

Handel's Borrowings (Concluded)

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HANDEL'S BORROWINGS.

(Concluded from page 528.)

For our present purpose, Erba, Stradella, Clari, Muffat, and Urlo have formed a class by themselves, both on account of the number and extent of the contributions levied upon them. We shall now deal with minor, though certainly not less curious, Handel borrowings. We begin then with Josquin des Près. Crotch finds Handel using one of his subjects in the final 'Amen' of the 'Messiah.' Burney had already remarked that Handel had taken a 'point' from the 8th Motet of Petrucci's 4th Book *Motteti della corona* of Josquin des Près, for the first *Allegro* of his first organ concerto, and for several of his choruses ('History of Music,' Vol. II., pp. 502 and 506). The 'point' of imitation in question is, however, to be found in many old composers, and it is well nigh impossible to say who first used it.

In a foot-note to his organ and pianoforte adaptation of the choruses in 'Samson,' Crotch says that a subject in the first chorus, 'O first created beam,' is taken from a psalm-tune by Martin Luther. The psalm in question is Luther's paraphrase of Ps. cxxx., 'Aus tiefer Noth schrei' ich zu dir,' the music to which, in Joh. Walther's 'Geistliches Gesangbüchlein,' Wittenberg, 1524, is generally attributed to him. The opening of this same chorus is to be found, by the way, in an aria in Cesti's opera of 'Orontea,' given in the 'Specimens.' In the latter there is also a 'Deposuit potentes,' by Palestrina, in which we again meet with a point of imitation similar to the one in the first Handel organ concerto. Those 'Specimens' were collected by Crotch for the purpose of illustrating the lectures of which he afterwards published the 'Substance'; and while collecting his material he no doubt jotted down many if not all, of the names which are in his footnote list. In No. 12 of the second volume of the 'Specimens' there is a theme used, rather than invented, by Palestrina, and this will be found (in its 'answer' form) in 'Let their celestial concerts all unite' ('Samson').

Sethus Calvisius, born in 1556, became Cantor of St. Thomas's, Leipzig, in 1594, and held that post until his death in 1615. He was a learned musician, and wrote treatises ('Melopeia,' 1582, 'Musicae artis praecepta,' 1612, &c.), and composed music (motets, hymns, and the 150th Psalm in twelve parts). He was also a distinguished mathematician and astronomer. In his organ adaptation of 'Solomon,' Crotch has the following foot-note on the chorus 'Throughout the world Jehovah's praise':—'The subjects are taken from a canon by Calvisius'; but the canon in question is not further specified.

Turini is mentioned by Burney as having been useful to Handel. He says that Handel composed 'one of his finest instrumental fugues' upon the subject of a canon by Turini, which he reproduces in his 'History of

Music,' Vol. III., p. 521. It is also noted by Busby. The Handel fugue is the one in B flat commencing—



Burney states that Handel 'adopted a base' from a cantata composed by Marc Antonio Cesti, and also used a 'division' from a motet in his overture to 'Saul.' A more definite charge, however, is made by Crotch in his organ adaptation of 'Samson,' wherein he says of a passage in 'Great Dagon hath subdued our foe': 'This passage is from the last chorus of Cesti's opera of 'La Dori.' It is curious that Crotch should not have pointed out the above mentioned resemblance between the opening of the chorus 'O first-created beam' in 'Samson' and the opening of an aria of Cesti's—('Specimens,' Vol. II., No. 76)—when mentioning the former in connection with Luther.

Burney, in his 'History of Music' (Vol. IV., pp. 153-155), quotes a 'division' from a Cesti Cantata in the Christ Church Collection—one evidently well known to Crotch—and states that it was used by Handel in his overture to 'Saul.' If such a 'division,' however, be accepted, one might multiply *ad infinitum* the number of Handel's borrowings.

