Organ Accompaniments (Concluded)

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and then he will laugh and confess that he only wanted to see if he could hoax you. But when at last the piece does finish, and the perspiring and agitated musician rises from the piano evidently anticipating praise, you see that it was all done in earnest. The same thing takes place at all the concerts with pieces by Liszt, Wagner, Berlioz, Brahms, and, newest of all, Richard Strauss, and the numberless other composers of the new school, who unceasingly produce opera after opera, symphony after symphony, piece after piece." We cannot deny the general truth of these words. Many of us have "been there," and know.

For the present, however, Tolstoy lets music off lightly, with just an indication of modern obscurity and emptiness. But this is only a respite. Execution comes later. On the other hand, summary justice is done upon Continental decadents in painting, poetry, and fiction. Baudelaire and Verlaine, "now accepted as great poets," are whipped with scorpions from the Count's presence. Both are "contemptible and commonplace in subject-matter"; the first elevated gross egotism into a theory and replaced morality by a cloudy conception of beauty; while Verlaine's idea of life consisted in "weak profligacy, confession of his moral impotence, and, as an antidote to that impotence, in the grossest Roman Catholic idolatry." Such, in their kind and manner, are the decadent painters, novelists, and dramatists. The slime of rottenness is on them all.

Do you suppose that Tolstoy encourages, or even permits us to rail against decadent art because we do not understand it? He does nothing of the kind. Mercilessly logical, he turns upon us who prefer what we call a better-ordered and saner art with this argument:—

"Such an attitude towards this new art is quite unjustifiable, because, in the first place, that art is spreading more and more, and has already conquered for itself a firm position in society . . . secondly, and chiefly, because if it is permissible to judge in this way of the productions of the latest form of art, called by us Decadent art, merely because we do not understand it; then remember there are an enormous number of people—all the labourers and many of the non-labouring—who, in just the same way, do not comprehend those productions of art which we consider admirable: the verses of our favourite authors—Goethe, Schiller, and Hugo; the novels of Dickens, the music of Beethoven and Chopin, the pictures of Raphael, Michael Angelo, da Vinci, &c."

All forms of art which have not the feelings of religion as their source and the good of life as their end are thus declared to be false—varying in the measure of their unreality perhaps, but still, without exception, false.

Next month I shall follow Tolstoy into his extended indictment of music as we now know it.

JOSEPH BENNETT.

ORGAN ACCOMPANIMENTS.

By EDWIN H. LEMARE.

(Concluded from page 164.)

It is an accepted truism to say that music is an indispensable element in worship. Nearly every thoughtful and intelligent worshipper feels the power of music, and instinctively demands it. The day has gone by when one can be satisfied with the lifeless and dreary reading of Psalms, Responses, and Creed. One naturally feels that something more is wanting; something which brings life and spirit into the service. Music, we feel, does this. It brings out, at least to those of a musical or artistic temperament, the meaning of the different parts of the service, and helps to convey to the mind what it is apt to lose sight of through constant repetition of well-known phrases.

Now, nowhere is the help of music in this respect more needed than in the saying of the Creed. The Creed has been called "An act of intellectual adoration"; but in order that this may be a reality and not a mere formality, the mind must be in a state of intelligent acquiescence. The constant repetition of the Creed has the effect of dulling the sensibilities as to its meaning; but I think it is possible, by a judicious accompaniment, to bring out the force of the well-known words. The old diatonic style of accompaniment is too monotonous and uninteresting to be considered in any sense a help. Such, for instance, as—

This, of course, merely fulfils the function of keeping the choir in tune; but, judged from an artistic point of view, it would be better to omit the chords and merely sustain an organ note. The accompaniment to the Creed ought to be a complete improvisation in itself: as far as possible in strict time, and with an interesting outline for the melody. The choir should be trained to keep the pitch however softly the organ may be played. If there is any tendency to flatten, a single note held down by the thumb of either hand, say on the Great Wald Flute (8-ft.), will have a far better effect—assuming that the choir have been trained to listen carefully to the organ—than by increasing the tone of the instrument. Listen attentively to the words throughout, and try and get your accents to coincide with them as far as possible. If you should have wandered from the key, get back in good time in order

to prepare for the key of the Amen. A few bars of dominant pedal serve this purpose very well. Regarding the registering, I should suggest the Swell Celeste (if the beats are not too quick) with perhaps sub and super-couplers, or very soft 8-ft. without couplers. Do not herald "the third day" with a trumpet fanfare on the Great, but make your accompaniment descriptive and sympathetic in the way of changes of harmony, in preference to changes

of stops, &c. It goes without saying that no chord should be used in which the reciting note does not form a portion, except possibly during a passage where the reciting note is used as a *pedal*. Every discord should, of course, be properly resolved. We will suppose the choir are reciting the Creed on the note A. Something like the following (which I have written down from a phonographic record, taken at my own church) might be played :—

Andante. $\text{♩} = 60$.
Sw. (soft 8 ft.)
MAN. *p*
Ch. (soft 8 ft. to Sw.)
PEDAL. *p*
&c.

The same remarks apply to the Lord's Prayer, only in this case let your accompaniment be very soft and only just audible in the church.

