A Question for Violoncellists

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A QUESTION FOR VIOLONCELLISTS.

À L'ÉDITEUR DU "MUSICAL TIMES."

MONSIEUR,—Je lis dans le Nr. 513, pag. 680, de votre journal, une lettre de Mr. Charles Edwards, par laquelle il demande si quelqu'un peut lui donner des renseignements sur l'auteur d'un violoncelle marqué, d'après lui: "F. Fillement, père, à Crémone."

D'abord, je pense que Mr. Charles Edwards se trompe en écrivant "Fillement." C'est "Pillement" qu'il faut lire; mais je sais que la marque, au fer rouge, est faite de façon à favoriser l'erreur.

Le père Pillement, comme on le nomme dans le commerce de la lutherie, était originaire de Mirecourt (Vosges, France), la patrie de presque tous les luthiers français. Il travaillait à la fin du dernier siècle, et peut-être encore au commencement du XIX^{me}. et a laissé beaucoup d'instruments.

L'expression "A. Crémone" n'est autre chose que l'enseigne de sa boutique, car il ne travaillait pas même à Paris, m'a-t-on assuré; mais à Mirecourt, et se contentait de signer ses violons de Paris. Ses instruments n'ont jamais eu une grande réputation, et cependant, on en trouve parmi une de bons, et même d'excellents. Il n'y a pas plus de deux ans, je lisais dans un journal musical qu'un artiste de renom, en tournées et possesseur d'un excellent violon Italien, exécutait presque toujours dans les concerts sur un Pillement dont-il faisait beaucoup de cas. J'ai vu des instruments de Pillement, bien construits (et notamment de violoncelles), d'un bois sain et d'une soupe correcte, ils étaient épais de bois, et avaient du son quoique de petit patron.

Leur vernis d'un bien terreux les rend peu agréables à la vue et est peut-être la seule cause pour laquelle ils n'ont jamais été estimés à leur véritable valeur.

Recevez, Monsieur, mes civilités.

S. SNOECK.

Renaix, Belgique, 11 Novembre, 1885.

AMERICAN SPRUCE TREE VIOLINS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In last month's Journal you reported the results of an examination of the violins made from wood of the *American spruce tree*.

May not the fine tone of these instruments result from the drying of the wood by the *American* process, noticed in a recent number of the *Daily Telegraph*. If not, would it not be a good experiment to try the quality of tone of instruments made with the customary hard wood backs and pine bellies, when dried by this *American* process?

Adopting the words at the conclusion of the article, I suggest that violin making is one of the industries to which this scientific aid can be opportunely applied; for by fashioning the backs and bellies *mechanically* to an approximate size and thickness, drying them by this *American* process, afterwards gauging their thickness, and finishing them by hand in the usual mode, cheap instruments may be made.

There is, I believe, a good demand for new violins at the present time, and the prices asked for really fine instruments, as we saw at the late *Inventions Exhibition*, are extravagant.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

OBSERVER.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

. Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.

Our correspondents will oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

Correspondents are informed that their names and addresses must accompany all communications.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Notice is sent to all Subscribers whose payment (in advance) is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed. We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers that, although the music is always kept in stock, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

STUDENT.—The usual combination in a modern orchestra is three Trombones, A., T., and B., and Ophicleide, or Euphonium, or Tuba. As to how to use these instruments we would recommend a study of the scores of modern composers.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF COUNTRY NEWS.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this Summary, as all the notices are either collated from the local papers or supplied to us by correspondents.

BELFAST.—Mr. W. H. Jude gave an Organ Recital in the Ulster Hall, on Saturday, October 31, which was thoroughly appreciated. The programme was well selected, and included compositions by Mr. Jude. Mr. Thomas Rimmer, a pupil of Mr. Jude's, also took part in the Recital, and his playing was much admired.—The opening Concert of the twelfth season of the Philharmonic Society was given on the 6th ult., at the Ulster Hall, before a crowded audience. The vocalists were Miss Gertrude Griswold, Madame Antoinette Sterling, Mr. J. W. Turner, Mr. Maybrick, and Mr. Farley Sinkins, all of whom were highly successful, an excellent and popular vocal selection being provided. The "Kreutzer" Sonata, in which the pianoforte was taken by Herr Beyschlag and the violin by Signor Papini, was a great feature in the programme; and Signor Bottesini's marvellous performances on the double bass were enthusiastically applauded, Signor Papini's violin solos also creating a marked effect. The prospectus of this Society promises during the season—Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Bruch's *Fair Ellen*, Schumann's *Faust*, and Cowen's *Sleeping Beauty*, or Lloyd's *Hero and Leander*. In addition to the artists who appeared at the first Concert, Madame Trebelli, Miss Carlotta Elliot, Mr. Henry Guy, and Mr. Frederic King are announced as vocalists, and M. Hollman (violinello), Miss Agnes Zimmermann, Signor Bisaccia, and Mr. Sidney Naylor (pianoforte) as instrumentalists. Four Concerts will be given during the season, Herr Beyschlag being, as usual, the Conductor.

