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A Musical Inventory under the Terror

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entitled "Fritjof," the libretto whereof, founded upon Tegner's poem, has been compiled by the composer himself. Some extracts of the work, recently performed at the Cologne Conservatorium, greatly attracted the attention of connoisseurs, and the stage performance of the new work is looked forward to with considerable interest. Zoellner, in his new work, is said to avoid the Scylla of merely adopting the old operatic method, while steering clear, at the same time, of the Charybdis of slavishly imitating the new, with its maze of representative themes and painfully laboured orchestration.

The Sängerbund Festival in Vienna has been fixed to take place between August 14 and 18. It is calculated that nearly 900 societies, numbering 12,000 singers, will take part in the performances.

The *Leipziger Tagblatt* points out that there has been a decrease last year in the number of musical publications in Germany, which for many years past had been showing a steady increase in the annual total. The figures are 6,650 novelties in 1889, against 7,169 in the preceding year. On the other hand, the number of literary publications has been considerably increasing during the same period.

Two new operas were produced in Paris last month—viz., "Zaire," by M. Veronge de la Nux, at the Grand Opéra; and "La Basoche," by M. André Messager, at the Opéra Comique. M. de la Nux's work had gained for him the Grand Prix de Rome, but its stage success was but a slight one. "La Basoche," on the other hand, is said to contain all the essentials of a true comic opera; the libretto, moreover, though somewhat extravagant, being well put together, and replete with humorous situations. The new opera will probably be produced in this country by the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

The performances by the newly-founded Society, "Grandes auditions de France," of Paris, which were inaugurated last month with Berlioz's "Beatrice and Benedict," are to include, at no distant date, those of Bach's "St. Matthew" Passion Music and of Handel's "Judas Maccabæus." Both these works will be comparative novelties to Parisian amateurs.

A fine new theatre was opened last month at Catania, amidst great popular festivities. Catania is the birthplace of the composer of "Norma," and the theatre has been named the Teatro Bellini.

"Cavalleria Rusticana" is the title of a new one-act operetta which has just been brought out at the Costanzi, of Rome, with a very pronounced success. The composer is Signor Mascagni, and the work is described as one of the most charming of its kind produced in Italy for years past.

A Signor Filippo Ato has recently given some Concerts at Naples, his instrument being a trumpet which the performer blows with his nostrils! The notes thus produced are, according to the *Gazetta Musicale di Milano*, flute-like and most charming.

An international competition between both brass and string bands, military or otherwise, is to be carried on at Antwerp from the 6th inst. to September 14. The performances are to take place once a week, and prizes to the amount of 5,000 francs will be awarded.

Unlike "Lohengrin," which was but coolly received by the Madrid public some months since, Wagner's "Tannhäuser" has just met with a most appreciative reception at the Spanish capital, both the subject and its musical treatment appealing more directly to the idiosyncracies of the southern nation. It may be added that the solo parts were given exclusively by Italian and German singers, the members of the chorus only being of Spanish nationality.

Victor Nessler, the successful composer of a number of operas of the lighter order—notably of the highly popular "Der Trompeter von Säkkingen" and the "Rattentänger von Hameln" (the latter produced some years ago in this country), died last month at Strasburg. Nessler was born at Balderheim (Alsace) in 1841.

Jean François Janssens, composer, and for many years a highly esteemed orchestral conductor, died recently at Antwerp, his native town, aged eighty.

Giovanni Valente, composer of some successful operettas, and an able professor of singing, has just died at Naples, aged sixty.

Léonce Mesnard, French musical critic and author of an interesting essay on Robert Schumann, died recently at Grenoble, aged sixty-four.

