

This article was downloaded by: [University of Birmingham]
On: 11 January 2015, At: 21:26
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered
Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41
Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Proceedings of the Musical Association

Publication details, including
instructions for authors and
subscription information:
<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rrma18>

The Mutilation of a Masterpiece

William H. Cummings MUS.D., F.S.A.
Published online: 28 Jan 2009.

To cite this article: William H. Cummings MUS.D., F.S.A. (1903) The Mutilation of a Masterpiece, Proceedings of the Musical Association, 30:1, 113-127, DOI: [10.1093/jrma/30.1.113](https://doi.org/10.1093/jrma/30.1.113)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jrma/30.1.113>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with

primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

MAY 10, 1904

DR. C. MACLEAN, M.A., VICE-PRESIDENT,
IN THE CHAIR.

THE MUTILATION OF A MASTERPIECE.

BY WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS, MUS.D., F.S.A.

THE responsibilities of one who undertakes the editorship of the work of a deceased musician are many and serious: he is bound to present the text in its integrity, correcting of course any obvious clerical error, and where any point of ambiguity or doubt arises to call attention to it, and, if he please, suggest such an emendation as would appear in his judgment to carry out the intentions and exact meaning of the author. It is absolutely indispensable that an editor of music should be an expert musician, thoroughly conversant not only with the works of the composer he edits but also the methods and traditions of the period in which that composer lived. The editor will frequently have to decide on the authenticity of conflicting manuscripts and copies and to accept or reject this or that reading; but if he mutilate or add to the original draft of the author, he is like a fraudulent trustee and deserves the reprobation of all earnest workers. The annals of music, if carefully searched, would present numerous instances of unfair or unwise editorship. In passing one may mention Dean Aldrich, who edited and appropriated, I think without due acknowledgment, the music of Palestrina, Carissimi, and other Italian composers. The music of Purcell has notably suffered at the hands of unscrupulous or unskilful editors. Doubtless you are familiar with Dr. Boyce's treatment of Purcell's great *Te Deum* in D. He tried to Handelize it, probably with the best intention, but by expansion and additions he made it about a third longer than the composer's original draft. This same *Te Deum* was treated in a far more

shameful manner by Stafford Smith. He published the work with the following title, "Mr. Purcell's grand *Te Deum* Alter'd and Digested for the Use of His Majesty's Chapel Royal, also adapted for the Organ or Harpsichord only, by John Stafford Smith, Being Proper for all Chorus and places where they sing in parts." This is one of the most impertinent pieces of vandalism I am acquainted with. The work is transposed a note lower throughout, and is rightly described as having been "altered and digested." Smith's digestion must have been of a remarkable character; he reduced the length of the composition by about one-third, and introduced much of his own composition or *decomposition* into the remaining two-thirds. I have brought a copy of this Smith concoction for your inspection, and also the first printed edition of the *Te Deum* published by Purcell's widow.

Let me hasten to speak of Handel and the particular instance of the "mutilation of a masterpiece" which I desire to submit to your critical notice. I trust I shall elicit some emphatic expressions of condemnation of the inartistic and disastrous methods employed.

Handel, as you know, has been edited by many capable musicians, notably Mozart and Mendelssohn. Mozart frequently exhibited exquisite skill in the additional accompaniments he supplied, and, although these cannot possibly meet with entire acceptance by thoughtful musicians, it cannot be denied that they are, as a rule, poetic and suggestive. We must not forget that Mozart was specially commissioned by Baron von Swieten to write these additional accompaniments for performances under peculiar conditions—to provide parts for the orchestra of the Baron, and to fill in what was originally intended for harpsichord and organ. The Handel works so dealt with by Mozart were "Acis and Galatea," "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," "Alexander's Feast," and the "Messiah"; there is good reason for believing that Mozart's accompaniments to the "Messiah" were added to (not to their improvement) by John Adam Hiller,—born in 1728—who died in 1804, one year after the publication by Breitkopf and Härtel of Handel's "Messiah" with additional accompaniments, described as *after* Mozart's arrangement. Hauptmann has aptly described these additional accompaniments as stucco ornaments on a marble temple. I have mentioned Mendelssohn as an editor of Handel. He, again, is not blameless; witness his additional accompaniments to the *Te Deum* in D, where he re-writes and mutilates Handel's trumpet parts, and also his arrangement of "Acis and Galatea," made in 1829. In this latter work he injudiciously filled up with chords the eloquent silences left by Handel in the chorus "Wretched lovers," thus following the bad

