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FEBRUARY 19, 1907.

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 VICE-PRESIDENT,
 IN THE CHAIR.

THE ANTIEN CONCERTS, 1776-1848.

By JAMES E. MATTHEW.

ALTHOUGH domestic music appears to have flourished in England during the Madrigalian Period, *i.e.*, from 1588 to 1638, as witness well-known and often-quoted passages from Morley's "Plaine and Easie Introduction," 1597, and Peacham's "Compleat Gentleman," 1620 (a work, by-the-bye, just reprinted by the University of Oxford), any idea of a public performance does not appear to have suggested itself. The professional musician of that day was either a member of a Cathedral choir or was attached to some family of distinction, as, for instance, Christopher Simpson to that of Sir John Bolles. The pursuit of music as a relaxation was of necessity confined to those who possessed means and leisure. The political troubles effectually put a stop to such pursuits, with the result that several well-known musicians, among them Captain Cook and Wm. Lawes, found their occupation gone, and from a feeling of loyalty actually took up arms in the Royalist cause, in which the latter lost his life.

It was not till after the Restoration in 1660 that music was again cultivated. Those musicians who had survived the troubles began anew to practise their art. Cathedral choirs were re-organized with difficulty, owing to the impossibility of finding boys with adequate—or, indeed, any—training.

The Hon. Roger North, to whose "Memoires of Musick" we are indebted for much information as to the condition and progress of the art at that period, tells us that "the Nation (as I may term it) of Musick was well prepared for a revolution. A great means of bringing that foreward was the humour of following publick consorts, and it will not be out of the way to deduce them from the beginning. The first of these was in a lane behind Paul's, where there was a

chamber organ that one Phillips played upon, and some shopkeepers and foremen came weekly to sing in consort, and to hear and enjoy ale and tobacco, and after some time the audience got strong." We thus see that music had already descended from its high estate, and that the smoking concert is not entirely a modern invention. North goes on: "The next essay was of the elder Banister, who had a good theatricall vein, and in composition had a lively style peculiar to himself. He procured a large room in Whitefriars, neer the Temple back gate, and made a large raised box for the musitians, whose modesty required curtaines. The room was rounded with seats and small tables, alehous fashion. One shilling was the price, and call for what you pleased; there was very good musick, for Banister found means to procure the best hands in towne, and some voices to come and performe there, and there wanted no variety of humour, for Banister himself (inter alia) did wonders upon a flageolet to a thro' Base."

North then proceeds to describe the Gentlemen's Meeting, "whom I shall not name, for some of them as I hear are still living, that used to meet often for consort after Baptist's manner, and performing exceeding well with Bass violins (a cours instrument as it was then, which they used to hire) their friends and acquaintance were admitted and by degrees, as the fame of their meeting spread, so many auditors came that their room was crowded, and to prevent that inconvenience, they took a room in a tavern in Fleet Street, and the taverner pretended to make formall seats, and to take money, and then the Society disbanded. But the taverner finding the sweets of vinting wine and taking money, hired masters to play, and made a pecuniary consort of it, to which for the reputation of the musick, numbers of people of good fashion and quality repaired."

"The masters of musick finding that money was to be got this way, determined to take the business into their owne hands; and it proceeded so far that in York Buildings, a fabrick was reared and furnished on purpose for publick musick. And there was nothing of musick valued in towne but was to be heard there. It was called the Musick-Meeting, and all the quallity and beau mond repaired to it." York Buildings were in Villiers Street in the Strand. The Society appears to have lasted but for a short time, owing to the jealousy of the performers and the opposition of the playhouses, which started what North calls "semi operas." "The chief of these were Circe (by Dr. Charles Davenant, Sir W. Davenant's elder son, musick by Banister), the Fayery Queen, Dioclesian, and King Arthur," the two latter to Purcell's music.

