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William H. Cummings F.S.A.
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May 12, 1891.

T. L. SOUTHGATE, Esq.,
IN THE CHAIR.

*SOME OBSERVATIONS ON MUSIC IN LONDON
IN 1791 AND 1891.*

BY WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS, F.S.A.

It is sometimes interesting and useful for individuals to take a retrospective view of their past doings, and it may be that certain valuable lessons can be gathered from a review of past epochs in the history of the art of music—it is a somewhat commonplace observation which we frequently hear that “things were different a hundred years ago.” I propose then to speak for a few minutes on the condition of music and musicians in the year 1791. Let us fancy ourselves standing in Hanover Square in May, 1791; over there at the corner stands the building, originally built in 1774, by Gallini, John Christian Bach, and Abel the viol-di-gambist. There Bach and Abel had been giving concerts until 1782, but in consequence of the withdrawal of the patronage of Lord Abingdon they had been obliged to discontinue them. Art seems at this period to have existed only when patronized by the rich and noble. Bach and Abel having failed pecuniarily, a few professional musicians banded together to give “professional concerts”; these commenced in 1783, but happily a very superior violinist, Salomon, jealous that his excellence and talent had not been recognised by the professional concert-givers, started an opposition in those same rooms in 1786. These rival venturers were energetic in devising means for attracting the musical public, and W. Cramer, the violinist, who headed the “Professional Musicians’” concerts, wrote to Haydn, then in Esterhatz, offering him any terms he chose to ask to appear at their concerts. Salomon, equally on the alert, and anxious to secure the most notable musician of the day, sent Bland, the music publisher, to make an engagement with him. These blandishments for the time had no effect, and Salomon, determined to conquer, went himself to Esterhatz; but owing to the binding nature of Haydn’s engagement with Prince Nicolaus, could not prevail. Leaving Haydn he commenced his return journey to England, but on his arrival at Cologne received the news of the death of the Prince; he immediately returned and found Haydn in Vienna. This was the end of the year 1790. The king of Naples was then a visitor in Vienna, and being a performer on the lyre, he had commissioned Haydn to compose a concerted piece for that instrument. Salomon’s persuasive tongue and purse prevailed on Haydn to start with him

immediately for London, whereupon Haydn requested an audience of the King of Naples in order to present his composition. The King, pleased to receive the MS., said to Haydn: "the day after to-morrow we will try them." Haydn expressed his sorrow that it would be impossible, as on that day he would start for England. The King very indignantly reminded Haydn he had promised to go to Naples, and forthwith left the room in anger; but shortly afterwards he recovered his good nature and gave Haydn a letter of introduction to his Ambassador in London, the Prince Castelcicala. He also presented the composer with a valuable tabatière. To enhance the interest of this little story, I have brought with me a manuscript of the Notturmo, referred to as written and presented to the King of Naples. The MS. is most valuable, being in the handwriting of the composer.

Haydn and Salomon left Vienna on Wednesday, 15th December, 1790, and crossed from Calais to Dover, where they arrived (happy omen!) on New Year's day, 1791. They came direct to London, and Haydn went to live with Bland, the music publisher, at 45, Holborn; but soon afterwards he removed to Salomon's house, 18, Great Pulteney Street. Salomon had engaged Haydn to compose six Symphonies, and to direct the performance at the pianoforte—according to the custom of the time. The first Concert took place on 11th March, 1791; the orchestra numbered forty performers; the Symphony chosen was the one known as Salomon No. 2, and the composer stipulated that it should commence the second part of the programme. The *Adagio* was encored—a most unusual occurrence. The journal of the day says the success was brilliant. Haydn had a Benefit Concert on the 16th of May, when the receipts amounted to £350. At this time, two rival opera factions, headed respectively by the King and the Prince of Wales, divided the fashion of the town. The King's party supported the performances at the Pantheon, and the other party those given at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. The latter had in vain endeavoured to obtain a licence to perform opera, the King having an opinion that two opera companies were not required in London. They, however, managed to obtain permission to give "entertainments of music and dancing," and on March 26 the house was opened with Vestris as ballet-master and Haydn as composer. Several of his compositions were performed in the season; amongst them were Symphonies, Quartets, and a Chorus, "The Storm," composed to words written by Peter Pindar. Haydn was in the habit of retiring for the necessary quietude for composition to the beautiful country then to be found in Lisson Grove. On the 30th of May, Haydn had a second Benefit Concert in the Hanover Square Rooms, when he conducted two Symphonies and the

