

Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 20, No. 431 (Jan. 1, 1879), pp. 34-36

Published by: Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3357799>

Accessed: 19-10-2015 05:26 UTC

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A VOCAL and Instrumental Concert by the boys was given in the large hall, Christ's Hospital, on the 18th ult. The programme was of a very varied character, and comprised a selection from Haydn's "Creation," followed by solos, part-songs, and instrumental pieces. The several items were exceedingly well executed, and reflected great credit upon all the masters engaged in the musical training of the youthful band. The arrangements for the accommodation of the visitors were very good, and the entertainment was thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

THE Annual Concert in aid of the funds of the Orphanage of H.M. Customs was given in St. James's Hall on the 5th ult., under the direction of Mr. W. Phillips. The solo vocalists were Miss Mary Davies, Miss Orridge, Madame Ashton, Mr. Edward Lloyd, Mr. Maybrick, Mr. H. Ashton, and Mr. Frederic King. Mr. John Thomas, harpist to her Majesty, and the English Glee Union also contributed several pieces. Sir Julius Benedict and Mr. Fountain Meen were the accompanists. Every number was received with warm approbation, the recalls being numerous.

WE understand that, by the will of the late Mr. Frederick Gye, the Royal Italian Opera-house, amongst other property, has been left entirely to his family, and they have decided to carry on the Royal Italian Opera as usual. Mr. Ernest Gye, who has for some years been associated with his father in the Opera, will, with Mr. Herbert Gye, undertake the management. The season of 1879 will commence in April, Madame Patti and Madame Albani being amongst the principal artists engaged.

THE Islington Choral Association gave Bradbury's sacred Cantata, "Esther the Beautiful Queen" at the Barbican Chapel, Hoxton, on Tuesday, the 3rd ult. The principal vocalists were Miss Tavender, *Esther*; Miss Carpenter, *First Maid of Honour*; Miss Toynbee, *Zerish*; Mr. A. Bird, *King*; Mr. Sparks, *Haman*; and Mr. Butt, *Mordecai*. The chair was taken by the Rev. J. Boyle. Conductor, Mr. George Randal; Organist, Mr. W. H. Whitmore.

A CONCERT was given at the Crouch End School-rooms by Mr. Alfred J. Dye, on the 19th ult. Miss Elene Webster in Cowen's "It was a dream," Miss Helen de Valence in Anderton's "Come to me, O ye children," Mr. Stedman in Stark's "Sea Song," and Mr. Egbert Roberts in Mozart's "Qui sdegno," were much applauded. The instrumentalists were Miss Augarde (piano), Mr. Grimson (violin), Mr. Deane (viola), and Mr. Trust (cello). Mr. Dye was an efficient accompanist.

MR. A. C. MACKENZIE'S "Scherzo," which was played in Glasgow on the 30th of November, and in Edinburgh on the 2nd ult., achieved a marked success, the applause being most enthusiastic, and the composer, who conducted it, being unanimously recalled. The scoring of the work is masterly, and the ease with which it was given by the orchestra proved that it had been carefully and zealously rehearsed.

THE *Guardian* of the 11th ult. announces the death at Gloucester of the Rev. John Antes Latrobe, late Vicar of St. Thomas's, Kendal, author of the "Music of the Church," and other well-known works. Mr. Latrobe died on November 19, and was son of Haydn's friend, the Rev. C. J. Latrobe, the Moravian minister.

A GOOD word must be said for "G. R. King's Royal Duke of Edinburgh Rosin Box," a specimen of which has been forwarded to us. This box is filled with the best treble, purified, medicated rosin; and both as a cleanly and effective article will no doubt be found highly useful by violinists.

IN a paragraph announcing the decease of Mr. "William Callcott" last month, the name was wrongly printed "William Hutchins Callcott." Our obituary notice was correct, and we gladly take the earliest opportunity of rectifying the error in the paragraph.

THE Scottish Choral Society gave an excellent Concert of Scottish music at Exeter Hall on November 30 (St. Andrew's Day) before a large audience. The programme was well chosen; and the enthusiasm of the listeners proved the thoroughly national character of the assembly.

REVIEWS.

Histoire de l'Instrumentation, depuis le seizième siècle jusqu'à nos jours. Par Henri Lavoix fils.
(Paris: Firmin-Didot and Co.)

