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The "Bach Trumpets"

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enthusiastically received. On the same occasion a bust of the distinguished Flemish composer was unveiled in the foyer of the theatre in question.

A Concert-Overture, entitled "Boris Godunoff," by the veteran Russian composer, Jury d'Arnold, was recently performed at Moscow, under the composer's direction, and received with marked enthusiasm. M. d'Arnold is in his eighty-third year.

The Belgian composer, M. Matthieu, has completed a new opera, entitled "L'Enfance de Roland," the libretto founded upon one of Uhland's ballads, which has been accepted for performance at the Brussels Théâtre de la Monnaie.

Wagner's "Die Meistersinger," produced some time since with conspicuous success at the La Scala of Milan, is just now in course of being mounted, in the Italian language, at Turin.

Signor Roberto Stagno, the well-known Italian tenor, pupil of Professor Lamperti, of Dresden, has invented a new inhalation apparatus for strengthening the voice, which has been pronounced the most efficient and ingenious of its kind by high medical authorities in Italy. The apparatus is also to be submitted shortly to the medical faculty of the University of Vienna.

Two new comic operas are in course of being mounted at the Pezzona Theatre of Milan—viz., "Don Abbondio," by Signor Prampolini, and "Chiarina," by the Maestro Luigi Dall'Argine. At the Bellini Theatre, Naples, a new opera, "Almanzor," by the Maestro Mario Vitali, is likewise in course of preparation.

Signor Mascagni, in a recent conversation with Dr. Hanslick, informed the eminent Viennese critic that he is just now actively engaged upon the score of an opera, "William Ratcliff," the book of which is not merely an adaptation, but simply an Italian version of Heinrich Heine's drama of that name, with the only alteration that the four tableaux of which the latter consists have been converted, for lyrical purposes, into so many acts.

It is definitely announced in the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* that Verdi's lyrical comedy in three acts, "Falstaff," the libretto by Signor Arrigo Boito, will be brought out at the Theatre della Scala during the coming carnival season.

A committee has been formed at Bergamo, under the presidency of the Count Suardi Gianforte, a member of the Italian Parliament, for the purpose of erecting a monument in that town to Donizetti, to be unveiled on the occasion of the birth-centenary of the composer of "Lucia di Lammermoor" and "La Favorita." Gaetano Donizetti was born at Bergamo on November 29, 1797.

A new operetta, entitled "Cappador," the music by the Maestro Gaetano Scognamiglio, was brought out last month at the Politeama Theatre of Naples, under the composer's direction, and was accorded a highly favourable reception.

Mr. Cowen's opera "Signa," originally intended for Mr. D'Oily Carte's English Opera House, is to be brought out in January next, with an Italian version of the book, at the Carlo Felice Theatre of Genoa.

The operatic season of the Royal Opera of Madrid commenced on the 12th ult., with gala performances in connection with the Columbus festivities. Among the works to be first performed here during the season are Wagner's "Die Meistersinger," Signor Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci," and two operas by Spanish composers—viz., "Garin," by Señor Thomas Breton, and "I Pirenei," by Señor Felipe Pedrell.

The Brazilian composer, Senhor Carlos Gomes, who has been appointed the official representative of the Brazilian Government at the Chicago Exhibition, intends, at the same time, to bring out two operatic works from his pen at the Exhibition Theatre—viz., "Condor," already performed at the La Scala of Milan, and "Colombo," a new work, written for the occasion.

It is intended to give a series of operatic performances during the coming winter, in various European capitals, by the Czech Company, who recently performed with so much success at the Vienna Exhibition. The contemplated tour is to commence in the French capital.

A new opera by M. Tschaiowski, entitled "Yolande," is in progress of being mounted at the Royal Opera of St. Petersburg.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE "BACH TRUMPETS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Now that the Leeds Festival has once more brought Bach's Mass in B minor to a hearing, may I be allowed to protest against the trumpets employed in that performance being described as "reproductions of the old German model"?—for this mistaken idea threatens to gain general currency. The evidence of existing instruments of the last century, of writers like Prætorius and Altenburg, and of the structure of Bach's parts, which are limited to the notes represented more or less perfectly by the natural harmonics, shows that trumpets were used of a length to give the harmonics of the key indicated in the score—that is, trumpets standing in D were written for and intended to be used in the Mass. These trumpets possessed no mechanical means for rapidly altering the length of the tube, except in the case of the slide trumpets (*trombe da tirarsi*) occasionally used by Bach, though not in the Mass; and as transposition was not resorted to, the performers were required to reach the eighteenth or even the twentieth harmonic. The present so-called "Bach trumpets" are made, with certain alterations, after the model employed by Herr Kosleck at the performance of the Mass in the Albert Hall in 1885. They stand not in D, but in A, so that, the pitch being a fifth higher, the player must transpose the part a fifth down; as this does not permit of the continued employment of the natural harmonics, they are furnished with two pistons of the usual type, a device utterly unknown in Bach's day, and they are made straight like a coach horn. The abolition of all bends except those in the piston tubing makes the emission of the high notes somewhat easier, and is not inconvenient with a tube under five feet in length, but would be most awkward if applied to the trumpet in D, half as long again. There is no evidence that Bach's musicians used straight trumpets between seven and eight feet long. On the modern "Bach trumpet" the performer is not required to ascend above the twelfth harmonic in order to reach the highest note written in the Mass:—

