progression VI – V – I but the melodic outline hints at the shape of the progression (see Prelude no.36 bars 55–64). The allusion to the progression in this prelude is of particular significance, as it was hinted at in the bassline of the opening section of the work (bars 5–7).

An examination of other works by Stanford detects his use of similar progressions; one such example of the progression VI – V – I in Stanford's organ music is found at the end of the first prelude in *Three Preludes and Fugues for the Organ* op.193 (bars 54–56). Furthermore, linked to the use of the chord of the subdominant in second inversion is the composer's preference for the tonic chord in second inversion, interestingly appearing more frequently and daringly in the second set of preludes (Preludes nos 23, 32, 33, 41, 43, 44 and 46).

While Stanford normally resolves immediately to the tonic in root position, on a number of occasions he delays the resolution of V<sup>7</sup> to the tonic in root position, by passing firstly through the tonic in second inversion, therefore producing a prolonging

of the dominant. This is a sort of the reverse of the typical classical cadence in which the appearance of the root of V is postponed by a pre-emptive tonic. Significant examples include Prelude no.31 (bars 46–50) and Prelude no.44 (bars 69–71). Stanford had previously used this progression in both the first and second movements of String Quartet no.3 op.64 and his Mass in G. As in each of the cadential progressions noted above, Stanford uses variants of this progression, one example being an offshoot of the dominant, vii<sup>o7</sup>d. An initial examination of the preludes has found that eleven preludes in op.179 use this progression or variants of it at important structural points in the piece. Linked to this progression is Stanford's use of elisions. On a number of occasions a particular progression is suggested but an important note is omitted from the writing (see for example Preludes nos 25, 26, 36 and 39).

There are many other interesting harmonic effects which are characteristic as Stanfordian fingerprints throughout the collection, and the presentation of each reveals Stanford's ease of handling such progressions. These include oscillating harmonies (Preludes nos 3, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 21, 33 and 48), while some modal colouring makes an appearance in a number of preludes, suggesting the influence of folk music (Preludes nos 3, 8, 12, 13, 20, 22 and 46). A penchant for mediant harmonies and the use of a mediant pedal recalling Brahms (see for example Preludes nos 3, 5, 11, 17, 24 and 42) are not isolated occurrences in the preludes. Mediant relationships feature in a number of his compositions, often employed for structural effect. Examples include 'Francesca' and 'Beatrice' from *Three Dante Rhapsodies* op.92. The presence of mediant relationships in each of his organ sonatas suggests a deliberate use, as the middle movement of each work begins a third above or below the key of the first movement, while mediant pedals feature prominently in *Last Post* op.75. In a similar



vein, Stanford's use of cycles of fifths provides both a structural and harmonic effect (Preludes nos 3, 4, 16, 18, 23, 24 and 33).<sup>12</sup>

It is clear that the preludes are drawn together by similar harmonic ideas. Stanford's wide and varied harmonic palette also includes a preference for dominant thirteenths, Neapolitan harmony and the misspelling of notes in diminished seventh chords resulting as  $\#V^{o7} - I$  instead of  $vii^{o7} - I$ . Each of these harmonic devices and colourings is strongly redolent of Romanticism as Stanford's Germanic harmony is tinged with modal overtones. To add further variety to a number of works, melodic notes are often repeated with changing harmonies beneath (see Preludes nos 11, 24, 27 and 43 for example), a technique reminiscent of Schubert which Stanford employed frequently in other late works such as the 'Nocturne' and 'Ballade in F' from *Night Thoughts* op.148. This demonstrates the ease with which the composer could change the harmonic direction in his writing.

### 6.5.2 Structural Devices

Due to the fluid structure of the preludes, with no expected form or structure, a number of techniques feature prominently throughout and lend structural unity to each of the works; they also demonstrate the strong emphasis which classical structures had on Stanford's compositional processes. On the simplest of levels his penchant for regular phrasing is clearly visible, with many of the phrases akin to breathing in speech. Despite not all sections being marked by conventional cadences, a logical form prevails throughout each work. Many of the structural devices are linked by Stanford's interest in numerology, which in particular suggests the influence of a musical trinity and which forms a continuous thread throughout his collection. For example, unison octave

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In Prelude no.18 the cycle is a cycle of dominant sevenths. Further examples of these progressions can be found in *Idyll for Organ* op.121 no.2 and *Credo* from *Mass in G* op.46.

passages are often used as linking devices, while figures repeated over three octaves also function in a similar way. Examples of Stanford's preference for repeating ideas over three octaves are found in works as early as his Piano Suite op.2. Other references to a musical trinity include three-note motifs, writing the music over three staves and modulations between keys a third apart. Threefold statements represent his strongest engagement with numerology and feature in a number of preludes (Preludes nos 2, 3, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 25 and 26 for example). Threefold repetitions are not unique to his preludes; other examples occur in Psalm 126, Idyll for Organ op.121 no.2, *Songs of the Sea* op.91 no.5, *Suite of Ancient Dances* op.58 and Gloria from Mass in G op.46.<sup>13</sup> Stanford's preference for modulations a third apart is also evident in a number of other works in his output: Piano Trio nos 1 and 2, *The Three Holy Children*, *Te Deum*, *Songs of the Fleet* and *O Praise The Lord of Heaven* and represent the influence of modulatory trends from the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Other structural devices employed include repetition of ideas which functions as a structural premise and a large number of scales, some of which span a twelfth while others are based on hexachords (Preludes nos 12 and 16). Many of the scale passages are used in the climactic section of a prelude, thus having a strong and significant function in its formal structure. Most interesting and perhaps most daring in his choice of such scales are pentatonic and whole-tone scales (Preludes nos 13 and 36).

<sup>13</sup> In Psalm 126 the words 'whereof we rejoice' are repeated three times. Stanford's interest in numerology is witnessed in an earlier work for piano, *Three Dante Rhapsodies* op.92. There are three rhapsodies in the set, themes are varied in three ways, some motifs are founded on three notes, the interval of the third acts as a compositional premise, mediant-based modulations recur throughout the set and in 'Capaneo' the sections often end with three repeated chords. Indeed, a cadential point in the second movement of his *Irish Symphony* is marked with a threefold reiteration of the tonic note. Mason notes this as 'typically Irish'. See Daniel Gregory Mason, *Short Studies of Great Masterpieces*, The Appreciation of Music, III (New York: The H.W. Gray Co., 1918), p. 53.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Songs of the Fleet: For Baritone Solo and Chorus*, op.117 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1910); Charles Villiers Stanford, *The Three Holy Children*, op.22 (London: Stanley Lucas, Weber & Co., 1885); Charles Villiers Stanford, *O Praise the Lord of Heaven: The Hundred and Fiftieth Psalm*, op.27 (London: Forsyth Bros., 1887).

Rests and dramatic silences perform an important structural role in a number of the pieces and add to the architectural function of individual preludes. In his treatise on musical composition Stanford placed great emphasis on 'the danger of using an insufficient number of rests and silences', noting that they 'are the most valuable assets of the composer'.<sup>15</sup> Stanford may also have been more concerned with overly dense textures. A number of preludes engage in unrelenting passages and often involve a dramatic change of texture in the closing bars in order to bring the work to a conclusion. The momentum had been built up for the dramatic element of closure. These alterations, in addition to other important textural and structural changes, are often highlighted by dramatic silences (see for example Prelude no.5 bar 43, Prelude no.9 bars 24 and 27, Prelude no.13 bars 26 and 57, Prelude no.19 bar 47, Prelude no.25 bar 23, Prelude no.26 bar 64, Prelude no.29 bars 34 and 43, Prelude no.33 bar 89, Prelude no.36 bars 52–60 and Prelude no.44 bar 67), while other preludes use rests to mark significant new sections or phrases (see for example Prelude no.6 bars 23 and 26, Prelude no.7 bars 29, 30, 31 and 44, Prelude no.14 bar 8, Prelude no.25 bar 14, Prelude no.33 bar 3, Prelude no.34 bars 35, 37 and 83, Prelude no.38 bar 48, Prelude no.39 bars 84–85, Prelude no.40 bar 45, Prelude no.41 bar 20, Prelude no.47 bar 74 and Prelude no.48 bar 44). Chopin utilised a similar layout in Prelude no.19. Stanford believed that 'some of the most thrilling moments in music have been the result of a dead silence', and his rests and pauses heighten the drama and tension in some of the preludes.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, organists often included rests and pauses in their works as they wished for the music to be heard and to give the sound a sense of 'space'. Stanford included other such breaks in his *Suite of Ancient Dances* op.58, in the Credo of his Mass in G op.46, Idyll for Organ op.121 no.2 and *Songs of the Sea* op.91 nos 3 and 4. Rests had an architectural function

<sup>15</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 170. See also pp. 9, 22, 47, 113, 125, 153 & 171.

<sup>16</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 170.

for a number of composers including Brahms, and it is clear that they served such a function in Stanford's preludes also.

### 6.5.3 Rhythm

While many of Stanford's characteristic traits are linked to his interest in melody, some rhythmic fingerprints are speckled throughout the collection. One such example is his use of an accompanimental silence on the first beat of each bar (see for example Preludes nos 17 and 23) which recalls an earlier use in the first movement of Piano Trio no.1 and *A Song of Battle*, while a favoured device includes the rhythmic displacement of important motifs or thematic ideas as a method of variation reminiscent of Brahms.<sup>17</sup> While it unsettles the rhythmic expectations of a particular theme, it helps to propel the music forward, providing rhythmic interest in a number of preludes (see for example Preludes nos 2, 4, 17, 19, 20, 25, 28, 29 and 48). Another example of this rhythmic displacement can be found in his *Three Intermezzi* op.13 no.3 (bar 17), while there are numerous examples of this alteration of rhythmic stress in 'Capaneo'.<sup>18</sup> Frisch proposes that such displacements 'become tools of developing variation, means for modifying and transforming thematic motivic material'.<sup>19</sup> The metric displacement takes a primary role as a varying agent in the development of thematic material. Stanford often uses devices to propel the music forward. For example, a dramatic compression in Prelude no.31 (bars 16–18) adds to the rhythmic propulsion of the piece.

While a number of these harmonic, rhythmical and structural devices demonstrate an affinity with earlier composers, the repeated presence of these ideas lend unity to the collection while also ensuring a strong Stanfordian sound throughout. In the

<sup>17</sup> In *A Song of Battle* the composer places a crotchet rest on the first beat bars (bars 89–94) while a quaver rest is heard on the first beat of bars 65–73 in *A Song of Hope*. See Charles Villiers Stanford, *Bible Songs: 'A Song of Hope'*, op.113 no.3 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1909); Charles Villiers Stanford, *Bible Songs: 'A Song of Battle'*, op.113 no.5 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1909).

<sup>18</sup> 'Capaneo' also features augmentation.

<sup>19</sup> Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, p. 93.



case of the harmonic devices, it is the novel combination of these across the collection which add a distinctive harmonic voice to the writing. Indeed, as many of these features which demonstrate a clear reference to nineteenth-century traditions are found in other compositions by the composer, this suggests that they are representative of his compositional style.

## **6.6 Nineteenth-Century Organicism: Towards a Unified Composition**

The Stanfordian traits highlighted above ensure cohesion throughout the preludes, and one of the key concerns of this thesis is whether Stanford had intended for them to be unified as a set. A clear sense of structure and growth is evident in each composition as the distinctive motive or motives which are presented in the opening bars are developed through a process of manipulation, simplification, variation and transformation involving inversion, interval transformation, compression, expansion and augmentation, fragmentation and rhythmic displacement. Despite appearing in different guises with new material growing out of original ideas, motifs remain recognisable throughout each piece. Taken as a whole the preludes are motivically orientated. The modified restatements of material suggest not only a degree of overall coherence for a cycle that is quite remarkably varied in its expressive material, but also demonstrates the composer's obsession with the melodic structure. One of the most important structural and unifying points of note is that in many of the forty-eight preludes there is a reference to the initial motif, heard either in complete or varied form, in the closing bars, again reminiscent of a number of miniatures from the nineteenth century. This ensures that most of the pieces have come full circle, with a sense of internal unity within each prelude and demonstrating a long-range connection within the pieces. Furthermore, this suggests a degree of overall coherence for a cycle that is otherwise

quite varied in the presentation of its melodic material. Most significantly the preludes represent a tonally integrated set.

