Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 19, No. 429 (Nov. 1, 1878), pp. 617-618

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3357187>

Accessed: 04-03-2016 09:50 UTC

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said enough to enlist the attention of all interested in the subject to the merits of a work which, although an invaluable manual for students, may also, we believe, prove of much service to many who have long been out of their musical school-days.

Novello's Music Primers. Edited by Dr. Stainer.

Fugue, by James Higgs, Mus. Bac., Oxon.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

"THIS Primer on Fugue," the author tells us in his preface, "is addressed to all who hear or play fugues as well as to students who desire to write them." His very valuable book may even reach a fourth class of readers; people who certainly cannot play fugues, who do not take the trouble to write them, and do not care about them when they hear them; but who are irresistibly attracted towards anything possessing an anatomy capable of being pulled to pieces and reconstructed. Music is a kind of all-pervading atmosphere consisting of palpable atoms of varied structure; some of them having an affinity for metaphysics, some for mechanics. Mr. Higgs assumes that his readers possess a knowledge and a skill in the practice of double counterpoint. That condition might exclude a few metaphysicians and engineers; but if they only know what double counterpoint is, they can readily form a perfect working plan of the mechanism of a fugue by paying ordinary attention to the first few pages of Mr. Higgs's Primer. No one should take up a volume in this educational series of publications under the impression that from their generic title they are adapted only to young people. When we compare them with the musical manuals and catechisms of forty or fifty years ago, we are at once reminded of the really extraordinary advance that has since been made in the system of elementary education. The young mind is not nowadays treated as a mere receptacle to be stuffed with miscellaneous materials. It is allowed to possess certain assimilating properties; and the materials supplied undergo a process of preparation in conformity with that view. Even on so mechanical a subject as the fugue it makes a vast difference if the pieces of the machinery, when described separately, are described carelessly in regard to their adaptation to what Mr. Higgs calls "the construction of a fugue as a whole." He himself never seems to lose sight of that ultimate object. Hence his most elementary explanations possess a particular charm; and for no one so much as the young student, who is repelled by the older method of instruction, and likes to have credit for the exercise of thought as well as memory. Mr. Higgs's method is of the highest importance in the subject he explains, because musical students are apt to learn too exclusively from isolated examples. Examples are much more necessary in fugue and counterpoint than in harmony. In counterpoint they are definite and precise illustrations. In harmony they are often duly assumed illustrations of a particular theory. Mr. Higgs's examples are mostly from Bach, as we should expect from an enthusiastic and a well-known worshipper of that august and transcendent idol of contrapuntists; but he is too free from narrow prejudices not to avail himself of a "masterly stretto" by Gounod when it suits his purposes.

We do not think we have ever seen in any work on the fugue a clearer explanation of what is called the "Exposition" than Mr. Higgs gives in his first four chapters; in which the aids of example and letterpress are most happily combined. The "Exposition" consists of firstly, subject; secondly, answer; thirdly, counterpoint—when simple—and called *counter-subject* when the counterpoint is double; fourthly, the codetta; fifthly, the "redundant entry" of the subject, when that device is employed. Mr. Higgs then explains the "counter-exposition," an inverted edition of the "exposition," and in its closer treatment foreshadowing the *stretto*. Then follows the first "episode," introduced for variety's sake, and formed of fragments of the subject, or countersubject, or of incidental counterpoints. Gradually through the second principal group in the fugue-form, which to a certain extent corresponds to the "free fantasia" in the sonata form, and wherein the composer employs all his art in the devices of imitation, inversion, augmentation, and diminution, we are led to the second episode, the coda, stretto, pedal and final close. When all these separate

parts are minutely explained we come to the "construction of a fugue as a whole"; and this branch of the subject is assisted by a novelty in the shape of "charts" or diagrams consisting of two, three, four, or five horizontal lines, according to the number of parts in the fugue, and divided by vertical lines representing alternate bars numbered 1, 3, 5, &c. So that in the whole fugue we see at a glance on the chart where the different subjects and countersubjects enter, where the episodes occur, and where the entries are shortened in the intervals of reply, and when the subject or countersubject is direct or inverted. Comparing the chart with the complete fugues given to us in the Primer in musical notation,—and in open score, even when taken from Bach's forty-eight clavier fugues—we have a mechanical aid we ourselves have found most interesting; and we are quite certain many hundreds of students will in the future adopt the system of analysis Mr. Higgs has provided.

