London University Musical Degrees

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Having thought it necessary to protest against certain tasteless arrangements, it is to me a duty all the more pleasant to draw attention to the discernment evinced by Oskar Kolberg, in his "Piesni Ludu Polskiego" (Warsaw, 1857, 8vo), which contains 466 Polish airs of songs and dance-tunes. Only the melody is given with the words of the songs; deviations popular in certain districts of Poland are indicated by small notes. In the dance-tunes occasionally some harmony is admitted, precisely as the people are in the habit of introducing it. Moreover, the book is embellished with ten coloured plates representing Poles in their national costumes. Oskar Kolberg is a native of Poland, and studied music for some time in Berlin. On his return to Warsaw he made it one of his principal objects to investigate the National Music of his country. He also published 126 Polish airs with pianoforte accompaniments (Posen, 1842, folio). A collection of Polish songs, by A. Sowinski (Paris, 1830, folio), has a French translation printed together with the original words. Especially noteworthy are also the songs of the people in Cracow, published by Konopka (Cracow, 1840); and the songs of the White-Croatians, Masovians, and Russinians on the river Bug, published by K. W. Wojcicki (Warsaw, 1836, two vols.) Songs of the Polish inhabitants in Eastern Prussia have been published by J. J. Lipinski (Posen, 1842, sm. 8vo); Julius Röger (Breslau, 1863, 8vo); Hoffmann von Fallersleben (Cassel, 1865, 8vo).

The Wends are a Slavonic race living in some villages of Lusatia, in Germany. A comprehensive collection of their popular songs, edited by Haupt and Schmalzer (Grimma, 1841, 4to, two vols.), contains 530 songs with the tunes. The words are in Wendish, with a German translation; and the interesting work is illustrated with coloured plates representing Wendish men and women in their picturesque costumes, and various objects illustrative of their manners and customs.

A curious instance, showing how even a distinguished musician may be deceived in hunting out national tunes if he has not made the subject his study, occurs in "Presni Polskie i Ruskie Ludu Galicyjskiego," a collection of popular songs of the Polish and Russian people in Galicia, published by Venceslas Zaleski (Lemberg, 1833, 8vo, two vols.) The second volume contains 160 airs, with pianoforte accompaniments, by Charles Lipinski, the celebrated violinist. He was a native of Galicia; nevertheless he admits in his publication, No. 80 of the set of tunes, an air which is in construction and expression so different from those of his native country that he might have surmised that it could not be Galician, although he was not aware that it is the melody of "Nel cor più non mi sento," from the Opera of "La Molinara," by Paisiello, on which Beethoven has composed beautiful variations, and which is known in England as the air of "Hope told a flatt'ring tale." Other Galician popular songs have been collected and published by Zegota Pauli (Lemberg, 1838, 1839).

The Czechs are the Slavonic inhabitants of Bohemia. A valuable collection of their songs, edited by K. J. Erben (Prague, 1862 and 1864, 8vo, two vols.), contains 811 tunes with the original words. An earlier publication, by Erben and Martinowsky (Prague, 1847, 4to), contains 300 songs with pianoforte accompaniments. Particularly interesting are the incorporated twenty old songs of the Hussites, which a friend of Erben committed to notation from the lips of an old minstrel, in the district of Budweis in Bohemia. These Hussite tunes are mostly in the minor key, but are more wild than sad. Other noteworthy publications of Bohemian National Music are by Rittersberg and Weber (Prague); Frantisek Martinec (Prague, 1856, oblong 8vo); J. Vashak

(Prague, 1844); W. A. Swaboda (Prague, 1829, 8vo); F. L. Czelahowsky (Prague, 1822-27); J. W. Kamaryta (Prague, 1832). There are also two fine collections of Moravian songs, edited by Frantisek Sushil. The first of these (Brunn, 1840) has the poetry printed in 12mo, and the music, consisting of 480 tunes without any accompaniment, in oblong folio. The other contains, in one volume 8vo, 800 songs, with their tunes, and was published in Brunn in the year 1860.