Although Stanford's preludes do not reveal any such internal connection by way of a simple unifying motivic cell, a number of the preludes share motivic connections which, while not linking every prelude in the set, group a number of preludes in twos and threes through their sharing of common melodic material. For example, a four-note descending figure features frequently in the set and functions as an ostinato-like pattern in a number of preludes. Indeed, the motive had previously featured in the third movement of Stanford's Second Piano Concerto op.126 from 1911. Used as the ostinato figure in Prelude no.25, which is reminiscent of a Bach passacaglia, a link is formed with its succeeding prelude through the re-introduction of the figure in the closing bars of Prelude no.26 as it is transported to the melodic line. It permeates the writing undergoing variation and transformation through the processes of sequential development, tonal alteration, registral and rhythmical displacement. Despite the contrasting material and mood presented in Prelude no.26, the four-note descending figure from the opening of Prelude no.25 is hinted at in the closing bars of Prelude no.26 linking these two preludes as a pair. Other preludes similarly share melodic figures: Preludes nos 27, 37 and 39 all include the following melodic strand:  $\hat{3} - \# \hat{4} - \hat{6} - \hat{5}$ , while Preludes nos 31, 33 and 46 exploit a similar accompaniment figuration with emphasis on lower auxiliary notes and filling in the texture below held notes in the right hand in the closing section of each prelude. This figure is an important strand in the accompaniment in Prelude no.31, so its appearance in the closing bars of the piece is not unusual or unexpected, as a number of Stanford's preludes return to an important melodic or rhythmic device in the closing bars to ensure unity within individual preludes. However, its presence in two later preludes is unusual, as the figure makes it

first appearance in the closing bars. Coupled with a similar treatment of the figure in these subsequent preludes this suggests a more deliberate link between the three works.

While not the most pronounced component in the overall unifying structure of the preludes, Stanford's interest in numerology brings cohesion to the collection as it plays a role in the structural, tonal and harmonic design of a number of the preludes. His penchant for a musical trinity is not isolated to his preludes, with references to the number three found throughout his compositional output. Tied to this is his focus on mediant relationships, with examples found in the Clarinet Concerto op.80, *The Three Holy Children*, *Te Deum*, *Songs of the Fleet* and *O Praise the Lord of Heaven*. Admittedly, the reference to numerology may have been unintentional; however, its existence is worth noting here.

Related to the issue of unity is whether Stanford had intended for the works to be performed as a whole. While each of the preludes can function as a singular piece and be effectively performed individually, the presence of typical Stanfordian features makes the case for a coherent performance of all forty-eight preludes. Eigeldinger has suggested that if preludes are an organic whole then they must be put together according to certain structural principles, many of which are evident in Stanford's collection. The basis of his theory rests on the principle of alternation 'between the cycle of fifths ascending through the sharp side and that descending through the flat side, between major and minor, between diatonic and chromatic, between opposing tempi and characters, sizes and lengths, rhythms and metres, between two oscillating harmonies, between ascending and descending melodic lines, between high and low, left hand and right hand, continuity and dual thematic bases' in addition to looking for a single unifying motif.<sup>20</sup> An examination of Stanford's preludes has clearly identified a high

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<sup>20</sup> Eigeldinger, 'Twenty-Four Preludes op.28', p. 180.

degree of contrast throughout the collections through the deliberate opposition of textural, dynamic, temporal and harmonic devices.<sup>21</sup> While one single unifying motif is not present over the course of the collections, the incorporation of characteristic Stanfordian traits adds to the musical organicism.

Kallberg does not consider Chopin's op.28 as a set, and he believes that Chopin 'allowed for an ensuing longer work to fulfil the closural promise left hanging in the introductory prelude,' thereby returning to the original function of the prelude.<sup>22</sup> Despite following the nineteenth-century model of the unattached prelude, Stanford's preludes do not share the ambiguity of Chopin's preludes as suggested by Kallberg. Each of Stanford's preludes gains closure as a definite sense of tonal completion is achieved. This tonal repose also ensures that each piece functions as a highly coherent independent miniature, demonstrating his ability to engage effectively with small forms. While it may be perceived that there would be a contradiction between the aim for the pieces to be unified and intended for performance as a whole set while also being suitable at amateurs, the examination of the preludes has demonstrated that both functions are viable.

## 6.7 Stanford the Traditionalist: Indebted to the Past?

'At times his very facility led him astray. He could, at will, use the technique of any composer, and often use it better than the original.'<sup>23</sup> The examination of the preludes has clearly detected that modelling, borrowing and stylistic allusion all feature throughout the set, revealing Stanford's debt to tradition and respect for the past as his music recalls a number of his predecessors. Such representation of Stanford's looking back to past forms and ideals is characterised by retrospection. While this retrospective

<sup>21</sup> The idea of alternation in Stanford's preludes is discussed in Section 3.22.

<sup>22</sup> Kallberg, 'Small Forms', p. 143.

<sup>23</sup> Vaughan Williams, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, p. 195.



act and reference to these composers may represent an extra-musical purpose, it is more closely associated with Stanford's reluctance to engage with many modern compositional trends in later life and part of his 'historical mission'.<sup>24</sup> Influences which shaped him earlier in his career are still detectable in his old age, and it is clear that the influence of the Germanic tradition never left him and therefore shaped his compositional historicism.<sup>25</sup> There are clear affinities with Stanford's predecessors in terms of harmonic devices employed, structural ideas and melodic figures representing a sense of historicism. Mendelssohn was known for his use of old forms imbued with Romantic traits. Although he did not complete forty-eight preludes and fugues, Mendelssohn composed forty-eight *Songs without Words*, thus building in one way on past traditions. Reception of Mendelssohn's music has suffered because of these tendencies, a fate also bestowed upon Stanford. Garratt notes that 'historicism comprised a variety of conflicting stances' towards the end of the eighteenth century. It is worth considering these in relation to Stanford's preludes, despite the fact that they were completed in the early decades of the twentieth century. According to Garratt 'Mendelssohn's compositional engagement with the past was conditioned by a similar conception of genre [to Zelter] [...] in which he [Mendelssohn] was reluctant to depart from the structural norms established by Haydn and Mozart.'<sup>26</sup> In a similar way, many of Stanford's compositions reflect structural norms established by a number of his predecessors. In the case of his preludes he was clearly influenced by an established genre, while his musical upbringing and life experiences shaped his historical consciousness through his thorough knowledge of past genres and idioms. While the choice of genre ensures an historical orientation, the musical content also needs to be considered in order to assess the true extent of his indebtedness to past masters. Some of

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<sup>24</sup> This term has been borrowed from Garratt, 'Mendelssohn and the Rise of Musical Historicism', p. 59.

<sup>25</sup> I have borrowed this term from Garratt, 'Mendelssohn and the Rise of Musical Historicism', p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> Garratt, 'Mendelssohn and the Rise of Musical Historicism', p. 62.

the references in Stanford's preludes are explicit and suggest a direct modelling on a particular motif or idea, while others are veiled allusions. While his use of traditional harmony, structure and form at times suggest a sense of academicism and prevent his creative streak from shining through, the presentation of the material represents his expert manipulation and treatment of a variety of musical means and skilful assimilation of styles as he drew on the classics demonstrating a retrospective to the past. Structurally he followed the models of a number of composers. For example, one of Bennett's Preludes and Lessons is a two-part invention, a genre alluded to in Stanford's Prelude no.4, while other composers of preludes including Bach, Chopin and Rachmaninov all included toccata-style pieces in their collections, a tradition subscribed to by Stanford in his Prelude no.18. In total, the preludes are his most important expression for keyboard of his strong interest in historical styles.

While some critics including Bennett and Shaw fault Stanford for his utilisation of past ideas, the inclusion of at least one work written in a genre suggestive of composers of the past may have been his attempt to add to the rich body of piano literature representing a consciousness of tradition. He may have believed that by doing so he could make his own contribution to a developing tradition. The two main traditions which he followed were the Bachian and the Romantic prelude tradition as represented by Chopin, although the analysis reveals the imprint of a number of other composers and their music. Much of this influence emanates from the Leipzig school of composition, and the following view is shared by many writers who have recounted Stanford's historicism:

the great masters of the past were [again] his guides, philosophers, and friends. He owed a good deal to *Schubert* and Schumann, and a good deal more to Brahms. [He was evidently bent on writing not for his own day, but for all days, quite oblivious of the circumstances that most of those around

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him were experimenting with various interesting things which might or might not survive as permanencies].<sup>27</sup>

Stanford's debt to tradition resulted in a neglect of his music both during his lifetime and posthumously. Stanford's views on modern compositional trends have been examined in Section 3.11 and demonstrate his disdain for developments in the early twentieth century. Indeed, his anti-modernism and reluctance to engage with modern compositional trends was related to his belief in musical beauty, a problem shared by a number of his British contemporaries including Parry, Mackenzie, Cowen and Vaughan Williams, many of whom experienced a similar neglect of their music at this time as they too did not embrace continental modernism post 1910.

### 6.7.1 Brahms and the Germanic Tradition

There is a heavy Brahmsian influence on Stanford's preludes in terms of textural, structural and harmonic devices employed, and it is particularly visible through Stanford's capability to generate musical paragraphs from small motivic cells.<sup>28</sup> Clear references to Brahmsian harmonies and progressions throughout echo the Germanic soundworld. An interesting link to Brahms's music includes the repetition of the second bar to form the third bar in Prelude no.33, a technique also employed by Stanford in his First Piano Trio in E flat major and in the Credo from Mass in G op.46, while Brahmsian textures permeate much of the pianistic writing.<sup>29</sup> This is not unique in Stanford's keyboard output, with a number of his organ sonatas displaying a similar layout. For example, the second movement of his Sonata no.1 for Organ also demonstrates the influence of Brahms (bars 87–90). Furthermore, Stanford's Brahmsian exploitation of motives demonstrates his link with Mendelssohn and a homage to the

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<sup>27</sup> Dunhill, 'Charles Villiers Stanford: Some Aspects of His Work and Influence', p. 51.

<sup>28</sup> Stanford's devotion to Brahms was always evident, from his programming of Brahms's music in England to his dedication of *Fifty Songs of Old Ireland* to the German composer in 1882 and the completion of his *Mayfair Biography of Brahms*.

<sup>29</sup> Doubling at the octave and third is found in other piano works by Stanford. See for example, *Five Caprices*, no.1, bars 80–84.

Leipzig tradition. Admittedly, Stanford did like some of Wagner's music and some Wagnerian traits are found throughout his output. However, the influence of Brahms is more prominent in his music suggesting a stronger link to the Leipzig tradition. Klein believed that 'Stanford's versatility was extraordinary, and once he had gained his equilibrium after an early predilection for Brahms, there was no school or style, old or new, that he could not easily assimilate and reproduce without plagiarism.'<sup>30</sup> Stanford admitted having an interest in Brahms's piano music:

the appreciation of Brahms was beginning to make itself widely felt in England, and I made many attempts to interest him [Bennett] in the famous Requiem, in the chamber-works and pianoforte compositions of that master, thinking that their common friendship for Schumann and Schumann's warm championship of the younger man would arouse interest and sympathy in Bennett.<sup>31</sup>

### 6.7.2 Following Schubertian Trends

Schubert's influence on Stanford is less fully documented, which is interesting when one considers the parallels between their reception history and the neglect of their piano music. The reception of both composers suffered during their lifetime and it was not until they died that a serious re-evaluation of their music was initiated with compositions discovered, performed, published and discussed for the first time.<sup>32</sup> While Stanford may not have been consciously making reference to Schubert's music, a number of Schubertian traits infiltrates the later composer's works, including a similar approach to harmony encompassing his penchant for mediant relationships and the juxtaposition of major and minor chords on the same root. This progression also features strongly throughout Stanford's chamber music. Some examples include the

<sup>30</sup> Herman Klein, *Musicians and Mimmers* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd., 1925), p. 302.

<sup>31</sup> Stanford, 'William Sterndale Bennett,' p. 164.