Dr. Chrysander (G. F. Händel, pp. 196-202) has something to say about Handel's indebtedness to Cesti or to Alessandro Scarlatti. In 'Agrippina' we find:—



In a duet of Cesti's, however, occurs:—



But it is more likely that Handel was acquainted with an Arietta of A. Scarlatti's, which contains the same Cesti phrase, and even more like it than we have quoted; borrowing then was not a speciality of *il caro Sassone*, though perhaps he excelled in the art.

'See a fugue by Kerl in Dr. Burney's 'History of Music,' from which Handel took this chorus with little or no alteration.' Thus runs a note in Crotch's adaptation of the chorus 'Egypt was glad,' from 'Israel.' (Hawkins's 'History of Music' is probably meant, as it is not given in Burney; and we may add that the Hawkins version is by no means correct.) So far as the boldness of the borrowing is concerned, Kerl might well have been classed with our first set of names. But, with one exception, it is the only serious instance of Handel having been indebted to him. A passage in his 'Capriccio Kuku' is mentioned by Dr. Max Seiffert in the Fleischer-Seiffert edition recently published of C. F. Weitzmann's 'Geschichte der Klaviermusik,'

as having been adopted by Handel in an *allegro* of one of his organ concertos. Johann Kasper Kerl (1621-1693) was organist of St. Stephen's, Vienna. He published 'Toccate, Canzoni et altre Sonate,' 1673, in conjunction with Borro and Krieger, and 'Modulatio Organica super Magnificat,' 1686.

Coming to Corelli, we find Crotch in his copy of 'The Triumph of Time and Truth' writing against the air 'Dryads, Sylvens, with fair Flora,' 'from Corelli's Pastorale 8th Concerto.' The resemblance between the two passages is, however, slight. Corelli himself, by the way, was not above commandeering the ideas of another composer on occasion. Geminiani told a friend of Burney that 'he [Corelli] availed himself much of the compositions of other masters . . . he acquired much from Lulli . . . and from Bononcini's famous 'Camilla.' On his own authority Burney adds that he finds in Corelli 'frequent imitations of the more natural passages of Scarlatti, particularly in the beautiful *Adagio* of his 8th Concerto.' There are several excerpts from Corelli in Crotch's 'Specimens,' from which the veriest tyro would be able to pick out passages, figures, progressions, &c., reminding one more or less of Handel.

In his organ adaptation of 'Solomon,' Crotch refers the air and chorus 'Music spread thy voice around' to a 'Qui diligit Mariam' by the Abbate Steffani, and the same instance is mentioned in his 'Substance of Lectures' (p. 109).

The passage in Steffani's Motet commences thus:—



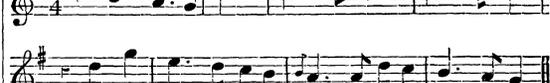
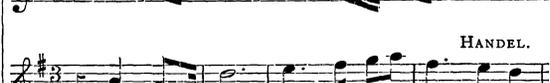
and Handel writes—



A longer quotation would show that the resemblance continues. Chrysander also mentions these passages.

The name of Purcell is on our list. Burney, Macfarren, and others have noticed Handel's obligations to Purcell; but we here confine ourselves to Crotch. In the third act of Handel's 'Saul,' he detects a strong resemblance to Purcell's 'Saul and the Witch of Endor'; of direct borrowing, however, he practically makes no charge. The 'King Arthur' Chaconne, he says, 'was employed by Handel in his harpsichord lessons,' referring, of course, to the Chaconne in G of the Second Collection, both of which are built on what we may perhaps call 'Welsh' ground. Bach also used it for his great 'Goldberg' Variations, and Purcell in his harpsichord piece 'A Ground in Gamut.' And not only is the bass the same, but there is so striking a resemblance between

the melodies of the three respective composers that we are tempted to place them side by side:—



