John Knowles Paine was one of the ‘Boston Six’, a group of important American composers active in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His German training equipped him with considerable formal skill and he soon rose to become a pioneer of the symphonic tradition in America.

Paine’s Symphony No. 1 received a tremendous reception at its première on account of its attractive themes, skilful orchestration and accomplished design. The Overture As You Like It is notable for its graceful and tuneful themes, whereas Shakespeare’s Tempest is a more adventurous and powerful Lisztian tone poem.