In the charming Wallachian airs arranged for the pianoforte by J. A. Wachmann, a music director at Bucharest, we have an instructive example as to how such music ought to be treated if it is to be arranged at all. In the present instance the difficulty was the greater, since the peculiar succession of tones prevalent in the Wallachian melodies, with the frequent occurrence of the interval called the superfluous (or augmented) second, rather invites the arranger to some unwarrantable treatment. Wachmann has not been misled to extravagances; the genuine melody is always clearly prominent, and the accompaniment renders the peculiar rhythm which distinguishes many of the Wallachian tunes. There are in all sixty-two melodies thus issued by Wachmann, in four numbers (Vienna: Müller; folio), and the first number dates from about the middle of the present century. Wachmann states, in a short preface to the third number, that he has taken great care to retain the original characteristics of the music, that he has not allowed himself to add even a note of embellishment, and that his chief endeavour has been to transfer the music, as he often heard it performed by the perambulating musical bands in Wallachia, to the pianoforte as faithfully as possible. The members of these bands are frequently gipsies. Any musician acquainted with Roumanian music will probably admit that Wachmann has succeeded remarkably well.

It is impossible to bestow a similar commendation on the pianoforte arrangement of Serbian tunes by Alois Kalauz (Vienna: Müller; folio, in two numbers); however, as many of the airs have the Serbian poetry, with a German translation of the words, given with the notation, it is possible to recognise the original tunes, and to pick out the grain from the chaff. Kalauz gives in the second number some Bosnian tunes, which cannot fail to interest the student on account of their great originality. Here may also be noticed the songs of the Slavonic inhabitants of Carniola, edited by Achazel and Korytho, under the title "Slovenske Pjesni Krajns-kiga Naroda" (Laibach, 1839).

(To be continued.)

LONDON UNIVERSITY MUSICAL DEGREES.

By H. HEATHCOTE STATHAM.

LOOKING over the new code of regulations as to the attainment of degrees in music, just published by the London University, one is reminded of the anecdote of Rossini turning over M. Fétis' work on composition at a music publisher's, when the author of the treatise happened to enter. "Ah! M. Fétis," said Rossini, as the numerous chapters on all the varieties of counterpoint and fugue flitted before his eyes, "does it take all this to enable one to compose?" Perhaps the story has two edges to it; for it may be admitted that Rossini, like the imaginary person reproached by Wordsworth, "had faculties which he had never used," and might have turned his genius to higher account had he been willing to give more serious study to musical construction. A thorough grasp of the scientific construction of music, on the basis of the theories which most of the great masters of the art have acknowledged, must, no doubt, be

acquired by any one who would handle with freedom and mastery even the less logical forms of composition; unless when in exceptional cases, as in that of Mozart, such power seems to come by instinct. But this is a very small part of the London University programme, which must be credited with being a scheme for arming the professor of music at all points with a thoroughness which has hardly been proposed hitherto in this country. Of the completeness of the curriculum, as a "preventive measure," there can be little question. None of the great composers could have taken degrees under it. Bach, with his strong and logical brain, and power of steady application, would have been the most likely of them to go in for it. One can imagine Handel dismissing it with, "Te tevil! vot vor sall I tell you of de phenomena of zound, and of hydrosdadigs and hydrauligs—dom your degree!" Mozart laughing it off, in a jaunty little note to one of his *trés cher* correspondents; Beethoven wrapping bread and cheese in it; Chopin dreamingly musing over "the principles of melodial progression" and "the phenomena attending the combinations of two sounds." Mendelssohn would have had more chance of making something of it, and could have got the degree if he had given his mind to it; but then he certainly never would; he was too fond of society.

However, of course, it may be said that the object of a Mus. Doc. curriculum is not to make great composers, but to point out by a distinguishing honour certain men who have taken the trouble to learn all that can be learned about the history and science of music, and who receive a kind of *imprimatur* as recognised authorities, to whom any one, even the distinguished composer himself, may go for information upon any knotty point which it needs science and study rather than genius to unravel. This, again, is not the way in which musical degrees have hitherto been regarded. Of course, one may leave out of the question the sham degrees for merely nominal knowledge which have been rightly falling into utter disrepute; but the existing recognised musical degrees include mainly what is necessary for a good standard of professional knowledge as a musician, being chiefly based on the evidence of sound attainment in counterpoint and the more elaborate forms of composition; and, of course, it is well known that these are often sought by clever young musicians who have no initial advantage of means or connection, and who want the affix to their name as a help to them in making a start in their professional life. There is no reason why a degree should not be sought with this object; but it must be recognised that the London University degree, as proposed, will necessarily stand on a different footing. It would not "pay" any man to go through their curriculum to obtain the degrees merely as a means of getting his name forward. The obstacle is not merely in the large amount of scientific knowledge in regard to the physical basis of music which is demanded, and which would, it may be said, be of no practical value in the ordinary pursuit of the musical profession, but in the fact that, before the musical degree can be attacked at all, the candidate must have passed the general matriculation examination, which requires him to show a competent knowledge in each of the following subjects:—1. Latin; 2, any *two* out of a list of other languages (Greek, French, German, Sanscrit, or Arabic); 3, the English language, English History, and Modern Geography; 4, Mathematics; 5, Natural Philosophy; 6, Chemistry. The details of the acquirements expected under these heads are given, and include considerably more than mere generalities.