<sup>32</sup> Admittedly, although Schubert's reputation grew almost consistently from shortly after his death, Stanford's music was not really rediscovered until over seventy years after he died, with a few isolated exceptions. Schubert's piano compositions are now being recognized as a serious body of work, aided by the promotion of his impromptus and sonatas by performers such as Alfred Brendel.



second movement of his Piano Trio no.1 (bars 121–126) and the first movement of his Piano Trio no.3 (bar 137). Allusions to particular Schubertian harmonic progressions are evident, while some works directly recall Schubert's music. A number of Stanford's preludes appear to have found their generic inspiration in Schubert's piano music: Prelude no.10 is suggestive of a Schubertian waltz, Prelude no.36 is reminiscent of Schubert's Impromptu op.90 no.3, while Prelude no.15 alludes to *Moment Musical* no.3 op.94 in F minor. Closer links in terms of melodic and harmonic material are witnessed in the opening of Preludes nos 15 and 33 which recall Schubert's *Ave Maria* and *Rosamunde* respectively, while Schubert's *L'Adieu* is suggested in Stanford's final prelude, representing his own work of farewell.<sup>33</sup>

### 6.7.3 Reliving the Bachian Prelude Tradition

Reference to the Baroque is clear through Stanford's exploitation of a number of Baroque compositional techniques, including his use of contrapuntal forms with deliberate reference to inventions and fugal passages (Preludes nos 4 and 9) and augmentation (Preludes nos 1, 2, 4, 9, 12, 18, 28, 31, 32 and 48). Such compositional techniques were not unique to his preludes, with augmentation featuring in his Piano Trio no.1 (bars 39–59 in the first movement and bars 80–90 in the second movement), in his Three Intermezzi op.13 nos 2 and 3 and in the third movement of his Clarinet Sonata op.129.<sup>34</sup> Apart from the structural and tonal relationships to the preludes of Bach, a number of Stanford's preludes are modelled on Baroque forms and dances including gavotte, sarabande and musette (Preludes nos 41, 42 and 43), but his use of popular genres within the host genre of prelude is imbued with a contemporary approach. Following the Bach revival he was not alone in his use of Baroque forms in

<sup>33</sup> Beethoven's *L'Adieux Sonata* is also suggested here. All three works share a similar descending three-note motif.

<sup>34</sup> In Stanford's Three Intermezzi, many of the examples of augmentation occur between movements (for example compare bars 1–4 in the third intermezzo to 62–70 in the second intermezzo).

Britain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with numerous composers such as Parry, Mackenzie, Bax and Bowen including Baroque forms in their piano music collections.

Ostinato-like figures feature prominently as a structural unifying device (Preludes nos 25 and 38), while an emphasis placed on pedal points also helps in this regard (Prelude no.35). Indeed, the pedal note heightens the harmonic intensity, propelling the music forward. Despite the absence of an accompanying fugue, Prelude no.37 cleverly includes a reference to the pairing of a prelude and fugue, with the first nine bars functioning as a 'prelude' to the following fughetta. This represents a more modern interpretation of the prelude and fugue combination. Other structural devices reminiscent of Bach include an emphasis placed on chromatic passages, many of which appear at important structural points in the work, and Stanford's use of augmentation of principal thematic ideas, often used for the final appearance of a theme.

Stanford's decision to compose his preludes in all twenty-four keys represents a mark of his grounding in the work of Bach. First and foremost, his debt to Bach lies principally in his choice of tonal design, while the compositions demonstrate an assimilation of other Bachian stylistic traits. This logical key succession provides a definite and clear sense of progression throughout each collection as the pieces move upwards chromatically. However, other features also demonstrate a clear link to Stanford's German forefather. These Bachian features include a preference for formal structures with basic regularity in phrase structure in many of the preludes. Additionally, as noted earlier, the intention of Stanford's preludes for amateur pianists with a view to developing technique demonstrates their suitability as didactic pieces, further linking their function to that of Bach's preludes. It is clear that Bach's collections of preludes are fundamental to Chopin's conservative style of composition

through the Polish composer's use of chromatic ornamentation and contrapuntal linear figuration; indeed, these traits are more in keeping with Bach's style than that of Chopin's immediate predecessors. In a similar fashion, the influence of Bachian and Baroque compositional practices on Stanford's preludes is indeed obvious. Michael Allis has alluded to many of these influences in his article on Stanford's preludes.<sup>35</sup> However, some of the strongest references to the link to Baroque tendencies in his compositions are Stanford's preference for Baroque dance forms and the use of chromatic harmony. The grouping together of three preludes (Preludes nos 42–44), consisting of musette, gavotte and sarabande, suggest the influence of the Baroque suite. Indeed, many of the dance forms utilized throughout the collections are of Baroque origin, while Baroque compositional practices such as ostinato, ground bass and contrapuntal writing feature prominently as structural devices.

While many of Bach's preludes were monothematic, Stanford's preludes represent greater thematic development with some of the works exploring longer or multiple thematic ideas. In some cases a single motif generates the theme which maintains a degree of cohesion throughout the individual preludes.

Modelled after the Bachian tradition of formal treatment in their mainly unitary presentation of motif, texture and mood, the preludes are imbued with a contemporary approach which fuses the Baroque influences with the Romantic.

#### **6.7.4 Following the Romantic Prelude Tradition**

Links to the Romantic prelude, and in particular to those by Chopin, are also evident. While the tonal ordering does not follow Chopin's model, the concept of the prelude as a small-scale independent piece is evident as each work succeeds as a piece in its own

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<sup>35</sup> Allis, 'Another 48', pp. 119–137.

right, while some of the styles and forms in individual pieces, and even certain harmonic details including Stanford's clear use of chromaticism and linear motion, suggest an awareness of Chopin's music. Interestingly, Chopin himself was influenced by Bach in the composition of his Preludes op.28, and numerous writers have explored those features in Chopin's preludes that demonstrate a distinct awareness of Bach's music. Therefore, Stanford would have been influenced by Bach's style on two levels: firstly, through his own first-hand experiences of Bach's music and secondly, through Chopin's treatment of Bach's ideas and sentiments. Instead of treating the prelude as an introductory piece, as had been the case in previous centuries, Chopin raised it to a level of *unprecedented independence*, successfully completing a collection of unattached preludes, in essence a collection of piano miniatures which survive in their own right as pieces without the need for succeeding fugues, in a similar vein to Stanford's preludes. Stanford's miniatures share a number of the characteristics of Chopin's pieces in terms of brevity, regularity of phrase structure and allusion to other popular genres. Chopin's op.28 is a compilation of various styles which include waltz, étude and nocturne. While not repeating Chopin's specific choice of secondary genres within his prelude, Stanford includes a range of popular styles within his primary genre.

The relationship between Stanford's preludes and Chopin's music is most audible and recognisable through the multiple references to Chopin's Piano Sonata no.2 in B flat minor op.35 in Preludes nos 22 and 44. Stanford's modelling on the work by Chopin raises the issue of why Stanford borrowed from Chopin and not other composers. Burkholder suggests that borrowed music may serve a musical function.<sup>36</sup> Here, the borrowed material serves as a motive in the prelude while also marking a major event. For Stanford, using the opening of Chopin's 'Funeral March' from his Piano Sonata op.35 as the basis for the opening passage of Prelude no.22, obviously

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<sup>36</sup> Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music', p. 864.



held some musical significance, particularly as he dedicated the work to one who had died during the war. Indeed, Prelude no.44 also demonstrates a clear reference to Chopin's sonata, although on this occasion the model could also have been Chopin's op.28 no.14. Indeed, such use of borrowed music is often associated with neoclassicism and Stanford's use here is not an isolated occurrence of his possible affinities with this movement.<sup>37</sup>

The features highlighted above represent the more important characteristics which permeate not only Stanford's preludes but his output as a whole. While exhibiting the influence of earlier composers on his compositional style, it is the combination of these features which demonstrate Stanford's personal voice. Although he did not include a unifying figure or motif to maintain unity, his coherent approach to composition affirms his ability to achieve a high level of unity throughout the collection, while also creating forty-eight varied pieces. Despite being noted as a 'relic from a past age' at this stage in his career, these preludes represent his magnum opus for solo piano and could be a summation of all his compositional ideas when writing for piano.<sup>38</sup>

## 6.8 Contextualising Stanford's Preludes: 1910–1925

### 6.8.1 Stanford's Preludes and Stanford's Piano Music 1913–1925

The period 1913–1925 was Stanford's most prolific in terms of composing for the piano, with over half of his piano output completed at this time. Table I lists the number of pieces completed during each of these years and the significant increase in compositions for the instrument is highlighted in Figure 2.1. Some of the works from

<sup>37</sup>

See Section 3.11.3 for a discussion on Stanford's possible affinity with neoclassicism.

<sup>38</sup>

Horton noted that 'even before his death at the age of seventy-one in 1924, Sir Charles Villiers Stanford had become something of a relic from a past age—a Victorian transplanted into the alien soil of post-1918 Britain'. See Norton, 'Review: Charles Villiers Stanford', p. 351.

this period were clearly aimed at the younger pianist and intended as pedagogical works. These works include *Six Sketches in Two Sets for Children* (1918), *Six Song Tunes* (1920), *A Toy Story* (1920) and *Irish Airs Easily Arranged for Pianoforte Solo* (1922). Excluding his work for two pianos, the other compositions can be broadly placed into two categories: single miniature works which include *Fare Well: In Memoriam K. Of K.* (1916), *Ballade in G minor* (1919), *Toccata in C major* (1919), *Sonatina in G major* (1922), *Sonatina in D minor* (1922), and small collections of miniatures which include *Six Characteristic Pieces* (1913), *Five Caprices* (1913), *Night Thoughts* (1917), *Scènes de Ballet* (1917), *Three Waltzes* (1923), *Three Nocturnes* (1921), *Two Fugues à 3 in C minor and à 4 in B minor* (1922 & 1923)<sup>39</sup> and *Three Fancies* (1923). As the sonatinas were not published during Stanford's lifetime or indeed posthumously, it is not clear whether he planned for them to be published as a pair. However, it is possible that this may have been his intention as other miniatures had been grouped together for publication purposes. Stanford's process of compiling pieces together at this time embraced two approaches: grouping more than one of a similar genre together and putting together a heterogeneous collection of genres into a set which bore a popular or evocative title. While Stanford's preludes are a large-scale example of the first of these approaches, the examination of his piano preludes reveals many aspects of Stanford's compositional style and a similar approach to writing for the piano in the other works from this period.

Similar melodic, structural and rhythmical devices are found across the repertoire with some thematic relationships also evident. In terms of his treatment of melody, each of the individual caprices in *Five Caprices*, for example, display clear lyrical melodies which have much in common with his treatment of the melodic lines in the preludes. Melodies are often simple, with much emphasis on step-wise movement

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These two fugues are pianoforte arrangements of the fugues from Stanford, *Three Preludes and Fugues for the Organ*, op. 193.

and small intervallic leaps. Melodies are often thickened through the use of octave doubling and thick chordal passages. (see for example Five Caprices op.136 no.2, bars 2 and 4–10, Three Waltzes op.178 no.2, bars 187–191 and Ballade op.170, bars 93–96, 103–106 and 113–116). The doubling of the melodic line in the closing passage of the second caprice (Five Caprices op.136 no.2, bars 150–154) is not unlike the writing in Prelude no.45. However, it is much more developed in his prelude.

Accompanimental patterns which feature prominently throughout his collection of preludes are also found in other works from this time. For example, sweeping rising and falling arpeggiac-like figures which support flowing melodies (see for example, Five Caprices op.136 no.2, bars 46–70), are reminiscent of a number of preludes including Prelude no.24, while scale-like passages, many of which incorporate chromatic inflections or span a perfect fourth and used as an accompanimental and modulatory device accompany a variety of melodic lines including repeated chords (see for example Three Waltzes op.178 no.1, bars 68–71 and bars 77–79 and Three Waltzes op.178 no.2, bars 3–5).

Harmonic devices which contribute to an overall sense of unity in the preludes are also exhibited in other works from this period. For example, of the five caprices, four use two of Stanford's favoured cadential progressions which feature prominently in the preludes to bring the pieces to a conclusion. For example, the submediant degree falling to the dominant features in *Night Thoughts* (*Night Thoughts* op.148 no.4, bars 68–71) and in three of the Five Caprices (Five Caprices op.136 no.1 bars 108–109, Five Caprices op.136 no.2, bars 110–113 and Five Caprices no.4, bars 119–122),<sup>40</sup> while the sharpened fourth rising to the dominant before a resolution to the tonic is heard as the final cadential progression of the set (Five Caprices op.136 no.5,

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<sup>40</sup> In the fourth caprice the sixth degree is flattened.

bars 279–282) and is also presented as the closing cadence in the Lament in *Night Thoughts* (*Night Thoughts* op.148, no.6, bars 92–93) and Ballade op.170 (bars 170–172). The emphasis placed on the sharpened fourth colouring in Stanford's preludes has been noted as an important aspect of his handling of tonality within the pieces, particularly as he favoured the sharpened fourth degree as the first chromatic note in many of these pieces. An example of this is found earlier in his Ballade from *Night Thoughts* op.148 (bar 2). His choice of the sharpened fourth degree as a colouring for cadential progressions is not accidental. Despite not introducing the chromatically altered degree as the first chromatic note in his Ballade op.170, the emphasis placed on this degree rising to the dominant in the closing section of the piece reveals his intent to use the chromatic colouring for the cadence (bars 163–172). The submediant decoration of the final perfect cadence in the second of the Three Fancies and the third of his Three Waltzes is also reminiscent of this soundworld (Three Fancies no.2, bars 43–44 and Three Waltzes op.178 no.2, bars 167–170). Indeed, there is much reference to the tonal movement of the submediant falling to the dominant and resting on the tonic degree in many of the phrase endings in the second of Three Waltzes (Three Waltzes op.178 no.2, bars 6–9, 144–148 and 192–200). Appearing in a number of guises in this work it is transported to the melody (Three Waltzes op.178 no.2, bars 125–126 and 171–173), while also used as a linking passage heard over three octaves, a favourite structural device of Stanford's found in the preludes (Three Waltzes op.178 no.2, 144–148).

