Newark-on-Trent and Dr. John Blow

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Source: *The Musical Times*, Vol. 50, No. 795 (May 1, 1909), pp. 301-311

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/906597>

Accessed: 13-03-2016 04:14 UTC

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NEWARK-ON-TRENT

AND

DR. JOHN BLOW.

A trio of interests—historical, architectural, and musical—give distinction to 'The Key of the North,' for thus has Newark been designated owing to its strategic position. Its fine old castle, dating from 1125, has withstood three sieges. In the dark days of internecine strife, those grey massive walls must have frowned down upon the horrors of battle. Now, as one beholds this picturesque ruin, with the river silently flowing by, those same walls seem to smile at the little children playing on the greensward in the glorious sunlight of a perfect spring day. Here King John died in 1216, and in 1646 Charles I. gave himself up to the Scotch army. The latter event doubtless inspired John Jenkins to compose the instrumental piece entitled 'Nuwark Seidge,' one of several Ayres (à 4) by that prolific 17th century composer. The coda, in the minor key, is doubtless a lament for those who fell at the siege.

In another part of the town the halo of antiquity sheds its hoary rays over the Beaumond Cross. The earliest known date of this stone erection is 1367. The theory that it is one of the 'Queen

Eleanor' crosses finds support in the fact that the queen died (in 1290) at Harby, between Newark and Lincoln; and that the funeral procession, on its sad and weary journey to Westminster, probably passed through Newark, where the mourners and attendants could enjoy the hospitality of the castle, then and long after the property of successive bishops of Lincoln.

Should the visitor, as did the present writer, find himself at Newark on a market-day, he would gaze upon an animated scene in the spacious market-place. (See the illustration below.) Here he would find much to interest him beyond the buying and selling of sundry wares, and the tempting display of country produce, the

THE ARMS OF NEWARK.

(From a drawing by Messrs. Sheppard & Lockton, Newark.)

THE TOWN HALL.

NEWARK MARKET-PLACE ON A MARKET-DAY.

(Photograph by Mr. T. Richards, Newark.)

whole suggesting 'the animation and colour of a mediæval town of Normandy or the Rhine.'

Two interesting literary associations are recalled in standing in the market-place of Newark. It was at the 'Saracen's Head'—where an inn of that name has stood from at least the year 1341—that Jeanie Deans stayed when on her journey to London (Sir Walter Scott's 'The Heart of Midlothian'). At a corner of the market-place were the premises of Messrs. S. & J. Ridge, printers and booksellers a century ago. Messrs. Ridge printed, for private circulation, the first book of poems published by Lord Byron. This was a quarto volume of sixty-six pages, published in November, 1806, and without a proper title, only a fly-title, 'Fugitive pieces,' and without the author's name. As objection was taken by the Rev. J. T. Becher to one of those boyish versifications, Byron recalled the whole impression and burned the copies in Mr. Becher's presence. Two copies only escaped the flames; one of them is imperfect,

A MISERERE IN THE PARISH CHURCH.

(Photograph by Mr. T. Richards, Newark.)

and from the other a facsimile reprint was issued in 1886. The poet very soon, however, prepared another issue of his poems. This appeared in a small octavo volume, printed by the Ridges, in January, 1807, and bearing the following title-page, &c.:

POEMS | on | various occasions. | Virginibus Puerisque
Canto. | Hor. Lib. 3 Ode 1. | Newark: Printed by S. & J.
Ridge. | MDCCCVII.

TO THOSE FRIENDS, at whose request they were printed, for whose amusement or approbation they are solely intended; these TRIFLES are respectfully dedicated by the AUTHOR.

The only apology necessary to be adduced, in extenuation of any errors in the following collection, is, that the Author has not yet completed his nineteenth year. December 23, 1806.

Only 100 copies were printed. Of these, one is preserved in the British Museum and contains some annotations in the handwriting of the poet: e.g., above the poem 'To a beautiful Quaker' is pencilled 'Whom the author saw at Harrogate.' Some earlier poems of Byron's were printed, on single sheets, by the Ridges, who also published the 'Hours of Idleness' (1807). At that time Byron was staying with his mother at Southwell, within easy reach of Newark, to superintend the earliest issues of his poetic muse from the press of Messrs. Ridge.