If it is the object of the London University to create a high class of scientific musical scholars, with a basis of broad general education, literary and scientific, of course this is an admirable programme, and the only thing needed is to find the people who will have sufficient enthusiasm to work up to it, and who are sufficiently independent to afford time to do so. But it is only reasonable to ask whether this is the object, or whether it is intended to appeal to the musical profession generally? If the latter, then the University have overshot the mark in demanding a degree of knowledge of subjects apart from music which no one intending to make his living by active professional work could possibly have time to acquire. This is to be regretted, because, without intending anything censorious of the musical profession, it will probably be admitted by most readers, including the best class among the professional musicians themselves, that there is nothing more required in the musical profession, or which would tend more to elevate it in social estimation, than a higher standard of general culture than at present for the most part exists within its ranks; and this end would have been far more likely to be attained by giving a musical degree for proficiency in the knowledge and the handling of music as an art, preceded by a more limited matriculation examination, such as would insure that the candidate had received a fair liberal education, but not burdening him with scientific subjects which he may never intend to make use of again, and which, if he means serious work as a musician, he cannot possibly have time to study thoroughly. If the London University degree were framed on this principle, it might, if properly worked, have become an instrument for raising the educational status of the musical profession; but as it is framed it cannot do so, because it attempts too much, and is calculated only to bring forth a small band of musical sciolists. If this is the object, well and good; certainly the degree is hardly one which Handel could have turned over to his "pellows-plower;" only one cannot help feeling that more might be accomplished if less were demanded, and that a general raising of the status of musical education would be of even more value than the production of a few erudite scientific theorists.

For the long list of subjects to be studied we must refer readers to the printed copy of "Regulations," to be obtained from the Registrar of the University of London; we may mention that the Mus. Bac. Examinations include a knowledge of the theoretic physical basis of music, and the production of a composition in five-part vocal counterpoint, with accompaniments for a quintett string band, with the knowledge of the theory of counterpoint and musical form, a critical knowledge of the scores of standard classical compositions, &c. The Mus. Doc. examination goes further on the same lines, and, in fact, is obviously intended to include all that can, so far, be known about music; which of course is as it should be. One or two points in detail seem open to question. For instance, the candidate for Mus. Bac. who is told that he is to be examined in "the principles of the construction of chords" might very fairly retort "Whose principles?" And at all events it would be as well to give some indication whether any particular theory is favoured, or whether an adequate exposition by the candidate of the theory which he considers to be the correct one will pass muster. Among one or two subjects which the Mus. Bac. candidate may claim to be examined in for extra honours is "playing an accompaniment from a figured bass." Is it worth while to keep up examination in an art which the full writing and engraving of modern music has

rendered superfluous? Among the Mus. Doc. subjects occurs "the principles of melodical progression." Here, again, there seems to be a begging of the question. Is every one agreed there *are* principles of melodical progression? And if so, what they are? What would Herr Wagner have to say on the point? On the other hand, there is one subject in the list of great value, and new (as far as I know) in such a curriculum: viz., "the general distinction between physical and æsthetical* or artistic principles, as bearing on musical forms and rules." If the London University can get anyone to settle *that*, they will indeed have done something to speak of, something not a little significant towards parting the sheep from the goats in modern music.

There is one provision, however, in the Mus. Doc. regulations by no means novel, but to my thinking most undesirable—that, namely, which rules that the candidate, having written a test composition in eight-part vocal harmony, with full orchestral accompaniment, shall be required to conduct a public performance of his exercise at his own expense. The objection to this is not merely that, as an able critic in a contemporary has already pointed out, many men who are competent to pass the examination with honour may be very ill able to afford the expense of such a performance; the far stronger objection is that it is undesirable on artistic grounds to make public performances of music written to order and as an exercise. The whole object of such examinations as these is to give proof of proficiency in the scientific knowledge and handling of music; but that is only the means. The end of music is poetic expression, and in that no one can be examined: success or non-success can be estimated only by the emotion of the listeners, and that which is to produce emotion must be the product of emotion, which a composition made to order and to illustrate the scientific difficulties of composition hardly ever can be. Numbers of these test Cantatas are in existence somewhere, and whoever hears them, hears of them, or cares for them? The audience who hear them are only likely to feel, like the organist in Browning's poem:—

So your fugue broadens and thickens,
Greatens and deepens and lengthens,
Till we exclaim—"But where's music, the dickens?"