IT is scarcely a matter for surprise that although numerous histories of music and musicians have from time to time appeared, no history of Instrumentation should ever, so far as we know, have been published until the present year. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for any one who has not made a special study of Instrumentation to realise the amount of labour involved in the compilation of such a work as the handsome volume of 470 pages by M. Lavoix, which now lies before us. Not merely would it be needful to have access to an enormous mass of music, much of which exists only in manuscript, and to read, it is appalling to think, how many thousands of pages of scores, in order to collect the necessary materials; but the author must further be gifted with a prodigious memory to enable him to compare the various styles of orchestration, and to render to each composer his appropriate due.

It would be little short of a miracle were such a work as the present to be found free from errors; and, as a matter of fact, we shall have to note some as we proceed with this review: the wonder is that any one can be found who would and could undertake so herculean a task as that which the preparation of this history necessarily implies.

The origin of the present volume is due to the fact that in 1873 the Académie des Beaux-Arts announced as the subject of the Bordin prize for 1875, the "History of Instrumentation." Eighteen months only were allowed for the treatment of this elaborate subject. Two essays were sent in. That of M. Lavoix was declared the best; but as he had been unable to complete his work, which was only carried down to the time of Mozart, the Académie considered that the prize could not be awarded to an unfinished book, and decreed the author an honourable mention and a gold medal, at the same time encouraging him to complete and publish the volume. This he has at length done, and the result lies before us.

As an official in the grand National Library of Paris, M. Lavoix has enjoyed special advantages for his task. He has had constant access to one of the largest musical collections in the world. Judging from his volume, he appears also to have great natural qualifications for the work he has undertaken. His patience and research seem inexhaustible; in nearly every case he evidently gives us the results of personal investigation. His accuracy, with a few exceptions, is unimpeachable, so far as we have had the opportunity of verifying his statements; while his studied impartiality, and evident freedom from prejudice in favour of any one school or style, command our respect even where we may feel compelled to differ from the opinions which he expresses.

It is obviously impossible within the limits of a review to do anything like justice to a book so full of detail as the present. We shall therefore confine ourselves to an outline of its contents, noting from time to time such interesting facts as may present themselves.

The volume is divided into two parts, preceded by an introduction which gives a rapid glance at the nature and employment of the instruments of the Middle Ages. The first part of the work, occupying about one-third of the whole, treats of the history of musical instruments. The author traces in detail the various changes in the form of the instruments, and the periods at which such changes were introduced; and many noteworthy facts are mentioned incidentally. For example, it is interesting to learn that the violoncello was first used in the French opera in 1725 (p. 51), and that the first score in which the double bass is to be found is the "Alcyone" of Marais, produced in 1706 (p. 53). So again at p. 111 we read that it is in Gluck's Italian "Alceste" that we first meet with the *cor anglais*, and at p. 222 that the horn was introduced into the French opera by Campra (1735). The various instruments now obsolete are treated of in sufficient but not too great detail. It may be as well to note in passing that at p. 109 M. Lavoix has confounded the *oboe d'amore* and the *oboe da caccia*, and that what he says as to the notation of the former is only true of the latter, as may be

seen at once by an examination of Bach's scores. The section on brass instruments gives us a full history of the various inventions for completing their scale. The author mentions incidentally that the ophicleide was first used in the opera by Spontini, in his "Olympia," while to Wagner is due the naturalization in the modern orchestra of the bass-tuba. With respect to this instrument M. Lavoix quotes an interesting anecdote from Wagner's "Recollections of Spontini," which is worth reproducing. When Wagner was conductor at Dresden he produced the "Vestale." As a compliment to the composer, Spontini was invited to attend the last full rehearsals. The old master listened to his work, and then said to Wagner, "I have heard in your 'Rienzi' an instrument called bass-tuba; I don't wish to banish that instrument from the orchestra—write me a part for the 'Vestale.'"

The second part of M. Lavoix's volume deals with the history of Instrumentation. After a brief sketch of the early dances and ballets in Italy, France, and Germany, and a chapter on the invention and employment of the *basso continuo*, we find a very interesting account of the early Italian orchestration of the seventeenth century. The method of treating the instruments at that time was, of course, widely different from that now adopted; but the variety of the instruments used will surprise many readers. To give but one example out of many—in a sonata for instruments by Massimiliano Neri, published at Venice in 1651, there are parts for two cornets, four trombones, one bassoon, two violins, two violas, and a theorbo. It will be as well to mention that the "cornet" was, of course, not our modern cornet-à-piston, but a wooden instrument, now obsolete, belonging to the same family as the hardly less obsolete serpent. It is worthy of notice that in the beginning of instrumentation it was very much the fashion to combine the various instruments of one class into families, so to speak, using one group at a time for the purposes of accompaniment. Of this system we find traces in the scores of Bach; and it is not a little curious that Wagner in his latest work, "Der Ring des Nibelungen," has to a great extent reverted, though of course with very different effect, to the original method of treatment.