The above are given in chronological order. According to Crotch, Locke also used it. Crotch states further that a section of 'Brave souls to be renowned in story' was imitated by Handel in 'All we like sheep' at the words 'And the Lord hath laid.' The influence of Purcell over Handel has been frequently discussed, so, having given one or two examples, I pass on to Alessandro Scarlatti, with whom Handel was personally acquainted. One of his cantatas, 'Fortunate miei martiri,' was used by Handel, says Crotch in his 'Substance of Lectures,' while in his printed copy of 'Triumph of Time and Truth,' he has scribbled opposite 'Pensive sorrow' the words, 'Italian canzonets Aless. Scarlatti: Ch. Ch. Collection.' Part of the above-mentioned cantata occurs, by the way, in the 'Specimens.'

Leo, Hasse, and Vinci are names to be met with in one or other of the lists. Without mentioning any special place, it may be said that there are many passages in the excerpts from the first two composers in the 'Specimens' of decidedly Handelian character. One air, 'Pupillette vezzosette,' attributed to Vinci, may through its general resemblance to 'Love in her eyes,' in 'Acis,' account for that name in the list, although Crotch says he afterwards discovered that it was by Hasse.

Handel was not deterred by Bononcini's fate from a stray nibble at that determined biter. Crotch, in his organ adaptation of 'Judas Maccabæus,' remarks of the chorus 'Zion now her head shall raise,' that some of the subjects are from a cantata by Bononcini; also that the movement was composed after Handel had become blind, when the oratorio was already finished. The cantata seems to be the song by Bononcini, 'Peno, peno e l'alma fedele'; it is in the Fitzwilliam Collection, and the theme, according to a note of Bartlemann's, is identical with the theme of 'Zion now her head shall raise.'

Dr. Gauntlett, by the way, in his *Notes and Queries* article (Feb. 5, 1859) speaks of a theme of Bononcini converted into the overture of the 'Messiah,' without telling us where to look for the original theme!

Passing on to Johann Kuhnau, we find Crotch in his copy of 'Triumph of Time and Truth,' against the chorus 'Comfort them, O Lord,' at the words 'Keep them alive, let them be blessed,' writing, 'see Kuhnau's Organ Pieces, Leipzig, 1696,' and, at the same place, 'compare this with a chorus in 'Susanna.' The theme in both is, in fact, taken from the first Sonata in Kuhnau's 'Frische Klavier Früchte'; and it is curious to note how, in both instances, Handel has also worked in Kuhnau's semi-quaver figure. The theme and the figure are as follows:—



The 'Susanna' chorus referred to is 'Virtue shall never long be oppressed.'

In the above-named chorus from 'Triumph of Time and Truth' we find Handel actually laying a *second* composer under contribution. At bars 8-14 Crotch writes, 'This passage all from Lotti, see Latrobe, No. 16.' The Lotti passage is in 'Qui tollis peccata mundi,' from a Mass.

Look on this picture—



and on this—



Lotti's name, by the way, is not in the Crotch 'Substance' list.

A writer in the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* (1822, p. 145) remarks that there is a chorus in a Mass by Caldara 'very similar in its subject to 'They loathed to drink' ('Israel'), and it is just possible that he referred to the theme of 'Qui tollis' in the Mass à 5 in F by that composer—



The resemblance is not very strong, yet there are many passages in Caldara's masses which might be described as Handelian. Antonio Caldara was born at Venice in 1670 and died at Vienna in 1736. He wrote many operas, oratorios, and masses. The dates of his birth and death are incorrectly given in most dictionaries; the above are according to official records.