The death is also announced, on the 20th ult., at Paris, of Théodore de Lajarte, the composer of a number of more or less successful operettas, brought out during the years 1850 to 1870, and a musician, moreover, of some considerable learning. Lajarte, who of late years had filled the post of librarian at the Opéra, had attained his sixty-fourth year.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A MUSICAL INVENTORY UNDER THE TERROR.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—When preparing the article which, under the above heading, appeared in your last issue, I was guilty of an oversight, and now ask that you will permit me to make it good. Referring to the large number of musical instruments found in the mansions of the emigrants and the condemned, I said: "Another victim, La Borde by name, was once the happy possessor of two clavescins, two harps, two French horns, three guitars, and an instrument described as 'une boîte de fer blanc avec des cordes.'" In the absence of definite information, Mr. Gallay ascribes the possession of these things to the Marquis de la Borde, who was put to death by the Revolutionary Tribunal in 1794, and proceeds to give an outline of his career. At the close of his notes, however, he says (and this is the paragraph I overlooked): "The personage named at the head of this article of our catalogue might, with equal probability, be another victim of the Revolution—Jean Benjamin de Laborde, once a *fermier-général*, condemned to death and executed, July 22, 1794." This uncertainty sent me, since my article appeared, to the second volume of Mr. Wekerlin's "Musiciens," which contains a good deal of information on the subject, and there I discovered that Mr. Gallay's second guess is the right one, although the editor of the "Inventaire" does not seem to know that the *fermier-général*, La Borde, at one time *valet-de-chambre* to Louis XV., was an amateur composer for the lyric stage, and the author of an "Essai sur la Musique," in four fat volumes. Possessed of great wealth—I will not ask how he got it—La Borde indulged his musical inclinations to the full, and, by the compilation of his "Essai"—upon which he must have spent a small fortune—really succeeded in keeping his name alive. The work, a copy of which I have, is remarkable for the fulness of its information on certain parts of the subject, and for the exquisite steel engravings which copiously adorn its pages. It was issued anonymously in 1780, the author fearing, perhaps, that the name of an *ex-valet-de-chambre* would hardly be a powerful recommendation to the musical public.

May I be permitted to add, as matter somewhat cognate, that in the course of reading the "Lives of the Berkeleys," compiled in the early part of the seventeenth century by John Smyth of Nibley, steward of the Berkeley estates, I came upon a curious story of a lute. Mr. Smyth shall tell it here in his own quaint way:

"In the sevenanth of Queen Elizabeth this lord (Henry, Lord Berkeley) humoring the greatnes of his wives mind (whom about the same time Queen Elizabeth called her golden lady) bought a lute of mother of pearle (herself an excellent lutist) for which the Queen formerly had offered one hundred marks; for this lute this lord paid a sum of money in hand, and gave a recognizance to pay to Best, the owner thereof, three pound a year more during his life, which for ten years after was duly paid, what time this lord growing either negligent or weary of the payment, neglected it, whereby his recognisans becoming forfeited, Best sued out a *scire facias*, and soone had judgment thereupon. This lord for releife flyeth into the chancery, where after bill and answer and witnesses on both parts examined, these offers in Court were made to Best by this lord's counsell: Either to take twenty marks in money for the only default of one three pounds, and the payment to be continued after: or to take 32li. 13s. 4d.—

in ready money and the annuity to cease; or to be quit of the 34th which already hee hath received and to have the lute againe to his own use, as safe and faire as first it was; or to referre the cause to the ending of any two Aldermen of London whom himself would chuse; or to his own two counsellors, Bell and Puckering, setting lawe and affection towards their client apart: None of which Best would accept of, but refused all; whereat Bacon, then lord keeper, being moved, awarded an Injunction and stayed him from taking any benefit by the said recognizance untill the cause should otherwise be ordered in that Court. Afterwards Best accepted of much less than was formerly offered. This lute, this lord, about two years after the death of his said wife, gave to the Dowager Countesse of Derby."

From which it appears that the instalment system, as applied to musical instruments, is nearly 300 years old, and that, even at the outset, it excited a litigious spirit. One would like to know what ultimately became of the lute so curiously associated with "Good Queen Bess," her "golden lady," and her famous law lord, the "greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind."—Faithfully yours,

JOSEPH BENNETT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, TORONTO, AND MUSICAL DEGREES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

No one can be better able to defend the action of the Cambridge Board of Musical Studies than Mr. Cobb. I am glad, therefore, that my statement to the Warden of Durham has called forth the letter which appeared in your last issue, as no more complete presentation of the views of the Board could be made. I am entirely unable, however, to see that Mr. Cobb has in any way disproved the statements which I have made, and to which I entirely adhere. I stated first with regard to Cambridge that "the University had taken no action in the matter." This Mr. Cobb does not attempt to deny. He admits that the Senate gave no authority and asked for none. His only defence is that the process of consulting the Senate is a "complicated" one. This may be a possible argument in favour of University reform, although I do not think that members of the Senate generally would endorse any proposal for further restricting their powers; but it certainly is no answer to my statement that the Senate had never been consulted. It is also an implied admission that the action taken was irregular. Down to the present time no information has ever been vouchsafed to the Senate on the matter. If the question has, to a certain extent, since the presentation of the Address become "notorious," this has been in no way due either to the action of the Board of Music or of the Council of the Senate, but has resulted from the action which I have taken thereon.