No; let the candidate write his "exercise" in due form, satisfy the examiners, and then, if he is wise, put it in the waste-basket, and never think of it again.

The perusal of such a curriculum as this, after all, tends to make one melancholy. For, if all analogy in art-history goes for anything, this determination to "know all about it" is one of the strongest indications that what many of us sadly suspect is but too true—that music as an emotional and joyful art is "played out." It is with art as with an organism, you cannot probe and dissect it while it is living; it is only after death that there comes the investigation by the scalpel. Music has lived a short but happy life with the world, and now her heart has ceased to beat and her life-blood to flow, and we sit down before her dead organism to investigate the reason of it, and find out how it was all done, and why it affected us so powerfully. The study is not without interest, though we can never really fathom the mystery even by the help of Helmholtz and his compeers. But will all this learning give us one new emotion in music—one new symphony to speak to us with a voice like that of the Immortal Nine? We have here a splendid machinery for turning out musical professors; but who will turn us out a musical poet?

* Why "æsthetical?" We generally say æsthetic. And if "æsthetical," why not "artistical?" If the termination is right for the one word, it must be for the other.—H. H. S.

"GOD SAVE THE KING."

By WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS.

(Continued from page 318.)

THIS is all George Saville Carey could say concerning the assumption that his father, Henry Carey, had composed "God save the King." The attempts of Carey the younger to obtain a pension failed, and he seems to have accepted the situation with tolerable equanimity. Had other and more weighty evidence been obtainable he doubtless would have brought it into notice. He adds to the foregoing statement:—

I am convinced, had my plea been fairly stated at a great and good man's house, I should have had a *Princely* answer; but his doors perhaps, like Jaffer's, might have been "damnd up," not with "starving creditors," but clamorous petitioners, backed with such irresistible influence that there was nothing to be done for me.

It is only fair here to refer to a statement, which has obtained considerable acceptance, that Henry Carey sang "God save the King" in 1740 at a tavern in Cornhill, at a dinner given to celebrate the victory of Admiral Vernon at Portobello. The evidence adduced to support this assertion is not very direct or precise. A letter addressed to the *Gentlemen's Magazine* in 1796 contains the following passage: "The first time I ever heard the anthem of 'God save the King' was about the year 1740, on some public occasion, at a tavern in Cornhill." Mr. Townsend in 1794 told Mr. John Ashley, of Bath, that his father dined with Henry Carey at a tavern in Cornhill, in the year 1740, at a meeting convened to celebrate Admiral Vernon's capture of Portobello, and that "Carey sang it on that occasion." "The applause he received was very great, especially when he announced it to be his own composition" (Ashley's letter to the Rev. W. L. Bowles, 1828). This third-hand evidence is surely of small value. It is possible that the memory of these gentlemen may have played them false, and that they heard Carey sing some patriotic song resembling "God save the King." There are two songs of Carey's which might have done duty at the tavern in Cornhill. One of them is to the following words:—

He comes, he comes, the Hero comes,
Sound, sound your trumpets, beat your drums.
From Port to Port let cannons roar
His welcome to the British Shoar.
Welcome to the British Shoar.
Prepare, prepare, your songs prepare,
Loud, loudly rend the Echoing Air;
From pole to pole your joys resound,
For Virtue is with glory crown'd.
Virtue, Virtue, Virtue, Virtue,
Virtue is with glory crown'd.

The second song is to be found in a small stage piece of Carey's which he calls "Nancy, or, The Parting Lovers: an Interlude set to music by the author:—"

AIR.—Death or Victory, now must determinate
All disputes with Haughty Spain;
That proud race we'll entirely exterminate,
Or be Masters of the Main.

CHORUS.—Britons, rouse up your great magnanimity:
Let your courage now be shewn!
Till proud Spain shall, with Puslanimity,
For its insults past atone.

If Carey really had been the sole author and composer of "God save the King," how was it that he never included it in any of his numerous publications? and if "God save the King" had been sung at the convivial meeting in Cornhill, in 1740, with so much applause, would it not have been published by one of the many music-sellers who at the time were ever ready to appropriate and publish the effusions of composers of merit or note?

A writer on the subject in *Long Ago*, February, 1874, accounts for the non-publication of "God save the King" by hazarding the supposition that Carey's last printed composition appeared in 1740, and that "God save the King" was probably written imme-