Although the name of Bach is on our list, it is difficult to find out what particular charge or charges of borrowing from the great Cantor Crotch brought against Handel. In his 'Specimens' he gives the Fugue in E from Part II. of the Well-tempered Clavier, the theme of which is also used by Handel, but it was an old theme which existed long before Bach. Yet it is just possible that Crotch may have counted it as a Handel borrowing, for we even find Macfarren, in discussing Handel's plagiarisms in an article in the *Musical World*, pointing out that the subject of 'And with his stripes' in 'The Messiah,' is identical with that of a fugue of Bach. But it seems more than probable that both Bach and Handel evolved their respective themes from one by Kuhnau—which may itself be an out-growth—in his 'Neue Clavier-Uebung' of 1696—



just as Handel may have evolved the fugue theme in his F minor suite—



from a fugue of J. K. F. Fischer (capellmeister to the Margrave of Baden from 1669 to 1707)—

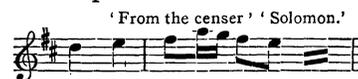


In the edition of Weitzmann's 'Geschichte der Klaviermusik,' mentioned above (p. 596), there are some interesting illustrations, including the above, of the metamorphoses of themes.

'This subject,' remarks Crotch of a passage in 'From the censor' ('Solomon'), 'is an improvement on one by Dr. Croft.' The plagiarism and the improvement were also noticed by Dr. Gauntlett (*Notes and Queries*, Feb. 5, 1859), who names Dr. Croft's fugue for his degree exercise as the original. Is this, perchance, the subject?



and this the improvement?



In several of his organ and pianoforte adaptations of Handel, Crotch points out the composer's obligations to Porta. Of the chorus 'To fame immortal go' in 'Samson' he says:—'The accompaniment is taken from Porta's opera of 'Numitor' . . . from which opera also Handel took many other passages.' Similarly a part of the opening symphony of

* In the preface to the Two Odes published under the title 'Musicus Apparatus Academicus,' the author states that they 'were performed as a Preparatory Exercise to the taking my Doctor's Degree.'

the third act of 'Solomon' he says is 'from a song in 'Numitor,' and the double chorus 'The name of the wicked shall quickly be past' in the same oratorio is also ascribed to the same work. If we are correct in supposing that Crotch alludes to the songs 'Si t'intendo' and 'Altro da voi non chiedo,' the charge of borrowing can scarcely be maintained.

Crotch himself did not know of much borrowing by Handel from Pergolesi. He says, in his adaptation of 'Belshazzar,' of a passage in the chorus 'O glorious Prince': 'This is one of the very few passages of Pergolesi copied by Handel.' This chorus may be compared with No. 105 (Vol. II.) of the 'Specimens,' and it will be seen that the copying is not very close. In his adaptation of 'Jephtha,' Crotch has the following note on the semi-chorus, 'Welcome as the glorious light':—'This passage is copied, *but not closely*, from Pergolesi' (the italics are ours). If he refers to Pergolesi's 'Euridice e dove sei' ('Specimens', Vol. II., No. 106)—and it seems to us just possible that such is the case—then the 'but not closely' is, indeed, a most appropriate qualification.

Dr. Burney, we have already said, appears to have been the first to call attention to Handel's borrowings—*i.e.*, the first to point out any. His attention to the subject may, however, have been drawn by Scheibe, who, in the Preface to his 'Ueber die musikalische Composition,' published in 1773, three years before the first volume of Burney's History of Music appeared, asserts, on the authority of Telemann and Mattheson, that Handel frequently made profitable use of the ideas of Reinhard Keiser, and he adds that he has other good grounds for the statement.*

Some of Crotch's examples are somewhat far-fetched, and this, seeing that he has so many substantial illustrations, is to be regretted. On the whole, however, his list is, we think, justified, and, if he had made the subject a speciality, there is little doubt that he could have produced further examples. As it was he seems merely, *en passant*, as it were, to have recorded those instances which came under his notice while preparing his lectures and adaptations. I have touched upon all the names of the two Crotch lists mentioned except six: Domenico Scarlatti, Colonna, Telemann, Mondonville, Astorga, and Morley. Other names however have been mentioned, and I might also have added something about Krieger, Poglietti, Mattheson, Buxtehude, Pasquini, and others, but the patience of the reader has already been sorely tried. It must

