Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 23, No. 473 (Jul. 1, 1882), pp. 395-396

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

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3358444>

Accessed: 18-12-2015 15:25 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Musical Times Publications Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

A VERY successful performance of Farmer's Oratorio "Christ and His Soldiers" was given on the 8th ult. by the Choral Society in connection with the Stratford Congregational Church. The vocalists were Miss Gowar, Miss Miles, Mr. A. Gowar, Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Jas. Blackney. The band and chorus consisted of nearly a hundred performers. Mr. J. W. Hale conducted. There was a large and appreciative audience.

At the Church of St. Margaret Pattens, Rood Lane, Fenchurch Street, after Evensong on Sunday evening, the 11th ult., being the Sunday after Corpus Christi, Mendelssohn's "Lauda Sion" was sung to the original words. The soli parts were taken by Master Frank Tebbutt, Mr. Arthur Hooper, and Mr. Franklin Clive. Mr. Theodore Drew was at the organ, and Mr. Stedman conducted. The church, as usual, was crowded to excess.

WE are informed that Miss Emily Shinner had recently the honour of playing a violin solo before the Princess of Wales and a distinguished private circle at Kensington Palace. Miss Shinner attended at the desire of the Princess Louise, and her performance elicited warm encomiums, especially from the Princess of Wales. Miss Shinner has for a long time been studying at the Hoch-Schule, Berlin, as a pupil of the distinguished violinist, Dr. Joachim.

ON Prize Day, the 20th ult., at Ardingly College, Sussex, "The Ancient Mariner," by T. Mee Pattison, was performed in the hall. The Cantata was greatly admired by a numerous audience, and much applauded. The rendering by the highly cultured choir of this School, consisting of masters and boys, was excellent, the choruses being sung with a precision and steadiness to which the habit of daily singing together so greatly contributes.

SIR J. BENEDICT'S "St. Peter" will be given at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, on Thursday, the 6th inst., at 5 p.m., with full orchestral accompaniment and choir of one hundred voices. The baritone and tenor parts will be sung by Mr. John Bridson and Mr. Bryant, and the soprano solo parts by Master Carrington: Organ, Dr. Bridge; Conductor, Mr. W. de M. Sergison, Organist of the church.

FROM Canada comes news of the decease of Mr. Henry Whish, Mus. Bac., one of the most eminent organists in the country, an excellent theorist, and a contributor on musical subjects to several papers. At his funeral, which was largely attended, a musical service was performed, and several floral offerings of affection were sent by his pupils and friends.

THE marriage of Sir George Elvey and Miss Mary Savory, youngest daughter of the late Mr. Joseph Savory, of Buckhurst Park, took place on the 20th ult. at Sunninghill Church, Berkshire. Sir George Elvey, who was appointed by King William IV. Organist to the Chapel Royal of St. George, Windsor, has resigned his appointment.

In aid of the funds of the New Baptist Chapel, Brixton, an evening Concert was given on the 8th ult., at Brixton Hall. The most notable items upon the programme were the pianoforte soli of Mr. Alfred Izard and Mrs. Rushton Odell, each of whom obtained an encore. The singers were amateurs.

THE Association of Lay Helpers for the London Diocese will hold their Annual Festival in Westminster Abbey on Tuesday evening next, the 4th inst., at half-past seven. Dr. Stainer's Anthem "I saw the Lord" is to be sung, and four brass instruments will strengthen the accompaniments.

THE Festival of the Girls' Friendly Society took place in St. Paul's Cathedral, on Saturday evening, the 24th ult. The choir of the Lay Helpers' Association sustained the musical portion of the service, and Dr. Stainer's "I saw the Lord" was the Anthem. Mr. G. C. Martin conducted, and Mr. W. Hodge was the Organist.

MR. JAMES R. BOOSÉ gave his first Concert at Loughboro' Hall, Brixton, on Wednesday Evening, the 21st ult., assisted by Madame Worrell, Miss F. Davis, Mrs. E. Mitchell, Miss Marie Dulcken (pianoforte), Miss Chidley (concertina), and Messrs. R. F. Roberts, H. Newton, and J. Ion Cattle. The *bénéficiaire* accompanied.

THE first Orchestral Concert by the Band of the South London Institute of Music took place on the 20th ult., when Haydn's Symphony No. 7, Cherubini's Overture "Lodoiska," Boieldieu's Overture "Jean de Paris," and other selections were performed in a highly creditable manner. Two violin solos by Mr. T. E. Gatehouse, and two songs by Mr. E. Bryant, were very successful. Mr. L. C. Venables conducted.

A FLOWER SERVICE was held on Tuesday, the 20th ult., at St. Mildred's, Bread Street, when the church was tastefully decorated. The Anthem was Sir John Goss's "The Wilderness," and after the Sermon a selection from "The Hymn of Praise" was given. Dr. Verrinder presided at the organ. The church was crowded.

A COMPLIMENTARY Concert was given to Mr. William Lemare, Conductor of the Brixton Choral Society, by his pupils, on Saturday evening, the 24th ult., at Angell Town Institution. The contributions were decidedly praiseworthy.