"Seven Last Words." He also published an Italian Cantata, "Ariadne a Naxos." This vocal scena was sung by Pacchierotte, the composer accompanying on the pianoforte. Here is an interesting copy of the Cantata, published by the composer at his lodgings in Great Pulteney Street, and signed by him. In this merry month of May Haydn was an honoured guest at the annual festival dinner of the Royal Society of Musicians, for which auspicious and memorable occasion he composed a March. He also attended the Handel Commemoration Festival held in Westminster Abbey. The performance was given by orchestra and chorus of unusual magnitude; and during the performance of the "Hallelujah Chorus" in "The Messiah," when the vast audience reverently stood up, it is recorded that Haydn, absolutely overcome with emotion, "wept like a child, exclaiming, 'Handel is the master of us all.'" Doubtless this experience brought forth fruit, and suggested the composition of the "Creation," a work of perennial beauty, which some unhappy mortals have called a collection of childish tunes. We must console ourselves with the reflection that it is said of children, "for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

In the beginning of July, 1791, Haydn went to Oxford to receive the honorary degree of music, and three grand concerts were given; Haydn presided at the organ, and at the last evoked an enthusiastic welcome by appearing in his doctor's robes. The Symphony played at the second concert is now known as the "Oxford" Symphony—a composition of 1788. This was substituted for a new Symphony which had been prepared but could not be sufficiently rehearsed. Haydn returned to London, and remained here until November, when he was invited to the Lord Mayor's banquets at the Guildhall. One was given by the outgoing Lord Mayor (Sir John Boydell) on the 5th; the other on the 9th by new Lord Mayor John Hopkins. Haydn, in his diary, has given us an amusing picture of civic sociability. He says: "After dinner there was a ball in three different chambers; the first was devoted to the *haute noblesse*, by whom minuets were danced. I could not possibly remain there, both on account of the heat and the detestable music performed by an orchestra, consisting of two scrapers and a violoncello. In the second chamber they danced country dances; the band there was somewhat better, because the noise of the tabours drowned that of the violins. The third chamber, which was the largest, had a band somewhat more numerous and less vile. The gentlemen were seated at several tables in drinking parties. There was some dancing, but not to the sound of music, because the songs bawled at the tables, the toasts and the laughing, and the gabbling and the clamouring, totally prevented the instruments from being heard."

We have arrived at the month of November, 1791. On the 25th of the same, Haydn went by invitation to Oatlands, as guest of the Duke of York, who had two days previously married the Princess of Prussia—a girl of seventeen. Here we find the Princess singing, and playing the piano—the Prince of Wales performing on the violoncello—all the music being Haydn's, who himself also played and sang several of his own songs. I have brought a volume containing the songs published in London by Haydn. You will see that he retained an interest in their sale by signing the copies. It is right to mention that these songs were not published before 1792, at which time Haydn had removed to Bury Street, St. James's.

We have now nearly got to the end of music in London in 1791. I may mention a curious custom then prevailing which lingered on for a few years afterwards. You are, of course, aware that the fashion of wearing swords as a part of full dress still continued; and it seems that a special sword was always provided at a grand concert for the use of the instrumental solo performers. This sword was in the charge of an attendant known as the "sword-bearer"; and, when a solo player was about to display his talents, he was presented, by the proper official, with a sheath and hilt, with which he was begirt before he entered the orchestra; and when the solo was concluded the hilt and sheath were returned to the official, who immediately hung it up over the chimney-piece of the private room, where it remained until required by the next soloist. I must not forget that Dussek, the pianist, had arrived in England in 1790, and was performing in London in 1791. He was in friendly intercourse with Haydn, who wrote a letter to Dussek's father from London in the following terms: "Most worthy friend,—I thank you from my heart that in your last letter to your dear son you have also remembered me. I therefore double my compliments in return, and consider myself fortunate in being able to assure you that you have one of the most upright, moral, and, in music, most eminent of men for a son. I love him just as you do, for he fully deserves it. Give him then, daily, a father's blessing, and thus will he ever be fortunate, which I heartily wish him to be, for his is remarkable talent.—I am, with all respect, your most sincere friend, JOSEPH HAYDN.—London, February 26, 1792." There is a curious account in a diary of the period of Dussek's first appearance in London. This was at the theatre, and, being Lent season, it was customary to give Oratorios on Wednesdays and Fridays—the first and second parts being divided by some secular or instrumental piece: "A pianoforte of Broadwood's was then brought in with as much ease as a chair, and immediately after Dussek followed, supported by John Cramer, whose