BRIGHTON.—A Pianoforte Recital was given at the Pavilion by Mr. E. H. Thorne, on October 28, before a large and highly appreciative audience. The three periods into which Beethoven's works have been fancifully divided were happily illustrated by the performance of the Sonata in G (Op. 14), the Sonata Appassionata, and the Grand Sonata in B flat (Op. 106), in all of which (especially the colossal composition last named) Mr. Thorne displayed the highest artistic powers. He also gave, with equal effect, a selection from the works of Chopin. In every respect the Recital was a marked success.—The new organ, built by Bevington and Sons, London, for St. Luke's Parish Church, Brighton, was opened on Wednesday, October 28, by Mr. H. W. Richards, F.C.O., Organist of St. John's Church, Kilburn, London. The instrument is of rich and pleasing tone, and has ten stops on the great, ten stops on the swell, and two stops on the pedal organ, in addition to the usual couplers and composition pedals. After a short Festival Service, Mr. Richards gave a Recital, and most ably displayed the full resources of the organ. The programme comprised selections from the works of Haydn, Mendelssohn, Bach, Beethoven, Calkin, and Meyerbeer.—The Sacred Harmonic Society concluded its Fortieth Season, and the last of the Handel Bi-centenary Series of Concerts, with a performance of *Israel in Egypt*, in the Dome, on Thursday, the 12th ult. The soloists were Miss Mary Rachel, Miss Mackay Robinson, and Mr. Gawthrop, the latter artist gaining an enthusiastic encore for his splendid rendering of "The enemy said." On the whole the performance was most successful. Mr. W. Baker was the leader, Mr. J. Spearing the organist, and Mr. Robert Taylor conducted as usual.—A very successful Pianoforte Recital was given in the Pavilion by Miss Florence Henderson (Gold Medalist, L.A.M.), on Tuesday afternoon, the 17th ult. The programme comprised Beethoven's Sonata Appassionata, Schumann's Etudes Symphoniques, Chopin's Polonaise (Op. 22) and Ballade in G minor, Liszt's Deuxième Légende, "St. François de Paul walking on the waves"; Passépie, by Delibes, and Tremolo, by Gottschalk, all of which were well played and much applauded. Miss Henderson was assisted by Herr Pollitzer, violinist (who joined the Concert-giver in Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata), and Mrs. Upton and Mr. Reakes, vocalists.

CONGLETON.—Sterndale Bennett's *May Queen* was performed in the Town Hall, on the 4th ult., by the Choral Society, before a large audience. The Cantata was exceedingly well rendered, and highly appreciated. The solos were taken by Miss Vinnie Beaumont, Mr. Henry Latham, Mrs. Moss, and the Rev. J. Penrose, all of whom were well received, Miss Beaumont and Mr. Latham receiving several encores. Mr. Nicholls led the band, and Mr. Eyre conducted with ability. The Concert was one of the best and most successful ever given by the Society.

COVENTRY.—A Special Service was held at St. John's Church on Wednesday evening, the 11th ult., in aid of the fund for improving the organ. The building was filled to overflowing. After a shortened evening service, Dr. Stainer's Cantata *The Daughter of Jairus* was performed. The soprano parts were effectively rendered by Masters Ward and Hetherington, and the tenor and bass parts were well sung by Mr. Clark and Mr. Ward. Most of the choruses were given in an admirable manner, thoroughly sustaining the reputation of the choir, and reflecting great credit on Mr. J. G. Robertson, the Choirmaster, who presided at the organ with much ability. As a concluding voluntary, Mr. Robertson gave Bach's Grand Toccata and Fugue in D minor.

DISS.—On October 28 a Choral Service was held in the Parish Church, and a Sermon on Church Defence, preached by the Rev. F. Baggallay, Vicar of St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich, which was listened to with great attention by a large congregation. A special feature was a setting of Psalm cxlv. by the Organist, Mr. Hemstock, sung as the anthem, and well rendered by the choir. The service was intoned by the Rev. A. A. Wilkinson (Curate.) The Rev. C. R. Manning (Rector) read the lessons. At the conclusion of the service Mr. Hemstock played Hesse's arrangement of the National Anthem.

DOLGELLY.—Mr. M. W. Griffiths' complimentary Concert was given at the Public Rooms, on Friday, October 30. The principal vocalists were Madame Lizzie Williams and Eos Morlais, assisted by Miss Madge Roberts, Mr. Edward Williams, and the Idris Choral Society, conducted by Mr. O. O. Roberts. Accompanists, Miss Cox, Mr. Griffiths, Mr. H. T. Jones, Master J. Hugh Jones; violin, Mr. T. Davies. The programme, which was miscellaneous, was well