On the west side of the market-place is the

'Clinton Arms,' from the windows of which Mr. Gladstone in 1832 addressed the electors of Newark. He was then a young man of twenty-two and a Conservative in politics, but he succeeded in being elected to Parliament as the member for Newark, this being his first appearance at Westminster. Seven years later, in 1839, Mr. Gladstone presented an organ to Christ Church, then recently erected. A brass plate on the instrument reads:

Removed from the old organ in the gallery when the church was restored, 1880. Presented to Christ Church, Newark, by William Ewart Gladstone, Esq., M.P., November, 1839.

The worthies of Newark include two creative musicians—William de Newarke, in the early part of the 16th century, and the more famous Dr. John Blow. Of the latter more anon. The Patent Rolls show that in the first year of his reign Henry VIII. appointed William of Newark to be Master of the boys of the Chapel in the Hospice of the King, at pleasure, and in the same reign the office was granted to John Newark. Previous to this, William had been granted an annuity of £20 by Richard III. (1483). In the recently published volume 'The King's Musick,'* we find that 'William Newerk' was one of the 'Gentilmen of the King's chapell' at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth, wife of Henry VII., in February, 1504. In the year 1509 he died, having apparently held the office of Master of the boys in the King's Chapel for a few months, in which he was succeeded by William Cornyshe.

Seven vocal compositions by William of Newark are to be found in the Fayrfax volume preserved at the British Museum (*Add. MSS.* 5465). Their quaint titles are as follows:

The farther I go, the more behynde. 2 voices.
What causyth me wofull thoughts. 2 voices.
So fer, I trow, from remedy. 2 voices.
O, my desyre, what eyeth the? (Imperfect.) 2 voices.
But why am I so abusyd? 3 voices.
Yowre counturfeyting with doubyll delyng. 3 voices.
Thus musyng in my mynd. 3 voices.†

The sixth in the above list was printed by Burney in his 'History of Music' (vol. ii., p. 541), the first stanza reading:

Yowre counturfeyting with doubyll delyng
Avaylyth nothyng, an wote ye why?
For ye with your faynyng hath such a denying
To make a belevyng, nay hardely.
Hit were to grete pyte that women truly,
Hade so grete folly that cowde not tell
When that they do lye;
They speke ye so swetely and thinke the contrary,
That knowe we well.

THE PARISH CHURCH.

The architectural glory of Newark is its beautiful parish church. Dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, the fine spire of this stately edifice is familiar to all

* 'The King's Musick.' A transcript of records relating to music and musicians. Edited by Henry Cart de Lafontaine. Novello, 1909.

† This has been published by Messrs. Novello.

travellers on the Great Northern Railway. It is not, however, until the church has been visited and carefully inspected that its manifold beauties, external and internal, can be realised. The spire of the church is the same in height as the body of the fabric is in length (252 feet), and who can fail to be impressed by the magnificent series of great Perpendicular windows along the whole of the north side of the church, and the lofty clerestory which surmounts them? As has been well said, 'The elegance and grace of the whole design, the balance of its proportions, the beauty of its ornament, which yet refrains from all floridness or redundancy, combine to give the church a dignity and stateliness which is unsurpassed.'

Two fragments of an earlier church (Norman) remain—the unusual crypt under the present sacristy and the crossing piers at the intersection of the nave and transepts. The graceful tower, a splendid example of Early English, was begun about 1230, but as its final stage and the spire were not added until some ninety years later, the upper portion of this imposing landmark belongs to the Decorated period. In 1313 the south aisle was begun, and work was probably started on the nave in 1390. Not, however, until the close of the 15th century was the church completed, the last

the parclose and rood screen is a handsome and imposing feature of the chancel. The misereres, dating from the first quarter of the 16th century, are twenty-six in number, and their carvings are of the usual grotesque designs. (A specimen is given on p. 302.) At the back of the altar is a series of thirteen cathedra, or stone seats, beneath crocketed canopies. In the centre of the cornice is a figure of the patron saint of the church, the Magdalen, holding the alabaster box of ointment. Two chantry chapels, dated 1500 and 1505 respectively, flank each side of the altar. One of them contains a curious painting, in two panels, known as the 'Dance of Death.' Newark can boast of one of the four largest brasses in England. It commemorates Alan Fleming, a

NEWARK PARISH CHURCH.

(Photograph by Mr. T. Richards, Newark.)

stone of the chancel being placed in position in the year 1498. Newark Parish Church appeals to the eye as a stately edifice in which strength and beauty are blended in perfect harmony. There is an element of lightness throughout the building. If one part of the graceful structure calls forth admiration more than another, it is the chancel aisles, by reason of their great width and height—indeed, the chancel is a church within a church, and yet the proportions of the building as a whole appear to be perfect.