It is hardly surprising that in his notices of the earliest orchestration M. Lavoix should treat at greater length of French composers than of any others. The probable explanation is that in the National Library his countrymen are more fully represented than either Germans or Italians. In the case of one of the old German masters, Keyser, the author acknowledges (p. 253) that, contrary to his habit, he has not been able to meet with any music by this composer, and is therefore forced to rely on the judgment of others. This, however, is an exceptional case; and the industry with which M. Lavoix has studied the works of composers many of whose names are now forgotten, but who have nevertheless contributed their quota to the advancement of the science of instrumentation, is worthy of all praise.

Very interesting to the student is the elaborate analysis of the works of Lulli and Rameau given in the fourth chapter, to which we can only refer. We must also pass over the following chapter, on the predecessors of Handel and Bach, and come to that in which the orchestration of these two great masters is dealt with in considerable detail. It is a curious thing that almost the only serious mistakes we have noted in reading the volume are to be found in the account of Handel's works. A few of the most important are worth pointing out. On p. 267 we read that the orchestration of Handel's choruses was so complete that Mozart in his additional accompaniments only retouched the airs—a most absurd statement, which irresistibly leads us to conclude that M. Lavoix has never seen Mozart's scores of either the "Messiah" or "Alexander's Feast," both of which are printed. An even more amusing mistake is found on p. 270, where, in speaking of Handel's use of the organ, our author says that "the stops of the sacred instrument take part in the instrumentation in a special manner, as in the 'Dettingen Te Deum,' where the full sounds of the 'Principal' contribute much to the general sonority of the piece." As a matter of fact, the part marked "Principal" in Handel's score is not the organ part at all, but that of the third trumpet. It is in "L'Allegro," not in the Coronation Anthems (as stated

by M. Lavoix) that the contrafagotto is introduced; and in "See the conquering hero comes" it is horns, not trumpets, that are found in the score. The analysis of the scores of Bach, on the other hand, is, so far as we have tested it, of remarkable accuracy. With Bach and Handel we reach the end of what we may call the old school of instrumentation. In the concluding lines of his chapter on these composers M. Lavoix says:—

Placed thus in the first half of the eighteenth century, Bach and Handel mark the separation of the two epochs; after them the orchestra will only be enriched in a very small degree with regard to the number of instruments; but it is in their employment that an entirely new art will be revealed.

The second of the "two epochs" referred to in the above quotation, is that which extends from Haydn to our own time. The treatment of this part of his subject must in one respect have been easier to our author than that of the earlier music, in so far as his sources of information were more readily accessible; but owing to the greater complexity of the modern orchestration, the comparison of the styles of various masters would yet be far from a light matter. M. Lavoix's sound judgment shows itself very conspicuously in this part of his work; indeed, there are but few of his opinions from which we should be disposed to differ.

The chapter on "The Symphony in Germany" is one of the most valuable in the book. Commencing with Haydn, M. Lavoix justly remarks, that more than any other composer he invented instrumental colouring; that he was the first who gave the modern orchestra its present constitution, discarding many of the instruments which before his time had been in use, but which with the modern system of instrumentation would be an encumbrance rather than an advantage. Mozart's orchestration is to be studied in his grand operas rather than in his symphonies; though M. Lavoix quotes from Köchel several curious specimens of instrumental combination. Mozart was the first who seems fully to have appreciated the resources of the clarinet, though in his treatment of this instrument he was subsequently surpassed by Weber.

Of Beethoven our author says that he was the first to individualize each instrument of the orchestra. We note, as we read, an inaccuracy in the statement that the Symphony in A (No. 7) contains parts for two trombones (p. 296). French musicians in general seem (so far as our experience goes) so apt to underrate Mendelssohn, that we are very glad to find so just and enthusiastic an appreciation of his orchestration as that given on pages 307, 308, which, did space allow, we should willingly quote. We are surprised to find the name of Schubert altogether omitted. His instrumentation is so characteristic and so individual, that we can only infer that M. Lavoix does not know the Symphonies in B minor and C major, the "Rosamunde" music, or the Mass in E flat. The author is very just in his strictures on Schumann's orchestration, which he characterises as heavy and dull, adding, with great truth, that "when hereafter justice is rendered to the talent of Schumann, it is as an inspired poet, as a bold and often happy harmonist, but certainly not as a colourist, that he will rank among the great composers of the modern school."

