This article was downloaded by: [McMaster University]
On: 04 December 2014, At: 05:46
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered
Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41
Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK

Proceedings of the Musical Association

Publication details, including
instructions for authors and
subscription information:
[http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/
jrma18](http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/jrma18)

On the Fallacy of the Repetition of Parts in the Classical Form

Ferdinand Praeger Esq.
Published online: 28 Jan 2009.

To cite this article: Ferdinand Praeger Esq. (1882) On the Fallacy of the Repetition of Parts in the Classical Form, Proceedings of the Musical Association, 9:1, 1-16, DOI: [10.1093/jrma/9.1.1](https://doi.org/10.1093/jrma/9.1.1)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jrma/9.1.1>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not

be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

NOVEMBER 6, 1882.

EBENEZER PROUT, Esq.,

IN THE CHAIR.

ON THE FALLACY OF THE REPETITION OF
PARTS IN THE CLASSICAL FORM.

BY FERDINAND PRÆGER, Esq.

OUR time of progress is often specially designated a critical and even hypercritical period. But whilst so much deep thought and true feeling have flowed from the pens of profound thinkers in every direction, it has occurred to no one to attack a barbarous remnant of bygone times in music. The idea might have appalled one less deeply convinced than myself. But one must have courage to enter the lists for what one has well weighed and found to be true. I propose to deal here with no less a matter than *the entire abolition of all part-repetition* in music—e.g., in symphonies, sonatas, quartets, &c. Can there be anything more inconsistent than these stereotyped repetitions? The artist creates a work from his innermost soul, and places it before us in its entirety so that we might behold the same mirage which enchanted his mind, and follow him with the unabated energy of all our mental faculties. He receives us, as it were, upon his Mephistophelian mantle, and carries us in a trice across giddy heights and rugged rocks, over charming valleys, purling brooks, and roaring torrents. He transports us to the pinnacle of joy, and anon dashes into the abyss of sorrow, thrilling us with the ever-changing kaleidoscope of human emotions. Happy is he whose receptive powers can arouse that sympathy which warms into enthusiasm for the master's vision of the ideal. He approaches nearest to the creating genius.

A strong dislike of part-repetition is among the earliest recollections of my youth, and I never lost an opportunity of indoctrinating my fellow-students with my heterodox opinions. I remember, when a boy at school, that our Greek master, a celebrated scholar, and a man for whom we all entertained

feelings of great affection, always admonished us in a touching address which had been prepared with much oratorical skill. His appeal would have deeply touched us had he not, as soon as the first recital was finished, at once began to repeat, *in toto*, the whole well-studied oration, I suppose under the mistaken notion that its effect would be intensified by repetition, instead of which it fell flat and missed its mark. All will readily admit that a first impression, however striking, is weakened when followed by an immediate repetition.

Would ever a poet think of repeating half of his poem ; a dramatist a whole act ; a novelist a whole chapter ? Such a proposition would be at once rejected as childish. Why should it be otherwise with music ?

Let any one imagine what a disagreeable impression would be produced if a gifted orator were, in the midst of his speech, to begin to repeat from the commencement. Would it not be considered a barbarism if the whole of an act, of however grand and intellectual a play, were at once repeated ? Innumerable musicians have honestly, but *naïvely*, explained that the repetition of parts helps to a better understanding, and that decidedly one becomes more conversant with the intentions of the composer on a second hearing. But would not this apply to the works of all the fine arts ? If such an argument is to be admitted for the tonal art only, I say let the student, who cannot on a first hearing follow the subtleties of the master-mind, take the work to his silent chamber and go through it *five hundred times* if he will, until he has mastered it.