Stanford's approach to developing melodic lines is visible throughout much of his repertoire from this period. The variety of devices used to develop melodic ideas in his preludes is evident across the pieces under consideration and intervallic patterns undergo a range of alterations including contraction, extension, expansion and diminution. For example, the opening melodic statement in the fourth of the Five Caprices is immediately repeated and varied by a process of extension (bars 3–4), a



technique utilised later in the piece (bars 103–105). Sequential passages are utilised to great effect for modulatory passages, while also ensuring a sense of forward movement.

Stanford's approach to rhythm is straightforward with most works from the period displaying a solid sense of rhythm, with some rhythmical patterns placing technical demands on an amateur performer. Other challenges are presented in this repertoire including large leaps in the bassline (Five Caprices op.136 no.1, bars 80–85) and Brahmsian textures which permeate much of the writing in the Five Caprices (see for example Five Caprices op.136 no.1, bars 80–85, Five Caprices op.136 no.4 bars 39–41 and bars 103–105 and Five Caprices op.136 no.5, bars 149–151. While textual augmentation is utilised through octave doubling on a number of occasions throughout the preludes, this also presents technical challenges to the performer throughout Five Caprices and Tempo Di Polka in *Scènes de Ballet* (*Scènes de Ballet* op.150 no.1, bars 81–94).

Reflecting upon Stanford's output for piano from the period in the context of his two sets of preludes reveals much about his approach to writing for the piano. Stanford's command of the piano is evident in all the music from these years as he explores a variety of pianistic techniques, presenting both technical and interpretational challenges to the performer in each of the characteristic pieces. In essence the preludes are like a summation of a number of Stanford's favoured melodic, rhythmic, structural and thematic devices and are like a culmination of his compositional styles and techniques. Furthermore, the examination also highlights the originality of the output for the piano from this period as new ideas are presented in each work. While some thematic similarities emerge, the possible links between the preludes and the earlier compositions are more on a superficial level than a deliberate reference to an earlier work. There are strong similarities, however, in the thematic material in a passage in

Prelude no.34 (bars 35–38 and 44–47) and a similar melodic statement in the second of Three Waltzes (bars 43–46). The presentation of the material in both pieces is similar in terms of three dotted rhythm chords accompanied by a crotchet bassline incorporating a leap, which leads on to a two-bar repeated phrase, both of which use a similar rhythmic pattern with the same melodic contour. In each of the works, his passage is an integral part of the thematic material of the whole piece. Interestingly the prelude is marked ‘Tempo di Valse’.

### 6.8.2 Stanford's Preludes and the British Piano Tradition 1910–1925

An examination of piano music composed by Stanford's contemporaries in England and Ireland during the 1910s and 1920s highlights that the repertory of British piano music was quite small at this time. Frederick Cowen, for example, had ceased composing piano music by this time. Stanford's preludes hold much significance in British piano repertory during the 1910s and 1920s for a number of reasons. Most importantly, Stanford was the first British composer to complete two sets of twenty-four preludes. Furthermore, despite his reliance on traditional compositional methods, the breadth of material presented in his collections demonstrates a composer who had an excellent handling of tonal language and a capacity for melodic and rhythmic development. When contextualising Stanford's preludes within the corpus of piano music produced at this time, it is important to consider these works in the context of Stanford's contemporaries of the British Musical Renaissance and also those of the younger generation in England who were also composing piano music at the time. Neither Parry nor MacKenzie, for example, wrote any preludes, and both composers, like Stanford, explored a variety of genres and forms in their piano output. Examining their compositions for piano, many of their works bore titles which did not suggest a particular genre (See for example Parry's *Shulbrede Tunes*, *A Little Forget-Me-Not* and *Sleepy* and Mackenzie's *Rustic*

*Scenes* and *Odds and Ends*). Stanford, too, engaged in this practice and two notable examples of this were his *Scènes de Ballet* (1917) and *Night Thoughts* (1917). Indeed, the output of composers working in Ireland was small in comparison to compositions in other genres with no composer at this time in Ireland producing a collection of preludes.

Parry composed less assiduously for the piano in the twentieth century than Stanford, and few compositions survive from the period under consideration, the most important being *Shulbrede Tunes* from 1914 which was his longest composition for the piano. Incidentally, Parry's last work for piano was completed in 1918. It is interesting to note that both Parry and Stanford completed their most ambitious composition for the piano in the later years of their lives. Comparing *Shulbrede Tunes* to Stanford's preludes, Parry's collection holds a more personal connection. Parry clearly had an agenda while composing these pieces; the collection of miniatures represents impressions, memories and the atmosphere at Shulbrede Priory as the titles of the individual pieces refer to Parry's granddaughter, his grandson, the garden and the priory itself. Despite the difference in intention, some parallels emerge between Stanford's preludes and Parry's *Shulbrede Tunes*. Both composers relied heavily on a Romantic tonal palette and chromatics add colour to Parry's pieces. Interestingly, the identification of  $\sharp 4 - \hat{5} - \hat{1}$  as a favoured tonal colouring at cadential points in Stanford ensured a sense of harmonic and tonal structure to his collection of preludes. Interestingly, the first of Parry's pieces ends with a similar cadence. However, an examination of piano music by both composers displays a greater emphasis on this colouring in Stanford's music than in Parry's. Similarities in texture and presentation of melodic material are evident and the two composers relied heavily on traditional compositional devices with successful execution of repeated bassline patterns. Both composers had a solid understanding of the piano as they explored a variety of sonorities and textures in their pianistic pieces, while the two collections are strongly

redolent of the soundworld of Brahms and Schumann. Furthermore, the two sets of pieces present a range of moods and characters, imbuing a high level of contrast throughout each set. Despite the similarities, however, the two composers clearly had different intentions when composing the pieces. While there are some personal references in Stanford's preludes, this was secondary in the meaning behind his pieces and it was more likely that he was clearly aiming at a professional setting for the works.

Parry's other significant composition for piano from this period is his Suite, 'Hands Across the Centuries' which comprises a number of Baroque dances. Not unlike Stanford's allusions to Baroque dances in his collection of preludes, references to antique dance forms by the two composers demonstrate that Stanford was not unique in his approach to composition at this time with both Parry and Stanford intent on linking their music with the past. Parry's strict adherence to the traditions of each dance presented in his suite, recalls Stanford's academicism.

MacKenzie's piano compositions from the period include a variety of small collections of pieces, many with popular titles including *Odds and Ends* (1916), *Jottings: Six Cheerful Little Pieces* (1916) and *Varying Moods* (1921), some of which demonstrate an impressionistic influence while also referring to pavannes and musettes. With some reminiscences of salon music of the late nineteenth century and strong Romantic overtones in the works they stand in comparison to his more virtuosic *Fantasia* (1910) and *English Air With Variations* (1915), both of which are more tonally discordant than his other piano compositions. Situating Stanford's preludes in the context of the piano music of his contemporaries from the British Musical Renaissance, highlights that there are stylistic similarities and parallel influences, with each composer favouring more traditional means of expression. While Stanford also composed smaller



collections of pieces, his preludes, however, represent a larger collection of pieces composed by a British composer at this time.

A comparison between Stanford's preludes and the piano music of the younger generation of composers active at this time highlights Stanford's firm reliance on a more traditional approach to harmony, structure and melodic development, strongly rooted in German Romanticism. The new generation in England found inspiration in a more varied range of sources with many favouring an impressionistic approach while others experimented with atonality and placed greater emphasis on dissonant writing. While some piano sonatas emerged during this period, many of the composers favoured short pieces or suites with loosely connected movements as a means to express their musical idea; in this regard Stanford's preludes are not unique in their use of a miniature genre. However, an examination of works by composers such as York Bowen, Cyril Scott, Benjamin Dale, Bax and Ireland reveals a freer approach to tonality with many presenting esoteric harmonies and a greater emphasis on chromaticism and changing key signatures, fluctuating time signatures and a flexible approach to structure. For example, Dale's music has been compared to Richard Strauss and Reger, while there are strong French influences found in the music of both John Ireland and Bax. While Stanford's preludes are pianistic and present a range of challenges to the performer, they lack the virtuosic element found in many other compositions from this period despite demanding a complete command of the instrument. More significantly, it is clear that he did not share the same musical aesthetics as the younger generation of composers.

### **6.8.3 Stanford's Preludes and the British Prelude Tradition 1900–1925**

In terms of piano preludes composed during this period, there are few examples written by British composers. A number of composers completed either single preludes or

included small numbers of preludes in collections, in contrast to Stanford's two sets of twenty-four preludes. For example, John Ireland had composed *Four Preludes* in 1915 while Henry Balfour Gardiner had written a single prelude in 1905. Consequently, Stanford occupies a significant position in twentieth-century piano composition through his engagement with this musical genre. A number of other small collections of preludes emerged around the same time as Stanford's works. Such works included five *Folk Song Preludes* composed by Peter Warlock in 1918, two sets of *Seven Preludes* composed by William Baines in 1919 and 1922, a second prelude composed by Henry Balfour Gardiner in 1920 and *Three Preludes* completed by Frederick Delius in 1923 while John Ireland returned to the genre in 1924 with his *Prelude in E flat*.<sup>41</sup> These preludes differ significantly from Stanford's collections. Firstly, these composers engaged in assembling smaller numbers of preludes together and their intentions for composing preludes would have been different to Stanford's. Baines's preludes, for example, represent a more experimental approach to the genre, with multiple changes of both key signature and time signature including a number of instances of the non-standard 7/4 time signature in his first set of seven preludes. Literary allusions and evocative subtitles add interest along with the adventurous choice of harmonies throughout. In contrast, Delius's *Three Preludes* were completed shortly after Stanford's and recall both Grieg and Debussy. The inclusion of whole-tone chords and the focus on arpeggiac writing creates a dreamy, rhapsodic-like nature to the music. It is notable that Stanford was not the only British composer exploring the prelude as a genre. However,

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<sup>41</sup> Peter Warlock, *Folk-song Preludes for Pianoforte* (London: Augener, 1923); William Baines, *Seven Preludes for the Pianoforte* (London: Elkin, 1919); Henry Balfour Gardiner, *Prelude: De Profundis* (London: Forsyth Brothers, 1920); Henry Balfour Gardiner, *Second Prelude* (London: Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1920); Frederick Delius, *Three Preludes for Pianoforte* (London: Oxford University Press, 1923); John Ireland, *Prelude in E Flat for Pianoforte* (London: Augener, 1925). Later examples by English composers completed shortly after the composition of Stanford's sets include Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Hymn Tune Prelude on Orlando Gibbons Song 13* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953); York Bowen, *Three Preludes*, op.81 (London: Oxford University Press, 1928); York Bowen, *Twenty-Four Preludes in All Major and Minor Keys for Piano Solo*, op.102 (London: Joseph Weinberger, 1950); Franz Reizenstein, *Twelve Preludes and Fugues for Pianoforte*, op.32 (London: A. Lengnick, 1955).

those who did experiment with the genre did not share Stanford's approach both in stylistic terms and the size of the collection. Despite being less adventurous and not engaging in more modernist compositional practices than the younger composers active in England at the time, Stanford's collection make a significant contribution to the British piano repertory of the period.

While Stanford's preludes demonstrate clear differences to the work of other composers in terms of their approach to composition in the early twentieth century, the similarities in his preludes to pieces by many of the older composers in the period 1910–1925 aid our understanding of the approach taken by this generation of composers. Their reliance on traditional models and compositional ideas affirm the significant reverence which they had for the work of earlier composers. Stanford was not unique in this approach and their music suffered great neglect as a result. Notwithstanding the traditionalist ideas which form the basis for the composition of his preludes, the combination of the features outlined above make for an interesting and varied collection of pieces worthy of further performance and study.