example set by Mozart in dealing with the air "He was despised." But it must be carefully noted that Mendelssohn afterwards repented his mistakes, and in a letter written to Devrient in 1833 he speaks of them as "interpolations of a very arbitrary kind, mistakes, as I now consider them, which I am anxious to correct." I think you will agree with me that after such a strong statement by Mendelssohn, his unfortunate arrangements ought never to have been published. Mendelssohn afterwards edited the "Israel in Egypt" for the London Handel Society, in which he incorporated an organ part, admirable for its good taste although by no means supplying a complete substitute for the harpsichord and organ as used by Handel himself.

"Israel in Egypt," edited by Mendelssohn, was published in London in 1844, with a preface written by him so admirably conceived and expressed that it deserves special recognition. I therefore quote some of the paragraphs to show what a sane and just view Mendelssohn took of the duties of an editor. He says: "The Council of the Handel Society having done me the honour to request me to edit 'Israel in Egypt,' an Oratorio which I have always viewed as one of the greatest and most lasting musical works, I think it my first duty to lay before the Society the Score as Handel wrote it, without introducing the least alteration, and without mixing up any remarks or notes of my own with those of Handel. In the next place, as there is no doubt that he himself introduced many things at the performance of his works which were not accurately written down, and which even now, when his music is performed, are supplied by a sort of tradition, according to the fancy of the conductor and organist, it becomes my second duty to offer an opinion in all such cases; but I think it of paramount importance that all my remarks should be kept strictly separate from the Original Score, and that the latter should be given in its entire purity, in order to afford to every one an opportunity of resorting to Handel himself, and not to obtrude any suggestions of mine upon those who may differ from me in opinion.

"The whole of the Score (excepting my Organ part and Pianoforte arrangement, which are distinguished by being printed in small notes) is therefore printed according to Handel's manuscript in the Queen's Library. I have neither allowed myself to deviate from his authority in describing the movements in the Score, nor in marking *pianos* and *fortes*, nor in the figuring of the bass, because he has frequently done so himself in his manuscripts (for instance, the Chorus 'The people shall hear' affords a striking instance of the accuracy with which he occasionally did it). Those remarks of mine which I had to offer, are therefore *only* to be found in

the Pianoforte arrangement, and those which are contained in the Score are written by Handel himself The descriptions of movements, metronomes, *pianos* and *fortes*, &c., which I would introduce had I to conduct the Oratorio, are to be found in the *Pianoforte Arrangement*. Whoever wishes to adopt them can easily insert them in the Original Score, and he who prefers any other is not misled so as to take my directions for those which Handel wrote himself.

"Signed, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy,

"London, 4th July, 1844."

Speaking of Mendelssohn's edition of "Israel in Egypt," I must remind you that many years after its publication the trombone parts written by Handel for the work were discovered bound up at the end of Handel's conducting copy, therefore we know that Mendelssohn's score as printed does not now represent the whole instrumentation of Handel.

I feel almost necessitated to apologise for dragging from its obscurity the shameful labours of an English musician, Thomas Pitt, who, originally a chorister in Worcester Cathedral, became organist of that church, which appointment he resigned in 1806. In 1789 he published a volume entitled "Church Music, consisting of Ten Anthems from the Sacred Works of Handel, selected and adapted for the use of Choirs by Thomas Pitt." I remember with regret that when I was a chorister-boy in St. Paul's Cathedral, some sixty-two years ago, these mutilations from Handel were in constant use there. A few examples of Pitt's handiwork will suffice:—

The chorus "Let all the angels of God" Pitt has shortened by cutting out the bars from 4 to 10 and the four concluding bars.