My contention does not apply to rhythmical compositions—*e.g.*, dances, marches, &c. The case stands entirely different here. In rhythmical compositions of this class, the music itself holds but a *subordinate* position. It is but the supporting accompaniment of rhythmical evolutions, supplying the necessary and unchanging accents of the physical movements. Were it not for the familiarising repetition of the tonal phrases the music would absorb too large a share of attention, since in dances and marches accent is the all-important feature. As a substitute, one might even eschew the melody, and supply the required accent by the rhythmical beating of time.* Dance music, however, has the advantage of the animating sound. It consists of short detached phrases, which are not worked out, as they are not intended to be followed with the undivided attention of the dancer. They are but the auxiliaries to the principal object, which is dancing. One could as little sustain a philosophical argument during a dance or a march as attempt to recite Hamlet's

*That this is a natural method is proved by the rhythmical clapping of hands, &c., resorted to by many savage nations as an accompaniment for their gyrations.

soliloquy "To be or not to be," yet ejaculations full of intense meaning might easily take place. Some dance rhythms, however, have been transferred into the regions of high art, and made component parts of the so-called highest classical form—*i.e.*, the Sonata. Although under these circumstances the Waltz, Minuet, Gavotte, Bourrée, &c., are ennobled in character and intensified in expression, they have still, like all other dance rhythms, retained their original properties of detached unconnected parts.

The almost infantile objection that the hearer understands the part better when repeated need not trouble us. In order to thoroughly grasp all the deeper meanings of a work of art, how often must one not study it? and only after such a study can one accurately gauge its value. And does not one discover, even after centuries, beauties hitherto unknown in the works of the greatest master-minds? We must not lose sight of the purpose of an art-work—*viz.*, that the master places before us the perfect completed image which his seer-like eye beheld. Why, then, interrupt the continuity of ideas and impair their cohesion, so to speak, by a redundant repetition? Are we ever impressed twice in precisely the same manner? Are not human feelings constantly influenced by a variety of adventitious circumstances? The more impressive the means of expression employed, the more they pale on repetition. As an *ad captandum* illustration, I would refer to the opening phrases of Beethoven's C minor Symphony, in which the appalling strokes of Fate's dread summons cause, like the Inquisition of old, a surging sea of emotions, anguish and misery, hope and rage, than which, perhaps, in the whole world of impressions none more forcible exist, and which we follow with breathless excitement to the end of the part. Then, on the repetition of the first part, *volens volens*, we hear once more Fate's summons. We cannot ask again, as we did at first, with an icy-cold shudder, "What means this?" and receive the answer, "It is Fate knocking at the door," as Beethoven himself interpreted it. We went through this only a few minutes ago; and, deny it who will, the reappearance of Nemesis—without sacrilege, be it said—reminds one strongly of the return of Basilio, in the "Barber of Seville," with his repeated "Good night."

Of course, the force of habit is an obstacle difficult to surmount, and, in my mind's eye, I see a number of worthy musicians greatly shocked and angered at such nihilistic innovations. "What! censure our great masters? Improve upon Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven?" Yes, that is my firm conviction: only make the experiment. Indeed, the phrase that leads back to the beginning of the part which is to be repeated, is at best only a clever device; while, in

innumerable instances, even in the work of genius, it has the character of patchwork, and often is so careless and forced a passage as to encourage the belief in my mind that the "repeat" was a concession grudgingly granted to precedent.

The theory that music is evanescent, and therefore needs the help of repetition, has found strong supporters both in the philosophical and musical worlds. That profound thinker, Cousin, asserted that the greatest charm of the tonal art lay in its "non-descriptiveness," and that the pleasurable sensations excited were caused by its vagueness and indefiniteness. Powerful as the argument of the French philosopher on the first blush would seem to be, I do not rate it higher than the opinion of the unmusical Goethe that the setting to his "Egmont" by a very common-place German musician was superior to that of Beethoven's immortal tone painting. However great the mental faculties may be in one direction, the want of musical education is as much a barrier to the understanding of the tonal art as the lack of knowledge is to any particular language. Need I cite Sir Walter Scott, who, notwithstanding his high literary gifts, considered music merely as so much "tingle-tangle"; even the impressionable nature of the genial Dickens was completely impervious to the pathos of high-class compositions. What I assert is that music is a language, and must be learned to be understood, like any other language. I have, indeed, for many years nursed the idea that a dictionary compiled by an earnest musician from the works of the great composers would be a most valuable acquisition to all students of the tonal art.