A few suggestions as to playing Anthems, Masses, &c., from the ordinary pianoforte arrangements of the orchestral score may be acceptable. If your anthem should be taken from one of the well-known oratorios, and a full score of the work is not available, you are, of course, somewhat handicapped; but if it is possible to look at the score first, you can indicate roughly in your copy how the music is laid out for the orchestra. Thus, for instance, the playing of a passage as a solo on the clarinet that is written for the strings would be avoided. A rough idea may be gathered from

the compass of some of the motives and phrases. If a certain phrase went down two or three times to the A below middle C, it would not be written for the oboe. It is a great pity that so many organ stops are wrongly named, as, for example, the Horn stop, which is frequently found in the Swell. This resembles the horn of the orchestra about as much as the double-bass resembles the piccolo! I think the stop that is most akin to the soft tones of the horn is the Great Claribel or Wald Flute. The Swell Oboe, if coupled to this, sometimes adds to the effect, providing the shutters are closed, or nearly so. The stops in an organ by a first-rate builder, that *do* somewhat approach orchestral tone, are the

Flute, Clarinet, and Orchestral Oboe, and if the Gambas are really good one can produce a very good representation of the strings.

Do not be tempted to play the pedal part an octave too low, especially in fugal movements. If you are in doubt as to where the double-bass enters in a fugue, pedal the bass part of the chorus *only in the same pitch*.

A suitable introduction to the anthem is most important. This should, as much as possible, be in perfect sympathy with what is to follow, both in regard to key, time, and rhythm. In many anthems which commence *ff* it is effective to work up a gradual *crescendo* on a dominant pedal, and then to start right away without any pause.

I have occupied so much space that I am obliged to curtail these remarks and leave further suggestions on this subject to a future occasion. In concluding these unpretentious hints on organ accompaniments, I trust I may not be considered a faddist. But I think it better to err—if, indeed, it is erring—on the side of soft accompaniments than on that of a too loud and dramatic style.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

MANY happy returns of the Century to Beethoven's First Symphony. This, the No. 1 of the immortal nine, was first performed at the Burg Theatre, Vienna, on April 2, 1800. The occasion was the first concert that Beethoven—then twenty-nine years of age—gave for his own benefit. The performance began at 7 p.m. and the programme was as follows:—

1. Symphony Mozart.
2. Air from the Creation Haydn.
3. A Grand Pianoforte Concerto "played
and composed" by Beethoven.
4. The Septet Beethoven.
5. Duet from the Creation Haydn.
6. Improvisation by Beethoven on Haydn's
Emperor's Hymn.
7. Symphony, No. 1 Beethoven.

No key, and therefore no clue is given as to the Concerto, but it was probably either that in C or B flat. The Septet had been previously performed at Prince Schwarzenberg's, where it had "pleased immensely."

No less than six months passed before the concert received any notice in the great German musical paper of the day—the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. From the columns of this periodical we learn that Beethoven's Concerto (key not given) contained many beauties, especially the first two movements. The Septet was a work showing great taste and feeling, and Beethoven improvised in a masterly manner. The new Symphony gave evidence of "much art, novelty, and wealth of ideas," but—oh! those "buts" of the critics—the wind instruments were too much in evidence, and thus the symphony was more after the manner of military music (*Harmonie*) than real orchestral music! It appears that there were some quarrels—"differences of opinion" perhaps is better—in regard to the conductorship of the concert. Beethoven thought that Wranitzky was the best man, but the band disliked him and they preferred Conti. Thus, with Wranitzky at their head, they vented

their disapprobation of Beethoven's choice by making mistakes in the concert-giver's "No. 1." In accompanying the concerto they took no trouble in following the soloist—this sort of thing has been noticed within a hundred miles' radius of Charing Cross—they showed no feeling of delicacy, and so on. In parts of the Symphony they even became so lackadaisical that, notwithstanding the conductor's beat, these obstreperous bandsmen—especially the wind players—infused no fire into their performances. Poor Beethoven! Well may the critic pathetically ask: "What sort of effect could even the most exquisite of compositions make under such circumstances?"

THE first performance in England of Beethoven's No. 1 took place at a concert given by Giambattista Cimarosa, at the Great Rooms, King's Theatre, on May 18, 1803, three years after its production in Vienna. (It should be noted that orchestral parts were not printed till the end of 1801.) A search amongst the London newspapers for a notice of Mr. Cimarosa's concert, in order to see what the London critics—if perchance there were any at that time—said about Beethoven's C major Symphony, has proved fruitless. As a matter of fact, the newspapers of that time (1803) were full of war news! Does not history repeat itself?

SOME important alterations have been made in the regulations for the Music Competitions at the Paris Exhibition since the first details were furnished, of which a summary was given in our last issue (p. 167). It had been originally intended that *all* choirs who competed for prizes should sing in French. But when it was pointed out that such a condition would almost exclude foreign choral societies, the authorities obligingly consented to allow foreign choirs to sing in their own languages, and to offer similar prizes to those offered to French choral societies, such awards to be specially competed for by the foreign choirs. The principles upon which the French competitions were primarily planned precluded foreign choral societies from entering; but choral societies from the British Isles will now be able to enter and compete for special prizes open to all foreign countries, providing the entries are sent in soon enough to satisfy the French authorities.

THE annual Bridlington Musical Festival—with a band of 70 players and chorus of 170 voices—is to be held on the 26th inst. The choral works selected for performance are Verdi's Requiem (Manzoni), Coleridge-Taylor's "Death of Minnehaha," and Stanford's "Revenge." The orchestral features will include Beethoven's Eighth Symphony and "Coriolan" Overture, Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" Overture, Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll," Berlioz's "Carnaval Romaine," and the Incidental Music to the "Wasps" of Aristophanes, composed and to be conducted by Mr. T. Tertius Noble. Mrs. Bosville will sing Liza Lehmann's vocal scena "Endymion," and Mr. Bosville will, as heretofore, be the conductor-in-chief. It is satisfactory to learn that the low pitch will be used at the concerts.

THE prize of £20 offered by Mr. Alexander for the best Quintet for horn and strings has just been awarded to Mr. Emil Kreuz. Mr. Alexander is now offering an additional prize for a Pianoforte Quintet, of which particulars may be obtained from Dr. Yorke Trotter, 22, Princes Street, Hanover Square.