Thus far the Hon. Roger North. It would seem that for a time the opera got the ascendancy. The meetings of

Thomas Britton, the musical small-coal man, founded in 1678, came to an end in 1710, and must have been confined to very small audiences. In the latter year, the "Academy of Ancient Musick," under distinguished patronage, was formed at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand. It was founded "by a number of gentlemen, performers on different instruments, in conjunction with some of the most eminent masters of the time." From a pamphlet published in 1770, attributed by the late Dr. Rimbault to Sir John Hawkins, we learn that "under the direction of the late Dr. Pepusch, with the assistance of Mr. Galliard, Dr. Maurice Greene, Mr. Bernard Gates, and the gentlemen and boys of St. Paul's Cathedral and the Chapel Royal, the Academy continued in a very flourishing state till about the year 1728, when Dr. Greene thought proper to leave it and set up an Academy at the Devil Tavern, Temple Bar, which subsisted but a few years." The Society "continued to flourish till the year 1734, when Mr. Gates retired, and drew off with him the children of the Chapel Royal." An attempt was made to train a number of boys, but in spite of the countenance of the Abbé Steffani, Mr. Handel and Signor Geminiani, at the death of Dr. Pepusch, in 1752, the undertaking appears to have languished. The pamphlet of Hawkins was an attempt to revive public interest in the Society. It winds up with the words, "Esto perpetua," but the fond hope was not fulfilled, as it came to an end in 1789.

Many concerts were, of course, given by different professors, principally in Hickford's Rooms, many of which are recorded by Mrs. Harrison in her excellent article on these Rooms in the new edition of Grove's Dictionary, and in *THE MUSICAL TIMES* of September and October of 1906, but it was not until the foundation of the "Concert of Antient Music" in 1776 that a Society of definite aim, at which the programmes should be entirely in professional hands, was formed.

An outline of the history of the Society will be found in the late Rev. Charles Mackeson's article in Grove's Dictionary, based on a short account by John Parry the elder, prefixed to the word-book of 1847. The founders were a committee of gentlemen—Lords Sandwich, Exeter, Dudley and Ward, Sir Watkin W. Wynn, Sir R. Jebb, and Messrs. Morrice and Pelham. The Society throughout its existence maintained a somewhat exclusive and aristocratic position which, in our more democratic days, seems almost comical. To go with your money in your hand was no passport; your social position had to be as carefully vouched for as for a ball at Almack's. No ordinary person could be allowed to be present at such refined musical banquets. This was in accordance with the habits and feelings of the

time, which now serve to amuse us; but apart from these ancient prejudices it must be admitted that, in its earlier and palmy days, the Society did much to maintain at its concerts a high standard both of selection and performance.

With these claims on the student of musical history and progress, I must admit that I have always felt much interest in the Society. When, therefore, a kind friend of mine reported that he had found a long series of word-books of the Antient Concerts on a barrow in Shoreditch, by the Standard Theatre, at threepence apiece, I at once, regardless of expense, begged him to secure them for me. A further series I was fortunate enough to pick up in a more unlikely place. It formed part of the very fine library of M. Martin, a professor of Marseilles, which was removed to Paris for the purposes of sale. It was fairly complete, but Mr. Liepmannsohn, of Berlin, who attended the sale, allowed me to take those I wanted on equitable terms. I was quite satisfied with his treatment—but they cost more than threepence each! This left a few blanks only, which I have since had the good luck to fill up.

The series extends from 1785 to 1848, sixty-four volumes in all. The Society was established in 1776, but I believe no earlier books of the words were issued. A manuscript volume of the earlier programmes exists in the old Sacred Harmonic (now Royal College of Music) Library. They are octavo volumes, bound, with some attempt at uniformity, in red roan, but I have come across odd copies in quarto, so I suppose large paper copies were issued to subscribers willing to pay an advanced price.

