Louis Grabu

Author(s): W. H. Cummings

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had no control whatever over the number of rehearsals I thought necessary for the concerts. For each concert, which included two symphonies and several minor pieces as well, the Society's economical arrangements allowed me only one rehearsal.

At the first concert we played Beethoven's 'Eroica,' and my success as a conductor seemed so marked that the committee of the Society were evidently prepared to make a special effort for the second. They demanded selections from my own compositions as well as Beethoven's ninth Symphony, and conceded me two rehearsals as an exceptional favour. This concert went off quite passably. I had drawn up an explanatory programme for my 'Lohengrin' Overture, but the words 'Holy Grail' and 'God' were struck out with great solemnity, as that sort of thing was not allowed at secular concerts. I had to content myself with the chorus from the Italian Opera for the Symphony, besides putting up with a baritone whose English phlegm and Italian training drove me to despair at the rehearsal. All I understood of the English version of the text was, 'Hail thee, joy' for 'Freude, schöner Götterfunken.' The Philharmonic Society appeared to have staked everything on the success of this concert, which, in fact, left nothing to be desired. They were accordingly horrified when *The Times* reporter fell on this performance, too, with furious contempt and disparagement. They appealed to Präger to persuade me to offer Mr. Davison some attentions, or at least to agree to meet that gentleman and be properly introduced to him at a banquet to be arranged by Mr. Anderson. But Präger now knew me well enough to dash their hopes of obtaining any concession of that sort from me. The banquet fell through, and, as I saw later, the Society began from that time forward to regret my appointment, realising that they had an entirely intractable and pig-headed person to deal with.

Wagner conducted the whole eight concerts of the season. Not very much music of his own composition was included in the programmes. There was a selection from 'Lohengrin' (described above), the 'Tannhäuser' Overture was performed twice, and that was all. The 'Eroica,' the 'Leonora' Overture, the Choral Symphony, and the Symphony in A of Beethoven were the most important features of the programmes. The invitation to conduct was not extended to another season.

In 1856 Sterndale Bennett was appointed conductor, and for some years nothing of special importance occurred. Clara Schumann played Mendelssohn's D minor Pianoforte concerto on April 24, 1856, and in the same year (on June 23) Schumann's 'Paradise and the Peri' was produced in England for the first time. On May 18, 1857, Rubinstein played his Pianoforte concerto in G, and on June 29 Beethoven's Violin concerto, hitherto unaccountably neglected, was played by Mr. Cooper. Schumann's Symphony in C appeared for the first time in 1864, and his Pianoforte concerto in A minor was performed by Madame Schumann in 1865. In 1866 Sterndale Bennett resigned, and Mr. W. G. Cusins entered upon a long period of authority. The year 1867 brought forward Schumann's D minor Symphony, and most notably the Schubert 'Unfinished.' On June 3 Sullivan made his début with the Overture 'Marmion,' which he composed expressly for the Society. The programme for April 8 of this year included Schumann's Symphony in D minor, performed for the first time in England. A rather drab period in the history of the Society now ensued. In 1870, Madame Norman Neruda, the first lady violinist to appear at these

concerts, played Mendelssohn's Violin concerto, and the next event of importance was on April 2, 1873, when the 'Requiem' of Brahms was given for the first time in this country. The same composer's Symphony in C minor was given on April 10, 1877, and his 'Variations on a theme by Haydn' on May 14 of the same year. The year 1878 witnessed the introduction of Schubert's great Symphony in C. In 1881 the dramatic Symphony, 'Romeo and Juliet,' by Berlioz, was performed twice, with the assistance of the South London Choral Association (Mr. L. C. Venables), under Mr. Cusins. The first Liszt Symphonic-poem to be played at the Society's concert was that entitled 'Hungarian,' which was performed on February 23, 1882. In 1883 there was an 'In memoriam' Wagner concert, at which Sarasate brought forward for the first time in this country the Max Bruch 'Scotch' Violin concerto (Op. 46). Cusins conducted for the last time on May 30, 1883, after sixteen years' service.

(To be continued.)

LOUIS GRABU.

By W. H. CUMMINGS.