* 'Händel und Hasse, diese berühmten Männer, die Deutschland in Italien und Engelland Ehre gemacht haben, haben sich, insonderheit der erste, gar oft seiner Erfindungen bedienet und sich dabey sehr wohl befunden. Sie verstunden aber die Kunst, sich diese Erfindungen so zuzueignen, dass sie unter ihren Händen in neue und Originalgedanken verwandelt wurden. Mattheson und Telemann haben mir dieses mehr als einmal bekräftiget, und ich kann auch nach andern zuverlässigen Nachrichten gar nicht daran zweifeln.'
Scheibe's 'Ueber die musikalische Composition.' Vorrede, p. LIII.

not for a moment be imagined that Crotch in giving his famous list wished to bring the composer into discredit. In discussing borrowings from Carissimi, he says:—'In most cases he merely took ideas, and greatly improved them; but when he introduced passages entire and unaltered, it must be considered as a quotation of a well-known classical author, and not as plagiarism which results from poverty of invention, and with the hope of escaping detection.' This explanation of the larger conveyances is, however, generous rather than just. We quote it, not for its own merit, but merely to show critic Crotch's attitude towards Handel. The name of Carissimi recalls a curious passage in Hawkins concerning an imitation of that master by Dr. Blow, undertaken by royal command, or perhaps, one might say, request. 'The king (Charles II.) admired very much a little duet of Carissimi to the words 'Dite o Cieli,' and asked of Blow if he could imitate it. Blow modestly replied that he would try.' The result was his song 'Go, perjured man,' and the imitation is evident. I have constantly referred to adaptations by Crotch of Handel's choruses, yet have only been able to see a few of them. In the other numbers (of which a list is given at the end of the 'Substance of Lectures') there are, no doubt, similar footnotes pointing to other copyings, or quotations, of the great master.

POSTSCRIPT.

After I had seen a proof of above I received a letter from Mr. William Wallace most kindly offering to lend me Dr. Crotch's own copy of the score (Arnold edition) of Handel's oratorio of 'Samson.' I at once gladly accepted. It contains many marginal notes. I have already quoted the doctor's comment on the overture (see THE MUSICAL TIMES for August, p. 527), and here above the heading 'Overture' is written:—'subjects from Muffat. See also the March in 'Judas Maccabæus' and the Introduction to 'Joshua.' The borrowing from the 'Martin Luther' Psalm-tune mentioned above (p. 596) is also noted. I named the Walther 'Gesangbüchlein,' in which the tune is to be found, but Crotch tells where *he* discovered it; he says 'the subject may be seen in Miss Cecil's collection of Psalm tunes.' He also remarks that Handel borrowed from another Luther tune 'in his last chorus of 'L'Allegro' (or 'Il Moderato') which may be seen in Tattersall's Psalmody.' And on these borrowings he remarks, 'It was natural enough for a Handel, a Lutheran, and a Saxon to use Luther's hymns. It was also the practice of young composers.'

With regard to the name Bach in Crotch's list, I suggested that he had in his mind the Fugue in E in the second part of the Well-tempered Clavier. In this score against—



and tri-umph o - ver death

is a cross, which evidently refers to a note at foot of page, 'See Bach's Fugue in E.' This theme, however, is much older than Bach. The name of Vinci is mentioned. A division in 'Why does the God of Israel sleep?' is said to be from that composer's 'Alessandro in Indie.'

There are five references to Porta's 'Numitor'—a 'passage' in *Dalila's* air, 'To fleeting pleasures'; a 'subject' in *Samson's* air, 'My strength is from the living God'; two phrases in 'Go, baffled coward, go'; the demisemi-quaver passage in *Samson's* recitative, 'Jehovah's glory known'; and a passage in *Micah's* air, 'The Holy One of Israel.' The one mentioned above, 'To fame immortal go,' is not noted in this score.