I was thus in possession of materials for a history of the Society as far as manifested in its public work, but I was soon afterwards fortunate enough to secure a large quantity of materials at the sale of the effects of the late Mr. Lonsdale, of Bond Street, who for many years transacted much of the business of the Society in its relations with the professors engaged, and of payments to tradesmen, &c.—in fact, he was sub-treasurer. In this capacity he inherited many documents from Birchall, who was his predecessor in the office, as he was in the well-known Bond Street business. These consisted of a long series of receipts for salaries for principals, band and chorus, annual statements of expenditure from 1813 to 1848, tradesmen's bills, regulations for performers, specimens of the tickets, and a mass of correspondence. I may mention that the series of receipts for salaries is not complete, many, no doubt (and of course the most interesting), having been given away as autographs. There were, in addition, copies of the banking account at Child's from 1807 to 1813, when Mr. Keysall (possibly a member of that firm) was treasurer. He retired from the office in 1813, handing over the balance

to Mr. Hammersley, with whose firm the Society continued to keep its accounts until its extinction in 1848.

These materials shed an interesting light on the inner workings of the institution, on social habits differing widely from those of our day, and on the extravagant expenditure which concert-giving then entailed—at least, to satisfy the standard of excellence aimed at by the noble managers. The earliest place of meeting was the New Rooms, Tottenham Street, which must have been rather outside the fashionable radius. The building stood on the site afterwards occupied by the Prince of Wales's Theatre, which became a centre of attraction under the management of the Bancrofts, and has now in its turn given place to the Scala Theatre. In 1795 the Society moved to the New Rooms, King's Theatre, Haymarket, and in 1804 to what were then called the Festino Rooms, a title which was soon changed to that of the Hanover Square Rooms, by which name they have been familiar to many of us. This building became the home of the Society till its dissolution. The Directors took a lease of the building from the daughters of Sir John Gallini, a teacher of dancing, its original proprietor. The rent was £1,000 per annum, subsequently lowered to £800. Part of this rent was recovered by lettings for concerts and other purposes, not always profitably, as I find a memorandum ordering that in future all lettings must be paid for in advance.

The first detailed account of the expenditure in my hands is for the year 1813. From that date the statements are complete. The number of concerts for the season, till the latter period of the Society's history, wastwelve. The accounts are very interesting. Taking the year 1813, the expenditure was £4,441 4s. 9d., *i.e.*, an average of £370 per concert. Of this sum, the payments to principal singers was £1,345 11s. The chorus amounted to £625 10s., but this included occasional extra payments for taking solo parts. Persons qualified to sing in choirs were so scarce in London that five ladies were brought up from Lancashire, and were maintained in London during the whole season at a further expense of £128. The chorus in all numbered sixty; the sopranos consisted of eight ladies, while the Chapel Royal, St. Paul's, and the Abbey each contributed four boys, at a charge of £6 6s. each for the season. The altos were exclusively male. The cost of the band, consisting, with the organ, of fifty performers, amounted to £1,178 2s.—that is something under £100 for each concert. There were sixteen violins, and no invidious distinction, up to the end of the Society's history, was made between first and second violins. Of these, François Cramer, as leader, received 100 guineas for the season, and Moralt, who no doubt was, in fact, principal second violin, twenty-four guineas. A guinea a concert seems

to have been the regular fee for the rank and file. Principals had two guineas, but Lindley, as principal 'cello, received forty guineas for the season. His inseparable companion, Dragonetti, does not appear in the list till 1816, and then for one night only, when he received £5 5s.; but this was for taking part with Cramer and Lindley in a trio, described as by Handel and Martini, a performance which was repeated in the following season. He became a regular member of the band in 1817, when his salary was sixty guineas. The terms of members of the band included one extra night, when the "Messiah" was performed for the benefit of the Royal Society of Musicians. And since the cessation of the Antient Concerts, this performance has been continued to the present day, with the exception that for the last few years some other oratorio has been substituted.

It will thus be seen that the total expenditure for professional assistance at the twelve concerts was £2,746, leaving upwards of £1,500 for other expenses, *i.e.*, about £125 per concert. Advertising, which in these days forms so large an item in concert-giving, was not so freely indulged in; newspapers were few; sandwich-men, if they existed, would, I am sure, have been repugnant to my Lords, and indeed, in a Society constituted on such lines, advertising was unnecessary except possibly in the interests of the principal singers. The charge for constables and doorkeepers was very large. Lighting was a serious matter. There was no gas; the bill of Barclay, in the Haymarket, a firm still existing, for wax candles (after allowing for the unburnt ends returned), was £151 4s. for the season. Printing, executed by Mr. Mallett, of Wardour Street, another firm still existing and mainly occupied in concert work, amounted to £212, while a Mr. Martin was paid £10 13s. for ordinary candles for use at rehearsals.