King Charles the Second on his return to his native land, after a long exile of over twenty years, soon gave convincing proof of acquired tastes and habits which were not only foreign but also false. If we examine his acts, moral, political, religious, or artistic, we shall find that he almost invariably patronized the evil and neglected the good. A striking evidence of his betrayal of a sacred trust was his appointment of Isaac Vossius to a Canonry in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, although he declared that 'this learned divine will believe anything except the Bible.' One of the King's first resolves, in 1660, was to restore the royal musical establishments of the Chapel and Palace; these had been entirely swept away during the Commonwealth. Charles the First seems to have employed at least seventy-five singers and orchestral players in his permanent staff of musicians. Some of these joined the King's army, and many of those who survived the conflicts were restored to their former places by his son. Amongst them were the notables, Captain Cooke, Henry Lawes, and Christopher Gibbons; but foreigners were soon introduced. The records give the names of 'four Dutchmen, Benigne le Ragois, Nicholas Caperon, Melque Goldt, and Hugh Fitchert, as trumpeters in ordinary.'

Amongst the numerous aliens who came to England in the train of Charles the Second was a French musician, Louis Grabu (his name is variously spelt Grabue, Grabut, Grebus). He must have been a special favourite of the King. He received valuable appointments in rapid succession: violin in the Private Musick, composer to His Majesty's Musick, and in a very short time (in 1666) he displaced John Bannister, a very capable English musician, as head of the King's band of twenty-four violinists. In the following year he was made the master of the select band, twelve in number. Pepys in his Diary, on February 20, 1667, makes an

entry that at the Duke of York's 'they talk how the King's viallin Bannister is mad that the King hath a Frenchman come to be chief of some part of the King's Musique, at which the Duke of York made great mirth.' Shortly after this Pepys had an opportunity of hearing and seeing Grabu; on October 1, 1667, he wrote 'to Whitehall, and there in the Boarded-Gallery did hear the musick with which the King is presented this night by Monsieur Grebus, the master of his musick; both instrumentall—I think twenty-four violins—and vocall; an English song upon Peace. But, I never was so little pleased with a concert of musick in my life. The manner of setting of words and repeating them out of order, and that with a number of voices, makes me sick, the whole design of vocall musick being lost by it. Here was a great press of people; but I did not see many please'd with it, only the instrumental musick he had brought by practice to play very just.'

The various musical appointments held by Grabu brought him an income of eight hundred pounds per annum. He had other pickings of considerable value; for example, £165 9s. 6d. in 1668, for 'fayre writing severall dances, aires, and other musick,' a payment for training two boys, and £16 2s. 6d. yearly for 'livery.' In 1672, he was paid £137 4s. 6d. for 'fayre writing and pricking severall sorts of musick,' and £20 'for riding and other charges in attending the King to Dover'; also £117 4s. 6d. for 'other services.'

These tokens of favour were not regarded with equanimity by rival musicians, and it is interesting to note that Pelham Humphreys, who undoubtedly was a genius and a competent judge, whilst generally condemning the performance of the King's Musicians, made a special attack on Grabu, as is recorded by Pepys on November 15, 1667. He wrote: 'Humphreys said that Grebus, the Frenchman, the King's master of the musick, understands nothing, nor can play on any instrument, and so cannot compose: and that he will give him a lift out of his place; and that he hath already spoken to the King of Grebus.'

We find that an order was made on March 27, 1674, 'to deliver to Monsieur Grabu, or to such as he shall appoynt, such of the scenes remayning in the theatre at Whitehall as shall be useful for the French Opera at the theatre in Brydges Street, and the said Monsieur Grabu to return them again safely after fourteen days' time, to the theatre at Whitehall.' Grabu had composed an opera, 'Ariadne, or the Marriage of Bacchus,' the music of which can no longer be found, but the libretto was published with the title 'Ariadne, or the Marriage of Bacchus, an Opera or a Vocal Representation; First compos'd by Monsieur P.P. Now put into musick by Monsieur Grabu, Master of His Majesties Musick. And Acted by the Royall Academy of Musick, at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden In the Savoy, Printed by Tho. Newcombe 1673.' There is a fulsome and mendacious address to 'The King's Most Excellent Majesty,' from which some interesting

passages may be quoted: 'Your Vast Mind not fully satisfied, would compleat the Splendor and Magnificence of your Imperial seat, by establishing within her stately Walls your Academy of Opera's, the fairest and most charming of all Publick Showes; your Majesty will doubtless find these First Representations of Your Opera very defective: But Sir, it dares flatter itself with hope that You will pardon its faults, and consider that the Academy that executed the same is yet an Infant, a new-born Beauty, whose Features and Lineaments are scarce come to their shape and proportion; but cannot fail growing to Perfection in her due time and age, provided You daign own her for your Creature, and afford her Your Royal Care and Protection. These Gracious Favors, Sir, she humbly, and with a most profound Respect and Veneration, begs at Your Royal Hands; with a sincere Protestation, that her chiefest Application and Study shall ever be to strive to the Uttermost of her Power, to contribute to Your Diversion, And that she will gather together Your Palms, Your Laurels, and Your Mirtles, into Wreaths and Garlands of Triumph to Crown Your Sacred Head with, as being Sir — Your Majesties Most Humble, Most Obedient, and most faithful Servant and Subject, Your Royal Academy of Musick.'

