The Doubled Air

Author(s): J. Conway Brown

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down in fragments, so strangely does it hang together when criticised as a whole. Commencing with a commonplace recitative in B minor, we are launched at once into a melody which, in the course of eight bars, is in D major, G minor, B $\flat$ major and back again in D major, conveying a restless feeling by no means in sympathy with the words. The harmonies are crude, but the mode of noting them still more so: for instance, the modulation from B $\flat$ to D is made by means of A $\sharp$, E $\sharp$, D $\sharp$, G $\sharp$, a chord which we should be frightened to attempt to figure. Does not Mr. Fowles know that this should be B $\flat$, D $\sharp$, F $\sharp$, G $\sharp$, and that is nothing else but what is commonly called the "German sixth," a simple method of effecting this modulation which has been used for years by theorists in every country. The best part of the song is where the moving accompaniment of quavers occurs, on the 4th page; but the whole piece shows that composing music and making music are by no means the same thing.

BERTINI, SEYMOUR AND CO.

I Pifferari, for the Pianoforte. Composed by Walter Spinney.

MR. SPINNEY has given us a tuneful, but not particularly original, theme in B minor, which we think would have been better written in its true time—12-8. The second subject is good; but the feeble sequence of sixths somewhat mars its effect. The fingering is so profuse that the merest tyro cannot go wrong; but even experienced players will be puzzled to know how a slur extending over four bars is to be reconciled with the direction "*Allegro staccato*." The composer would do well to re-consider this matter should his piece reach a second edition; and we may also mention that the eye would be less distressed if the leading fingers only were printed.

WILLIAM H. BONER AND CO., PHILADELPHIA.

Grand Chant Te Deum, in C, compiled from authentic sources, by F. H. Hodges.

THERE is one plausible reason for singing the *Te Deum* to a chant, namely, that an ordinarily dull congregation may learn its top melody by heart from manifold repetition, and so be enabled, before the conclusion of the canticle, to take part in the performance. This reason is superseded in the arrangement before us, for it comprises eight changes of chant, so that the people will no sooner get one tune into their heads than it gives place to another; and these changes are sometimes divided by an organ interlude of the length of a bar or more, so that the unschooled singers will not know where to sing and where to cease. The text is unfit for chanting, of which there is quite sufficient as applied to the daily Psalms; and we deprecate therefore any appropriation of this canticle to the chant form. There is a pleasant relief in a solo passage in triple measure, to the words, "When Thou tookest," &c.; but what is to become of congregational singing while this goes forward? A bad instance of false relation occurs in this solo, where A natural in the bass follows a chord of F minor. In the chant applied to "The glorious company," &c., we object to the reciting note of one strain and the closing note of another being a discord. Otherwise, the compilation is technically correct.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DOUBLED AIR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—Conscious that I have had my say and ought to trouble you no more on this subject, I would yet beg to be allowed a few words of rejoinder to your correspondent, Mr. Vincent. This gentleman has at last discovered a tune that will not bear the double air without "injury to the music." Now, one defective link will render a whole chain worse than worthless; and one little leak may sink

the stateliest ship. So, in admitting that out of *four* tunes he has examined, *one* can never be sung without danger of injury from the double air, your correspondent virtually concedes the whole argument I have advanced.

But then, as Mr. Vincent shows, there is a dilemma. He says, and he says again, that "those who cannot abide the double air . . . ought never to use a stop like the double diapason," since the last named doubles all the parts. Here I may say that I do not think many organists care to use the 16ft. manuals, except for solo-playing; but I cannot thus escape the difficulty. Rarely is an organ sounded without 8ft. and 4ft. stops being used together, and thus is universally perpetrated the offence (if such it be) of doubling all parts. Many a juvenile contrapuntist has been sorely puzzled by this; and I can imagine such a one saying to his teacher, "You strictly enjoin me that I must employ no consecutive 5ths or 8ths; that I must not sound the major 9th below the 3rd, and ever such a lot more; yet, before you have sat down for five minutes at your organ you draw out stops that really produce all the progressions and combinations you forbid!" The *maestro* will probably tell him not to bother his brains with such speculations, but wait till he comes to the study of orchestration. He will then find, that although the rules he has learned are, with good reason, strictly binding when he is writing for voices only, or instruments of one class only; yet, with equally good reason, they permit considerable freedom when voices and instruments of various properties are to be heard together; and that two notes which create the harshest dissonance when clashed together by voices, may nevertheless conduce to an effect quite pleasing when distributed among instruments of differing *timbre*. A correspondent in your May number explained how different sorts of sound fail to render the best written harmony in a manner satisfactory to the ear. He might have added that they equally fail to make the worst dissonances keenly felt. To prove this point, let the tune 33r, "Hymns Ancient and Modern" (which will not bear the double air *sung*), be correctly played upon 8ft. and 4ft. stops coupled and in tune. All the parts will then undoubtedly be doubled in the instrument; and yet the hearer will experience no unpleasant effect; the organ-builder having carefully imparted sufficiently different properties to all such stops, each of which is really a distinct instrument.

It is a fallacy then to argue that *because* the organ doubles all the parts, *therefore* the voices may do the same. Otherwise we might infer the desirability of introducing a number of voices, giving vent to a plurality of sounds—5ths, 8ths, 10ths, 12ths, 15ths, &c., above the written notes, simply because certain stops in the organ produce all these parts. This, of course, is the height of absurdity; but it is only the logical outcome of the fallacy I have herein endeavoured to refute.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
J. CONWAY BROWN.

Aldershot, June 16, 1874.

P.S.—I should like to know under what circumstances a double air "shows to great advantage in the 7th line, 332, "H. A. & M." It would certainly produce very bad harmony with the alto part. Supposing the latter, however, to have been sung by female voices (like Annie Laurie's) "low and sweet" and the double air to have been rather "robust," there would have been sufficient difference of quality to conceal the faults. I have known such to be the case in the last line of tune 24, "H. A. & M.," where the double air proceeds in 5ths with the alto.

SOLMIZATION OF THE MINOR SCALE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—Although I cannot, at the present moment, bring forward any *statistics* to my support, I think I may safely inform Mr. Gill that the great majority of authors of elementary works on Sol-fa-ing, with the moveable Do from the established Notation and most *practical teachers* adopt La as the key-note of the Minor Scale. That some *theorists* have advanced plausible objections to this plan I am aware, but I have never yet seen any of sufficient force to shake