father stood forward as leader, Salomon and other great men of the day being grouped around him. The applause was loud as a welcome. Dussek, now seated, tried his instrument in prelude, which caused a burst of applause. This so surprised the stranger that his friends were obliged to desire him to rise and bow, which he did somewhat reluctantly. He then, after reseating himself, spread a silk handkerchief over his knees, rubbed his hands in his coat pockets, which were filled with bran, and then began his Concerto. Near the end of the first movement there was always a "cadenza," which gave the performer an opportunity of displaying his powers in *bravura*, or to show off any peculiar or particular merit that he possessed. In this instance, Dussek finished his cadence with a long shake and a turn that led to the 'Tutti' to finish the movement, and he was rapturously applauded." It may be noted that Dussek had four notes in the upper octave added to his pianoforte.

I may now connect 1791 with 1891, by telling you that for many years I enjoyed the intimate friendship of a clever old organist and pianist, who was present at Haydn's first concert in Hanover Square. He has often told me how his youthful mind was astonished by seeing, when the Royal Princesses arrived, the Court attendants lift up the hoops of their dresses in order to facilitate their passage through the doorways, which, though apparently of ample width, did not suffice for the extended circumferences then in fashion. My old friend, I should tell you, was born in 1778, and died in 1873, having been a pupil of Dr. Worgan, and organist of one church eighty-one years. I may mention in passing one piece of sad and depressing news which arrived in London at the end of 1791: it was that Mozart, the incomparable musician, had died in Vienna on the 5th December. A glorious sunset, whose brilliant rays lighted up the path of the mighty musicians who were to make a name and fame in the succeeding century.

And now to contrast the picture of 1791 with 1891. Many points will at once occur to you in gauging this difference. Let us think, for a moment, of the facilities for musical education which then existed. At that time London did not possess a single academy for the instruction of youth in the art of music. The noble institution, within whose walls we are now assembled, was not established until some years afterwards. Now, in addition to the Royal Academy of Music, we have another chartered institution—the Royal College of Music, at Kensington. Then there is the Guildhall School of Music, an essentially civic institution, with an enormous number of students; and almost every part of London, whether you go North, South, East, or West, has its own efficient conservatoire. Then again in the matter of journalism. At the period we speak of there was not a single

journal devoted to the art of music. Now I am afraid to mention the number of musical papers, so numerous and varied are they. When we think of the societies for the advancement of the art, there were none in 1791, if we except the two series of concerts—one led by Salomon and the other by the professors of music, headed by the Cramers. What have we now? Take orchestral societies. There is the Philharmonic Society, which, for many years, has done so much for the advancement of the art, and I hope may continue to do so. (Hear, hear.) Then we have the orchestra conducted by Richter, of Vienna. Then there is another series of orchestral concerts, given under the direction of a capital musician, Mr. Henschel. Let us turn to amateur societies. At that time there were a few amateur performers, but no societies. Now we have the Stock Exchange Orchestral Society, an admirable institution, numbering a very large orchestra, possibly some 100 performers. Then there is the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society; and here we may refer to a very curious picture. You will remember Lord Chesterfield writing to his son, who was in Italy, and warning him against music and musicians. While in the land of music and of song his son was welcome to hear as much as he pleased, but on no account was he to take any lessons or active part in music itself. That should be left to plebeians. For a gentleman to have anything to do with music was the most contemptible thing possible, and he wound up by saying: "I'd as lief see you with a pipe in your mouth as a fiddle under your chin!" A contrast to the present day, when we consider the title of the forementioned Royal Amateur Society, and the very active interest taken in our noble art by a Prince of the Royal blood. Then we have the "Wandering Minstrels," "Strolling Players," and doubtless many others with which you are all familiar, but which I cannot recall to mind just now. Again, if we turn to Church music. Let us take the two great buildings of the metropolis—St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. What was the condition of music then? The choir of St. Paul's consisted of eight boys and six men. A very different state of affairs from what we find now. A similar arrangement prevailed at Westminster Abbey—six men and ten boys. Then the Temple Church, the only other Church for music in those days, also had a very indifferent service, consisting of a few Psalm tunes. That we know from the collections published at the period. There is one ecclesiastical establishment, which does not seem to have progressed in the same way, unfortunately, but has considerably retrograded. I say this with great shame and with great regret because it is a stigma upon us. We must not forget that, whatever the failings of the Hanoverian race, they have ever lent a