I further stated that the University has not authorised the signing or presentation of the Address. This is a necessary corollary of what has been already stated. Mr. Cobb's defence, however, is that there are various degrees of authorisation, and that authorisation was given both by the Board of Music and by the Council of the Senate. These are described as "smaller representative bodies appointed by the larger body (the Senate) for this purpose." I must take emphatic exception to this statement. Neither the Council of the Senate nor the Board of Music are empowered to take such action as they please in the name of the University. Each of these "representative bodies" has certain functions for which it is specially authorised to act. These are generally to prepare matters for the ultimate decision of the University, and, when such matters have been thus properly prepared, the obtaining such decision is a simple matter enough.

I challenge Mr. Cobb to prove by reference to Act of Parliament under which the Council of the Senate was constituted, or to the University Statutes, that either of those representative bodies is empowered to take public action against another University in the name of the University of Cambridge.

As far as the Council of the Senate, however, is concerned, they in no way authorised any such irregularity. All that was done by the Council was to empower certain members of the Board of Musical Studies to appear before Lord Knutsford, and bring under the notice of the

Colonial Office the question of the powers of my University under its Charter to extend its operations to England and elsewhere. And in so doing the deputation was empowered to state that they "appear with the knowledge and approval of the Council of the Senate." No possible objection could be raised by my University to such an inquiry as to the extent of its powers, and such inquiry might, perhaps, be held to come within the scope of the duties of the Council of the Senate in investigating the subject prior to making a recommendation to the Senate if it desired so to do in the matter. Instead of taking this course, the deputation affixed their names to an Address dealing with a large number of points affecting the action of Trinity University, Toronto, and the standing of its examinations, &c., on none of which other than the purely legal one were these gentlemen authorised by the Council of the Senate to speak.

I must therefore repeat, what I have already stated elsewhere with regard to the Address: that the Council of the Senate had not authorised it, neither were they cognisant of its contents.

I shall not attempt to follow Mr. Cobb in the discussion raised in the latter part of his letter, as all the points have been fully dealt with in the memorial presented to Lord Knutsford on behalf of my University, which has been made public. I will only remark, in conclusion, that Mr. Cobb's plea that it was too complicated to acquaint the University with the action which was taken, is the best possible proof that could be given that whilst gentlemen holding official positions have taken more or less irregular action, the University itself has had no opportunity of doing anything whatever in the matter.—Yours truly,

C. W. E. BODY,

Vice-Chancellor of Trinity University, Toronto.

June 21, 1890.

P.S.—May I be allowed to state, once for all, in regard to various statements which have appeared from time to time as to our examinations, that no irregularity has at any time taken place in their conduct, and that any statements to the contrary are either entirely untrue or originate from a lack of adequate knowledge of University procedure on the part of their authors.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL DEGREES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—The attention of the "Special Board of Music" at Cambridge has been directed to the fact that some persons who have passed the first (only) of our three examinations for the Degree of Mus. B. have appended to their names "First Mus. B., Cantab.," or other similar titles. The Board have directed me to endeavour to make it known through the columns of the Musical Press that such a proceeding is wholly unauthorised. *Private* reference may, of course, be made to the fact of his having passed this examination by any candidate applying for a professional appointment, &c.; but the public use of any such title as that indicated above will be regarded as constituting a very serious infringement of University custom. The only title that can be legitimately used is that of the Degree itself, "Mus. B." or "Mus. D.," as the case may be, and this may not be adopted until the candidate has not only passed all the examinations, but has been formally "admitted" to the Degree in the Senate House.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

GERARD F. COBB

(Chairman of the Special Board for Music in the University of Cambridge).

MOZART MSS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—A paragraph which appeared in a recent number of *THE MUSICAL TIMES* (founded doubtless on an account of the discovery of Mozart MSS. in this city, which was some time since published in the *Manchester Guardian*) calls, I think, for a statement of the subject by me. In the publication alluded to I find that some minor details require modification. The facts are these:—

A few weeks ago I was asked by Mr. Cornish, a book-