These "charts" remind us of one or two little points that occurred to us in perusing this Primer. Mr. Higgs adopts the definition of a *tonal fugue* as a fugue written in a Church *tone*; the subject of the fugue if at the interval of a fifth is *authentic*, and the reply at a fourth will be *plagal*. As we put it the description is rather in Greek fashion than in that of the Church modes; but it comes to the same thing if we consider the subject, C—G, as in the *tone* C♯, divided by the dominant, and the answer, G—C, in the plagal octave of that scale divided by the tonic. We quite agree with Mr. Higgs that such is the manifest theory, if not definition, of a *tonal fugue*. There is, however, a little of history in the question that requires clearing up. We are generally told that of the two kinds of fugue the *tonal* is the more modern. That cannot be so, if we are to consider, as we think we may do, the *real fugue* to be a product of the modern tonality and the *tonal fugue* of the old tonality. We imagine the way to reconcile history with the apparent facts is simply this—that both descriptions of fugue have been a contemporaneous growth; but the progenitor of the *real fugue* was the *canon* at strict interval, one of the earliest contrapuntal forms. The *tonal fugue* was historically an intermediate event between the canon and the free *real fugue* of later times. The *real fugue* is therefore more ancient in respect only to its original form when issuing as it were from its prototype the canon.

Another point is the question of modulation in the fugue; on which subject we have nothing to offer at this moment by way of a substitute for the common rules quoted in the Primer from Cherubini; but Mr. Higgs so evidently throws the rules at us as if he presented them, such as they are, without accepting any responsibility on his own part, that we are inclined to ask the question, is it possible to teach the theory of the fugue with our modern notions of key with two modes, major and minor? Shall we not have to go back, and very far back, to get an inkling of what we desire to teach? The method of describing the related keys quoted in paragraph 129 from Cherubini is to our individual notions the very acme of unsystematic rule of thumb; and we know what it leads to in practice. It has been pointed out over and over again that musicians intend to write in the *Me* mode, and from habit they write in the *Lah* mode, or *vice versa*. There is a vestige of this question in Chart No. 6, where the subject in Bach's C♯ minor fugue is led off in the key, and the chart shows us that the fugue finishes in F♯ because the subject in the second treble is in that key. As a question of fact, the cadence being *plagal*, the harmony keeps the subject in the original key, C♯.

The whole question is that of putting new wine into old bottles—the "old bottles" being the ancient system of modes still flourishing when the fugue was born, and not yet extinct. It is rather curious, although the explanation may appear obvious, that if we collect the keys given in Mr. Higgs's Chart No. 6 (Fugue C♯ minor) we get the scale 1, 7♯, 6♯, 5, 4, 3♯ (2), 1; the ordinary minor scale in descending. The No. 2 is employed by Bach (bars 66, 68) in the same part (the first treble) as No. 1, and evidently, as an excrescence or not, as absolutely necessary to the development of the fugue. It may show some technical system of modulation derived from the scale and not practised in our time. The shorter fugue (G minor), in Chart No. 4, is according to the same

system *hexachordal*; and the B flat minor fugue (Chart No. 5) gives the *Pentaphonic Scale*.

Mr. Higgs naturally avoids any speculative questions; and has in the guise of a Primer produced a standard little work on the *Fugue*; which can be read with equal interest by the learner or the practised contrapuntist.

Christmas Carols, New and Old. Third Series. The words edited by the Rev. H. R. Bramley, M.A. The music edited by John Stainer, M.A., Mus. Doc.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

WE are glad to welcome the appearance of a third series of Christmas Carols from the experienced hands of Mr. Bramley and Dr. Stainer, and to feel assured, as we do, from a careful examination of the work, that the high reputation justly gained by the two earlier series will not be impaired by the new one just published, as too often happens in similar ventures. The new series consists of twenty-six Carols, the words by a variety of authors, some of them unknown, representing every century from the fifteenth to the nineteenth. Of the melodies eight are ancient and eighteen original; and when it is mentioned that among the composers who have contributed are Dr. Steggall, Mr. Gadsby, Mr. Prout, and Mr. Thorne, not to enumerate others of greater or less note, enough has been said to convince those who are casting about for suitable Christmas music that here they will have novelty and merit worthily combined. The Editors give a caution which is not unnecessary. They point out that of the twenty-six Carols eleven might be wisely excluded from Divine Service, and they add a similar suggestion with respect to the two previous series, furnishing indeed the numbers of the Carols, which now amount to sixty-eight in all, from which selections should be made for use in Church. The others, they say, may be fitly reserved for less solemn places and occasions. Along with these three series of Carols there is published, we observe, a selection of twenty-four of the most popular of the Carols arranged for men's voices, for use as open-air music on winter nights, when soprano voices, either of boys or women, are not easily obtained.

Intermezzi Sinfonici, di Luigi Mancinelli, per la *Cleopatra* di P. Cossa. Edizione privilegiata in partitura d'orchestra. [Florence, 1878: G. G. Guidi.]