and it may surprise some purists to learn that its employment is in every way analogous to the substitution of the cornet for the more noble instrument. For it only differs from a cornet in A in its shape and in the replacement of the conical by a cylindrical bore. Its tone in the upper register is equal to that of the old trumpet, while the highest notes are far easier of attack and less fatiguing; but the lower register is hardly better than that of the cornet, whose faults it shares with respect to the use of the valves, and is not to be compared with that of the D trumpet.

In what then do these instruments resemble the "old German model"? Neither in shape, length, mechanism, nor in the demands made on the performer's skill. The similarity in bore is common to all trumpets, for it admits of no variation except in calibre and in the shape of the bell—points in which the English-made instruments differ from the one used by Herr Kosleck. With these differences the last shred of resemblance to the old instruments he is supposed to have reproduced is gone.

In protesting against an inaccuracy so general that even an authority like Mr. Hipkins, in the Appendix to Grove's Dictionary of Music, speaks of Mr. Morrow being able to reach the twentieth proper tone on the "Bach trumpet," when he means a note equivalent in pitch to the twentieth proper tone of the trumpet in D, I do not wish to undervalue its utility. At the present day no man, unless he were to devote himself exclusively to *clarino* playing, could play Bach's parts on the proper instrument, as it is only very few artists, like Mr. Morrow and Herr Kosleck, can do so. The fatigue is immense, and there are good grounds for believing that in Bach's time, when every little Capelle had a large staff of trumpeters, these high parts were played by at least two men taking alternate sections,

whereas the modern player has to do it all by himself. The more honour to him!

But the point is not entirely academical. In the late performance, "for the first time all three trumpet parts were played on instruments made after the old German model" (*The Times*, 8th ult.). The attempt to carefully reproduce Bach's intentions has led to an artistic error. When three trumpet parts were written by Bach or Handel (as in the Dettingen Te Deum), the two first were *clarino* parts—that is, they were high, florid, and often moved together in two-part harmony. The third trumpet played *principale*; its part lay in the middle and lower registers, was less florid, and played with a bolder tone.

For the *principale* the new trumpet is nothing but a bad substitute, with an inferior tone in the lower notes, inability to give the natural harmonics, and its freedom limited by the constant use of the valves. The most conservative and representative arrangement of Bach's parts that can now be adopted is to employ the "Bach trumpet" for the first and second *clarino* parts, and for the third part or *principale* to have recourse to the slide trumpet, which can well perform it, is far better in the lower register, and is the legitimate and lineal descendant of the trumpets of the "old German model."—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

W. F. H. BLANDFORD.

October 8, 1892.

THE MUSIC OF WATER.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In reply to "F. C.'s" letter, I may say in the words of Shakespeare, "Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia," or rather "poor 'F. C.'," and therefore I refrain from loading thee with any new aqueous information. "F. C." has evidently had more water than is good for him.

He declares that there are numerous propositions in the article which do not claim his assent. I daresay there are; yet I, for my part, do not imagine that his assent is of very much importance, considering the gross mistakes which he himself makes in the few lines which have been placed at his disposal. In his very next sentence he tries to make out that *sticks and stones are one of the four elements of nature!* I have always understood that Earth, Air, Fire, and Water constituted the quartet. "F. C.," however, believes that the proper four are Fire, Water, Sticks, and Stones.

So much for his assertions. Next for his arguments. I stated in my article that "the gurgling of a brook is the most musically satisfying sound in nature, because it embodies the trill." "F. C.'s" argument is pithy but not profound. He says simply, "*It isn't and it doesn't.*" To such logic as this I may reply, "It is and it does."

A little lower down he falls foul not only of me, but of Professor Tyndall, whose words concerning De la Rive's experiment I quoted in my article. Professor Tyndall's careful words about the experiment are, according to "F. C.," "pure nonsense"; all my article is likewise pure nonsense; in fact, the only person who knows anything about the subject is "F. C." himself, whose views on the matter have hitherto not been vouchsafed to an expectant world.

To this anonymous antagonist, who loads both Professor Tyndall and myself with his abuse, I have neither the patience nor the inclination to reply. I am not accustomed to argue as he argues—"it isn't and it doesn't"—without giving reasons in support of my assertions; nor am I wont to abuse an antagonist because his opinions differ from mine. If he seeks for complete and careful evidence for every fact he is ignorant of, I may recommend him to turn to my "History of Music," where he will find full and ample information, not only about the Greek games, but also about De la Rive's experiment, about the Brazilian instruments, the water-clocks, the hydraulic organ, &c. When he has made himself fully acquainted with the whole literature of the subject, I expect him readily to confess that he is astounded at *his own* statements—not at mine.—I remain, Sir, yours, &c.,

J. F. ROWBOTHAM,
Author of "The Music of Water."

[Several communications are held over owing to want of space in the present issue.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

* * Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.