Who is there that will deny that a study of the manner in which the great masters have severally typified love, hate, anger, rage, &c., would not tend to dispel that vague feeling of indefiniteness which leads the uninitiated to regard the working-out of high-class compositions as the intricate windings of a maze? But it will be retorted that there are musicians who frankly acknowledge their inability to follow the logical sequences of the great masters. To them I must honestly confess that, in my opinion, their studies have not been profound enough. They may have mastered the *technique* of their art, but the philosophy is wanting. The body is present but the spirit is absent.

Admitting, then, that the art of the musician is as much a language as the art of the poet, and, like the poet's art, it contains within itself the means of expressing sensations and feelings equally as the poet's art, then, since any whole part-repetition in poetry would be rejected as childish, or as the emanation of a disordered brain, why should it be otherwise with music?

Having some time since been requested by the Editors of the *Neue Zeitschrift* to send some fragments of my MS. "Philosophy of Music," I forwarded them the part which now forms the subject of the present paper. As was to be expected, the opinions I then uttered raised a whirlwind of dissension, and a Berlin critic hurled all the invective he possibly could at me. But, notwithstanding this, I owe him thanks, for, in his rancorous denunciation, he did me the honour to reproduce the whole of my argument, for which I here beg to tender him my warmest thanks, and only regret that I have quite forgotten his name. But I am convinced that when future generations review this part-repetition, they will look upon it with as much risibility as we now regard the ponderous wigs of Bach and Handel, or the pigtail of Frederick the Great.

I have always availed myself of every opportunity to test the vitality of my opinions in this respect, by gauging those of musicians and every thinking man, and I am happy to be able to say that I count many more *ayes* than *noes*. I regret that I am forced to admit that many musicians of note, who agree with me and whose names would add great weight to my argument, timorously recede when pressed to publicly avow their assent. They nervously retire at the approach of the conservative critic. Conservatism is undoubtedly the stronghold of much that is great and good in art, but when it blindly clings to tradition, because it is tradition, then, alas! I can but say with Moore, "But faith, fanatic faith, once wedded to some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last."

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, I have first the pleasing duty of offering, in your name, our best thanks to Mr. F. Praeger for his very interesting and valuable paper. It is a paper which ought to give us, I think, plenty of opportunity for discussion, for the subject of which it treats is one of considerable practical importance. I should like to say a few words which have been suggested to me as Mr. Praeger has read the paper. In the first place, I am much afraid that I shall have to be included in the class which he referred to of "Conservative critics," for, although I do not value things merely because they are old, at the same time I am not disposed to do away with the old forms unless I see some reason for improving them; and while I agree with a great deal that has been said, I cannot help differing

from many of Mr. Praeger's remarks. I think there is a great deal to be said on the side which he has rather made light of, or perhaps hardly put forward so strongly as, in my opinion, it deserves to be put forward. There is no doubt that Mr. Praeger is right, in a certain point of view, in speaking of repeats as a barbarous relic of bygone times. It comes down to us in the Sonatas from the suites. The principal form of the Sonata, the first movement form, which we call the binary form, is the distinct outcome of a portion of the suite movements, as we find them in the old suites of Bach and Handel. In these suites the first part was repeated; for instance, the prelude in D in the second book of Bach's 48 Preludes and Fugues is a very good example of that old form, the form which was the producer of the binary sonata form, the one of which Mr. Praeger has been talking to us. There we find the first theme in the key of D going into the key of A, the first part being repeated; the second commences in A and leads us back to the original key of D, in which it concludes. There we have the origin of the repetition of the first movement. That form was adhered to by Haydn, Mozart, and even by Beethoven, at first. In so far as concerns the repetition of the two parts, both first and second, you will frequently find them both marked for repetition in the early Sonatas of Haydn and Mozart, and in even one or two of Beethoven. The Sonata in F, Op. 10, No. 2, is one in which I remember the second part is repeated, and it is the same thing with the Sonata in A, No. 2, of the set of three dedicated to Haydn, although, as matter of fact, they are not repeated in actual performance. There we see the relics of that old form. But I think there is something to be said for the repetition of the first part, the part that is called the exposition, and that is this—Mr. Praeger mentioned that the argument that was frequently put forward in favour of it was that we wanted to hear the exposition, the part in which the subjects are set forth twice, so as to impress it more upon the ear. Now, I think there is considerable amount of reason in this, if you bear in mind the difference between music and all other arts. Mr. Praeger says, if we do this why not repeat the first part of an orator's speech, or why not repeat one entire act of a drama? I do not think the cases are at all parallel. If you hear an orator speak, or if you hear the first act of a drama, it is in a language intelligible to all; every word conveys a distinct and definite impression at once. There is no occasion to repeat that; you know perfectly well the first time what the orator has said; but music is a much more vague and indefinite language—it does not speak to us, at least to me, with the same distinctness and directness as a written language. If anybody asked me what I supposed a Beethoven Sonata