IN these orchestral *Intermezzi*, which have just been published in the above handy score edition, Signor Mancinelli, the young and rising composer and conductor of the Apollo Theatre at Rome, has evidently aimed at something higher than a mere musical *entr'acte* diversion. The compositions are six in number—comprising an Overture, *Marcia trionfale*, *Battaglia d'Azio*, *Scherzo-orgia*, *Andante per quartetto ed arpa*, and *Marcia funebre*—and are intended to illustrate certain portions of a drama by P. Cossa, entitled "*Cleopatra*." Thus the *Intermezzi* are a species of "programme" music, partly descriptive partly reflective, in which a certain local colouring is successfully sustained, while abundant evidence is furnished also of the composer's skill in the production of orchestral effects. The overture, especially, is a spirited impromptu composition, consisting of one movement only, which forms an appropriate index to the drama, and may be heard to advantage also in the concert-room. A somewhat novel effect is produced by the frequent use made of the harp in conjunction with violin passages. The music is none the worse for bearing traces here and there (and particularly in the two *Marches*) of the composer's intimate acquaintance with the later scores of Wagner and Verdi; there being sufficient originality in them to stamp these *Intermezzi* as the independent productions of a musician of no mean talent. Since their first performance in December last at Rome, the *Intermezzi Sinfonici* have made the round of Italian concert-rooms with great success, and have also been introduced at one of the recent Exhibition Concerts at Paris.

Stabat Mater. Composed by Emanuel Astorga. The pianoforte accompaniment arranged by Robert Franz. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE composer of this work—born in Sicily about the year 1681—became a great favourite at the court of the Emperor Leopold at Vienna, and produced, it is believed at

Barcelona, a Pastoral of his composition called "*Dafné*," which achieved a remarkable success. His "*Stabat Mater*," now published in the octavo form, with a pianoforte accompaniment arranged by Robert Franz, is a very excellent specimen of his style, the sympathetic and somewhat melancholy nature of the composer being faithfully reflected in the music throughout. Many of the solos are extremely melodious and expressive, but we would especially draw attention to the opening Chorus, "*Stabat Mater*," which contains much clever and artistic writing.

The Dream. A Serenata. Written by William Bartholomew on the occasion of the marriage of Her Highness the Princess Royal of England with His Royal Highness Prince Frederick William of Prussia. The music composed and dedicated to their Royal Highnesses by Sir Michael Costa. The pianoforte accompaniment arranged by Charles Lucas. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

WE have often wondered that this graceful and melodious Serenata should have been so long allowed to remain comparatively unknown. True it is that, written for a special occasion, like many other works produced under similar circumstances, it has scarcely been at all submitted to the judgment of the general public; but we are convinced that it has abstract musical merits which should preserve its vitality; and the edition now before us—which contains a clever pianoforte accompaniment by the composer's friend, the late Charles Lucas—will doubtless be the means of introducing the composition to the many choral Societies in search of novelty.

FOREIGN NOTES.

THE first performance of M. Gounod's new five-act Opera, "*Polyeucte*," the production of which, at one or the other of the lyric establishments of Paris, had been anticipated at intervals by the musical press for some years past, has at last been realised at the National Opera, where the work was brought out on the 7th ult. as the great operatic novelty of the International Exhibition. We have noticed the work so fully in another part of the present number that we need only record here the complete success of the first representation, and that the Opera has since almost exclusively occupied the stage of the national theatre.

Another event in the operatic world of Paris was the first production, last month, at the Théâtre-Ventadour of "*Les Amants de Vérone*," the work of an amateur, the Marquis d'Ivry, who is the author of both libretto and music. The new Opera (which, by the way, the composer is said to have completed some twenty years ago), although founded on the same subject as M. Gounod's "*Roméo et Juliette*," and thus inviting a comparison with the work of a favourite composer, was nevertheless very well received, a result to which the excellent singing of Mdlle. Heilbronn and M. Capoul in the principal rôles is said to have contributed not a little.

At one of the numerous organ recitals which have recently been given on the powerful instrument erected in the Salle des Fêtes of the Trocadéro, M. Camille Saint-Saëns created a deep impression upon a numerous audience by his remarkable playing. Among the pieces selected by the gifted artist-composer were, besides three "*Rhapsodies Bretonnes*" and the Prelude to the Oratorio, "*Le Déluge*," of his own composition, a Prelude and Fugue by Bach, and Liszt's *légende musicale*, "*St. Francis of Assisi preaching to the birds*." This series of excellent Recitals terminated on the 8th ult.

According to the new regulations, which have just obtained the official sanction of the Marshal-President, the Paris Conservatoire admits pupils from nine to twenty-two years of age; whereas the salaries of professors have been fixed at 3,000 francs for composition, and at from 1,500 to 2,400 francs for the remaining branches of musical tuition. The examinations for admission of new pupils commenced on the 28th ult., and will extend over a fortnight, applications having to be accompanied by certificates of birth and of vaccination. M. Massenet, the well-known composer, has, it is announced, been nominated professor of counterpoint, fugue, and composition at the institution referred to, in the room of the late M. F. Bazin.