Our notice of this, to us at least, truly fascinating volume has already extended to such a length that we must pass hastily over the chapters which still remain to be noticed. An excellent analysis of the orchestration of the operas of Gluck and Mozart is followed by some remarks on the influence of these composers on modern music. We next have a sketch of the progress of the orchestra in France from Rameau to Rossini. The list of the composers whose works are noticed in more or less detail in this chapter may help our readers to form a slight idea of the amount of labour involved in the preparation of the present volume. M. Lavoix speaks (evidently from personal knowledge) of the scores of Grétry, Monsigny, Dalayrac, Nicolo, Philidor, Gossec, Salieri, Sacchini, Cherubini, Méhul, Lesueur, Catel, Spontini, Berton, and Boieldieu. We can only quote one point. He mentions (p. 342) that Spontini was the first to introduce the modern system of orchestrating by large masses, whence no doubt results greater sonority, but also in the long run inevitable monotony. The following chapter, on the Italian orchestra before Rossini, chiefly

proves to us how little skill in instrumentation the larger number of Italian composers possessed. The simple explanation is to be found in the fact that they looked upon the orchestra as nothing more than an instrument for accompanying the voice, and therefore always relegated it to a subordinate position. After an interesting analysis of Beethoven's "Fidelio" and the operas of Weber, with remarks on colour and romanticism in dramatic music, we reach one of the most elaborate chapters of the work—that devoted to Rossini and Meyerbeer. This occupies forty-five pages, and the details as to the orchestration of "Guillaume Tell," and of the grand operas of Meyerbeer, are of much value to the student. A chapter on the modern dramatic orchestra in France (Auber, Hérold, Halévy, Félicien David) succeeds; of which we would remark that M. Lavoix hardly appears to us to fully appreciate the exquisitely polished and often most piquant instrumentation of Auber. The works of Berlioz are next examined in detail, and justice rendered to one of the most original thinkers, and undoubtedly one of the greatest colourists of modern times; while in the final chapter on contemporary instrumentation, a careful and unprejudiced examination of Wagner's scores is to be found. Most Frenchmen entertain such a bitter hatred of the composer of "Tannhäuser" that it is pleasant to read M. Lavoix's opinion of him. His words are (p. 456):—

A musician powerful and full of passion, possessing in the highest degree the science of effects of harmony and instrumentation, endowed, whatever one may say, with remarkable richness of melody, Richard Wagner is incontestably the first musician of our age.

The scores of the "Ring des Nibelungen" are analysed at some considerable length, and this portion of the work will interest the numerous readers for whom the price of the scores themselves would be prohibitory. It is singular that not a word is said in this chapter of three great German composers of the present day, whose instrumentation is, to say the least, worthy of mention. We do not find the names either of Liszt, Brahms, or Raff—all of them great colourists. It is probable that their works have hardly yet made their way into France.

In taking leave of M. Lavoix's most valuable work, we can only express the hope that at no distant time an English translation may be published. We have said enough in our notice to show that it is no less interesting than instructive, and in conclusion cordially recommend it to the notice of musicians.

Fior d'Aliza. Opéra en quatre Actes. Tiré du Roman de A. de Lamartine. Par MM. Carré et H. Lucas. Musique de Victor Massé. [Paris: Choudens.]

AFTER experience of M. Massé's "Paul et Virginie," it may appear superfluous to ask attention for another work from the same pen. But a composer can neither be made nor marred by a single effort. It is true that "Paul et Virginie," though not deficient in striking numbers, has radical defects, and there is little chance of its obtaining a permanent place upon our lyric stage. That however is no reason why M. Massé's other productions should be included in a wholesale condemnation. Rather should it incline us to a patient and impartial examination of their claims, in the hope of finding something able to redeem the credit of the composer, and prove that the measure of reputation he enjoys rests on a basis of fact. Without further preamble, therefore, we turn to M. Massé's setting of the libretto founded upon Lamartine's touching romance.