THE Philharmonic Society announces six Concerts to take place at St. James's Hall during their seventy-first season. The dates are February 15, March 1 and 15, April 25, May 9 and 23, 1883.

MESSRS. ASHDOWN AND PARRY have dissolved partnership, Mr. Parry retiring from business. Mr. Ashdown will carry on the well-known music-publishing business as heretofore, under the style of "Edwin Ashdown."

MR. C. HARFORD LLOYD, Organist of Gloucester Cathedral, has accepted the post of Organist at Christ Church, Oxford, vacant by the resignation, through ill-health, of Dr. Corfe.

THE next performance of the Musical Artists' Society will take place at the Royal Academy on the 8th inst. The particulars will be found in our advertising columns.

REVIEWS.

Life and Letters of Berlioz. Translated from the French by H. Mainwaring Dunstan. [Remingtons.]

IN spite of the admirable efforts that have been made by Mr. Bache, Mr. Charles Hallé and others, towards popularising the works of Berlioz, it is to be feared that, with the exception of his symphonic compositions, the music of this great composer is but half-understood, and still less appreciated. Although the cloud of witnesses eager in his lifetime to testify to the bad faith of his criticism and his pedantic egotism has been dispersed since his death, and scattered by the four winds to the limbo where all unworthy jealousies find their own most fitting place, and his *bond fides* as critic is no more disputed than the genuineness of his inspiration, there still exists a disposition to regard him as an innovating heretic who disturbed alike the dogmas of the orthodox and the gods of their worship: interesting as a man by the inherent force of his genius, but decidedly mad. The neglect of his dramatic works at the present time is deplorable. If the thorough representation of "Benvenuto Cellini" or "Les Troyens" demands multiplied rehearsals and necessitates the mastery of great and complicated difficulties, the time required for the repetitions should not be grudged, least of all when the difficulties to be overcome are far from insuperable. The absence of the *chef-d'œuvres* of Beethoven and Gluck from the prospectus of the Italian Opera may be explained on quite other grounds; the chief obstacle in this instance being the impossibility of discovering a worthy successor to Mdlle. Tietjens. The enthusiasm with which the excellent performances of "Fidelio" have recently been received at Drury Lane is a proof that the public will avail themselves of any opportunity for hearing the great masters efficiently rendered. But so long as a portion of the public is willing to endure the representation of mediocre works, repeated *ad nauseam*, for the sake of hearing a favourite soprano whose position and merits are rendered more conspicuous by reason of the incompetency of her supporters, the hope of hearing "Les Troyens," or even "Béatrice et Bénédict," must be very faint. It is inconceivable what satisfaction the frequenters of the Covent

Garden Opera can derive from the performance of works in which the very presence of a splendid orchestra is a bitter irony, and where the *prima donna* shines forth a star of planetary magnitude, whose brilliancy is enhanced by contrast with the incapacity of a most unheroic tenor and a *mise-en-scène* that is seldom wanting in ludicrous incident. The continuance of this state of things shows that the Italian Opera management is still what it has been for so many years past, and that it is above learning anything of the German Opera; and if its neglect of the great masters and its irreverent treatment of those whose works it condescends to represent meet with few protests it is, perhaps, because its patrons are willing that art and the claims of art should give way before the superior and more righteous claims of a *prima donna assoluta*. The fiery and eloquent letters from Germany in which Berlioz denounces the general admiration and worship of mediocrity might appropriately receive Mr. Gye's consideration.

The appearance at this time of these two volumes of the translation of the correspondence of Berlioz by Mr. Mainwaring Dunstan is opportune. Whether or not Mr. Dunstan has been seduced by the charm of alliteration, the title of his translation is misleading, for M. Bernard's notice of the life of Berlioz, which is prefixed to the collection of letters here translated, is in no sense of the word a life of the composer, but merely what M. Bernard himself accurately describes it—a notice of that life, and a notice, moreover, inadequate, inchoate, and devoid of critical authority. It is an abuse of language to call this biographical introduction a "Life"; and Mr. Dunstan is guilty of what cannot be regarded as a mistranslation when he substitutes this lofty title for the plainer and more truthful description of the original. M. Bernard's notice of the life of Berlioz is of no biographical value; its facts are founded upon the well-known autobiographical "*Mémoires*"; and, beyond an occasional amplification of a well-known anecdote, it contains no fresh matter, nor does it throw any fresh light upon its subject, nor reveal either critical sagacity or profundity of any kind whatever. In this respect it compares unfavourably with M. Ernest Legouvé's interesting and powerfully written recollections. One page of the "*Mémoires*," one single reminiscence culled from that vast storehouse of pathetic and dramatic memories, is of infinitely greater value as helpful towards obtaining a true insight into Berlioz's remarkable mental constitution than this so-called "Life." Mr. Dunstan has not even translated M. Bernard's memoir in its integrity. The omission of the portion of the prose translation of Romani's Ode to Paganini is justifiable on the ground of its irrelevancy, but there are other omissions that appear more singular. The translation of the memoir is inefficiently done when compared with that of the correspondence. On page 13 we find "*féroce*" rendered "firm," which gives but a faint idea of its signification, and the invariable attitude of Berlioz towards Gluck's compositions; and on page 42 there is a curious disagreement between the translation and the original. M. Bernard says in the copy we have before us: ". . . Meyerbeer, de sa voix flutée et avec sa léger accent gascon." This is translated: ". . . Meyerbeer, in his harsh voice and with a slight German accent." Granting that M. Bernard was in error with respect to Meyerbeer's nationality, it would have been better if Mr. Dunstan had noted the existence of this discrepancy in a footnote.