meant, I could not put it into words to save my life; no more could most of you, although you were fully sensible of the charm of it. But if you hear a new work there is this advantage to be obtained of hearing it twice: the ideas are much less distinctive in the language of music than of speech, and, therefore, there is more gained by familiarity with them. Again, there is another point in support of this view, and that is, if you go to a picture exhibition, and look at a picture, you can keep on watching the particular portions of this picture with which you want to become familiar, and impress them on your memory as long as you choose. You are not obliged to go on immediately from that part to another. In the same way, if you are reading a poem to yourself, and you come across a passage that strikes you, or that perhaps you do not quite understand, if it is of rather obscure construction, like some of Mr. Browning's, for instance—some passage you do not catch the full meaning of the first time—you can go back to it; but in hearing a new symphony, if there is a passage you cannot make out the meaning of at the first hearing, you do not have the chance to say, "Let us have that over again, please, before we go on"; and while you are thinking about that, something else comes and puts it all out of your head. It seems to me an advantage from that point of view to be able to hear these principal subjects put forward distinctly by having them as they are, in the large majority of cases, twice over, and so when they come to be treated with the skill which Beethoven and Mozart know how to treat them in the subsequent part, they may be recognised in their somewhat altered form: I have had a very apt illustration of this very point only this afternoon within the last hour. I have just come from St. James's Hall—Mr. Walter Bache's recital. Amongst other things Mr. Bache played there was Liszt's Sonata in B minor. In that there is no repetition at all. Well, I cannot say that I was not able to follow the Sonata; I had heard it once before played by Mr. Beringer, but it is not a Sonata I am familiar with. I was able, after a while, to recognise, in an indistinct sort of way, the subjects, or some of them; I will not say none of them escaped me; probably they did; and I should be sorry to say I heard the whole of them, and I think if, in the exposition, as it is called, the first part of the Sonata had been played over twice instead of once, I should have been in a much better position to follow the subsequent developments. I think that is a very strong reason for keeping to repetition, at all events, in many cases. It is quite true that in some of his later works, not in all, Beethoven did away with this repetition of the first part, and that recent composers have also done the same thing. But I think there is another point that ought to be

borne in mind, and that is the balance between the lengths of the different portions of the movement; that is to say, the length of the exposition as compared with the subsequent development. As far as my recollection goes, and I am speaking now from general impression, wherever you find the first part of the movement of Beethoven's not repeated, provided that it is an extended composition, as in the case I am now referring to, you will find that that part is proportionately longer as compared with the rest of the movement than it would be if there were a repetition. Mr. Praeger referred to the Symphony in C minor; the opening of that is very concise; there is a great deal of development afterwards, and by the repetition of the first part the adequate balance between the exposition of the subjects and their subsequent developments seems to me to be about maintained. On the other hand, if we take such a movement as the first movement of the great quartet in F, the first of the three Rasoumowski quartets, there we find a much longer development, but there is no repeat. The development is three or four times as long as in the first movement of the C minor symphony. Therefore, sometimes by throwing out this repeat we should rather disturb the balance of parts. But I must not trespass too much on your time, for I am sure there are many others who would be happy to say a few words on this interesting subject. Mr. Praeger must pardon me for taking a distinctly hostile line to that which he has taken up, but I cannot help it.