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## Chapter 7 Conclusion and Research Findings: Stanford's Contribution to the Prelude Tradition

### 7.1 Introduction

The central aim of this study was to reveal Stanford's contribution to piano music and to the piano prelude tradition. Despite his compositions for solo piano spanning over sixty years of his life and representing an important facet of his compositional output, there has not yet been sufficient musicological discourse that pays enough serious attention to Stanford's rich contribution to solo instrumental music, and in particular his piano music. Despite leading a successful career as composer in the late nineteenth century, Stanford was overshadowed by a younger generation of composers in the context of twentieth-century British music. In addition, he assimilated many of the idioms of the Leipzig school of composition into his own personal style. Consequently, Stanford reception suffered on account of his reluctance to engage in all aspects of modernism as he was not following the path of 'music of the future'. In this period of re-evaluation and re-appraisal of English art music, the validity of Stanford's compositional methods is now being recognized.

This study examined his relationship with the instrument through performance and the composition of a range of genres for the instrument. In order to understand Stanford's approach to piano composition and reveal particular traits of Stanford's compositional style, his largest body of work for solo piano was chosen for examination and analysis. This thorough assessment would help to determine the contribution which he made to the prelude tradition at the beginning of the twentieth century. This exploration of and analytical engagement with Stanford's largest work for piano is a significant part in his reception history as a composer of solo piano music.



## 7.2 Answering the Secondary Research Questions

A number of research questions were central to this study. These questions were addressed and answers suggested throughout the dissertation. A central principle of the results of my research is to acknowledge the immense and largely forgotten contribution which Stanford made to piano composition in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### Question 1

1(a) How did Stanford's formative musical experiences impact on his future musical decisions and did this experiences shape his piano compositions? 1(b) How were his piano works received during his lifetime and posthumously?

Stanford was fortunate to receive excellent musical training during his childhood in Dublin and the extent of his exposure to canonical repertoire permeated his future compositions. Reception of his music varied during his lifetime: despite being hailed a child prodigy in composition and performance, the reception of Stanford's compositions did not remain positive. On account of the encouraging experiences with the piano during his childhood he was repeatedly drawn to the instrument, experimenting with a range of genres, and his output for the piano spans his compositional career. Some of his piano works were promoted by notable performers, though Stanford himself did not continue to play his own piano compositions in public. Furthermore, much of his piano output remains unpublished and unperformed, with some works lost which has resulted in a lack of awareness of the quality of his writing for the piano.

Additionally, reception of Stanford's compositions changed during his lifetime. Despite being positively received in Germany and America, audiences in

England altered their opinion of him, a judgement which was tainted by criticism in the press, his most cruel critic being his fellow Irishman, George Bernard Shaw. The changes in public reception of Stanford's music followed the severe criticism in the press. His Irish infused compositions were nonetheless popular in America at the turn of the twentieth century but this success was also short-lived as American press often included reports from English critics, many of whom would have spoken less favourably of Stanford's music. In the later years of his life his music was neglected in favour of compositions by younger composers and at this point in his career he may have felt an unprivileged outsider, struggling against much more socially accepted and revered composers in later life. Stanford's work as a pedagogue also began to overshadow his success as a composer with greater emphasis being placed on this aspect of his work. This undoubtedly shaped public opinion of his music which contributed to the lack of interest in his piano compositions while contemporary and posthumous criticism also focused on his debt to tradition. Despite the lack of interest in his compositions in the land of his birth, reception of his music in Ireland has changed dramatically in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries with renewed engagement with and performances of his music. Stanford was not alone in this regard with many other composers sharing a similar fate to him as their music fell out of favour either late in their lives or posthumously. Indeed, within the British context, the music of many of his contemporaries was neglected on account of their traditionalist tendencies. In this period of re-evaluation much of their music is being rediscovered and subject to critical engagement and performance.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Footnote 3 in Introduction of thesis.

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**Question 2**

2(a) What prompted his decision to write in such a variety of genres for the piano? 2(b) What aspects of his piano works exhibit traits of Stanford the traditionalist? 2(c) Did his childhood piano lessons have an impact on his decision to write pedagogical music?

The survey of Stanford's engagement with the piano in Chapter 2 identifies Stanford's lifelong relationship with the piano and his interest in the music of his predecessors which aids in understanding his preoccupation with traditional forms and genres. Even in his early compositions Stanford's music reveals a strong tendency towards eighteenth and nineteenth-century concepts of form and genre and through this it is clear that Stanford revered the work of the European masters, looking to them for models for inspiration. The emphasis on existing models throughout his output for piano clearly reveals his traditionalistic tendencies in terms of his approach to form, harmony and motivic structures. The emphasis placed on acquiring a solid piano technique during his childhood would have impacted on his decision to contribute to the realm of pedagogical music, while the emphasis on educational music also represents the voice of Stanford the pedagogue coming through in his compositions.

**Question 3**

3(a) What were the trends in piano composition in England and Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? 3(b) Was there a strong tradition of composing preludes during the British Musical Renaissance? 3(c) How do Stanford's piano works compare with other piano compositions by British composers working at this time?

Of contemporary composers writing for piano in Britain Stanford was certainly the most prolific. Composers at this time were drawn to writing piano pieces

suitable for salon entertainment and few wrote large-scale works or sonatas.<sup>2</sup> As detailed earlier, Rutland stated that few composers in England were composing for the piano, save for some educational pieces and concertos.<sup>3</sup> As in Stanford studies, reception of piano compositions by his contemporaries Parry and Mackenzie has suffered on account of their choice of forms, genres and musical language reflecting European trends. Each composers' output for the piano includes a miscellaneous list of genres and forms used, with many aimed at the domestic market and which make for suitable pedagogical studies. The range of pieces composed for piano by composers during the British Musical Renaissance demonstrates no particular pattern or trends. No one form or genre seems to have dominated at this time and composers experimented with a range of styles in their writings for the instrument. In terms of the size of output for the instrument Stanford was indeed the most productive. Additionally, when comparing Stanford's output for piano to his contemporaries in Ireland, Stanford's list of compositions for the instrument is much more varied and comprehensive.

The examination of the prelude tradition in England during the period 1910–1925 in Chapter 6 revealed the uniqueness of Stanford's preludes with composers at this time choosing to compose single or small collections of preludes. Equally interesting is the lack of a collection of preludes from an Irish composer at this time. There had been a steady output of preludes in the first half of the nineteenth century in England with collections completed by composers as Bennett, Potter, W. McFarren, Crotch and Cramer.<sup>4</sup> However, these prelude collections differ from Stanford's works for a number

<sup>2</sup> See Lisa Hardy, *The British Piano Sonata* for an account of British composers who were writing piano sonatas at this time.

<sup>3</sup> Rutland, 'Notes and Comments', p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> Sterndale Bennett, *Preludes and Lessons*, Cipriani Potter, *Fifty-Four Preludes or Impromptus, in All the Major and Minor Keys, for the Pianoforte*, op.22 (London: R. Cocks & Co., 1830); Walter McFarren, *Forty Preludes in All the Major and Minor Keys* (London: E. Ashdown, 1896); William Crotch, *Preludes for Pianoforte to Which Are Prefixed the Rudiments of Playing That Instrument* (London, 1822); Johann Baptist Cramer, *Twenty-Six Preludes or Short Introductions in the Principal Major & Minor Keys for the Pianoforte* (London: Chappell & Co., 1818).



of reasons: these collections did not follow Bach's tonal plan and they were more clearly intended as pedagogical material with many written in the style of studies and focusing on improvisation. Bennett's *Preludes and Lessons* op.33, for example, were a significant collection of preludes from the nineteenth century. They have been described as 'really remarkable among music written for instruction on the pianoforte from its union of beauty and interest in the music with instructive value for forming the style of young players; and perhaps no book of the kind could be named more valuable in this combination of qualities'.<sup>5</sup> Bennett's preludes are renowned for their value as instructional pieces as the lessons afford 'the student practice in a particular technical problem, like trills or octaves',<sup>6</sup> with each piece 'having its own object in regard to teaching some special lesson in execution and expression'.<sup>7</sup> Stanford's works differ from the nineteenth-century examples in England representing a more serious engagement with the piano miniature. While a pedagogical focus was clearly the intention of a number of these earlier collections, and although some of Stanford's preludes are suitable for teaching purposes, his preludes were clearly intended for performance. Each collection makes an equally significant contribution to the British prelude tradition at their time of composition.

#### Question 4

4(a) What was Stanford's experience with the prelude as a genre? 4(b) What effect did Stanford's engagement with Bach's music have on his composition of the preludes? 4(c) Which model of the prelude was Stanford following or was he torn between two traditions? 4(d) What is the nature of the influence of Stanford's predecessors on his preludes?

<sup>5</sup> H.H. Statham, 'Sterndale Bennett's Pianoforte Music', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 91 (1965), 130–134 (p. 133).

<sup>6</sup> Bush, 'Sterndale Bennett: The Solo Piano Works', p. 95.

<sup>7</sup> Statham, 'Sterndale Bennett's Pianoforte Music', p. 133.

From the sources available to us it is clear that Stanford had significant exposure to the Bachian prelude tradition and Bach's music played an important role throughout Stanford's life as composer, performer, teacher and conductor. Coupled with his strong engagement with the Romantic tradition throughout other aspects of his compositional output it is no surprise, therefore, that Stanford chose to merge both traditions of the prelude in his own contribution to the genre. The detailed analysis of op.163 and op.179 presented in this thesis has illustrated the strong influence of a number of composers and traditions in his choice of harmonic and structural devices and in his own manipulation of the prelude tradition. Similarities and veiled references to works by a range of composers reflect Stanford's awareness and knowledge of a breadth of musical material from the preceding centuries.

### Question 5

5(a) What provided the impetus to write the preludes so late in his life? 5(b) What biographical elements or extra-musical influences are visible in the preludes?

Self-reflection and nostalgia appear to be important strands in understanding Stanford's decision to complete his forty-eight preludes in the last years of his life. A reading of his autobiography completed only four years before the publication of the first set of preludes highlights Stanford's remembrance of the more positive events in his life as it is interesting to note what he omitted from his autobiographical account. As a genre the prelude is noted for its brevity. Stanford's choice to write preludes at this late stage in his career may have been fuelled by his idea that the prelude would allow him to present his musical ideas in a short musical composition. Combining a number of preludes in the set allowed him to demonstrate a variety of ideas, moods and characters within a larger construction. The diversity of styles displayed within the collection of preludes would therefore help to maintain interest for the performer and audience. By

merging two traditions of the prelude and combining a range of styles and techniques within his collection clearly affirms that Stanford did not seek to improve upon Bach's tradition of the prelude. Instead, Stanford was seeking out a genre not widely in use in England at that time. Furthermore, the preludes demonstrate that Stanford was deeply influenced by his past experiences and recent events. In particular, World War I clearly left a mark on Stanford and he chose to represent this through the references to those who died during the war and with the inclusion of funeral marches. The preludes are an individual creation with much personal significance for the composer as he reflected upon his life experiences to date and the collections form a musical diary of his musical experiences and tastes while also recording history.

### Question 6

6(a) Was it always Stanford's intention to write a second set? 6(b) What was Stanford's intended function for the preludes? 6(c) Did Stanford intend the preludes to be motivically linked in terms of their content and style and do they work as a unified collection of pieces?

Due to the lack of personal writings left by Stanford, with no reference to his piano compositions, it is difficult to ascertain his intentions when writing the preludes in terms of their proposed function and intended audience. His relationship with the pianist, Harold Samuel, may have provided the impetus for him to consider a professional setting for the performance of the works, while their pedagogical value may attribute to their suitability for domestic performance. Despite not having a conclusive answer as to the composer's intended function for the works, through analytical discussion of each prelude it is possible to suggest some answers to these questions suggesting that the works could conform to both the drawing-room aesthetic and a more professional setting depending on whether they were performed

individually, in small groupings or as a complete set. While each of the pieces function as independent preludes, Stanford's arrangement of the pieces — following Bach's tonal model coupled with the variety of material presented throughout the set and the unifying features which ensure an overall sense of coherence — demonstrate that he intended for the works, to be considered as a set of pieces.<sup>8</sup> By choosing to follow Bach's tonal model, it may have been Stanford's intention to complete forty-eight preludes. However, the gap between the composition of the two sets does not necessarily suggest that the completion of forty-eight was in his mind when he set out to write the first twenty-four preludes. Indeed, he may have been focusing his energies elsewhere in the intervening period. Linked to his intention for the preludes to be performed as a set is the sense of coherence achieved by the unifying features which are used throughout. Whether intentional or not, the overall sense of cohesion ensure a strongly unified composition which attests to their significance as a collection of preludes worthy of further musicological examination and performance.