"Lift up your heads" he amends by changing all the accents from bar 10; he cuts out bar 23 and all the *ritornels*; from the point where in the original the two sopranos sing the same part, after giving two bars of Handel he again excises nineteen bars.

From the recitative "Thus saith the Lord" the characteristic semiquavers in the accompaniment to the words "All nations; I'll shake the heavens, the earth, the sea" are changed to quavers, and a puerile shake and turn are added as improvements.

"But who may abide" has four bars ruthlessly cut from the symphony; at the words "for he is like a refiner's fire" we have six bars of Handel and then a cut of sixteen, with a fatuous pause on the word "like."

The chorus "And He shall purify" has mercifully only two bars cut.

" Rejoice greatly " is shortened by removing six bars of the symphony, the *ritornel* eleven bars, and another twenty-two bars.

" He shall feed His flock " is reduced from nineteen bars to twelve; " Come unto Him " from twenty-seven to thirteen; the chorus " His yoke is easy " from fifty-one to thirty-five. " And the glory " is deprived of the symphony and *ritornel* in addition to the excision of twenty-six bars.

" O thou that tellest " from 106 bars is pared down to forty. The chorus " The Lord gave the word " is improved by reduction from thirty-six to twenty-two bars.

The Pastoral Symphony presents the first part only. In the recitative " And lo the angel " the semiquaver accompaniment is deleted. You will not be astonished to learn that from the recitative " And suddenly " all the symphonies, and the picturesque semiquaver accompaniments were cut out.

" Every valley," in the key of D, is reduced from eighty-five bars to sixty-three.

Enough of this wearisome stuff, which is a discredit to the taste of the age and to the musicianship of the time in which it was perpetrated and accepted! I believe and hope that its puerilities are no longer permitted in any church or chapel in the land.

I am reminded here of an anecdote related by Dibdin, who, touring in the West of England, one day encountered some rustics who were carrying music-books and musical instruments. He asked them what was in preparation; they replied they were on their way to church to practise the music for Sunday. " What music do you play? " said Dibdin. " Oh! Handel's," was the answer. " Don't you find Handel's music rather difficult? " " Ees, it was at first, *but* we alter'd un, and so us does very well wi un now."

It is recorded that Jenny Lind, a devout student and unrivalled exponent of Handel's music, said, " Before you can make the world understand what a beautiful thing the score of the ' Messiah ' is you must wash it clean." That opinion I believe has long been entertained by experts, and efforts have conscientiously been made to carry the principle into effect. The name of Dr. Chrysander will at once occur to us. I knew him well, and for his work and memory I entertain a sincere regard. He gave up the best part of his life to the production of the works of Handel in the magnificent collection known as the German Society's edition. If we remark that this edition is not faultless, it is only another reminder that perfection is impossible in all human endeavours. It is a significant and pathetic fact that Dr. Chrysander delayed the production of the score of the " Messiah " until the very end of his labours. Doubtless he

realised the importance of producing an absolutely clear score and a correct version of the most popular of all the composer's oratorios. He likewise was keenly alive to the difficulties of his self-imposed task. Only a few weeks before his death, which occurred on September 3, 1901, he corrected the last sheets of the full score of the "Messiah." He did not live to see the publication, but he subscribed the dedication in August, 1901, and the work was issued to the public in 1902. We must not omit also to place to the credit of Dr. Chrysander the publication of various facsimiles of Handel's autograph MSS., particularly those of the "Messiah," and many separate pages connected with that oratorio preserved in the Dublin score and elsewhere. He thereby supplied us with material for judging Handel by his own autograph evidence.