Our correspondents will oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

Correspondents are informed that their names and addresses must accompany all communications.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

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BRIEF SUMMARY OF COUNTRY NEWS.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this summary, as all the notices are either collated from the local papers or supplied to us by correspondents.

BECKENHAM.—Mr. Edward Coombs, the Organist and Musical Director of Beckenham Independent Church, was presented, on the occasion of his recent marriage, with a handsome marble chiming clock by the Choir of the Church, and a massive walnut overmantel and Oriental vases by the Minister and Officers, as a mark of esteem and appreciation.

BRIGHTON.—Mr. Frederick Corder gave a capital Lecture on "Pianoforte Technique" at the School of Music, on the 11th ult., to a large audience. He dealt with the development of the pianoforte from the harpsichord down to the present perfect instruments, and went minutely into the mechanism of the hand, showed how to develop its powers, and insisted on the necessity of intelligence other than musical in the would-be pianoforte player. In illustration of various styles of pianoforte playing several pieces were performed by Miss West, Miss Balaan, Miss Moate, and the Lecturer himself.—On Saturday, the 22nd ult., a very interesting Lecture on the history of "English Music" was given by Mr. Henry Davey, a well-known local Professor and author of a recently published "History of Music" and other works. Commencing with the twelfth century, the Lecturer traced the development of the art, in all its principal branches, down to the present day. The illustrations were rendered by students of the School of Music, under the direction of Mr. Robert Taylor, and consisted of examples of the various periods alluded to by the Lecturer:—Six-part song, "Sumer is icumen in," John of Fornsette (1226); "The King's Hunting Jigg," John Bull; old ballad, "The Three Ravens"; Toccata (pianoforte), and song, "Nymphs and Shepherds," Purcell; songs, "Where the bee sucks," Arne, and "Lo, here the gentle lark," Bishop; Barcarolle from Fourth Concerto, Sterndale Bennett; song, "Guinevere," and trio "Three little maids" (*Mikado*), Sullivan. The Lecturer was introduced by Dr. A. King, one of the directors of the School.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS.—The Harvest Festival Services held in St. Mary's Church on the 2nd ult. were of a particularly bright and hearty nature. In the evening the large and beautiful church was crowded by an enormous congregation. Shinn's Evening Service in F was used, the Anthem being "Great is the Lord," by Adam, for solo treble and chorus. After the sermon, "O lovely peace" (*Judas*) and "Achieved is the glorious work" (*Creation*) were finely sung by the choir, numbering about sixty-five voices. Mr. T. B. Richardson ably presided at the fine organ by Walker and Sons.

DERBY.—On September 29 Mr. J. Harold Henry, a talented young violinist who is rapidly making a name for himself, gave a Violin Recital in the Temperance Hall, Derby, in which town he has established himself after a course of study at the Royal Academy and under Herr Hans Sitt at Leipzig. In conjunction with an excellent orchestra Mr. Henry played Concertos by Godard and De Beriot and a number of smaller pieces. Throughout the young violinist displayed qualities of the highest order; his execution is brilliant and dashing in *bravura* passages, while his *cantabile* is delightfully tender. The orchestra played several selections, Mr. Sydney Sadler played two movements of Sterndale Bennett's F minor Concerto, and Miss Marie Hooton (contralto) sang a number of songs very artistically.

FARNHAM.—The first of the second series of Popular Concerts, given in the Corn Exchange on the 19th ult., attracted a large audience. The vocalists were Miss Aubrey and Messrs. Lambert and Winslade. Miss Edith Woods was the pianist and Mr. John Hullah Brown the violinist. The Farnham Excelsior Band also played several selections, under the leadership of Miss Hayell.

LEE.—The Harvest Festival Services at St. Mildred's Church were brought to a close on Wednesday, the 19th ult., by a very fine performance of Haydn's *Creation*, with full orchestra and a choir of 115 voices. The usual harvest hymns, in which the congregation were invited to join, had been arranged for the orchestra by Mr. F. L. Kett, the Choirmaster, whose beautiful tune to "Holy is the seed-time" was sung, and who conducted with his well-known ability. The solos in the Oratorio were efficiently rendered by Mrs. Dilley and Messrs. Walker, Robinson, and Dilley. Mr. Terry was leader of the band and Mr. S. Mayor presided at the organ. There was a very large congregation. The offertory was in aid of the Choir Fund.

LLANDUDNO.—On the 19th ult., at Holy Trinity Church, the second Festival of the Arllechwedd Deanery Church Choral Union was held, combined with the Harvest Festival. The choirs of Conway, Llanfairfechan, and Penmaenmawr, in all about 100 voices joined in the afternoon and evening services. The organ was supported by a brass quartet—