No account of the performance of the opera is available, but in all probability it was a failure, and possibly brought the Royal Academy to an end. A few anonymous lines have been preserved which may have had reference to it:

Each Actor on the stage his luck bewailing,
Finds that his loss is infallibly true.
Smith, Nokes and Leigh in a fever with railing
Curse poets, painter and Monsieur Grabu.

The scenery was not returned within the period prescribed, and on April 27 a warrant was issued 'to deliver to Sir Christopher Wren, His Majesty's surveyor generall of the works, the scenes belonging to His Majesty's theatre at Whitehall, which were formerly delivered to Mr. Grabu for the use of the French Opera in Bridges Street.'

Evidently Grabu had offended his royal master in some way, and after having been a special favourite the downfall must have been hard to bear. On the following St. Andrew's Day, 1674, an order was made for payment to the King's musicians, and we find the note, 'Lewis Grabu, vacatur, Mr. Staggin in his place.'

We lose touch of Grabu for some time, but apparently endeavours were made to restore him to favour, with the result that in 1677, January 17, six of the King's violins were 'ordered to attend to practise Mons. Grabu's musick.' The hopes raised were, however, destined to disappointment, and on May 5 following the 'Petition of Lewis Grabu' was presented to the King, 'shewing that the petitioner has lately fallen under very grievous misfortune, the greatest of which hath been His Majesty's willingness to receive another person into his place during pleasure. Your Majesty was nevertheless graciously pleased a few days since to declare that the petitioner should receive the

growing benefit thereof until the arrears due to the petitioner should be paid to him, which he accordingly humbly presents in the paper annexed, which arrears being paid to the petitioner for the keeping him from arrests and the providing some subsistence for his distressed family, your petitioner shall, though with much grief, retire from being a menial servant to Your Majesty. The petitioner therefore humbly prays Your Majesty according to your Royal compassion to a poor servant, guilty of no crime but misfortune, that you will give effectually order for the speedy payment of the said arrears, and that in the meanwhile he may be maintained and supported as others are under all circumstances in the like case with him, and that all his salary may run on till the said arrears be paid.' The King received the petition, and we read: 'His Majesty refers the consideration of this petition to the Lord Chamberlain, to cause the arrears due to be stated, and then report the same together with his Lordship's opinion thereon.'

The Lord Chamberlain lost no time in investigating the matter thoroughly, and on June 5 he made the following report: 'In observance of Your Majesty's reference upon the petition of Lewis Grabu by the Hon. Sir Joseph Williamson, one of Your Majesty's Secretaries of State, I do humbly certify that there is due in arrears to Lewis Grabu, late Master of Your Majesty's music, the sums following in these severall offices, vizt:

'Out of Your Majesty's Exchequer, the sum of £450; out of the Office of the Treasury Chamber £145 4s. 6d.; and out of the Great Wardrobe £32 5s. And I find his condition to be very poor and miserable, all which I humbly submit to Your Majesty's wisdom. (Signed) ARLINGTON.'

We should naturally expect to find evidence that the poor musician's just dues were immediately paid; but the King could only provide money to squander on his mistresses. In one year he gave £136,668 10s. to the Duchess of Portsmouth. Pepys in his Diary refers to the well-known fact that 'many of the musique' not having received their salaries were on the point of starvation. Grabu's debt remained for ten years unsettled; a record, dated December 8, 1687, shows 'that Mr. Grabu received all his arrears as master of the music to his late Majesty although not actually in his said Majesty's service at the time of his decease.' King Charles died in 1685, and Grabu had been dismissed from his service in 1674. He had therefore waited thirteen years for the money he had earned! It could not be alleged that he passed out of the knowledge of the King and the Duke of York, for in 1685 he had been associated with Dryden in the production of an opera, 'Albion and Albanus.' This was first performed at the Queen's Theatre in Dorset Gardens on June 3, 1685, and for the sixth time on the 13th of the same month. Dryden published the libretto of the opera simultaneously with the performance, and in a long and interesting preface discussing opera in general, includes some particulars respecting the composer, Grabu, and the preliminary rehearsals. He says, King Charles