Oh! that he had been content with those splendid labours and had then stayed his hand. Unfortunately he seems to have been tempted by some evil genius to proceed to make what he called a conducting or performing version; he appears to have considered that a life of forty years spent in editing and printing Handel's scores entitled him to deal with the performing versions as he pleased, abstracting, adding, and altering *ad libitum*. The result of this chimerical idea is unhappily shown in the vocal score of the "Messiah" prepared by him, and published after his death in 1902.

The vocal score was printed in Leipzig with German text, and in the Preface Chrysander writes "With us, in Handel's fatherland, where his Oratorio has in former centuries been completely misunderstood, and where it was never properly performed, the apparently thin score has to a great extent been the cause of our setting out on a wrong track, and making Handel's Oratorio a failure. This can now be considered as past. Having gone back to Handel, and freshly studied him, lovers of noble music can now enjoy, under *original* conditions, the gems of this branch, of which the 'Messiah' is the most worthy."

The *original* conditions, on examination, prove to be Chrysander's, and not Handel's, and I venture to think you will find them not only original but offensive to the last degree. To prove that I am not exaggerating I shall go through the work page by page.

At the end of the opening *Grave*, there is no indication in Handel's autograph of a *rallentando* or *ritardando*, but Chrysander has doubled the length of all the notes in the last five bars; he then cuts out the whole of the fugato *allegro moderato*, and proceeds direct to "Comfort ye." More wonderful still he indicates for the accompaniment string orchestra, the cembalo, and *harp*. Why harp, in the name of common-sense! Handel did write for the harp in a few of

his works, but he certainly never contemplated it in connection with the "Messiah." Chrysander has inserted a questionable *appoggiatura* and F on the second syllable of "iniquity." He breaks the recitative by adding a bar to the *ritornel* after "pardon'd," and makes a new number, with a new metronome time, commence at the words "the voice of him," which he alters and vulgarises, as you shall hear.

"Ev'ry valley," the whole of the bright descriptive symphony is cut out: at bar 11 of the voice part he introduces a chord where Handel gives no harmony. I find this blemish in the full score, in Chrysander's pianoforte part, but there it does no harm, because the musician seeing the full score can at once recognise that it is *de trop*. A little later we find *grupetti* and ornamentation introduced in the worst taste, and at the end of the air he gives three cadences, the first labelled "Handel"; but here again Chrysander has blundered, for although it is true that in the Dublin score *Smith*, not Handel, pencilled-in a cadence, doubtless the one sung by Signora Avolio, the soprano, even that is not given correctly by Chrysander. The second cadence is dated 1790, but no evidence is given whence it is obtained (Handel had then been dead thirty-one years), and the third cadence is Chrysander's—it is monstrous in structure, compass, and taste.

The chorus "And the glory" is shortened by cutting fifteen bars after bar 73. An unwarrantable slackening of the time is indicated ten bars before the close; Handel's direction is for the last four bars to be so treated.

The magnificent dramatic scene which includes the recitative "Thus saith the Lord," the air "But who may abide," and the chorus "And He shall purify" are all omitted without a word or note to inform the reader that this mutilation had been exercised.

In "O thou that tellest," at bars 17, 21, 29, and 35, we find various trivial ornaments which form no part of Handel. In bars 76, 82, and 84, Chrysander presumes to attempt to improve the original. At bar 104, the close of the solo, Chrysander changes the time from $\frac{8}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ in order to introduce a commonplace cadence. The entry of the chorus is also wrong, both in the arrangement we are reviewing and in the full score. Handel wrote and intended that the first quaver A for the soprano chorus on the word O should be accompanied by the violins only; Chrysander makes the string basses hold on the D from the previous chord, giving the effect of bare fifths!

At bar 18 of the chorus Chrysander waters down the soprano part in a childish manner, and repeats the offence at bar 32, and finishes a sad specimen of editorship by cutting eight bars from the concluding symphony, to which he introduces a remarkable final pause.