fostering hand to music. Now, in the case of the Chapel Royal, what are the facts? The choir, which at one time numbered forty, is now reduced to eight. I confess that whatever retrenchment may be necessary, and no doubt it is necessary in certain directions, one cannot be too lavish in the worship of the Almighty, especially in such an establishment as that of the Queen of this realm. Then again, when you come to music publishers. There were about four in London at that time. Now they fill a directory. The same remark applies to composers. At present their name is legion. London then was content to know half-a-dozen composers. As to the question of quantity, the music produced 100 years ago was infinitesimally small as compared with that of to-day. At the present time it is impossible to cope with it. But when we come to the question of quality, results point the other way. In Haydn and Mozart the musical world, certainly, had great treasures. I say Haydn and Mozart advisedly, because nobody at that period remembered anything about Sebastian Bach's music. It would be impossible to find anything that could offend the very best taste in either of these two composers. Yet what they did was done with very moderate means, without calling in the aid of volcanoes from Vesuvius or upheavals from below. They were content with a very moderate orchestra; but how is it now? And, by the way, since the days of Haydn and Mozart we have had Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert—names not to be mentioned with contempt; and if you look at their scores and those of Haydn and Mozart, what are they? They are all completed with strings, two or four horns, and two of each kind of wood and brass instruments, and three trombones; no more. Yet, what do we find now? I have in mind a concert with which I am to be associated. In addition to the two flutes we must have the piccolo, that glorified penny whistle; then the two oboes, the usual clarinets, besides which there is to be on this occasion an extra clarinet—a military one in E flat—which, of course, must have a set off in the shape of a corni di basso. Then there are the four horns, bass tuba, &c., while the two trumpets are also to be reinforced on this occasion by two cornets. Then, in addition to the grosse caisse, three kettle drums, &c., there is to be a triangle, and in order to make the thing perfect and angelic, to finish off, we are to have two harps. Of course this is quite a common thing now-a-days, and would be all very well if after the immense labour, expense, agitation, paper and ink, &c., commensurate results could be shown. But compare any of the compositions which are produced with so much effort and ostentation with any symphony you like of Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart, and tell me if you get a return for your

money. I don't think you do. One little thing in passing which will doubtless have occurred to you. I refer to Broadwood's pianoforte. It is pleasant to read of our old friends having had their instruments at these concerts of a hundred years ago, and one cannot help wishing that it were possible to transport their pianofortes as easily now as it is recorded they were then. But I am afraid I ought not to detain you any longer, and I am extremely anxious to hear the opinions of several of my friends here. I see gentlemen fully capable of giving, perhaps, a more decided and better opinion than myself.

In conclusion, then, I would only suggest one other thing. It is reported that Gounod was recently asked what he thought of the present state of music with its complicated scoring, and of the exacting demands which were made upon composers; when he is said to have replied that he could not tell, but that he thought it not unlikely that the time would come when people would revert to the simplest form of all. He may be right, though, I am afraid, I shall not live to see it. Some lines occur to me just now in this connection, which I may be pardoned for repeating to you—

" The world becomes old,
Then to childhood returns;
But the soul to press on
Eternally burns."

I do feel that by-and-bye people will tire of this constant striving after effect, without the accompaniment of inspiration, and that, after a time, there will arise the genius who, with simple means, will carry us all captive. I should like, before I finish, to sing you one song. It is one of Haydn's, and is included in this volume of forty-four I mentioned in the beginning of my paper. It is called "Oh, tuneful voice." The words of the song were written by Mrs. Hunter. Curiously enough they were also set to music by Salomon, though, of course, the composition of the latter will not compare with Haydn's.

DISCUSSION.

THE Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Cummings which was passed unanimously.