### 7.3 Answering the Primary Research Question

A central tenet of this research was to determine the extent of Stanford's contribution to piano music through an exploration of his piano preludes which would confirm that the piano held special significance in his career. The questions answered above reveal those experiences which may have influenced his decisions to compose for the piano and more specifically what drew him to compose in a range of traditional genres. The inspection of these influences and experiences has led the author to scrutinize the composer's contribution to the piano prelude tradition.

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<sup>8</sup> Stanford used a variety of musical devices including various motifs and the recapitulation of earlier material to ensure coherence and continuity in *The Canterbury Pilgrims*. See Rodmell, 'The Operas of Charles Stanford', p. 105.



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**Question 7**

7(a) What features of his preludes reveal the influence of the two traditions of the prelude? 7(b) Did Stanford make a unique contribution to the genre? 7(c) Do the preludes counter the claim that Stanford is a traditionalist? 7(d) What is the artistic and pedagogical contribution of his piano preludes? 7(e) What are the qualities of the work which deem them worthy of further research and performance? 7(f) What unifying features confirm that they are a cohesive collection of preludes?

In a period of compositional change it is important to consider whether the prelude has retained any of its original functions in Stanford's composition or whether he used the title of prelude for a piece of indeterminate genre. Stanford's preludes clearly demonstrate his affinity with the music of his predecessors through his use of particular compositional devices. Despite his return to a tonal model utilized by Bach in the eighteenth century, Stanford fuses the Baroque tradition of the prelude with the Romantic tradition of the unattached prelude which demonstrates his building on both traditions of the genre to make for an interesting contribution to the prelude tradition by an Irish-born composer working in England. While the inspiration for the tonal design of the collection clearly came from the Baroque tradition of the prelude, other influences permeate the two sets of preludes with references to orchestral and other solo piano works.

The examination of the preludes has revealed a range of compositional devices utilized by Stanford, many of which disclose his traditionalist tendencies in terms of his approach to motivic development, harmony and form. Despite his demonstration of his debt to and understanding of the prelude tradition, Stanford utilizes a number of harmonic progressions which counter the claim that he was solely a traditionalist. His innovative treatment of ideas and combination of styles and genres

within the collection of preludes highlight the strength of his creative personality without depending wholly on established compositional trends. Furthermore, the dual purpose of the preludes is worth noting for their suitability for concert performance and also for pedagogical study.

The range of influences throughout the collection is noteworthy and demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the repertoire of a range of composers. Through his merging of two traditions of the prelude, it is somewhat disappointing, therefore, that the pieces have not secured a place in the canon of piano preludes. Negative reception of his music which favoured traditional models lies at the root of this. Due to the variety of his forty-eight preludes in terms of his choice of mood, tempo, form, styles, harmonic progressions and treatment of motifs and ideas — in addition to his fusing together of two traditions of the preludes — the works are worthy of further study and performance, either individually or as a full set despite having remained hidden from serious musicological scholarship and performance for so long.

Stanford's treatment of his melodic ideas and approach to melodic development coupled with his use of traditional structures and preference for particular harmonic and cadential progressions demonstrating Bachian and Chopinesque touches ensure a clear sense of unity throughout the collection. The emphasis which he places on establishing a clear tonal sense at the outset of each preludes ensures that there is no harmonic ambiguity throughout. The analytical engagement with Stanford's preludes has outlined that traditional modes of expression significantly impacted upon the compositional decisions made during his compositional process. According to Dyson 'those of us who played, from manuscript or from first proof, [...] gathered, it is to be

hoped, something of his essential cleanliness of thought, his directness of aim, his economy of expression.’<sup>9</sup>

## 7.4 Pathways for Future Research

This thesis has highlighted the lacuna in Stanford scholarship, particularly in the area of his piano compositions. As this thesis only focused on Stanford’s preludes it is clear that within Stanford studies and British piano music studies there is ample opportunity to complete in-depth examinations of Stanford’s other piano works to highlight his varied output for the piano as he engaged with a diverse range of forms and genres. As some of the analytical focus of this project dealt with cyclic unity within Stanford’s preludes, an extension of this analytical application could be taken to identify the extent of unity within other sets/cycles of piano works by Stanford, namely *Night Thoughts*, *Scènes de Ballet*, *Six Concert Pieces* and *Six Characteristic Pieces*. Related to this would be an examination of whether the Preludes are distinct pieces generically from his other collections of pieces and to consider the identity of each individual collection. The analytical chapters have identified particular hallmarks of Stanford’s compositional style including highlighting favoured pianistic idioms and figurations, identifying his approach to motivic and thematic development and his penchant for particular harmonic devices. Other analytical approaches such as rhythmic analysis could be undertaken which might highlight further stylistic traits of the composer’s writing.

As the preludes represent some of Stanford’s most mature writing for the piano and have been considered here in the context of late style, it would be worth considering those other works by Stanford from the same period in order to complete a comprehensive analysis of his mature piano works. The assessment of nostalgia and late style in other works by Stanford could prove useful in understanding his approach to

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<sup>9</sup> Dyson, ‘Charles Villiers Stanford’s, p. 45.

composition in the later years of his life. Indeed, his choice of texts in his songs is worth examining in this context.

Linked to the examination of works from the later period of his life, a comparison with piano compositions from the early stage of his compositional career would prove interesting in order to trace the development of his compositional style when writing for the piano and to determine if any notable changes occurred.

While the composition of works for solo instrument was driven by economic reasons, particularly in the later years of his life, an examination of those works for solo instruments would be useful in order to determine his generic choices here.

The analysis has highlighted the preludes worth as didactic pieces while acknowledging that this may not have been their main intended function. Much of Stanford's reception history has been coloured by his work as a teacher, and the value of many of his compositions suffered as a result. In order to assess fully Stanford's role as a pedagogue it would be useful to examine those other piano works which have a pedagogical function and to highlight the particular technical difficulty presented by each.<sup>10</sup>

As noted in Chapter 3 Stanford engaged frequently with the prelude in his organ compositions. However, it is clear that he perceived the prelude differently when writing for the two keyboard instruments. In order to fully understand Stanford's preoccupation with this genre, further research projects could involve a comparison with Stanford's treatment of the prelude for organ.

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Considering that some of Stanford's piano works include the appropriate level of study, this could serve as a basis for further study of his pedagogical material.



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Most importantly a greater contextualisation of Stanford's preludes within British piano music is required in order to assess the true extent of Stanford's contribution to piano music of his period in Britain.

## 7.5 Stanford's Contribution to the Prelude Tradition

Stanford's contribution to the prelude tradition has been unveiled through the analytical engagement with each individual prelude in the context of the prelude tradition. The sets are very valuable as a compositional creation in themselves and technically challenging in performance, while exhibiting a variety of musical feeling. Each prelude is an independent miniature and taken as a group the preludes represent independent character pieces which are a compilation of styles and genres, a sequence of tonalities and a set of technical studies in miniature. While the preludes could be performed in a salon context, Stanford is clearly making a serious contribution to the piano literature of his day. Despite the technical difficulties presented, their brevity and simple form allows for amateur pianists to master them. Stanford's most significant contribution to the prelude tradition is his fusion of both Baroque and Romantic traditions of the prelude, representing the stylistic pluralism in his music. Indeed, the inclusion of organicistic idioms is a notable feature of his contribution (Preludes nos 1 and 35). While *Three Dante Rhapsodies* op.92 from 1904 are among Stanford's most complex compositions for solo piano with their literary allusions to Dante's *La Commedia*, Stanford decided to revert to simplicity for his largest contribution to solo piano literature. This is not surprising considering they were written late in his life, representing an older, experienced man reflecting on poignant times.

The preludes are significant as one of the most important keyboard repertoires by an Irish-born composer, and Stanford's contribution to the cultivation and promotion of serious keyboard music both for domestic and public performance should

be endorsed and valued. On account of this variety and his secure handling of melody, structure, harmony and motivic development they are valuable representatives of the European prelude tradition. While his preludes may not bear the same significance as collections of Bach, Chopin, Rachmaninov or Scriabin, the examination and analysis has highlighted a number of significant and interesting points in terms of his compositional style. Despite being relatively unknown among pianists, the collection has much to offer to both amateur and professional performers as the works are suitable for performance in a range of settings, notwithstanding their accessibility as pedagogical studies from a range of perspectives. While Stanford's focus on traditional compositional methods in his preludes may have had a negative impact on the promotion of his solo piano works at this time, the value of these works within the repertoire of preludes is important as he continues on this strong tradition in the twentieth century.

The examination of his preludes is therefore an important part in readdressing the misrepresentation of Stanford's piano music in reception studies and he deserves to be recognised as a pioneer in the revival of serious British piano music. Indeed, Anne Gilchrist (1828–1885) wrote to Walt Whitman in 1884 that 'Villiers Stanford is, I think, the best composer England has produced since the days of Purcell and Blow.'<sup>11</sup> On account of his contribution to British musical life and the wealth of compositions, including those for the piano, he is indeed a significant figure in the British Musical Renaissance.

As criticism of some of Stanford's music focused on his reliance on traditional forms and structures, this created a negative perception of the composer and

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<sup>11</sup> Letter LXXI from Anne Gilchrist to Walt Whitman in 1884, in Anne Gilchrist, Walt Whitman and Thomas B. Harned, *The Letters of Anne Gilchrist and Walt Whitman* (New York: Doubleday, 1918).

his entire compositional output. Despite his piano music reflecting his ambivalent attitude towards modernism, the immaculate skill and mastery of structure, while deceptively simple on the surface, ensures a strong and convincing contribution to the prelude tradition as he exploits a variety of pianistic textures and gestures. The musical variety in this collection of preludes demonstrates his creative vision for the works.

Initially the preludes may appear as individual works. However, on a deeper structural and motivic level they include distinct links in terms of style, structure and musical language. The contrast provided throughout the collections embraces texture, tonality, mood, character. For example, some of the works represent the *moto perpetuo* Bachian tradition, while others maintain a consistent melody and accompaniment texture, highlighting Stanford's skills as a lyricist. Furthermore, some preludes merge both stylistic elements in their writing. The preludes represent some typically idiomatic Romantic keyboard styles, each making a tonal statement. Additional Stanfordian characteristics include his penchant for linking passages which keep up excitement and many of which involve modulatory turns. His preference for sequential passagework demonstrate his treatment of neoBaroque procedures.

In terms of his approach to form and structure, the cyclical element is clearly obvious in a number of the preludes. In addition to the contrast achieved throughout the set with a mixture of monothematic/monomotivic and duo-motivic preludes, unified sectional form is also evident which aids to the unifying sense of the individual prelude. Linked to his approach to the structure of the individual preludes is his preference for mixing elements of other genres within the prelude genre. Stanford's engagement with the cross over with other genres is clearly audible throughout his collection.

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Porte's belief that [the preludes] 'are derived from the choicest aspects of Stanford's varied and versatile genius' is true. The works reveal a composer who successfully demonstrated his command of a variety of brilliant technical aspects of pianism and pianistic figurations, combined with a style that exhibits both lyricism and a wide range of moods. Both sets of preludes display an array of forms, styles, genres, characters and moods representing a varied collection of pieces. Presented here as a succession of ideas, they are like a snapshot of a number of his pianistic textures, styles and compositional types. As he explored the expressive possibilities of the prelude genre, Stanford's preludes are a comprehensive cycle of miniatures organized around a clear tonal system and make a valuable contribution to the British prelude tradition at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This collection of preludes represents Stanford's return to a more personal style of piano writing and this comprehensive cycle of miniatures embodies a range of styles and textures, each representing a variety of structures and genres. They are a microcosm of his favoured pianistic textures and compositional types and offer a snapshot of his preferences for particular genres and styles. By analysing each individual prelude, this thesis highlights Stanford's contribution to the prelude tradition at the beginning of the twentieth century. Along with the scholarship of Allis, Dibble and Rodmell, it is hoped that this research will arouse further musicological investigation and performance of Stanford's preludes and piano music in general. Stanford's forty-eight preludes marks the zenith of his solo piano music representing one of his most important achievements in piano composition. Acknowledging that they may lack an element of grandeur, emotional intensity or musical impetus, this may be, in part, on account of his composing every day 'regardless of whether or not he had



anything special to say'.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the technical skill and mastery of harmonic and structural language deems them an excellent contributor to the prelude tradition and they are pianistic in their style and outlook; they warrant further performances. Notwithstanding the numerous links and references to the work of other composers and the variety of styles and genres presented within the main controlling genre, each of the concise miniatures has something to communicate to a contemporary audience with their extra-musical dimensions. Stanford's collection of preludes clearly represent Ong's theory of a prelude:

the prelude is thus an amalgamation of a tonal, technical and affective piece, which may be considered a fusion of a tonal essay, a study/toccata, and a character piece; and collectively, a sequence of tonalities, a set of pianistic technical studies, and a compendium of musical styles/genres in miniature.<sup>13</sup>

With the increase in interest in Stanford's music and the initiation of the Stanford Society his music is being subject to further study and performance. While his importance as a composer of other genres is being acknowledged, it is now time to endorse his significance as a composer of piano music and dispel the myths which place too much emphasis on his traditionalistic tendencies. 'An artist cannot always control his inspiration, but Stanford saw to it that his tools were bright and sharp and fashioned of tempered steel. His music is educated music, founded on the great traditions by one who was determined to uphold the nobility of his art.'<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> G. Brown, 'Re-valuations: (V) Charles Stanford', *The Quarterly Record of the Incorporated Association of Organists*, xlvii (1962), 19–25.