The fittings and ornaments of the church are worthy of their beautiful surroundings. Carved by Thomas Drawswerd, of York, and finished in 1508,

citizen who died in 1361. This brass, of Flemish workmanship, is one of the finest examples of its class. Now placed above the north door, but formerly *in situ* (see p. 307), is an altar-piece representing the Raising of Lazarus. It was painted by William Hilton, R.A. (1786–1839), and presented to the church in memory of his father, a native of Newark. A reproduction of this picture in stone forms one of the panels on the artist's tomb in Lincoln Cathedral.

The church library is housed in a room over the south porch. It consists of a collection of some 1,200 volumes, mostly theological and of the 17th century, presented by Bishop White,

of Peterborough, a former vicar of Newark. Some of the books, however, have disappeared, including a York Hymnal, printed at Rouen in 1517. This was found concealed in the choir on removing the seats when the church was restored in 1855, and unfortunately was sold by the churchwardens for £50, the proceeds being devoted to the restoration fund. There remains, however, a Sarum Missale, printed by R. Pynson in 1520; a copy of the London edition of the Sarum Missale (1554), and a Porteforium (London, 1556). The Sarum Missale, printed by Pynson, although sadly damaged in places, is a very interesting volume. There are manuscript insertions of names of saints in the Kalendar, and 'Bishop' is written in for 'Pope.'

A Mr. Darbie appears upon the scene in 1663, as the accounts record the following payments to that gentleman :

Expended upon Mr. Darbie in treating with
him about the repairing the organe . xliiis. vi^d.
Paide Mr. Darbie in parte of xxv¹/₂. due
to him for mending ye organe . . . xli.

It is quite certain that at the Restoration the organist and choir of Newark Parish Church were surplised. 'A note of such church things as were delivered by the accomptants unto the churchwardens' (1660) contains the following items: 'A surplice for the viccer, one for the organist and six surplices for the six boys'; also 'seven towels that go about the choir.'

THE NORMAN GATEWAY OF NEWARK CASTLE.

(Photograph by Mr. T. Richards, Newark.)

The earliest known reference to the organs of the church is found in the churchwardens' accounts of 1627, which contain this refreshment entry :

Ale for the organ mender iij^d.

In 1628 the payments included 'George Fishbourne, organist, xxxvs.,' and 'John Walker, dog whipper, iij^d.; also

To Simon Raignor, when hee was hurt xij^d.

To the same, for pulling the organs ijs.

In May, 1646, the disbursements included :

For taking down ye organs vis. vi^d.

To return to the organ of olden times. In 1797 a writer describes it as 'a disgrace to everything around it; the case is painted with ruddle, and the pipes in front are as foul as time and neglect could make them.' Seven years later this instrument was sold by auction, judging from the following communication which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of February, 1804 :

I read an advertisement purporting that there was to be sold by auction at the Town Hall of Newark on Trent, February 16, 'A capital old Organ, in a painted case, maker's name unknown; standing in the parish church of Newark, and consisting of the following stops and open diapasons, viz., principal, fifteenth, two trumpets, cornets, two flutes, sesquialtera (*sic*), and two twelfths. Further particulars may be had, and the organ viewed, on applying to Mr. Bridges, organist, Newark.'

Newark Parish Church.

(Photograph by Mr. T. Richards, Newark.)

In the same year (1804) a new organ was built for the church by G. P. England. In his manuscript organ-specification book (now in the possession of the present writer), Dr. E. J. Hopkins gives the following description of the instrument :

GREAT ORGAN (12 stops).			
Pipes.		Pipes.	
1 Open diapason, East front ..	59	7 Fifteenth	59
2 Open diapason, West front ..	59	8 Tierce	59
3 Stopped diapason	59	9 Sexquiltera, III. rows ..	177
4 Principal	59	10 Mixture, II. rows ..	118
5 Nason	59	11 Cornett, IV. rows ..	120
6 Twelfth	59	12 Trumpet	59

CHOIR ORGAN (7 stops).			
1 Dulciana, to Gamut	47	5 Fifteenth	59
2 Stopped diapason	59	6 Mixture, II. rows ..	118
3 Principal	59	7 Bassoon	59
4 Flute	59		

SWELL ORGAN (6 stops).			
1 Open diapason	40	4 Cornett, III. rows ..	120
2 Stopped diapason	40	5 Trumpet	40
3 Principal	40	6 Hautboy	40

Compass : Great and Choir, FFF, without FFF[#] and GG[#] to f³ in alt. = 59 notes. Swell : Tenor d to f³ = 40 keys.
Pedals to take down the keys.
An octave of large pipes.
Gothic case of wainscot : two fronts.