It was considered necessary in those days to provide refreshments, which was done at a cost of 100 guineas. Bills of tradesmen had to be met, and the whole business arrangements were carried on with a magnificent disregard of economy, as became the body of noblemen and gentlemen who managed affairs. In the list of expenditure there is no charge for rent of the rooms; possibly this was in part repaid in lettings for other concerts, but one would suppose that something should have been debited to the concert account. It is also puzzling that, while in 1813 a sum of £115 5s. 8d. is charged for King's taxes and £35 15s. 8d. for parochial rates, no similar payments occur in subsequent statements. One charge is not without interest—an annual one of between £70 and £80 to Mrs. Field, housekeeper, rising indeed, in later years, to over £90. Mrs. Field was, as far as I can trace, paid no salary; she was probably the wife of Mr. Field,

music porter, and no doubt they occupied pleasant lodgings with "a respectable address" in the building. Mrs. Field's bill is entirely for out-of-pocket expenses—firewood, charcoal, chimney sweeps, &c. Soap, house flannel, and dusters came to £8 18s., blacklead and emery to £6 14s. Doubtless Mrs. Field kept the establishment in apple-pie order, for she was assisted in her labours by a whole army of charwomen; on the approach of the season there was a regular spring cleaning! For three weeks in succession there is a charge of £2 12s. per week, and for fourteen subsequent weeks of £1 18s., which in those days, I should suppose, would have paid for nineteen charwomen. Her bill for the season included a supply of wine for the principal singers, generally about £4 10s., which, compared with other charges, seems moderate.

As I have said, the expenditure for 1813 amounted to £4,441 4s. 9d., and as the receipts came to £5,966 2s., there was a balance to credit of £1,524 17s. 3d. In that year one of the "ladies from Lancashire" was Miss Deborah Travis, whose voice greatly impressed the Directors. It was thought to be so promising that they determined to undertake her musical and general education. For a musician, in most cases an organist, to take an articulated pupil is not altogether unknown even in our own days, but this was not the course adopted by the Directors. While prosecuting her studies, the Directors were anxious to secure her services, and with this aim she was actually bound apprentice to one of their number—to the Duke of Cambridge, probably the first and the last time that a Royal Duke stood in that relation. The bill of costs for this transaction, although made out to Miss Travis, was presumably paid by the Society, as it is among the other receipts. It is as follows:—

	Miss Travis of Shaw to H. Barlow.	Dr.
1813,	Attending and taking Instructions to	£ s. d.
Sept.	prepare Draft of Indenture of Apprenticeship from you to His Royal Highness Prince Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge, K.G., one of the Directors of the Antient Concerts in London	o 6 8
	Preparing Draft accordingly and Copy for perusal	o 16 o
	Ingrossing two parts on Stamps	1 1 o
	Paid for Paper and Duty	1 11 4
	Attending the Execution and to read over same in presence of two Justices of the Peace	o 5 o
		<u>£4 o o</u>

Having embarked on this enterprise, the Directors were determined not to starve the cause. During the season of 1814, in addition to £30 gs. paid to Miss Travis for singing at performances, the following items paid on her behalf occur in the statement of expenses:—

	£	s.	d.
Miss Harwood's Bill	45	6	9
Mr. Greatorex, Teaching	26	5	0
Mr. Kirkman, for a Grand Pianoforte ...	63	0	0
Bill for Music	6	7	6
Mr. Greatorex, for Teaching, to Midsummer	49	7	0
Miss Harwood's Bill for Education ...	91	11	0
Total ...	£281	17	3