'had been pleased twice or thrice to command that it [the opera] should be practised before him, especially the first and third acts of it; and publicly declared, more than once, that the composition and choruses were more just and more beautiful than any he had heard in England. How nice an ear he had in music is sufficiently known; his praise therefore has established the reputation of it above censure, and made it in a manner sacred. It is therefore humbly and religiously dedicated to his memory.' Of the music, Dryden writes: 'I have advantages not common to every writer; a knowledge of the Italian and French language, and being conversant with some of their best performances in this kind; which have furnished me with such variety of measures, as have given the composer, Monsieur Grabu, what occasions he could wish, to show his extraordinary talent in diversifying the recitative, the lyrical part, and the chorus; in all which, not to attribute anything to my own opinion, the best judges, and those too of the best quality, who have honoured his rehearsals with their presence, have no less commended the happiness of his genius and his skill. And let me have the liberty to add one thing, that he has so exactly expressed my sense in all places where I intended to move the passions, that he seems to have entered into my thoughts, and to have been the poet as well as the composer. This I say, not to flatter him, but to do him right; because among some English musicians, and their scholars, who are sure to judge after them, the imputation of being a Frenchman is enough to make a party, who maliciously endeavour to decry him. But the knowledge of Latin and Italian poets, both which he possesses, besides his skill in music, and his being acquainted with all the performances of the French Operas, adding to these the good sense to which he is born, have raised him to a degree above any man who shall pretend to be his rival upon our stage. When any of our countrymen excel him, I shall be glad, for the sake of old England, to be shewn my error; in the meantime, let virtue be commended, though in the person of a stranger. To conclude, though the enemies of the composer are not few, and that there is a party formed against him of his own profession, I hope, and am persuaded that this prejudice will turn in the end to his advantage. For the greatest part of the audience is always uninterested [disinterested] though seldom knowing; and if the music be well composed, and well performed, they who find themselves pleased will be so wise as not to be imposed upon, and fooled out of their satisfaction.'

The foregoing preface was written before the death of Charles, and published as already stated in 1685; the music of the opera was published in March, 1687, with the title, 'Albion and Albanus, an opera or Representation in Musick, set by Lewis Grabu, Esquire; Master of His late Majesty's Musick.' It is printed in a large folio volume, and is preceded by an address: 'To the King' [James]: 'Sir, After the shipwreck of all my fairest Hopes and Expectations, in the Death of the late

King my Master, Your Royal Brother of ever Blessed Memory, the only Consolation I have left, is that the Labour I have bestowed in this *Musical Representation*, has partly been employ'd in paying my most humble Duty to the Person of Your most Sacred Majesty. . . . My late gracious Master was pleas'd to encourage this my humble Undertaking, and did me the Honour to make some Esteeme of this my Part in the Performance of it: Having more than once condescended to be present at the Repitition, before it came into the publick View. Your Majesty has been also pleased to do me the same Honour, when it appear'd at your Theater in greater Splendour, And with more advantages of Ornament: And I may be justly proud to own, that you gave it the particular Grace of Your Royal Protection. As the subject of it is naturally Magnificent, it could not but excite my Genius, and raise it to a greater height, in the Composition, even to surpass itself: At least, a virtuous Emulation of doing well, can never be so faulty, but it may be excus'd by the Zeal of the Undertaker, who laid his whole Strength to the pleasing of a Master and a Sovereign. The only displeasure which remains with me, is, that I neither was nor could possibly be furnish'd with variety of excellent Voices* to present it to Your Majesty in its full perfection. Notwithstanding which, You have been pleas'd to pardon this Defect, as not proceeding from any fault of mine, but only from the scarcity of Singers in this Island. So that I have nothing more at this time to beg, than the continuation of that Patronage, which your Princely Goodness hath so graciously allow'd me: As having no other Ambition in the World, than that of pleasing You, and the desire of shewing myself on all possible occasions, and with the most profound Respect, to be Your Majesty's Most humble, most oblig'd and Most obedient Servant, Lewis Grabu.'