THE ARMS OF THOMAS MAGNUS.

(From a drawing by Messrs. Sheppard & Lockton, Newark.)

This organ at first stood at the west end of the church, but in 1814 it was placed upon the screen, as shown in the illustration opposite. The screen was strengthened in order to bear the weight of the instrument, and some ornamental ironwork was added, the whole, including all the fine old woodwork, being painted white ! In 1836 improvements were made by Bishop at the suggestion of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Dearle, the organist. At the reopening service, in December, 1836, a local newspaper thus eulogised the performances of the organist :

Mr. Dearle's Voluntaries and playing were truly delightful. His spirited manner of playing the Chorusses, and his fine glossy tones, produced by great judgment in blending the stops . . . completely satisfied us that Newark can now boast of having one of the best organs in the Kingdom, played by one of the best organists.

At the restoration of the church, 1853-55, by Sir Gilbert Scott, the organ was again removed, this time to the south aisle of the chancel, where it

now stands. Messrs. Foster & Andrews added some stops, and later on, in 1866, Father Willis rebuilt and enlarged the instrument, which now consists of four manuals and about fifty sounding stops. A further rebuild has now become necessary, especially in regard to the worn-out action. Sir Frederick Bridge has been consulted in this important matter, and during the present year the needful renovation will doubtless be carried out. In the meantime the specification of the organ may be deferred.

THE SONG SCHOOL.

In the year 1529, Thomas Magnus founded a twin educational institution, a Grammar School and a Song School, in his native town of Newark. He is described in the 'Dictionary of National Biography' as an ambassador, but he was also an ordained clergyman, and became an archdeacon, though in later years (he died in 1550) his 'duties were hardly religious,' and 'whatever religious opinions he had seem to have been at the service of the King.' With regard to the Song School founded by Magnus, Mr. A. F. Leach, in his erudite work, 'English Schools at the Reformation, 1546-8 (1896),' says : 'Of all the wealth of Song Schools which then existed outside the Cathedrals, the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, and Winchester and Eton, all have perished, except the Song School at Newark, which, being a new foundation, or re-foundation, together with the Grammar School of Dr. Magnus, escaped being reckoned as a Chantry, and has survived, though in a mutilated form, to this day.' Mr. Leach significantly adds : 'How many Purcells have we lost, how many Wesleys, not to guess at Beethovens and Mozarts, for lack of the proper endowment of organists and of Song Schools !'

By his deed of gift Magnus gave certain lands and properties, therein recited, of the clear annual value of £42 8s. 4d., to be administered by trustees. Part of this sum

shall yerely be payde and ymployde to and for the Exhibition and fyndyng of two secular honest Prests, whereof the one Prest shall have sufficient Connyng and Leryng to teche Gramer, and the other Prest Connyng and Leryng to teche playne Song, pryke Song, descant and to play at the Organs ; and the said two Prests frely shall teche and instruct all Persons and Chyldren that wyll at *Newwarke* aforsaid come to Schoole with theym, and shal be dysposed to lerne Gramer, pryke Song, playne Song, or descant ; That ys to saye, the one of the same Prests to teche Gramer, and the other playne Song, pryke Song, and descant. And that the same Prests, or either of theym, shall not have, nor take, or require to have, or take for his or theyr techyng any thyng, oneless yt be frely and liberally gyven unto them by the Frendys of the Scolers, or by the same Scolers by way of Rewarde, without any former Covenant or Promyse, except yt be for teching to play at the Organs ; *Provided* that the sex Cheldren hereafter mencyonyd be not in any wyse charged for the same teching, or leryng to play at the Organs.

The scope and practical carrying out of this benefaction of Magnus may be gathered from some further extracts from the deed of gift. It is

THE ENGLAND ORGAN ON THE SCREEN (1814).