"For behold darkness" the melody is changed at bars 18, 21, 22, and 23. "The people that walked in darkness" is, you will remember, the air to which Mozart put such beautiful accompaniments, and which a better and more conservative feeling has thought it wise not to use, but to follow Handel's expressed direction that the strings are to play in octaves with the bass. Chrysander, in the pianoforte part of the full score, and also in the performing vocal score, has given harmonies, not so good as those of Mozart but equally defiant of pure taste. At bar 19, in the *ritornel* where Handel has a chord of the 6th, Chrysander gives a \sharp ; in bars 27, 31, and 57 we find some ill-advised changes, and at bar 58 he boldly alters the time from quadruple to triple in order to introduce a vile and outrageous cadence. At the end of the symphony we are supplied with another superfluous pause; this may have been mercifully inserted to give the audience, who would probably sit aghast after hearing the prodigious cadence, time to recover breath.

The chorus "For unto us a child is born" is changed to solos for the various voices, soprano, tenor, alto, and bass; the full chorus being introduced at the word "Wonderful" for five bars only, then the directions are three choristers for each part, and at bar 53 half the choir are to sing, the whole resuming at bar 68. Let it specially be noted that Handel in *this* chorus has clearly written "*Tutti*" over every entrance of the voice parts.

For the pastoral symphony Chrysander introduces the *harp* and organ, and cuts it down to the first movement in C—there is no note or reference to show that Handel added a second part in G, with a return to the first part, making a refreshing and beautiful variety. The Handel idea is thus shorn of twenty bars.

The recitative "And lo, the Angel" is directed to be accompanied by strings, harp, and cembalo. Handel's accompaniment we know is quite complete and perfect with the string quartett; the harp and cembalo are therefore not only unnecessary but intrusive.

The recitative "And suddenly" is again disfigured by the addition to Handel's string quartett of the *harp* and cembalo, and for some unknown reason the final announcement to the words "and saying" on the high A is transposed an octave lower. The chorus "Glory to God" is directed to be sung by half the chorus, and the *harp* is again dragged in. Pauses are inserted in bars 5 and 14.

In "rejoice greatly" we find sundry grace notes introduced, and a miserable cadence at bar 35, another hideous disfigurement at bar 63, and after bar 68 twenty-two bars are cut out without any intimation to the reader of the mutilation. Later on, where Handel has the word 'shout' on the top F

followed by the note above, G, Chrysander in the most erratic manner makes the voice fall an octave F to F, with the result that the following interval for the singer is a ninth. We then have some curious ornamentation, and a change of time from quadruple to triple in order to admit one of Chrysander's original cadences.

The recitative "Then shall the eyes" is deleted; "He shall feed His flock" is disfigured by some *fiorituri* in bad taste; "Come unto Him" has various alterations of the melody and a vile final cadence. In "He was despised" we note the absence of the necessary A \sharp at bar 20—this, by-the-way, is wanting in the full score. There are also some arbitrary and unwarranted alterations in the melody, and at the close of the first part in E flat Chrysander deletes the symphony and introduces the second part in C minor by a bridge of his own composition; he alters the melody in several places, also the time notation; the *Da Capo* is a thing of patches and impertinences.

The theme of the chorus "And with his stripes" he gives in wrong notation (following the mistake he has made in the full score); after bar 26 he coolly cuts out fifty-four bars—the most important part of the working of the fugue.

"All we like sheep" after bar 33 is shorn of twenty bars. The voices are made to sing a passage which in the original belongs to the orchestra, and the final five bars are marked *forte*; the undeviating tradition in this country has been the opposite, the words "the iniquity of us all" being always sung *piano* with a *diminuendo*. From the chorus "He trusted in God," after bar 20 he cuts out thirty-six bars—another shameful mutilation.

In "Thy rebuke" there are introduced some extraordinary *appoggiaturi*; the like remark applies to "Behold and see," also to "He was cut off." The melody of "But Thou didst not leave" is also doctored with paltry grace notes. From "Lift up your heads," after bar 35 nineteen are cut.

In "The Lord gave the word" pauses are introduced which find no suggestion in Handel's score. "How beautiful are the feet" is embellished with numerous trivialities and a cadence in the worst taste.

