Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Metropolitan Liedertafel, Melbourne

Author(s): Thos. J. Connor

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 26, No. 512 (Oct. 1, 1885), p. 614

Published by: Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3356765>

Accessed: 21-10-2015 11:38 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>

condemned as prompted by causes incompatible with genuine enthusiasm for the art. With this opinion I can hardly concur, and would quote in contravention thereof the remark made by a distinguished and enthusiastic musician, himself the conductor of a well-known choir: "We have everything to lose, and nothing to gain, by entering for such a contest. Even if we were to win, we should add nothing to our present reputation, which is founded on the execution of a different sort of music from that selected for this competition."

With all respect for the able writer in the *Daily Telegraph*, I cannot share his belief in the immense value of such tournaments, or his conviction that their spread will be coincident with the spread of a national interest in music. As an initial stage I believe them to be distinctly useful, just in the same way that talent in other departments is often elicited by prize competitions. One of the most able of our provincial journalists dates his rise into notice from the day when he won a handsome honorarium for an essay on a political subject. But it would be unreasonable to expect a man to devote himself to a career of competition, a career which cannot escape the charge of pothunting; and what is true of individuals is also true of associations. Competition should never be looked upon in any other light than in that of a means; and the wholesale introduction of the competitive system in art would, I firmly believe, have the same levelling effect upon the artistic intelligence that it undoubtedly has exercised in the sphere of scholastic acquirements. The competitive system has developed the mechanism of preparation known by the vulgar but expressive term of "cramming," a process not altogether unknown, I fear, to candidates for degrees and distinctions in music. Such a term would not, of course, be applicable to the training of choruses for public contests; but such training, if of frequent occurrence, would not be without its dangers. It would restrict the conductor in the choice of works to those prescribed by the organisers of such contests (precisely in the same way that schoolmasters are often determined in their choice of subjects, not by the capacities of their pupils, but by the requirements of the Oxford or Cambridge Local Examination Boards) and substitute for the true function of musical associations a craving for material distinctions and notoriety. Perhaps I have been unduly alarmist in the foregoing remarks, and the event will falsify my misgivings; but I have been haunted all along in my reflections upon this subject by a saying of Berlioz's to the effect that the most musical country is not that which possesses the greatest number of musicians, but which has given the most creative and original musicians to the world. We cannot make a country more musical by merely multiplying the number of musicians, unless their motive in following this career be a sincere love of art. With all that the writer in the *Daily Telegraph* has to say upon the value of co-operation and combination I am entirely in accord. It is only by the union of detached vocal and instrumental resources that an adequate performance of certain monumental works is possible outside the great musical centres, and I have nothing but praise for any system of organisation which has so admirable a consummation for its end and aim. But if the ensuing decade is destined to witness any considerable spread the competitive system in music, I trust that it may be jealously safeguarded from any of the dangers to which actual experience and the argument from analogy prove it to be liable.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

C. L. G.

METROPOLITAN LIEDERTAFEL, MELBOURNE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In a letter to you some four years back, this Society was brought under the notice of your readers, and I now wish to inform you that the one hundredth Concert was given in the Town Hall, on June 29, before an audience filling the building, many persons having to stand the whole evening. The programme included the first and second parts of Berlioz's "La Damnation de Faust," with English words specially translated by Madame Carlotta Tasca (hon. member), the parts of *Faust*, *Mephistopheles*, and *Brander* being taken by Messrs. Armes Beaumont, T. Bergin, and

S. Angus respectively. Herr Louis Pabst, pianist and composer, made his first appearance before an Australian audience.

A noteworthy feature in connection with this (centenary) Concert was that every one of the hundred Concerts has been conducted by Mr. Julius Herz. Mr. Herz's health has, I am sorry to say, given way from overwork, and the Society has granted him six months' leave of absence on full pay.

Since the former letter the tariff of the Society has been doubled, the subscription having been raised to two guineas, and the extra tickets (sold to subscribers only) to 7s. 6d. for gentlemen and 5s. for ladies. There are about 700 subscribers, with a list of many waiting for admission, and nearly 100 singing members—men only.

Within the past four years the Society has produced (substituting boys' for women's voices when required) Wagner's "Lohengrin," first and third acts; "Tannhäuser," third act; "Love feast of the Apostles" and Mendelssohn's "Egeus"; and the first act of the "Huguenots" will shortly be placed in rehearsal. These works are, of course, in addition to a large number of the best available part-songs.

The Society's Concerts are eagerly looked for, as they serve to introduce most of the leading artists, vocal and instrumental, who visit Melbourne. Eight Concerts are given—four for ladies and gentlemen in the Town Hall, and four for gentlemen (Smoking Concerts) in the Athenæum Hall. At the former large orchestras are almost invariably employed, and the following works, among many others, have been given, several for the first time here—viz., Mendelssohn—A minor (Scotch) Symphony, Italian Symphony (Op. 90), G minor Concerto (piano), and Concerto (flute); Beethoven—E flat Concerto (piano), Sinfonia Pastorale, F (No. 8) Symphony, D (No. 5) Symphony, C (No. 1), Symphony C minor (No. 5), Overture Leonora (No. 3), Overture ("Fidelio"), and a portion of Ninth Symphony; Wagner—Grand Festival March, Overture to "Tannhäuser," Introduction to "Lohengrin" and L'Entr'acte, Charfreitag Zauber; Weber—Concertstück (piano); H. Herz—Concerto (piano, chorus and orchestra); Hugo Ullrich—Symphony Triumphale (No. 9) and B minor (No. 6); Saint-Saëns—"Danse Macabre"; Liszt—Concerto (piano); and Pratten—Concertstück (flute), &c.

We find, at this distance from the musical centres of the world, a great difficulty in keeping up a supply of suitable male-voice choruses (two tenors and two basses), and will very willingly receive samples of such from any source. Latterly much valuable help has been rendered to us by Mr. Arthur Reed, secretary of Apollo Glee Club of Boston, U.S., Messrs. Novello and Co., Messrs. Chappell and Co., and Messrs. Augener and Co., for which we return our heartiest thanks.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

THOS. J. CONNOR, Hon. Sec.

17, Collins Street East, Melbourne,

July 13, 1885.

THE ESTES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Mr. David Baptie, in his Musical Biography, informs us that Thomas Este (or Est), the music typographer and publisher, was born about 1550 and died about 1625; that Michael Este, the madrigalian composer (supposed to have been a son of the preceding), was born about 1575 and died 1638 (according to Mr. Rockstro).

Now, in a fine copy of the treatise on "The Art of Divine Meditation," by Joseph Hall, D.D., "printed at London by Humphrey Lownes for Samuel Macham, 1614," and which is before me whilst writing, the following passage occurs in Cap. iii., "Concerning Meditation Extemporall" (defined to be that occasioned by outward occurrences offered to the mind, as distinguished from formal or "deliberate" meditation):—

"Thus that learned and heavenly soule of our late *Estye*, when wee sate together and heard a sweete comfort of Musicke, seemed upon this occasion carried vp for the time beforehand to the place of his rest, saying, not without some passion, What Musicke may we thinke there is in heauen?"