(From an old print kindly lent by Mr. George Sheppard, of Newark.)

interesting to find that in addition to plainsong, 'pryk song' and descant, the children were to be instructed in organ playing :

That there shal be sex Chylder chosen apte and mete to lerne to syng, and they to be taught by the said Maister of the Song Scoole their playn Song, pryk Song, descant and to play at the Organs. So that their Maister and the sex Childer, euery Sondag and other Festyvall or Holy-day, be present and do mayntayn dyvnye Service in the high Querre of the Church of *Newark* aforsaid with syngyng and playing at the Organs.

St. Paul's Cathedral and St. George's Chapel, Windsor, were the models set before the Master of the song school in regard to the singing of anthems :

The said Maister of the Song Scoole, and the sex Chylder, shall nyghtly kepe our Ladyes Antyme in the saide Church in the Place accustomed ; and forthwith after that Antempne doon, another Antempne of Ihesus to be by theym solempnely and devoutely song afore the Rood in the Bodye of the Church of *Newarke* aforsaid ; the same Scoolmaister and Chylder Knelyng in manner and forme, as at the Antempne

of Jhesus hath and ys usyd to be song before the Roode of the North Dore in the Cathedrall Churche of Seynt *Paule* in *London*, and in the College of *Wyndesore*, with lyke Prostrations and devout Maner.

The last quotation speaks for itself :

The said Childer to have theire Heere of theire Hedes long, and not polled, honestly and clene kept by the Oversight of the Maister of the said Song Scoole, who shall have the orderung of the said sex Childer, as well in good and vertuous Maner, as in their Larning. The said Childer to be chosen, elect, and taken by the saide Maister, as he shall seme theym apte in Age and their Breste for syngyng, all Affection and Favour of the same Maister in any wyse put aparte. And that all and every of the sex Childer

aforesaid shall enjoie the said poore Rewarde of xxvir. viii*l*. soe long as they doe sing in their Chyldys Brestys, and abide with their saide Maister, and do mayntayne dyvyne Service in the said Churche, and not after nor longer.

The first master of the Song School was a Newark musician named Robert Kyrkbye, who is referred to in a deed of the town, dated 1507, as a 'singingman'; therefore in appointing him Magnus made choice of a local man. Kyrkbye, who held office for the long period of forty-two years, is buried in the parish church. His monumental inscription, of which we give a rubbing, has now found a place on the east wall of the vestry.

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION IN NEWARK PARISH CHURCH OF ROBARTE KYRKBYE, FIRST MASTER OF THE SONG SCHOOL, AND HIS WIFE, ELIZABETH.

ORIGINAL SIZE $7\frac{1}{2} \times 16$ INCHES.

(From a rubbing specially made for this article by Mr. F. Cook, Verger of the church.)

An early, if not the immediate, successor of Kyrkbye was Edward Manestie. To him succeeded George Ffyshburne. In this connection it is of great interest to find that, in addition to the other subjects specified by Magnus, the violin was taught at Newark Song School three hundred years ago. An entry in the Corporation Minutes, under date 30th September, 37th Queen Elizabeth, reads thus :

That the day and yeaere above wrytten Edward Manestie, late school mayster of the songe schol in Newarke-uppon-Trent in the Countie of Nottinghame, delievered upp unto the handes of Willm Standley alderman and the assistants of the same towne and parishe, the setts of singing bookes belonginge to the children querristers of the songe schol as followeth, all which was delivered unto the hande and custodie of Geo. Ffyshburne now occupying the place of Songe School.

Imprimus five violine bookes with blacke covers.

„ five songe bookes covered with parchment.

„ four antheme bookes.

„ two setts of Service bookes of iv. pts., viz. : viii. bookes.

Imprimus five mathringall bookes.

„ eight setts of other olde bookes.

„ five surplazes for quirristers besides one for the Mr.

„ five quirristers' gownes.

„ five violins, and there remayneth in Mr. Manestie's hands an antheme of service, which is written against and by him and is to be delivered to the alderman for the schol.

Space will not admit of detailed accounts of those who have held the office of Master of the Song School—an appointment which carries with it the organistship of the parish church—and it is doubtful if a complete list exists. Among the more distinguished of the Masters are Samuel Wise, afterwards organist of St. Mary's Church, Nottingham, the composer of some instrumental music; Lloyd Rayner, afterwards organist of Lincoln Cathedral, where he was 'arraigned and reproved for playing one anthem while Mr. Binns was singing another'; John Alcock, appointed at the age of seventeen and a son of Dr. John Alcock, of Lichfield Cathedral; Thomas Jackson, whose

chants and hymn-tunes have found a place in most collections; John Calah, afterwards organist of Peterborough Cathedral; Edward Dearle, from 1835 to 1864; and Samuel Reay, composer of 'The dawn of day,' from 1864 to 1901.