Mr. BANISTER.—I am afraid, Mr. Chairman, that you have taken out of my mouth any ideas that did occur to me as Mr. Praeger was reading his paper. I would only say in addition to what you have said about the indefiniteness of certain ideas, that we often get a somewhat unfavourable opinion even of a great work on the first hearing, which is considerably amended afterwards. I think that is within the experience of us all. Then, with respect to one remark Mr. Praeger made, that the first impression can never be reproduced in all its freshness, that would almost be a reason for never hearing any music again at all. But we like to hear a musical work again. It is perhaps perfectly true that there is a certain bloom of youth about a first impression which is never reproduced. Would that it could be—in life and in music too. Still, we do like, if possible, often to hear again certain beautiful works, and we like to hear that which is to be argued out. That is another point. The first part contains the exposition of that which is to be argued out, and we like to have a very clear idea of the proposition first of all. Before I sit down I would make Mr. Praeger a present of this statement of fact, that Sterndale Bennett once said to me, "Banister, I

should like to abolish all repetitions in music"; but we never argued out the point.

Mr. BARRY.—May I add to that, that Sterndale Bennett once, whilst talking to me on this subject, advocated in performance leaving out repetitions, unless it involved leaving out some part of the work. For instance, in the "Scotch" symphony, if you leave out the repetition there, you must leave out some dozen bars altogether.

Mr. CHARLES STEPHENS.—I am under the impression that we may fairly assume that the repetition of parts in many cases was merely a concession to the fashion of the period, and I think it is very probable that many of the smaller sonatas of Haydn were merely marked with "repeat" because it was the fashion to repeat those parts. I think it is traditional that the second part, although marked for repeat, is, as the Chairman pointed out, not usually repeated in such works. But I think we must at the same time pay deference to the feelings and wishes of the composer when they are distinctly indicated. As I said before, in those older specimens it is possible that the repeat was merely the fashion of the day; but if you come to the case of Mendelssohn, we know very well he wrote many of his works without any repeat at all; but if you take the "Scotch" symphony, and the "Italian," as Mr. Barry has remarked, there is in those works a certain portion that you must leave out if you do not observe the repeat, because there is what is called a first and second time. I might also refer to the quartet in D minor of Mozart, in which there is a first and second time, indicating the absolute necessity of repeating, unless you leave out some portion of the author's composition. I can also speak of Mozart's pianoforte quartet in G minor, where he has a coda following the work for the second time of performance of the second part. All those are clear indications that the author really intended that these parts should be repeated, and I think the case of Mendelssohn is a very strong one, because his tendency generally is to avoid the repeats of those parts; but where he indicates them, as in the cases I have mentioned, I think we should do wrong to disregard them. At the same time, I am sure Mr. Praeger has made out a very strong case, at all events in reference to those works in which the repeats were merely a concession to a fashion.

Major CRAWFORD.—I would venture to point out one case in which what was undoubtedly mere fashion appears to have been abandoned by modern composers, that was the case of the *da capo* in Handel's time.

Mr. STEPHENS.—That is not quite a case in point; the *da capo* is not the same thing as a repeat of the first part; but I think we must all deplore, even there, the fact that the fashion

of the period was to have a *da capo* of almost the entire song without modification, and, even when the singer had concluded, to still go through much of the work with the orchestra—a fashion on which I think we have much improved in the present modified forms. Still that was the fashion of the day: for instance, in the great song "Let the bright Seraphim" it seems unnecessary to go over the whole of that first portion again, thus closing three times.

The CHAIRMAN.—With regard to the illustration Mr. Stephens has mentioned, "Let the bright Seraphim," I may mention that in the new edition of "Samson," published in the last twenty years by the German Handel Society, corrected from Handel's own manuscripts, there is no repeat in that particular song, but after the second part in B minor immediately follows the chorus. That is so in the new edition, and it appears it was Handel's direct intention.

Mr. G. A. OSBORNE.—I perfectly agree with everything that has been said by our worthy Chairman. If I were not a conservative musician, which I hope I am, I certainly would become so from the remarks he has made. I must say that we have had a very interesting paper from Mr. Praeger. As regards those repeats, of course we have been speaking of the great giants in music; I am not going to allude to them, but to a man whom, although he has passed away from us, we all knew perfectly well as a pianoforte writer—that is Czerny; he never marked repeats for the simple reason that he invariably wrote them *in extenso*. In fact, he did not give you the opportunity to leave them out, for you were obliged to go through them, *nolens volens*. I remember asking a publisher one day how it was that the repeats were not marked with double bars and dots, and he said, "He would not give us a manuscript if we were to do so, because we pay him by the page." He brought his manuscripts with every note written out. Of course I do not ask any one to follow the example of Czerny. I should be very sorry to do so, and I am sure no publisher would accept such a manuscript now. I certainly must say—although, perhaps, it may be my own dulness—that I very much enjoy hearing the first part of a work repeated. It gives me great pleasure. I can perfectly well understand that there is no occasion for a repeat in the first part if it is as long as the second part usually is, and that the latter is not repeated.