<sup>13</sup> Ong, 'The Piano Prelude in the Early Twentieth Century', p. i.

<sup>14</sup> Vaughan Williams, *National Music*, p. 198.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Stanford and the Feis Ceoil

Fig A1: Copy of the Stanford Memorial Medal Awarded at Feis Ceoil<sup>1</sup>



Table A1.1: Works by Stanford Performed at the Feis Ceoil 1897–1929

Date	Concert Details <sup>2</sup>	Works by Stanford or Arranged by Stanford	Performer(s)
20 May 1897	3 <sup>rd</sup> Concert, Royal University Building, Earlsfort Terrace	<i>Irish Symphony</i> , IV, ‘Cavalier Songs’, ‘King Charles’, ‘Boot Saddle to Horse and Away’, ‘Marching alone’	
2–7 May 1898	1 <sup>st</sup> Concert Tuesday held in Belfast	‘Come All Ye’, ‘I Love My Ould Ireland’ (From <i>Shamus O’Brien</i> )	Denis O’Sullivan
17 March 1898	Concert of Irish Music (St Patrick’s Night) held at Lyric Hall	‘Foggy Dew’, ‘Lament of Eoghan R. O.’ Neill’	Mr R.G. Matthews Mr J.G. Carroll
15–20 May 1899	1 <sup>st</sup> Concert Tuesday, Dublin	‘There’s a Bower of Roses’ ‘The Willow Tree’	Miss Agnes Tracey Miss Florence Daly
14–19 May 1900	1 <sup>st</sup> Concert Tuesday, Belfast	‘My Loves an Arbutus’, ‘Battle Hymn’	Agnes Nicholls
	2 <sup>nd</sup> concert	‘Chieftain of Tyrconnell’, ‘Little Mary Cassidy’	Denis O’Sullivan
6–11 May 1901	The words of songs all taken from <i>Songs of Erin</i> illustrating a lecture by Graves	‘Falling Star’, ‘One at a Time’, ‘More of a Cloyne’, ‘The Queen Song’, ‘The Riddle’ (Duet)	Annie McCabe
		‘Since We’re Apart’, ‘Lullaby’, ‘The Queen Song’, ‘The Riddle’ (Duet)	Florence Crawford

<sup>1</sup> Anon., ‘Memory of Stanford’, p. 5.  
<sup>2</sup> The concert, venue and performer details have been included where available.

		'The King's Cave', 'Song of the Fairy King', 'I Shall Not Die for Love of Thee'	Mr Nathaniel Smith
		'The Death of Oscar', 'The Songs Erin Sings', 'O'Donnell's March', 'Beautiful City of Sligo'	Mr J.C. Doyle
7 May 1901	Tuesday, Royal University	'Kitty of the Cows'	Denis O'Sullivan
		'The Hero of Limerick'	Mrs A. McStewart
		'The Alarm', 'Chieftain of Tyrconnell', 'Trottin to the Fair'	Denis O'Sullivan
		'Darling Don't be Weeping' (Duet from <i>Shamus O'Brien</i> )	Denis O'Sullivan and Mrs Stewart
		'A Hush Song'	Miss A. Treacy
8 May 1901	Wednesday, Rotunda	'The Lute Song', 'The Milkmaid's Song'	Miss Agnes Treacy
9 May 1901	Thursday, Royal University	'The Smith's Song'	Denis O'Sullivan
		Ballad for Chorus and Orchestra from <i>Phaudrig Croohore</i>	
5-10 May 1902	Monday, Royal University	'At the Mid Hour of Night', 'She is Far From the Land'	Mrs Hutchinson
		'I Shall Not Die for Love of Thee'	Denis O' Sullivan
		'Lullaby', 'The Falling Star', 'The Sailor's Bride'	Mrs Hutchinson
		'St Seamus and the Lady'	Denis O'Sullivan
7 May 1902	Wednesday, Royal University	'There's a Bower of Roses'	Mrs Hutchinson
		'The Washer at the Ford' <sup>3</sup>	Denis O'Sullivan
8 May 1902	Thursday, Rotunda, (Concert of Chamber Music)	'Caoine'	Arthur Darley
1903	Monday, Royal University	'March of the Maguire'	Mr E. Gordon Cleather
1904		'Emer's Farewell'	Mrs A. Mc Stewart
		'Caoine'	Miss Ernestine MacCormac
		'There's a Bower of Roses'	Miss Katherine Malone
23 May 1905	Tuesday, Royal University	'O Breathe Not His Name'	The Orpheus Choral Society
		'The Return from Fingal', 'My Loves an Arbutus'	Miss Agnes Nicholas
		Irish Fantasie 'Reel' (violin)	Mr A.W. Payne
1906	No concert		
21 May 1907	Tuesday, Rotunda	'Molly Brannigan'	Denis O'Sullivan
		'Go Where Glory Waits Thee', 'The Young May Moon', 'Emer's	Denis O'Sullivan

<sup>3</sup> This was arranged by Stanford with orchestral accompaniment

19 May 1908	Royal University	Farewell', 'The Ladies Eyes'	Mr E. Gordon Cleather
18 May 1909	Tuesday, Royal University	'Trottin to the Fair', 'Festival Song', 'March of the Maguire', Four Irish Dances: March-Jig, Leprechaun Dance and Reel for Orchestra	
1910	Wednesday, National University	Irish Rhapsody no.1 op.78	
1912	Piano and Song Recital	'Remember the Poor', 'The Alarm', 'Quick We Have But a Second'	H.P. Greene, F. Davies accompanied by Rev R.A. Oulton
1913	Prize winner's concert	'When She Answered Me'	Boy's Solo Winner
5-9 May 1914	Tuesday, Antient Concert Rooms, (Piano and song recital)	'Drake's Drum'	E.G.C. Leather
	Saturday, Antient Concert Rooms, Prize winner's concert	'The March of the Maguire'	Winner of the Baritone and O'Mara Cup
15 May 1915	Antient Concert Rooms, Prize winner's concert	'Sweet and Low', 'O Swallow Swallow', 'The Voice is Heard Thro Rolling From'	Ladies' Committee Prize: Miss Selby, Miss Kathleen Stokes, Mr Sholdice, Mr Wilfred Wells and Miss Culwick on piano
22 July 1916	Saturday, Central Model Schools, Marlborough Street, Prize winner's concert	'My Love's an Arbutus'	Winner of Bass: Peter Nolan
12 May 1917	Round Room, Mansion House, Prize winner's concert	'Trottin to the Fair'	Winner of Bass: John Duignan
1921	Prize winner's concert	'The Falling Star'	Winner of Denis O'Sullivan Medal: Miss Delia Moclair, Cashel
1927	Prize winner's concert	'Did You Ever'	Winner of Denis O'Sullivan Medal: Rosalind Cohen
1929	Prize winner's concert	'Little May Cassidy'	Winner of J. O'Mara Prize: Frank Cowe



**Table A1.2: List of Works Composed or Arranged by Stanford Included on Syllabus of Feis Ceoil Competitions from 1897–1907**

Date	Title of Composition	Title of Competition
1897	'Diaphenia'	Vocal Quartet
1901	'The Foggy Dew'	Tenor Solo Singing
	'Battle Hymn'	Mezzo-Soprano Solo Singing
	'The Little Red Lark'	Soprano Solo Singing
	'Chieftain of Tyrconnell'	Baritone Solo Singing
1902	'Willow Tree'	Contralto Solo Singing
	'Emer's Farewell to Cuchullan'	Mezzo-Soprano Solo Singing
1903	'Lullaby'	Mezzo-Soprano Solo Singing
	'The Little Red Lark'	Boy's Solo Singing
1904	'Lullaby'	Soprano Solo Singing
	'Caoine'	Senior Violin
	'How Dear to Me the Hour'	Contralto Solo Singing
	'The Hero of Limerick'	Bass Solo Singing
1905	'Loved Bride of O'Byrne'	Contralto Solo Singing
	'The Ploughman's Whistle'	Tenor Solo Singing
	'When She Answered Me'	Baritone Solo Singing
	'Desmond's Song'	Bass Solo Singing
	'When Thro' Life'	Boy's Solo Singing
1906	'The Stolen Heart'	Mezzo-Soprano Solo Singing
	'Kitty Bawn'	Tenor Solo Singing
	'Twas One of Those Dreams'	Sop Solo Singing
	'Remember the Poor'	Contralto Solo Singing
	'O'Donnell's March'	Baritone Solo Singing
	'Ar Cheol'	Irish Solo Singing Soprano
	'Forget Not the Field'	Bass Solo Singing
	'Diaphenia'	Choral Competition
	'Sweet Innisfallen'	Boys Solo Singing
1907	'At The Mid Hour of Night'	Soprano Solo Singing
	'Eva Toole'	Bass Solo Singing
	'She is Far From the Land'	Boys Solo Singing
	'Corydon Arise'	Choral Competition

**Table A1.3: Competitions for Which the Stanford Cup was Offered at Feis Ceoil 1936–2011<sup>4</sup>**

Year	Competition	Winner
1936	Interpretation of two Stanford songs	Mary Dempster O'Neill, Ballymena, Co. Antrim
1937	Senior Violin	Llewelyn Williams
1938	Choral competition	Tudor Singers, Co. Dublin conducted by Mr Percy Whitehead
1939	Interpretation of two Stanford songs	Nan Shaw, Belfast, Co. Antrim
1940	Vocal	Norman Thomson
1941	Mixed Vocal Quartet	Rathmore Quartet: Mabel Thrift, Olive McHugh, Norman Davidson and Reginald Hall
1942	Choral	Rathgar Methodist Church Choir
1943	Organ Works by Stanford	Mae Johnston
1944	Violin	Carmel Lang
1945	Piano Works by Stanford	Hilda McDonald, Dunganstown, Co. Wicklow
1946	No competition	No Competition
1947	Piano	Ethel Graham
1948	Choral	Teachers' Club Male Voice Choir
1949	Choral	Michael O'Dwyer
1950	Vocal	Joan Ingle
1951	Vocal	Con O'Shea
1952	Vocal	Hazel Morris
1953	Organ	Alicia Turnball
1954	No Competition	No Competition
1955	Choral	The Lurgan Singers
1956	Piano	Deirdre McNulty
1957	Piano	No Competition
1958	Vocal	Joseph D'Alton
1959	Organ	Colette Aungier
1960	No Competition	No Competition
1961	Piano	Darina Gibson
1962	No Competition	No Competition
1963	Vocal	Michael O'Connell
1964	Organ	Michael Doherty
1965	No Competition	No Competition
1966	Vocal	Chris Henchy
1967	Choral	Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church
1968	Choral	Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church
1969	Choral	TCD Chapel Choir
1970	Choral	St. Stephens Singers UCD
1971	Choral	St. Stephens Singers UCD
1972	Organ	Una Russell
1973	Vocal	Mary Barrett

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to Howard Freeman and Andy Gilsenan at the Feis Ceoil Association for furnishing me with the names of the winners of the Stanford Cup which I was unable to locate in the Feis Ceoil records held at the National Library of Ireland and also newspaper records.

1974	Vocal	Sheila Smith
1975	Organ	Neil Hurley
1976	Organ	Barbara Dagg
1977	Organ	David Adams
1978	Organ	John McCann
1979	Organ	Paul Heneghan
1980	Organ	Ann Sheil
1981	Organ	No Award
1982	Organ	No Award
1983	Organ	Beatrice Ward
1984	Organ	Edel Thomas
1985	Vocal	Maire Kelly
1986	Vocal	Anne Marie O'Farrell
1987	Organ	Donal Hennessy
1988	Vocal	Maire O'Brien
1989	Vocal	Colette Delahunt
1990	Vocal	Sandra Oman
1991	Vocal	Toni Walsh
1992	Vocal	Sandra Kelly
1993	Organ	Stanley D.W. Miller
1994	Organ	No Award
1995	Organ	No Award
1996	Organ	No Award
1997	Organ	No Award
1998	Organ	Mark Keane
1999	Organ	No Entries
2000	Organ	No Entries
2001	Feis Cancelled <sup>5</sup>	-
2002	Organ	David Connolly
2003	Organ	David Grealy
2004	Organ	Patrice Keegan
2005	Organ	Herta Murphy
2006	Organ	Liam Crangle
2007	Organ	Sayjin Park
2008	Organ	Niall Carroll
2009	Organ	Sean Boylan
2010	Organ	Ronan Whittern
2011	Organ	Paul Mullen
2012	Organ	Conor Gannom

<sup>5</sup> The Feis was cancelled this year on account of the Foot and Mouth crisis in Ireland.