Mr. William Thompson Wright, the present holder of the office, is a native of Southwell, of which his father was, and his brother, the Rev. Joseph Wright is, the head-master of the Grammar School there. Mr. Wright began his musical career as a chorister of Southwell Cathedral, and became an articulated pupil of the organist, Mr. Arthur Marriott. He then studied for three years at the Royal College of Music, and was for a short time organist and choirmaster of Hornsey Parish Church. In 1889 he became organist of St. Leonard's Church, Newark, a post he resigned upon being appointed to the parish church in 1903. Mr. Wright is also assistant-organist of Southwell Cathedral.

The Song School at Newark no longer exists as founded by Magnus nearly four hundred years ago. The funds have been largely used for the Grammar School side of the original benefaction; this, and some irregular dealings in years gone by with the land which yielded the income, have practically proved the death-blow to a benevolent foundation which had such splendid potentialities. At the present time the endowments provide (1) a house, in

which there is a practice-room for the church choir, called the Song School, rent free for the organist of the parish church—unique perhaps in

MR. W. T. WRIGHT.

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER OF NEWARK PARISH CHURCH.

(Photograph by Mr. T. Richards, Newark.)

the case of parish churches; (2) part of the organist's salary, for which he has to teach music gratuitously to one boy in the town; (3) payment to twelve choristers.

DR. JOHN BLOW.

Was Dr. John Blow a native of Newark? The answer to this question would appear to be in the affirmative. Mr. Thomas M. Blagg, a zealous and well-informed antiquary of Newark, was the first to claim the famous musician as a Novarcensian. In a letter he wrote to the *Athenæum* of December 7, 1901—duly commented upon in the *Musical Times* of January, 1902, p. 30—Mr. Blagg stated that he had been working at the registers of Newark Parish Church, with the result that he had found marriage and baptismal entries which go far to prove the point he had raised.

The entries are as follows:

MARRIAGE.
August 20, 1646. Henry Blow and Katherine Langworth, widow.

BAPTISMS.
May 5, 1647, Henrie Blow
February 23, 1648, John Blow
May 8, 1651, Katherine Blow } Children of the above.

During the present writer's visit to Newark he took the opportunity of inspecting the above entries and of obtaining permission of the Vicar for a photograph to be taken of the John Blow entry.

BAPTISMS. February, 1648.

ENTRY OF THE BAPTISM OF DR. JOHN BLOW IN THE REGISTERS OF NEWARK PARISH CHURCH.

(Photographed, specially for this article, by kind permission of the Vicar, the Rev. W. P. Hindley, M.A.)

Musical Association. He called attention to the words 'of Newark' in connection with the Lambeth degree of Doctor of Music conferred, during a vacancy in the Archbishop's See, on John Blow, of Newark, by Dr. John Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury, on December 10, 1677.

By the special and kind permission of the Master of the Faculties, Sir Lewis Tonna Dibdin, K.C., D.C.L., we are enabled to give a photograph of the faculty which granted the degree. With the exception that the original contains this marginal note, '*ffacultas Joanni Blow pro gradu doctoris in Musica*,' a facsimile of the faculty appears on the opposite page. Although the evidence is not wholly conclusive, there seems very little doubt that Dr. John Blow was born at the interesting old town of Newark-on-Trent.*

For valued help in the preparation of this article the best thanks of the writer are tendered to Mr. T. M. Blagg, F.S.A., Mr. George Sheppard, Borough Surveyor of Newark, and Mr. W. T. Wright, organist of the parish church; also to Mr. T. Richards for his excellent photographs.

DOTTED CROCHET.

Occasional Notes.