In place of the chorus "Their sound is gone out" we have a solo which Handel composed to those words, but with weak alterations by Dr. Chrysander.

"Why do the nations," so far as the first part is concerned, has only two emendations—not improvements; the second part of the air is however disfigured by two alternative cadences, one of them involving a change from quadruple to triple time.

The recitative "He that dwelleth" is omitted, and for the air "Thou shalt break them" a recitative is inserted,

founded on a pencilled copy in Smith's handwriting; whether sanctioned by Handel or not it is impossible to determine. Smith's recitative moreover is considerably distorted by Chrysander.

Mirabile dictu! the Hallelujah is not improved. The air "I know that my Redeemer" is considerably disfigured by tasteless ornaments, and there are also harmonies which find no warrant in Handel, and you will not be surprised to learn that in the final close of the voice part one bar is enlarged to three to introduce a cadence.

The recitative "Behold, I shew you a mystery" is changed in the final cadence in a very fantastic manner. From the symphony of "The trumpet shall sound" twelve bars have been cut, and after bar 31, thirty-three bars are excised; and again later on another nineteen bars are deleted, and yet again another six bars. Dr. Chrysander has concocted a second part from Handel's score, and finishes with a cadence which has no affinity to Handel's work.

The recitative "Then shall be brought to pass" is altered in a childish manner, and the duet "O death" is omitted.

"Blessing and honour" after bar 39 has thirteen bars cut. The last "Amen" chorus even Chrysander did not attempt to improve.

I think I have now shown you very clearly that a great wrong to Art and to the reputation of a great musician has been perpetrated in this mutilation of a masterpiece. I regret very sincerely that Dr. Chrysander was so ill advised as to attempt to improve that which should have been regarded as a solemn heritage and a sacred trust. The work of any great deceased master, poet, musician, or sculptor should be jealously preserved by all who presume to call themselves artists. I further regret this unfortunate conducting copy of the "Messiah," because I have read that many of our brother musicians of Germany, in years not long gone by, were inclined to regard Handel's music as rococo; surely if they innocently accept Dr. Chrysander's version as an authentic representation of the traditional manner of performing Handel's oratorios, they will believe they have just ground for their opinions. There are many here to-day who know full well that this distortion of Handel is abhorrent to *our* tastes and *our* customs, and I hope some will not hesitate to say as much.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—We are of course all agreed about the mutilations of the times to which Dr. Cummings referred at first. For the most part they were by small people. If I may endeavour to borrow the style of a gentleman who sits in front of me, Dr. Cummings has given a pill to correct the digestion of the gentleman who digested Purcell, he has consigned Thomas Pitt to the bottomless pit, and he has given a good shaking to the gentleman who introduced so many shakes. As to Mozart's "additional accompaniments" to the "Messiah," it should be borne in mind that he had no ideas of "editions" in his mind. He simply did work required by his patron to make possible certain German performances where there was no organ. This work fell into the hands of J. A. Hiller, and finally was adopted for practical needs in 1803 by an eminent German publishing firm. As to the subject of the latter part of the lecture, it is an important indictment by an important personage against an important writer; but even if you are prepared to be the jury, I am not prepared to do the summing-up. I confess that until the lecture was half-way through I did not know what work was about to be censured. I will only now, in inviting discussion, point out that the edition of the "Messiah" against which the lecturer has spoken is not the official full score issued by the German Handel Society, but an octavo vocal score issued as a "performing edition," and apparently under no special protection by that Society. I am not aware to what extent this "performing edition" of Chrysander's has been taken up in Germany, nor, indeed, why he prepared it, unless it was perhaps to "relieve his feelings." Whatever footing it is on, it must be remembered that an eminent firm in this country also has just issued its "performing edition" of the "Messiah," and how far that will be open to parallel criticism I do not know.