It is noteworthy that this address was printed before the payment of the moneys due to Grabu, and we may hope that he escaped the imposition of a tax such as was imposed in 1686 on other musicians of his late Majesty who received a lump sum of £483 6s. 8d. in discharge of £1,933 6s. 8d. originally due, in accordance with an order for 'Making such a deduction throughout as His Majesty hath commanded in cases of arrears.'

The opera was not a success; and it has been suggested that it was withdrawn from the stage because of the Monmouth rebellion, the news of which was received by express messenger on the last night of its performance; but it is significant that, notwithstanding the approbation of Dryden and the King, no attempt was made to revive it. A perusal of the libretto, the whole of which was set to music, and of the composer's score, induces wonder how an audience could patiently have listened to it more than once. The lines of the poet are generally of the poorest description, and

the music matches them; it is difficult to decide which is worse. Some anonymous scribbler of the day wrote:

Grabut, his yokemate ne'er shall be forgot,
Whom th' God of tunes upon a muse begot;
Bayes† on a double score to him belongs,
As well for writing, as for setting songs;
For some have sworn the intrigue so odd is laid,
That Bayes and he mistook each other's trade,
Grabut the lines, and he the music made.

Dryden's preface affords evidence of his ignorance of the art of music, and his assertion of the superiority of the French nation as a musical people reads oddly when contrasted with the following lines extracted from his Prologue to the opera:

In France, the oldest man is always young,
Sees operas daily, learns the tunes so long,
Till foot, hand, head, keep time with every song;
Each sings his part, echoing from pit to box
With his hoarse voice, half harmony, half pox.

This barbarous custom must have ruined any good music; it prevailed in Paris even in the time of Gay (1719), who wrote:

But hark! the full orchestra strikes the strings,
The hero struts and the whole audience sings;
My jarring ear harsh grating murmurs wound,
Hoarse and confused, like Babel's mingled sound.
Hard chance had placed me near a noisy throat,
That in rough quavers, bellowed every note.
'Pray, Sir,' said I, 'suspend awhile your song,
The Opera's drowned, your lungs are wondrous strong.

A few words may be added respecting the music as printed in the score of 'Albion and Albanus.' One curious feature in the orchestration is that the overture, preludes, and incidental music are scored in five- and six-part harmony for strings, a 'Consort of Viols.' The recitatives with which the work abounds are mostly accompanied by harpsichord alone. Usually when the bass voice has a solo his part is identical with the instrumental bass-viol. There are a few places where two flutes take up the accompaniment, without violins, and in one number 'Gittars' are associated with the flutes. The overture and several succeeding numbers are in one key, D minor, producing a feeling of monotony. A trio, 'Nymphs of the city,' is curiously written in alternating duple and triple bar measures. In the matter of just accent the composer fails very frequently, and it is difficult to imagine that Dryden could have heard and approved. Three examples will suffice:

God-like Al-bion is re - turn - ing, Loy - al hearts to cheer

When the world is in trou - ble

To rule by love, to shed no blood

† Dryden.

* Who the singers were is not known; the names are not printed in the libretto.

The printed score gives the G clef in two positions, on the first and second lines of the staff, and the C clef in four positions, on the first, second, third and fourth lines.

No reference to Grabu and his doings can be traced after 1687, until 1690, when he was engaged to compose the instrumental music for Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Maid's Tragedy' as altered by Waller. The place and date of his death are unknown.

Occasional Notes.

In the large and varied mass of free advice that was hurled at Mr. Hammerstein at the close of his winter season, the suggestion that he should give opera in English was one of the most prominent, and he seems to have yielded, somewhat grudgingly, to its insistence. Two British operas—'The children of Don,' by Lord Howard de Walden and Mr. Holbrooke, and 'Fionn and Tera,' by the Duke of Argyll and the late Mr. Learmont Drysdale—will be produced, and 'Die Meistersinger' will be given in an English version. For the rest, Mr. Hammerstein's summer season, which is to commence on April 22 and to continue until July 13, will be run on the plan which failed in the winter; that is to say, French and Italian operas, many of them unfamiliar to our public, will be performed without 'stars' except those of Mr. Hammerstein's own making, and high prices will be charged. The difference is that this time he will have an adequate backing from a subscription list. The promised repertoire is as follows:

(In French.)

'Don Quichotte,' 'Hérodiade,' 'Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame,' 'Werther,' 'La Navarraise,' 'Contes d'Hoffman,' 'Faust,' 'Roméo et Juliette,' 'Le Prophète,' 'Quo Vadis,' 'Les Huguenots,' 'Le Luthénier de Crémone,' 'William Tell,' 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' 'Robert le Diable,' 'La Reine Fiametta.'