Appendix 2: Stanford and the Bach Choir

Table A2.1: Works by Bach Performed by the London Bach Choir Under Stanford's Conductorship<sup>6</sup>

Date of Performance	Venue	Title of Work
25 March 1886	St James's Hall	Cantata, 'Gott ist mein König'
1 June 1886	Prince's Hall	Motet, 'I Wrestle and Pray'
13 December 1886	Prince's Hall	Motet, 'Gracious Lord God'
8 March 1887	St James's Hall	Cantata no.50, 'Now shall the Grace'
17 May 1887	St James's Hall	'O Grief! Now pants' ( <i>St Matthew Passion</i> )
12 May 1888	St James's Hall	Mass in B minor
5 March 1889	St James's Hall	Cantata, 'Halt im Gedächtniss'
		Cantata, 'Wachet Auf'
		Motet, 'Singet dem Hevrn'
25 February 1890	St James's Hall	Cantata; 'Christ lag in Todesbanden'
		Cantata, 'Wachet Auf'
		Motet, 'Der Geist Hilft'
10 February 1891	St James's Hall	Cantata, 'Ich hatte viel Bekümmerniss'
		Cantata, 'O Ewiges Feuer'
		Motet, 'Singet dem Herrrn'
12 May 1891	Prince's Hall	Motet, 'Singet dem Herrrn'
22 May 1892	St James's Hall	Mass in B minor
10 May 1893	St James's Hall	Cantata, 'Es Erhub sich ein Streit' (1 <sup>st</sup> Chorus only)
		Cantata, 'Herr wie du Willt'
		Trouer Ode
15 May 1894	Queen's Hall	St Matthew Passion
2 April 1894	Queen's Hall	St Matthew Passion
4 April 1894	Queen's Hall	Cantata, 'Now Shall the Grace'
		Cantata, 'O Ewigkeit du Donnerwort'
		Cantata, 'Wachet Auf'
6 April 1895	Queen's Hall	Mass in B minor
24 March 1896	Queen's Hall	St John Passion
8 April 1897	Queen's Hall	Cantata, 'Ich hatte viel Bekümmerniss' (Final quartet and chorus)
		Cantata, 'Wachet Auf'
		Cantata, 'Wachet, Betet'
10 April 1897	Queen's Hall	Mass in B minor
8 March 1898	Queen's Hall	Cantata, 'Sie Werden aus Saba Alle Kommen'
7 February 1899	Queen's Hall	Cantata, 'Ein Feste Burg'
		Magnificat

<sup>6</sup> Information for this table was compiled from Keen, *The Bach Choir*, pp. 214–225.



**Appendix 3: Stanford and the Piano Duet**

**Table A3.1: Select List of Piano Duet Performances by Stanford During the 1870s**

Date of Performance	Title of Work	Composer	Duet Partner
1871/1872	Overture op.106	Hiller	Frank McClintock
1871/1872	Hungarian Dances	Brahms	Frank McClintock
21 February 1876	Duet version of Six Waltzes	Stanford	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
15 March 1876	Piano Duet	Brahms	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
21 February 1877	Bilder aus Osten op.66	Schumann	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
	Rhapsodie Hongroise no.14	Liszt	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
7 March 1877	Duets (Serenade)	Raff, Stanford	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
17 May 1877	<i>Grosses Duo</i> in E Minor	Parry	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
18 May 1877	Neue Liebeslieder Walzer Set II op.65	Brahms	Raoul De Versan
21 November 1877	Piano Duet	Grieg	William Barclay Squire
21 February 1878	Waltzes for Piano Duet	Stanford	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
19 March 1878	Duet	Liszt	William Barclay Squire
17 May 1878	Duet for 2 pianos in E minor	Parry	J.A. Fuller-Maitland
16 October 1878	Piano Duet	Schubert	J.A. Fuller-Maitland

**Table A3.2: Stanford's Compositions for Piano Duet Including Arrangements of Works for Two Pianos**

Opus No.	Title of Work	Date of Composition	Publisher
(9)	Six Waltzes	28 April 1876	Unpublished
-	Scherzo for Two Pianos in C major	1922–1924 <sup>7</sup>	Unpublished
18	Serenade in G Arranged for Two Pianos	11 September 1881 <sup>8</sup>	London
-	Charivari in Dresden (Fünf Phantasie-stücke)	1875	Unpublished <sup>9</sup>
6	The Music to A. Tennyson's drama <i>Queen Mary</i> Arranged for Piano Duet	1876 <sup>10</sup>	Stanley, Lucas, Weber & Co. 1878
-	Serenade for Piano Duet	-	-
126	Piano Concerto no.2 in C minor <sup>11</sup>	1916	Stainer & Bell

<sup>7</sup> This date is suggested by Frederick Hudson. The manuscript is undated. A comparison with surviving manuscripts by the composer has not given a conclusive answer to the dating of this composition. Secondly, a close examination of the manuscript reveals the inclusion of the word 'brass' after the second divisional section in the second piano part, which is, on the whole sketchy and sparse. Dibble has suggested that the manuscript was in fact a reduction of a concerto. However, as the composition is only 136 bars in length this makes it difficult to believe that this was a complete concerto as suggested by Dibble.

<sup>8</sup> This is the date of completion for the orchestral score. No manuscript has survived to verify the date for the two-piano version of this work.

<sup>9</sup> This work is in private hands.

<sup>10</sup> This is the date of completion of the vocal score.

<sup>11</sup> Stanford's Piano Concerto no.3 in E flat major op.171 also exists in a version for two-piano. However, this work was not published during Stanford's lifetime. Geoffrey Bush orchestrated the work from the two-piano version which was later released by Lyrita.

## Appendix 4: Stanford and Chamber Music

Table A4.1: List of Stanford's Chamber Compositions Involving Piano<sup>12</sup>

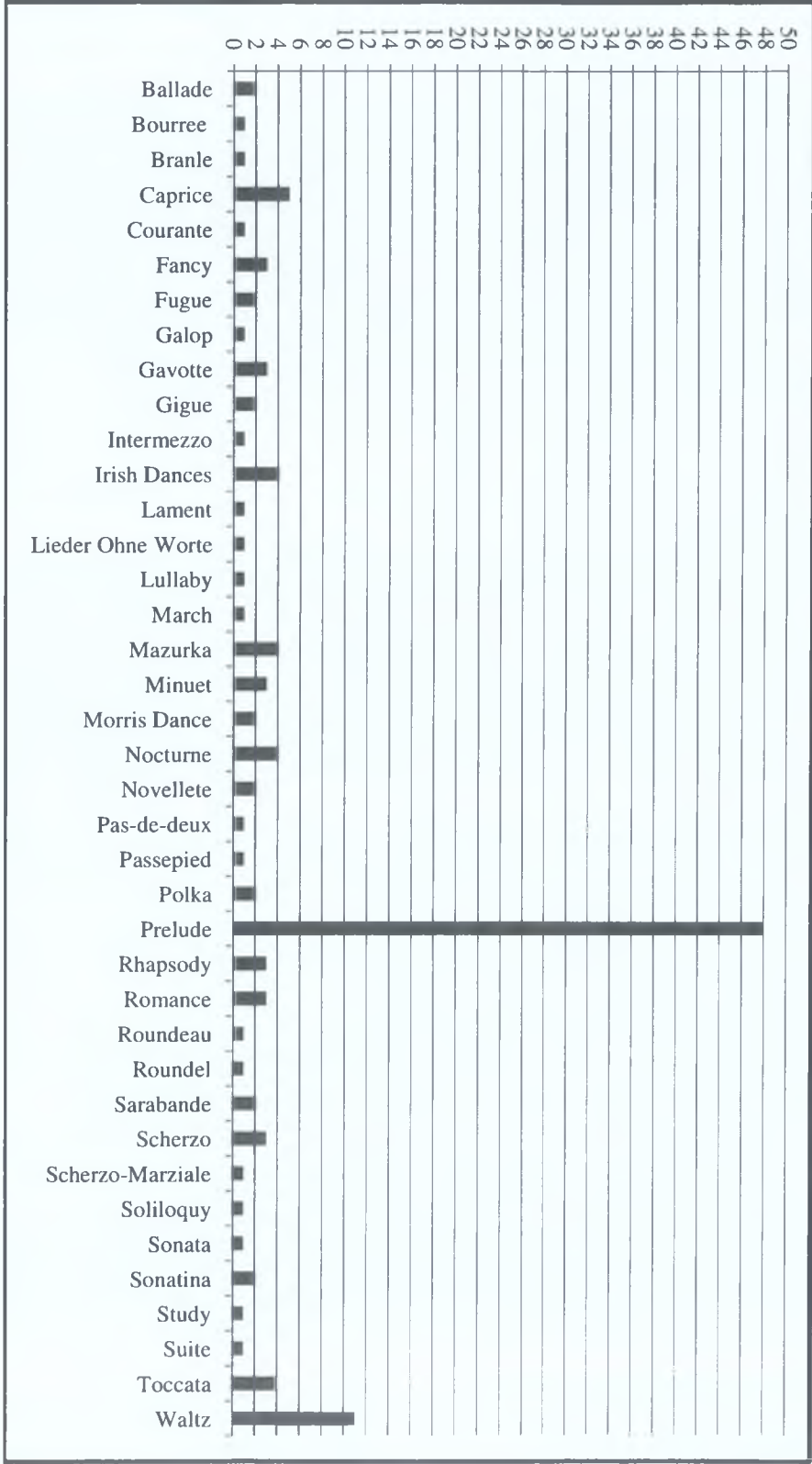
Opus No.	Title of Work	Date of Composition	Dedicatee of Work	Publication Details
-	Piano Trio in G major	c. 1875		Unpublished
15	Piano Quartet no.1 in F major	April 1879	Ernst Frank	Bote & Bock, Berlin c.1882.
25	Piano Quintet in D minor	March 1886	Joseph Joachim	Novello c.1886
35	Piano Trio no.1 in E flat major	17 June 1889	Hans von Bülow	Novello c.1889 London, Novello, Ewer & Co.
73	Piano Trio no.2 in G minor	23 January 1899	Heinrich Barth, Emanuel Wirth and Robert Hausmann (The Berlin Trio)	Bosworth & Co., Leipzig c.1899
133	Piano Quartet no.2 in C minor	10 January 1913	-	Unpublished
158	Piano Trio no.3 in A major	22 April 1918	'In Memoriam: E.U., A.T., A.K., E.J.G. and M.G.' <sup>13</sup>	Augener, 1918

<sup>12</sup><sup>13</sup>

This list does not include those works for solo instrument which demand piano accompaniment. The remainder of the dedication reads 'sempiternam patriae laudem funere cumulantium'. The work is subtitled and it is dedicated to the memory of those killed at war including two of Alan Gray's sons: Maurice and Edward Jasper Gray.

Appendix 5: Stanford and his Generic Choices

Fig A2: Genres Used by Stanford in his Piano Music





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- , Irish Rhapsodies nos. 1-6, Piano Concerto no. 2, Down among the Dead Men, Margaret Fingerhut, Raphael Wallfisch, & Lydia Mordkovitch, Ulster Orchestra, cond. by Vernon Handley, (Chandos, CHAN10116-17X, 2003).
- , String Quartet no.1 op.44 & no.2 op.45, Fantasy for Horn Quintet in A minor, Stephen Stirling, RTÉ Vanburgh Quartet (Hyperion, CDA67434, 2005).
- , Piano Quintet op.25 & String Quintet op.85, Piers Lane, Garth Knox, RTÉ Vanburgh Quartet (Hyperion, CDA67505, 2005).
- , Cello Concerto in D minor & Piano Concerto no.3 in E flat major op.171, Alexander Baillie, Malcolm Binns, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, cond. by Nicolas Braithwaite (Lyrita, SRCD321, 2007).
- , Piano Music: Land of Sunset Glories, Christopher Howell (Sheva Collection, Sheva 019, 2008).
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