MR. F. G. EDWARDS.—Mr. Shedlock, who was obliged to leave the meeting, has asked me to mention that last year he heard Herr Franke's (the Cologne organist's) version of the "Messiah" at Duisburg—a version which, as Herr Franke told him, was based almost entirely on that of Chrysander's performing edition. Mr. Shedlock—who wrote a notice of this performance in *The Musical Times*—desires me also to say that he quite agrees with Dr. Cummings as to the monstrous mutilation of Handel's masterpiece. For myself, I should just like to remark that the German Handel Society's facsimile of the autograph is not above reproach. For example, in one place Handel, at the head of one of

the solos, is supposed to have written the word "mission"; what he really did write was "Miss Young"! The photographer, or someone, had touched up the plate, whereby "Miss Young" was converted into "Mission." Therefore, one must not put implicit confidence in the German Handel Society's facsimile.

Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT.—For several reasons it is not quite easy for me to speak on this matter. I should have to be rather lengthy were I to tell of all my experience in connection with the "Messiah." I have had to do in a sense with most of the modern editions, and also with that of the Handel Society, the latest edition of the full score, edited by the late Dr. Chrysander. After Chrysander's death, the editor who completed that volume, namely, Dr. Seiffert (a well-known music historian in Berlin), came to London in order to compare his version, then in proof, with the copy I possess in John Christopher Smith's handwriting; in examining which he spent two days at my house. Dr. Chrysander has been most conscientious in his full-score editions—and it seems to me a very great pity that after doing this great and conscientious work, with very little benefit to himself (I believe he acknowledged in his preface that an English amateur had provided him with the means for publishing his monumental edition of Handel's works), he should have brought out a further edition which, in my opinion, Dr. Cummings has not stigmatized too severely. We must remember, however, that Handel as a conductor of his works was of a very elastic temperament, and in all the editions which I have examined there are constantly recurring passing-notes and *fiorituri*, which indicate that Handel gave way to the singers of his day. This brings me to the traditions of the solo singers of that period when my late wife—to whom Dr. Cummings has referred in such touching terms—began to sing the "Messiah" in England. She did so for the first time in 1850 at Liverpool, on the eve of sailing for the United States. She stopped in London in order to be coached by Sir George Smart, who had evidently followed all the traditions of the previous century, for better or worse. Luckily I have got a copy inscribed to my wife, prepared by him a few years later, in which he has introduced in the soprano part all the *fiorituri* and ornaments which were traditionally sung at the time. Madame Goldschmidt then went to him several times, but when she found that his version in many instances totally disagreed with Handel's music (as found in his own scores) she adopted the attitude which our lecturer has expressed in such eloquent terms. She never afterwards sang any of these emendations—to call them by a polite name. I have had to conduct the "Messiah" at two festivals in Germany, one on the Lower Rhine and the other at Hamburg. As to Germany,

we must allow for there being no tradition whatever in the rendering of Handel's music. In England, through services, oratorios, and festivals, there is such a tradition—in Germany there is none. Consequently, I found it very difficult, imbued as I was with the reading prevalent in England, to deal with the editions there employed; and of course also with Mozart's additional instrumentation. However, I had to accept what I found. With reference to Mozart, I must make one correction in the statement of our able lecturer. The order from Baron von Swieten successively for the four works of Handel which Mozart scored was necessitated by there being no organ in the great room called the Redouten-saal, which forms part of the Imperial Palace in Vienna. Indeed, in very few concert rooms in Germany, even to a much later day, was there an organ; and therefore what Mozart read as Handel's meaning had to be introduced, if at all, through the addition of wind instruments. I do think that some allowance should be made in view of these circumstances. And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I think I have occupied your time long enough, and I only wish to repeat that I possess that extraordinary copy of Sir George Smart's, with Handel's version in many places scratched out and replaced in red ink by Sir George's emendations. And to my dismay a daughter of his has lately presented a similar copy to the library of the Royal College of Music, which I have had the opportunity of inspecting. It has the same alterations and embellishments as contained in my own copy and which are supposed to have been sung by Madame Goldschmidt at her many renderings in England of the soprano part in the "Messiah." And I only hope that in the future it will not be supposed to have been her reading, a reproach from which Dr. Cummings's remarks and my own here made may help to save her.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—I should like to make a remark with regard to that noble preface of Mendelssohn's referred to by Dr. Cummings. If other editors would only act upon it, such mutilations and alterations would never take place again. Mr. Goldschmidt has certainly thrown some fresh light on the matter. He has told us that Handel is rather an unknown factor in Germany; and may not one explanation be the fact that in the case of some music, German singers have indulged in the cadences such as we have heard Dr. Cummings play to-day? Chrysander seems to have been cadence-mad; and the examples we have listened to I should say are the most extraordinary to be found. But one can remember various pieces of operatic flourishes and cadences in which something like that has been heard; possibly it may be some explanation of these extraordinary things. I was going to ask Dr. Cummings if he could tell us in his reply whether this