MR. WALTER MACFARREN.—Mr. Chairman,—I rise with a good deal of diffidence, as this is the first time I have had the honour of addressing the members of this Association; but there are two or three things which occurred to me, and which I should be glad to give expression to. Referring to the year 1791, I believe it is a fact that the immortal Mozart

was engaged to Salomon to visit England, which visit was subsequently found impracticable owing to Mozart's ill-health, and that, as a consequence, Haydn was induced, as we have heard related, to take the place of Mozart. This circumstance induces some reflections as to what would have happened had the great Mozart come over and repeated the visit he first made to this country in the year 1764, when, as a little boy, accompanied by his elder sister and father, he spent, I think, as much as twenty months in London, and was fêted and caressed by everybody, from the great downwards. Mr. Cummings has compared the advantages which the student of music enjoyed at that period with those which are offered at the present time. Now-a-days it is a very rare thing indeed to find any publication for the piano which extends beyond a matter of seven, eight, or ten pages, and I think most publishers will tell us that anything exceeding that is sure to be an utter failure. But how did the case stand in those days? I have in my possession some volumes consisting of the original editions published in London by Longman, Clementi, and such old firms, of the Sonatas of Dussek and Steibelt. Three and even six sonatas were issued together in one publication. What sale would there be for six sonatas published together at the present time? Would they repay the cost of paper and printing? The paper in those days was not of the most elegant description, and somewhat resembled the paper in which now-a-days brown sugar is wrapped up. It was not even smooth at the edges, and so these volumes need a great deal of attention to keep them free from dust. There is a good story told in connection with the rivalry of Dussek and Steibelt. In those days pianos were not strung with the solid metal strings of to-day, but with strings similar to those of the violin, some of which were covered. It is said that Steibelt gave a concert in the King's Theatre, at which he was to perform an inspired concerto "L'Orage." Some friends of Dussek got at the instrument and tampered with the strings, so that when Steibelt came to the grand part of the Storm, all the strings snapped with an awful sound. We must all admit that the progress in church music has been enormous. Even so late as the days of my choristerhood, the choir at Westminster Abbey mustered exactly the same strength as in 1791—i.e., ten boys and six men, with this difference, however, that we rarely had the whole complement together. Mr. Cummings said there were no societies in 1791. Surely there were old madrigal societies?

Mr. CUMMINGS.—I ought to have added the word "instrumental." There certainly were madrigal societies, but these were of a semi-private nature. With regard to publication, I do not know whether it would be possible

in these days to do what musicians did then. Dussek, Clementi, and Cramer were all music publishers. Dussek became a partner with Corri: Clementi with someone else in Cheapside. It is also the fact that when Salomon was in Vienna he saw Mozart, and positively concluded an engagement with him. He was to have come to London in 1792. In this connection it may be interesting to mention that Mozart once lived in the very fashionable quarter of Thrift Street, Soho, and while there published an interesting volume of Sonatas for violin and piano. Mozart, unfortunately, died at the end of the year 1791, which frustrated the visit projected for the Spring of the following year.

Mr. H. C. BANISTER.—Mention has been made of Haydn lodging at 45, High Holborn, from which address he published the collection of songs referred to. That house was occupied by Z. T. Purday, publisher; and it is a pleasant thing for me to remember that my first publication was issued from that house. I welcome any discussion which brings up the rather dishonoured name of Dussek. Within the last few weeks I have been censured for using the word "genius" with regard to Dussek at all, and have been reminded that it was too grand a term to use in such a connection, unless, indeed, the meaning of the term were lowered. I can only say that those who use such language cannot be familiar with Dussek's music. Of course he wrote a great deal for bread and cheese, and a great deal of his music is not worth looking at. At the same time, if anyone who takes the trouble to look at his finest works cannot see any genius in them, I do not know what genius is. As to Steibelt, though inferior to Dussek as a composer, some of his compositions have a great stream of melody. I have heard Potter, who was born in 1792, speak of Steibelt playing and causing the audience to hiss by breaking the hammers. Perhaps that was the occasion to which Mr. Macfarren alluded. I knew old Jonas Blewitt, who was a pupil of Haydn, very well; and it is pleasant for me to remember that I have shaken the hand of one who has grasped the hand of the great Haydn. It is a curious speculation as to how they managed to learn to play the pianoforte in those days. They had no technical studies, and did not even possess Cramer's studies, though I do not envy them that destitution. Still they did manage to play uncommonly well both Haydn's and Mozart's sonatas, to say nothing of Bach's fugues. This may be accounted for by the fact that the early forms of sonata that we know of, such as Handel's, for instance, were called "Lessons for the harpsichord," the music being written for the double purpose of learning how to play it, and then playing it. They apparently wrote no studies as a preparatory exercise to playing something else.