Readers of French literature will remember "Graziella," and at once recognise in it the materials of a charming pastoral opera full of strongly dramatic situations, and actuated by the purest feeling. True the story is, in its elements, an old one—as old as woman's unselfish devotion to the man she loves. It presents us with another "Fidelio," and illustrates not less strongly than Beethoven's Opera the justice of high Heaven, who guards the innocent and punishes the guilty. But while all this in Massé's work is familiar, the scenes, incidents, and details are so fresh and charming that we welcome it as an old friend with a new and attractive face. The beginning of the Opera is delightful in its rustic sweetness and joy. After an overture which reproduces some of the more significant themes in the body of the work, including a Saltarello, we see the cottage in which *Fior d'Aliza* dwells with her

parents, *Antonio* and *Magdalena*, under the shadow of a huge and favourite chestnut-tree. Within, the maiden is singing gleefully; and from without, *Geronimo*, a young peasant who has always associated with her on the footing of a brother, answers in kindred strains. Then follows a simple air for *Fior d'Aliza*, "O mon doux ami," based entirely on a tonic or dominant pedal, with a distinctive *musette* accompaniment. The young people meet, and an important duet ensues as a matter of course. They speak of their mutual happiness in unaffected strains, till at length *Geronimo* ventures to tell his companion why she is so glad. This he does in an *Andantino cantabile*, "Sais-tu pourquoi tout rayonne en ton âme?" marked by considerable grace and fervency of expression as well as melodic beauty. "It is love," says the young man, "that lights up thy soul;" and she naïvely answers, "Love, sayest thou?" as not wholly comprehending the purport of the remark. In all this, as need scarcely be pointed out, we have an anticipation of "Paul et Virginie." After the duet comes an air for *Hilario*, a good monk who collects alms for the poor of the neighbouring monastery. The worthy brother sings of his "house" and his duties with considerable unction and appropriate sedateness. He is on good terms with himself and all around him; which happy state of things the music, by its easy flow, well reflects. Arrived at the house of *Antonio*, the monk bestows something like a blessing upon the venerable chestnut-tree, commencing a quintett with the four inmates of the cottage, who are nothing loth to join in so agreeable a theme. "O vieux châtaignier! arbre centenaire," exclaims *Hilario*, the others answering, "Puisses-tu, respecté de la hache et du temps, reverdir encore dans cent ans?" The quintett is short and unpretending, but quite in harmony with the occasion and subject. So far the Opera is an idyll all redolent of the flowers of Eden, but in the finale of Act I., which we now reach, the genius of evil makes his appearance. Four woodmen enter, armed with axes, and announce that their errand is to cut down the tree. This purpose they state in a brusque and rhythmic two-part chorus, at the close of which *Antonio* pleads for his favourite in the true spirit of a well-known English song, while his wife invokes the name of the Madonna. But the woodmen are under orders, and simply repeat their chorus. Then *Geronimo* speaks to the effect that it will be the worse for the first man who lifts axe against the venerable trunk. At this crisis a diversion occurs. *Fior d'Aliza*, who has wandered away, shrieks for help; *Geronimo* runs in the direction of her voice, a shot is heard; and presently the young fellow returns, avowing that he had killed a man who dared to offer insult to his "sister." The victim is a captain of gendarmes, whose love had been rejected by *Fior d'Aliza*, and who in revenge had purchased the cottage of *Antonio* that he might, as landlord, rightfully cut down the tree. *Geronimo*'s act excites the greatest alarm among his friends, not without reason. The gendarmes appear on the scene; and the act closes with a long *ensemble* expressing the wrath of the officers at the loss of their leader, the dismay of the onlookers, the anguish of the culprit's parents, and the mutual devotion of the lovers. In this concerted piece M. Massé takes care to keep within his depth. The music is not complicated, nor does it aim at very original effects, but at the same time it fairly expresses the conflicting emotions of the scene, and brings down the curtain with *éclat*.

The second act opens with a recitative and air for *Fior d'Aliza*, full of the trouble that has come upon her. We regard the air, "Hélas, à cette heure triste et suprême," as one of the most expressive and charming in the Opera. Its structure is very simple, but throughout it is instinct with true feeling. At the close of the song, the maiden declares that a ray of hope has come to her. She receives, as she fancies, an order from Heaven to save her lover; the music, like herself, suddenly becoming animated. We now reach the close of day, and the unhappy parents of *Geronimo* prepare to take such rest as they can. Their duet, after the orchestra has played a suggestive *Allegretto malinconico*, is a little dreary, but we forget the fact in the interest of the subsequent scene. *Fior d'Aliza* has assumed the dress of a *pifferaro*, and prepares clandestinely to leave the cottage while the old people are asleep. But *Antonio* awakes, and strenu-