(In Italian.)

'Il Trovatore,' 'La Favorita,' 'Dolores,' 'Lucia di Lammermoor,' 'Rigoletto,' 'La Traviata,' 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia,' 'Andrea Chenier,' 'Un ballo in Maschera.'

The Covent Garden Syndicate, fortified with purchased rights, offers a more interesting programme. The season will open with two cycles of 'The Ring' and 'Tristan und Isolde' in German, without cuts. The performances will be timed to allow an adequate dinner interval between the first and second Acts. The dates are as follows: 'Rheingold,' April 23 and May 3; 'Die Walküre,' April 25 and May 4; 'Siegfried,' April 27 and May 6; 'Götterdämmerung,' April 29 and May 8; 'Tristan und Isolde,' May 1 and May 10. The repertoire for the remainder of the season is the following:

(In Italian.)

'Aïda,' 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia,' 'La Bohème,' 'Carmen,' 'Cavalleria Rusticana,' 'Conchita,' 'Faust,' 'I Gijelli della Madonna,' 'Madama Butterfly,' 'Manon Lescaut,' 'Mefistofele,' 'Il Pagliacci,' 'Rigoletto,' 'Il Segreto di Susanna,' 'La Tosca,' 'Tess,' 'La Traviata,' 'Gli Ugonotti.'

(In French.)

'Faust,' 'Louise,' 'Pelléas et Mélisande,' 'Roméo et Juliette,' 'Samson et Dalila,' 'Thaïs.'

'I Gijelli della Madonna' (Wolf-Ferrari), and 'Conchita' (Landonai), are new to England. The Russian Ballet will arrive in June.

The revised syllabus of the examinations for musical degrees at Dublin University are a bold and timely practical recognition of new conditions of musical life, and new ideas in the teaching of theory and composition. The chief innovations are the following:

Figured basses are set only in the preliminary Mus. Bac. examination.

There is no strict counterpoint in the Mus. Doc. examination.

The exercise may be avoided altogether, and a practical examination be taken at the organ or pianoforte for both Mus. Bac. and Mus. Doc.

If the exercise is preferred, it may take the form of a string quartet (Mus. Bac.) or symphony (Mus. Doc.)

Dr. Percy Buck's design, which, it may be hoped and expected, will meet with wide approval, is to give as much credit for musicianship as for scholarship.

The South Place Sunday Popular Concerts persevere on their interesting course. That given on March 17 was especially notable, for, in order to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the programme was entirely devoted to the works of Sir Charles Stanford. We give the programme:

String quartet in G minor (Op. 99).

Irish Fantasies for violin and pianoforte.

Pianoforte quintet in D minor (Op. 25).

Irish Song Cycle, 'Cushendall.'

Seven old Irish airs.

The singer was Mr. Plunket Greene, and the composer took part at the pianoforte.

We do not usually give prominence to any matter which may be regarded as of a trade nature, but we cannot refrain from chronicling the fact that on May 10-14, the British Music Trades' Convention, a great gathering of those who represent the various branches of the industrial side of musical art, will meet at Brighton for the purpose of discussing matters of interest both to the trade and the musical public. We think the Convention Committee has been very happy in selecting Brighton for its place of meeting, in that Brighton possesses one of the pioneers of Municipal Orchestras.

The programme of the forthcoming Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace has been announced. 'Israel in Egypt' will be given on June 25, a selection from 'Samson' on June 27, and 'The Messiah' on June 29. The performances will in each case commence at 2.30 p.m. The rehearsal day is June 22, when the proceedings will open at 12.30. Sir Frederic Cowen will conduct.

Dr. Ethel Smyth writes to us as follows:

I am much gratified at your devoting so much space in your last two numbers to me. In view of the appreciation the Press of this country has recently shown me, and still more perhaps given the testimony from abroad, in which temptation to an over-favourable estimate of home produce cannot play a part, it may surprise you to hear that no single composition of mine has ever been performed at any British Festival, though I regularly implore for even a bare ten minutes.

The details of the arrangements for the International Music competition and demonstration to be held in Paris at Whitsuntide are now taking definite shape. As stated in our supplement, the Competition Festival Record, last month, 45 choirs from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland have entered in the Competitive Choral section, which will be held on Whit-Monday. The number of choralists thus concerned