performing edition of Chrysander's had ever been heard; but Mr. Shedlock has told us that it has been performed, or at least one founded on it. I wish Mr. Shedlock could tell us whether it was hissed or applauded. One can hardly think that if a notice of Dr. Cummings's remarks should appear in Germany, this version will ever be heard again. I should hope not, both for the sake of Handel and for the sake of the Germans. Of course there is a great deal of old music that seems to be written so high that it cannot be sung. Now I think an editor is justified in such a case in putting it in a lower key. Perhaps Dr. Cummings will say whether Handel's fork is not in existence; if so, it would be one little piece of evidence that would settle the question of the alteration in pitch. If music, especially sacred music, was, according to the custom of that time, performed as the specimens we have heard, then I am very sorry for the sacred music of Germany.

(A vote of thanks was then passed to Dr. Cummings.)

Dr. CUMMINGS.—I am very much obliged to you for the kind way in which you have received my paper. I felt this was a solemn duty and a very unpleasant one. But do let us bear in mind with regard to the German musicians that we must not find fault with them. If they have no other standard they must be content with what is put before them. To change the pitch of any of the choruses is not a mutilation, but to take out the best part of a fugue is surely a mutilation. What would you think of a man who had a statue of Venus and who to satisfy his æsthetic ideas knocked off the arms, legs, etc., and left it a torso? You would call it a mutilation; and that is precisely analogous to what Chrysander has done with the "Messiah." Handel's tuning-fork is in existence, and we know that he set the oratorio about a tone lower than we sing it. Sometimes Chrysander puts a note an octave lower without rhyme or reason, and sometimes he puts it higher than Handel wrote it. I am very glad to have had you here to-day, especially Mr. Goldschmidt and one or two others who are capable of forming a very good judgment on the matter. Mr. Goldschmidt has studied the "Messiah" for a lifetime, and he of all men would be desirous of having the work of Handel handed down as the composer intended it. As our Proceedings will be published I do hope some of our friends in Germany will read the account of to-day, and not be misled by the so-called "performing" edition of Dr. Chrysander.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—As this is the last time we shall meet in this room, I think we ought to give a Vote of Thanks to the Royal College of Organists for having accorded us their hospitality and the use of their room for the last ten years

I was an original member of the Society, and I remember our first meetings in Harley Street and our removal to the concert room of the Royal Academy of Music, and later to these premises. But now we are compelled to go, because the Royal College of Organists, under the terms of the lease of their new home in South Kensington, cannot let their rooms to any other Society. It is true we have been tenants of theirs, and have paid them a rent—a very modest rent; but independently of the use of this room they have always been ready to let us have a room for our Council Meetings, and the room where we have our tea; so I feel that on coming here for the last time, on the eve of parting from them, it would be very right that we should pass a Vote of Thanks to the Council for the kind way in which they have treated the Musical Association since we have been here.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I was going to draw attention to this matter. I can only say for my own part that I do not think we are very likely to get such a cheap and pleasant bargain again. We have every reason to be immensely grateful to the Royal College of Organists.

Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT seconded the motion, which was carried by acclamation.