The recent performances by the students of the Guildhall School of Music (recorded in our last issue) of Hérold's chef-d'œuvre 'Le Pré aux Clercs' suggests a note on the history of that opera, from information kindly furnished by an old opera-goer. 'Le Pré aux Clercs,' written by Planard on a tale of Merimée and composed by Louis Joseph Ferdinand Hérold (1791-1833), was for many years one of the most popular works ever performed at the Opéra Comique, Paris. Produced on December 15, 1832, the opera was from the very first a great success, a success of which the gifted composer only enjoyed the first-fruits, as he died at the early age of forty-two, on January 19, 1833. On October 10, 1871, the 1,000th presentation of the opera took place at the Salle Favart, Paris, with the rentrée of Madame Carvalho and the début of the tenor Duchesne, who had previously served in the Franco-German war. In 1875, Mlle. Marguerite Chapuy—the original Micaela in 'Carmen'—made a great success as Isabelle. 'Le Pré aux Clercs' again inaugurated the theatre on its becoming the property of the State in 1879, with Mlle. Bilbaut-Vauchelet as a valued member of the cast. The opera was played for the 1,482nd time at the Théâtre des Nations, now the Sarah Bernhardt Théâtre, at the centenary of Hérold, but in 1898 the work was withdrawn from the répertoire after 1,589 performances. We believe, however, that it is now played at the Trianon-Lyrique, but not at the Opéra-Comique.

In this country 'Le Pré aux Clercs' received its first representation at the Adelphi Theatre on September 9, 1833, in English, and called 'The Court Masque, or Richmond in the olden time,' the locale being shifted to England, *temp.* Henry VIII. The adaptation was attributed to Planché, but according to the list of works given in his testimonial edition of extravaganzas,

* A biographical sketch of Dr. Blow, with special portrait, appeared in the *Musical Times* of February, 1902.

he was responsible for the songs only. William Hawes 'arranged' the music. The cast included Miss Novello, presumably Cecilia, afterwards Mrs. Serle. On April 1, 1834, it was given at Covent Garden as 'The Challenge,' the lyrics again by Planché, the adapter unknown, this time keeping to the original locale. The part of the Queen was taken by Miss Inverarity, of whom Thackeray said that 'her mouth was big enough to sing a duet.' As usual the opera was spoiled by the interpolation of songs by inferior composers—*e.g.*, Blangini and Tom Cooke. The *Athenæum*, however, praised Planché for the deft way in which he had fitted the English words to the music. Two revivals in the French language have to be recorded (1) St. James's Theatre, under Mitchell, May 2, 1849; and (2) at the Gaiety, under John Hollingshead, on June 15, 1875. On June 26, 1880, 'Le Pré aux Clercs' was given at Covent Garden in Italian with Albani as Isabelle. A ballet was interpolated, the music of which was by an inferior hand, Mr. Gye being evidently ignorant of the fact that Hérold had written, with great success, the music for several ballets at the Opéra, notably 'The Sleeping Beauty,' the Naiad dance of which was one of the early successes of Taglioni in this country. The whole ballet was successfully given at Drury Lane, February 13, 1833, when Pauline Duvernoy, afterwards Mrs. Lyne Stephens, made her début in this country.

The Musical League announces that the first festival under its auspices will be held at the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, on September 23, 24, and 25, when the programmes will consist chiefly of the works of living British composers. MM. Debussy, Vincent d'Indy, Max Schillings and Gustav Mahler have promised to give their support and to endeavour to be present to conduct works of their own. The Liverpool Welsh Choral Union, under Mr. Harry Evans, will undertake the choral works that are to be performed. The committee of the League has been much strengthened, and the secretary is Mr. Norman O'Neill, 4, Pembroke Villas, Kensington, W.

Messrs. Breitkopf & Härtel have recently discovered among some old papers in their archives at Leipzig the parts of two Violin concertos by Haydn. It appears that these parts (in manuscript) have been lying on their premises, unknown to themselves, for 140 years! The concertos are now published for the first time. Messrs. Breitkopf & Härtel state that about the middle of the 18th century Johann Gottlieb Immanuel Breitkopf, son of the founder of the firm, had instituted a library of orchestral material (MS.) of which the works now discovered formed a part. Haydn composed this pair of concertos between the years 1766 and 1769 for his friend Luigi Tomasini, leader of the Esterhazy Orchestra, and that in a MS. catalogue of his works in the master's own writing, one of the pieces is referred to as 'Concerto per il Violino, ex C, fatto per il Luigi.' The *Adagios* of the concertos are said to be equal to the finest movements of their kind that Haydn ever wrote. It is a remarkable coincidence that these important additions to violin literature should have been discovered and published for the first time during this centenary year of the composer's death.

The Finnish Senate, which has power to award each year prizes varying from £60 to £240 to authors and artists, has this year voted an annual life pension of £200 to Finland's foremost composer, Jean Sibelius.