Dr. W. H. MONK.—I think there is another point on which we may very well make an inquiry. It has been occasionally the custom to write out the part which is to be repeated, and we know, of course, what a composer means in that case; but with regard to all those compositions in which the repeat of the first part was at a certain time the result of the feeling of the day, did the composer, knowing that, write a short

first part because he knew it was going to be repeated—is it part of his design? Such a question as this would, of course, have to be argued out, composition by composition, author by author, but the decision seems to me to very much hinge upon that question—What was the composer's design? Is it a short first part which, in proportion to the length of the second part, is necessarily repeated to make a homogeneous whole? I do not think this remark has been thrown out by any one else, but it seems to me to be pertinent to the whole question.

Mr. SHEDLOCK.—It seems to me that one principal argument, apart from that which has just been mentioned, is that we like to have a thing repeated, to have it impressed on our memories in order to understand the development; but that argument would disappear when we came to know the work, and do away with the necessity of repeating; whereas, when it forms part of the original design with regard to balance and symmetry of the work it must be retained. If the only argument in favour of it is to impress the subjects on us, when we once get to know the subjects there would be no occasion to repeat, and musicians in private playing could leave out all the repeats, or even in public performance where the audience were supposed to be educated.

Dr. GLADSTONE.—One thing does not appear to have been remarked upon, that as far as I am aware in the case of overtures written in classical form, there is no specimen of a repeat to be met with—I do not know of any.

The CHAIRMAN.—Mendelssohn's Military Overture, Op. 24, is one.

Major CRAWFORD.—And the "Zauberflöte."

The CHAIRMAN.—There is no repeat in that.

Dr. GLADSTONE.—Both are exceptional cases, at all events. It seems to me that the argument raised as to the necessity of impressing the subjects of the first part by repetition ought to apply equally to the overture form; but we do not find it is the custom, whatever the exceptions may be, to repeat the first parts of overtures; in fact, they are not planned for the purpose.

The CHAIRMAN.—I should just like to say, with regard to the point Dr. Gladstone has mentioned, that I think there is this difference between the overture and the sonata—that there is not the same kind of repetition necessary in the subjects, because in the overture, with very rare exceptions, the middle portion, which musicians call the free fantasia, is either omitted altogether or is cut down to very short limits; take, for instance, the "Figaro" overture, where you find just a simple bar or two in the dominant seventh, and you are back again to the subject directly. It is quite an exceptional thing to have much development. The "Leonora" overture may be one,

but it is quite exceptional to find an enlarged free fantasia or development in the middle portion of an overture as there is in the sonata; therefore, as you get back almost immediately to the first part, with very little subsequent development, that may be a reason why a repetition of the first part is not necessary in an overture as in a symphony.

Mr. MOSELEY.—Perhaps I may be allowed to offer one remark on the question which has been discussed this evening. It seems to me that Mr. Praeger has not met with that hostile criticism which he anticipated. We have heard a most interesting discussion on the paper he has favoured us with, and although all the speakers have been against his contention, at the same time they have treated him in a most conciliatory spirit. For my own part, I should like to say that I throw my weight into the balance with Mr. Praeger, and for this reason. The main object of the repeat is, no doubt, to impress the leading subjects on the memory; that I think is pretty generally conceded. Now, if that is the object, and if it is acknowledged and accepted on all hands that it is useful to repeat the "first part" in order to impress the subjects upon our minds before the working-out commences, it will follow equally with regard to the rest of the sonata that that ought also to be repeated. I put it in this way, *a fortiori*, it ought to be repeated because it is much more difficult to follow the working-out of a subject than to follow the subject itself, which is very often quite a simple one. But really it seems to me there is no logical reason for the repetition of the first part except this, that a large number of persons cannot, as I think has been stated, easily remember a theme, and therefore they require to have it repeated. Now for those really I do not think we ought to make any provision whatever. If a sonata, or symphony, or any other work of art, is worth hearing at all it is worth hearing many times. No doubt it may be said, this or that work does not create a favourable impression on the first hearing in many instances, because people do not understand it. With that argument I say we, as musicians and as amateurs, have nothing at all to do. We must make no concession to the vulgar or to the uneducated. If our object is to elevate art, those persons who cannot understand, who have not arrived at that stage of cultivation to understand, must do the best they can to learn from those who can teach them. One remark I think was made with regard to the Symphony in C minor. Mr. Praeger said something about the knocking of Fate. I am not sure—of course, he will have an opportunity of reply—but I think I understood very well what he intended to convey. It seemed to me this, that the freshness is taken off by the repeat. No doubt it is taken off by the repeat, and it has, I think, been accepted that that is the case—that you