There are interesting, and at times, quaint remarks besides those relating to the borrowings. Against *Micah's* aria 'No more of earthly joys' is written 'A favourite of Mr. Battishill's—not of mine!' At *Samson's* aria 'Ne'er think of that,' the words 'and fair enchanted cup' suggest to him the following query 'Did Milton borrow this idea from his own Comus?' He refers evidently to the line in Comus in which Circe's 'charmed cup' is mentioned, but the borrowing is not very marked; anyhow, the poet could do what he liked with his own. Of *Samson's* aria 'It is not virtue,' the worthy Doctor says: 'surely this is the worst of Handel's songs.'

J. S. SHEDLOCK.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Haydn is to be represented at the approaching Leeds Musical Festival by his so-called motet, 'Insanæ et vanæ curæ,' known also by its English text, 'Distracted with care and anguish.' Like many other familiar compositions, the knowledge of its history is in inverse ratio to its popularity. The result of some recent investigations may therefore not be unacceptable to our readers. In the first place it is not an original work, but, after the manner of much of Haydn's smaller church music, it is an adaptation. In the winter of 1774-5 Haydn (*ætat* 42) composed his first oratorio, 'Il ritorno di Tobia,' to an Italian libretto, which was first performed in Vienna, and under his direction, on April 2, 1775. Nine years later he added to Part II. of this initial effort in oratorio, a 'storm chorus,' which, however, must not be confused with the 'Storm chorus' (in the same key, but in triple rhythm) which he afterwards composed during his sojourn in London. This 'storm chorus' immediately follows, in fact it forms the conclusion of a fine soprano air in F minor and major, sung by *Anna* in the original work, a portion of which forms the beautiful second subject (in F) of the 'Insanæ.' The original words of this chorus—'Svanisce in un momento'—are to the effect that the soul threatens to yield to the fury of its enemies, yet trust in God keeps one steadfast. The music admirably reflects these opposites, first in the tumultuous D minor section, and then in the tranquillity of the F major portion which follows, no less than the trustful quietude of the D major conclusion.

It is interesting to know that Haydn brought the score of his 'Il ritorno di Tobia' with him to England on the occasion of his first visit to these shores in 1791, probably with a view to its performance here. Messrs. Novello's private library contains an oblong volume in the handwriting of Vincent Novello, in which he has copied some numbers from 'Tobia,' including the air of *Anna*, already mentioned, but not the 'Insanæ' chorus. The inside cover of the book contains the following interesting note in Novello's hand, written, not later than 1820, under the contents of the volume:—

The whole of the above are unpublished manuscripts, and were copied from an extremely rare volume, containing the full orchestral score of the entire oratorio, kindly lent to me for the purpose by my friend, Mr. Shield, who had obtained it from Haydn himself during the visit of the latter to England in the year 1791.

VINCENT NOVELLO, 240, Oxford St.

'Il ritorno di Tobia' is practically unknown. The late Mr. W. S. Rockstro, in his article 'Oratorio' in Grove's 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians' (ii., 550) says of it: 'The airs throughout are overflowing with melody, such as Haydn alone knew how to produce. The choruses are powerful and well-developed fugues, with bold yet tuneful subjects, like those familiar to us all through the medium of his well-known masses. The first is a prayer for the restoration of Tobit's sight—

Allegro con brio.

Rendi a To-bit la lu-ce, O . . del-la luce an-

Rendi a To-bit la lu-ce, O . . &c.
- tor ren - - - di a

The final fugue is in 6-8 time, and founded on a highly characteristic subject:—

Met-ter-em glo-ria maggiore e maggior fe-li-ci

Met-ter-em glo-ria maggiore e &c.
- ta, e mag-gior fe-li-ci -

Latin words were adapted to both these choruses as well as to the 'storm chorus.' Rockstro, however, makes no reference to the 'Insanæ' adaptation. Probably the copy of the 'Tobia' score which he consulted did not contain it. As to who made the adaptation it seems impossible to say. A full score of the motet (so-called), published by Messrs. Breitkopf