It is strange that Mr. Dunstan's translation of the correspondence should be generally more satisfactory than his version of the biographical notice of M. Bernard, seeing that the former abounds in passages incomparably more defiant of adequate translation. The literary style of Berlioz possesses many of the qualities of his symphonies. There is not one of these letters wherein he has not left the impress of his vivid and singular personality; they offer abundant evidence of his excessive sensibility of imagination, and his truly passionate and sensuous sense of beauty; and in their rapid and facile change of emotional demonstration, their delicate *nuances* of humour and pathos, and stormy outbursts of enthusiastic adoration and denunciation, they not seldom powerfully suggest the poetical symphonies of the writer. An intense individuality of character is as obvious in these letters as it is in the critical writings and memoirs of Berlioz. As specimens of the art

of letter-writing they are notable even in a literature so richly endowed in this particular as the French; some of them indeed realise the perfection of this art, and in so rare a degree that the sense of the presence of a fiery personality is so powerful on reading them, the stress of eloquent passion is felt with such compelling force, that the reader becomes a sharer in the ardour of the inspiration, and intimately cognisant of its source. When literal fidelity is aimed at in translation, it is inevitable that a certain amount of the volatile spirit of the original should be lost or suffer transmutation. It is creditable to Mr. Dunstan's skill that so many of these letters retain much of their original force, and that they fairly reflect the astonishing *mélange* of wit, humour, and epigram of the correspondence. The literary charm of the original disappears in a great measure in the act of translation; the brilliant wit, the Voltairian banter and irony, the keen thrusts of controversy, and the satirical sketches of contemporaries, all necessarily suffer from taking a new form of expression. These letters cover the whole period of the career of Berlioz, and the turbulence and unceasing conflicts of his life are revealed to their depths. While it is impossible to withhold our sympathy from the spectacle of genius baited by a miserable and selfish crowd of mediocrities, it cannot be denied that it was in this very atmosphere of controversy and intrigue that the composer again and again renewed his existence. Detraction and opposition with him were stimulative to new and more vigorous production. His indomitable spirit imbibed fresh ardour from every new conflict; and whether in Germany, in Russia, or in England, his heart turned to Paris, to the city that had rejected him, with ever the old warmth and the joyous anticipation of battle. It will be seen in these letters how unfounded are many of the accusations directed against him, and how calumnious. The ebullitions of wrath, the Landorian violence of invective, and all the bitterness of irony and scorn, are in nearly every case the fruit of an indignation righteous in itself and honourable to the artist. If the fine wit and caustic speech were sometimes exercised with a refinement of cruelty and with something of the pleasure of self-conscious power, the attack was generally provoked and the castigation amply merited. His unvarying justice towards men who had injured him, or who had no spiritual sympathies with him, and his quickness to atone for injuries effected by rash and inadvertent speech, are well shown in many anecdotes, and betray a warm heart beneath all contrary appearances; while his lasting loyalty to the great masters who were the source of his lifelong enthusiasm prove the depth and sincerity of his convictions. His artistic sincerity was indeed a rare honesty, and a noble characteristic of the man who was not to be cajoled into doing anything that might be interpreted as a compromise with a vicious public taste, and who guarded so jealously the honour of the great men he revered.

Musik-Lexikon, von Dr. Hugo Riemann.

[Leipzig: Verlag des Bibliographischen Instituts, 1882.]

In our recent review of Dr. Reissmann's "*Handlexikon der Tonkunst*," it was our duty to point out certain shortcomings—the result, as we thought, chiefly of a hasty compilation and imperfect revision—which seriously interfered with the usefulness of the volume in question. It is the more gratifying, therefore, to meet so soon after with a work of very similar scope and dimensions, in which a most careful selection of well-balanced articles, combined with copious and generally accurate information, are the prominent features. Dr. Reissmann's "*Handlexikon*" being an abridgment from a much larger work, the fact may in a measure account for some of its incongruities and lesser general usefulness as compared with the present volume; it being notoriously more difficult to condense an existing elaborate work than to compile a fresh one upon a fixed and preconceived plan. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the volume at present under our notice fulfils the conditions which we may reasonably impose upon a book of general reference in musical matters far more satisfactorily than the similar work recently issued by Dr. Reissmann; the almost simultaneous publication of the two lexica of such identical pretensions naturally inviting a comparison which otherwise might have ap-