must have the freshness of a work taken off by having the idea repeated. But then it is argued that whenever you hear a thing a second time the freshness is gone, the first blush, so to speak, and cannot be recalled. I demur to that, and I say for my own part, and I think, probably, it is the experience of many other persons, that if that work is put aside for some time and brought out again, it comes back with increased freshness, and, with renewed understanding, one enjoys it considerably more; but, of course, if you have this knocking of Fate, or repetition of a particular phrase almost immediately after you have heard it the first time, no doubt the freshness is taken off, and it falls upon you as flatly as possible.

Mr. PRÆGER.—The Chairman said that hearing a work only once was not a parallel case to looking at a picture or reading a poem, and, therefore, as music is less positive than the impression of words it should be repeated. Now, one ought to look first how a language is made. Had I not been afraid of taxing your patience too much I should certainly have gone into several points to prove that music is a perfect language like any other language. A language owes its existence to the people according to their nationalities, having a sign for certain things. I hope there are some fathers here, and any one of them will know that their babies give names to things which remain in the family and become standard words. Is there not such a word as "Boz," that was the consequence of a little child calling Dickens "Boz," and the name was kept? Out of the conglomeration of a number of words a language is formed, according to the climate and the habits of the people; the whole language is built up by the sounds people have given according to their different form; as they have pronounced this way or that way. We have merely to refer to the different Teutonic races to see how they have exactly the same words, only changed a little according to the different form of their mouths and throats. And the language of music is made in exactly the same way. If you were to make a dictionary of all those parts that great masters have used to express love, joy, sorrow, and anger, you would have as good a musical dictionary as those of any other language. That music is not come-at-able like language is admitted. In speech you say, "This is a round table;" but, because music is an art which expresses feelings only, you cannot express "round table" in that language. I ask any one if, with a perfect mastery of expression, he can explain even to himself (in the most serious manner I ask this) his own feelings? Are they not as varied as the 10,000 items we see every day and cannot understand? Can any man say, "Now, I feel *this*, and the next minute *that*, and the other minute *this*." Can he define it? If I were not rated already so much as one of the innocent who admire

Wagner beyond all others, I would tell you to look at his works and see how the feelings of the human heart are delineated there; how you can actually read in the human heart; to those who cannot I only hope that in time they will learn to do so. If you hear a poem, or see a picture, I defy you to retain more of either than a musician retains of a symphony. I can retain a symphony, and I can bring hosts of pupils who can retain a symphony, and be able to sing parts of it to you—who can retain the subjects, and be able to explain them. You must excuse me naming myself in that regard, but as to the sonatas of Beethoven, I have for years taught all my pupils to understand those sonatas from first to last, giving them my own version of what it means. Suppose that version is not perfect, it will always be the version of a thinking musician, who has the thing at heart, for the good of art only and not for his own pocket, which unfortunately so many musicians have more in mind than true art. I am ready at any time to be examined on the point. I have done it to the satisfaction of many great musicians, Richard Wagner being included. That music is a language is to me as clear as anything else. That it is not as much a language as the vernacular of every country is only owing to the difficulty of expressing one's feelings, understanding them, and following them. A man reads an account of some harrowing disaster. If you will excuse me, I will give you one instance. I was dining in Cornwallis Gardens, when all at once there was a great hubbub (building was going on), all the footmen rushed out, and the question was eagerly asked, "What is the matter?" A man had fallen down from a scaffold and broke his neck. A gentleman present said, "Really! Give me a little more of that currant jelly, I never tasted anything so nice in my life." That was a gentleman, a man of education; but his feelings put in music would not produce a work of art. It was his true feeling; he had said what he meant; his whole sympathy had been exhausted, and he wanted a little more currant jelly. I have been laughed at for crying over music. One gentleman spoke about first impression. The whole world is an agglomeration of atoms, and our whole life is composed of so many minutes, hours, and days, and we can have the same impression every day again, and every week, and every month; and after many years we have a similar impression, but the first impression is always the most striking and lasting. You will find from the first impression you will never depart throughout your whole life, especially if a thinking man gives his whole thoughts to that first impression; otherwise, how do you account for falling in love, and marrying almost against your will?—because it is the