MR. JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT.—I think there is one matter that might be mentioned in comparing the two epochs, and that is the wonderful advantage the present epoch affords in the facilities offered to the musical public in obtaining copies of what they require. I will venture to say that at the present time many of the works published up to the year 1791 are better known than they were even in those days—that is, by the masses of the people and not by individual musicians only. Novello, Augener, and many other publishers issue beautiful editions of composers, such as Bach and Scarlatti, in which we have, in a few volumes, the entire works of these composers. That is an advantage which was denied to the amateurs of a hundred years ago. Possibly some disadvantages have accrued to modern composers in this respect, as for the price of one modern composition a collection perhaps of twenty pieces by a classic composer can be purchased. At the same time, I do not think that even modern composers would care to return to the state of things existing in Haydn's time and the manner in which works were then produced. I think there has been a great improvement in the smaller compositions as compared with those of a hundred years ago. I do not mean to say that the improvement has been universal; but there are very many modern compositions of that character which would totally eclipse anything of the kind produced in those days, even by the greatest composers. This result, to my mind, is due to the influence exercised by such men as Schumann, Mendelssohn, and others. We have practically lost the sonata, as few composers care to write such works, and in that respect we have retrograded. Whether the sonata will revive as a popular modern composition remains to be seen.

MR. CUMMINGS.—Mr. Barnett has touched upon one matter in connection with publication. Of course each generation must expect to profit by the legacies of preceding generations, and, naturally in these days, the copyrights of Haydn's compositions having expired, we get his music much cheaper; but even in Haydn's own days, I take it, the public were able to purchase such works very much cheaper than they do now. I have just looked in this volume containing, "Oh, tuneful voice." It is printed from four full plates of music, and I am bound to say is far better engraved than any music published at the present time, and I see it was sold at 1s. 6d. That was the publishing price, copyright, of course. I turn to Haydn's First Set of Canzonets for the voice, and I find that the publishing price of the whole set of six was 7s. 6d. You see these were copyright songs, and yet the price is by no means exorbitant, while the engraving is certainly of a superior kind. Another matter Mr. Barnett has touched upon, and that is the development of modern music, such as is to

be found in the examples of Grieg, and so on. This is not due to Schumann. It is partly due to the pianoforte having been so largely developed and popularized. It is also attributable to the fact that just at this very period a man, now almost forgotten, Corri by name, had invented what he called, "A new system of writing down the accompaniments which were to be played." Remember that up to that time songs had nothing but their figured bass. One was expected to make up accompaniments from the thorough bass which was there. This method had so many drawbacks that Corri, as he says, was induced to fill up the harmonies and give them a proper accompaniment for the first time. I think it is due to these two facts that composers began to write down their accompaniments as they wished them to be played, and consequently took the trouble to write very good and elaborate accompaniments. These two factors probably brought about a great improvement in modern romantic short pieces, whether vocal or instrumental.

Rev. C. R. TAYLOR.—There are two points of contrast which have not yet been referred to, though it is hardly necessary to expatiate upon them. In one respect we have advanced very much for the good; in the other, perhaps, for the bad. Mr. Cummings has referred to church music and the changes it has undergone, and I hoped he would have said something about parish churches. If we bear in mind the condition of affairs which existed in olden times, when the parson and the clerk controlled matters between them, and when the "parish orchestra" consisted of a fiddle and a flute, and compare it with the beautiful services that are to be heard, not only in London, but also in the country, the improvement is very marked indeed. We know what is done now, and that they have not only beautiful services, but that, at various times, they also produce oratorios in churches with full orchestras. The other point I thought of is the dreadful infliction of street music. I do not know what it used to be, but I certainly cannot imagine that it was ever as bad as it is now; and I trust, for the sake of musical progress, that something may be done to put down this ever-increasing nuisance of strident pianoforte organs, out-of-tune bands, and the like.