first impression; we are not responsible for it, it is a kind of disease—you cannot help your feelings. I have this to say, that had I not been afraid of taxing your patience too long, I would have entered into the matter of *form* altogether. That cast-iron *form* before which conservatism kneels, just as of old they did before the golden calf; it is a worthy thing to be remembered, and to be treated with respect: and so is the wig of Handel and Bach and the pigtail of Frederick the Great, but we do not want to put those on again. However, I have no objection to have those things performed with the repetition; but I should like a young generation to weigh the matter well, and see really whether that is not merely a thing that has come to us like so many others that we have not examined nor weighed sufficiently. As to the first part, and the second part, and the exposition, and all that, I cannot agree with it, because when you see a picture you have no more impression of it than you have of a symphony. I never had; and I have hosts of pupils, amateurs, who have just as much impression of music as of a painting or a poem: but if you want to understand a poem you read it many times over. I know some of the poems of Swinburne you have to read a dozen times to see their full beauty; but would you have them read over to you whenever there was an opportunity of hearing them in public? And so it is with music performed in public. Let those who cannot understand it take them home and study them and practise them at home. Who can say that he has so often heard one of Beethoven's Symphonies that he never hears anything new in it? Do you want any other precedent than the greatest anatomist of the human heart, Shakespeare, who after 300 years still gives rise to fresh publications, especially in Germany, every month. The Shakespeare Society publishes every month, explanatory papers on Shakespeare, and most valuable they are. There is no exhausting a genius. To speak of smaller men, that is quite a different thing. I exclude all those who make music by the yard; they have learnt that it may be done in this way; they are very honourable men: may they prosper; but they cannot go down in the history of the world—that will only leave the high landmarks. The stream of time flows over the rest, and the little men are swamped. They have had their time—the great men who rarely have had any honour in their time stand like mountains; let the little men have their parts repeated as much as they like, provided they do not force me to hear them. I have educated a goodly number—worse luck if it is not a good notion—of amateurs the many years I have been here, and they are all firm of my opinion. I will not tax your patience any longer, but I could name an immense number of men that were of my opinion but did

not dare avow it. Even Moscheles, though he was very conservative, acknowledged it; but when I say why do not you make a point of it, it was always the same thing—"What would the press and the public say?" Schmidt, who was an intimate friend of mine, had the power, because he was totally independent; he was a rich man, and he could have done it. Lately I asked Hans Richter; he said, "If I had my will, I would do away with all repetition"; but when I said, "Why do not you do it?" he said, "I cannot battle against the people." I think it would have been in his case his duty to do so. I have read you this paper, because I thought it was my duty fairly to expose myself to the consequence of being considered a radical, but the goodwill must excuse the deed.

The CHAIRMAN.—I have now to propose a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Praeger for the very interesting paper, which has given rise to one of the most interesting discussions I have had the pleasure of listening to. I am quite sure you will show your sense of the service he has rendered us this afternoon by very heartily and unanimously according him a vote of thanks.

The resolution having been carried—

Mr. PRAEGER said:—Allow me, first of all, to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the kind manner in which you have taken up the question. I thank you heartily, and, if the slightest seed has been thrown out to help to the abolition of part-repetition, I shall consider this to be one of the happiest days in my life.