Mr. CUMMINGS.—In 1791 we also have accounts of street music. I am sorry to say that in that respect, too, we have gone in for additional accompaniment, so that here perhaps we might profitably go back to simplicity. In those days it was sometimes a flute, sometimes a fiddle or a bass-viol, but nothing more. Of course in the matter of organs there has been a complete revolution; and there is no doubt that the present street pianoforte or organ may be heard at the other end of Hanover Square, so strident is the tone.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Comparing 1791 with 1891, there is no doubt that we seem to have progressed in some things, whilst we have remained stationary in others, if we have not actually gone backward. Music has certainly become very complex, and it is quite possible that the outcome of it all will be a reversion to simplicity. Gluck, we know, went back to a simpler form, and his music still finds interpreters to-day, and still gives pleasure. "*Orfeo*" has recently been heard with delight at the opera house. Mr. Cummings has said that when Haydn came over here, the king thought that one opera house was sufficient. We find a parallel to this in the present opera house at Covent Garden under Mr. Harris. As to better means of education, undoubtedly enormous strides have been made in this direction, and I think we ought to be very grateful for it. Doubtless these facilities have induced an appreciation of music. Education, however, may go too far and induce people to imagine that they are intensely musical, and so swell the musical ranks with people who have no talent whatever. The amount of music produced is no test as to its quality. It has been pointed out that in the olden time the music principally written, especially for the pianoforte, consisted of sonatas and what we should call classical but deep music. In place of it we now have "*Reminiscences*" and "*Pièces de Salon*." Mr. Barnett has attributed that to Schumann. I think as time goes on and the style changes, so the taste for certain kinds of music changes with it. I doubt whether 100 years ago they would have been satisfied with the music of Purcell and that of his compeers. Since then times have changed again. It is impossible for men like Schumann and Mendelssohn to have lived without influencing the tone of music to-day; and it was doubtless owing to their great influence and the romantic feeling which is found in their works that classical music in a measure has, if not disappeared, at any rate received the go-by to a certain extent for pieces of more emotional and of a more sensuous character. As to cheap music, I think that comes simply from the enterprise and competition of the various publishers. As has been pointed out, some music of the olden time was absolutely cheaper than it is now. I should say that six pieces, especially songs, one of which we have heard sung to-night, published at 1s. 6d., would certainly now be published at 5s. But do not publishers put on the price in order to take it off again? Of course the paper, &c., is better. Mr. Taylor has alluded to the great improvement which has taken place in church music. There we shall all agree with him. Undoubtedly an enormous and vast improvement has come about; and we know that churches now endeavour to do what cathedrals did then. One hundred years ago they had neither singers nor the

materials, nor did they have such organs as we have now. There is one thing I cannot help regretting, and that is the disappearance of the old village bands. Those bands were very useful. Now they have almost all disappeared and the pianoforte has taken their place, so that in some respects we have lost where we have gained in others.

Mr. CUMMINGS.—I think we have had a delightful conversation. It is, no doubt, the great advantage of these meetings that we all have an opportunity of saying what we think of the various themes brought forward. I often wish that the papers could be shorter, so that the discussions might be more exhaustive. As to village bands and the comments made thereupon, I would remind you that I confined my remarks to London alone. As I would not care to have you go away with the impression that the music of the year 1791 was absolutely classical, I may mention that among the accounts of popular pieces that were played at that time was one by Dussek, called the "Flaxen-headed Plough Boy." It was an air with variations, which has remained popular to this day, though at the time it never failed to bring down the house; so that they had their faults in those days as well as we have now. All was not classical then, nor is everything vulgar now. With regard to the matter of publication, that is a very important question, and I should very much indeed like to have a big discussion here some night upon the question of cheap music, and connecting it with the consideration of the sight of the coming generation. At that time, not only did composers publish their music at a reasonable rate, but with very excellent engraving, and always in folio size. There was a certain publisher, I think Fought by name, who published popular songs, ballads, and so on, with three or four plates, folio size, at a penny a piece. We have not got beyond that. As to the so-called octavo editions of the present day, I think they are responsible for a very large proportion of the bad sight of the present generation. I think nothing can be more horrible than this style of production. Take any popular edition of modern composers. It is almost impossible to read the music if it is put upon a desk and the player is expected to read it far away from the keys. I am sure that a great deal of the bad sight of this generation is due largely to the habit of reading music at such a distance, printed on such a small scale, and I shall cordially welcome any movement which has for its object the ventilation and remedy of this serious defect.