Miss Dorothy Travis was evidently an expensive luxury. Miss Harwood no doubt, kept a very superior finishing establishment for young ladies, where probably Miss Travis was a parlour boarder. Of course, Miss Travis did not require a new pianoforte every year, but in 1815 her total expenses (excluding £30 gs. paid as before for actual services) amounted to £252 5s. 10d. The last payment to Miss Harwood appears to have been made up to Christmas, 1815, £65 5s. This includes sundry items of cash advanced, and £1 16s. 6d. mantua maker's bill, which does not seem an extravagant item for a young lady called on to make public appearances before the *élite* of society. Miss Travis had probably outgrown the resources of that establishment, and in 1816 she was for the first time allowed to appear as a principal, which she did at the opening concert of the season in an air from Handel's "Alcina," "Di, cor mio, quanto t'amai," not coming forward again till the fifth concert, in a duet with Mrs. Vaughan, from "Alexander Balus." After this, her appearances were more regular. On leaving Miss Harwood's roof, she took up her residence in the house of Mr. Greatorex, where she was able to profit more readily from his lessons, of which she appears to have had three a week, at a charge of 10s. 6d., while board and lodging were at the rate of £60 a year. During this period, she took lessons in writing and Italian from Mr. John Dalton, whose receipt for two months' lessons, £6 6s., is in the flying penmanship of the period. Down to 1820, Miss Travis continued to take lessons from Greatorex, but in less number. As is well known, the kindness of the Directors was justified, for she became an excellent and esteemed singer, especially in oratorio, and in 1826 she became the second wife of William Knyvett, for many years the principal alto at the leading concerts and festivals, and from 1832 to 1840 the

conductor of the Antient Concerts. He died in 1856; his widow survived till 1876.

The best principal singers were always engaged, those resident in this country receiving regular engagements, while foreign singers of celebrity were brought forward when visiting this country. In 1785, the first year of the printed books of the words, Madame Mara and Tenducci appeared. In 1786 came Mrs. Billington, while Miss Storace was regularly engaged from 1787 to 1794. We first find Madame Banti, that singer by nature about whom Lord Mount Edgcumbe waxed so eloquent, from 1795 to 1801, Mrs. Billington from 1802 to 1810, Catalani from 1811 to 1813, Mrs. Bianchi Lacy from 1812 to 1814. In the latter year came out Miss Stephens—the famous Kitty Stephens—afterwards Countess of Essex, and the aunt of a much-respected member of this Society, the late Mr. C. E. Stephens. The Directors were most loyal to their performers, and Miss Stephens appeared regularly in the programmes till she retired from the platform. It need hardly be said that Miss Travis, as a daughter of the Society, was always engaged. After singing in the chorus she came forward, as already stated, in 1815, and appeared without interruption till 1839, although from 1827 as Mrs. William Knyvett. It would be tedious to continue these details, but among other famous prima-donnas we find Mmes. Fodor, Camporese, Salmon, Pasta, Caradori-Allan, Malibran (in 1829, and in 1836 as Madame de Beriot), Paton, Stockhausen, Masson, Cinti Damoreau, Schröder Devrient, Grisi (1834), Clara Novello (1833, and still living), Adelaide Kemble, Rivière (in 1831, who in the following year appears as Mrs. H. R. Bishop), Garcia (Madame Viardot), the sister of Malibran, Maria B. Hawes, Romer, Dolby (1839), Alfred Shaw, Anna Thillon, Alboni, and many others. In the last year of the Society appeared Miss Emma Lucombe (who soon afterwards became Mrs. Sims Reeves), and the sisters Williams, one of whom soon afterwards married another promising tenor—Mr. Lockey—whose career was so unfortunately cut short by an affection of the throat.

If the male singers were not quite so well known to fame as the ladies, they were a well-chosen body. Tenducci and Pacchierotti (the latter a much-respected *habitué* of Dr. Burney's social evenings) were the only members of a race of singers no longer existing. Harrison, Bellamy, Sale, Knyvett, were all held in estimation in their day. Bartleman appears for the first time as a solo singer in 1791, leaving to be principal bass at the Vocal Concerts, but returning in 1795, and from that time continuing regularly till ill-health forced his retirement. In 1825 we find H. Phillips, who for many years was the leading bass in

oratorio. In 1828 our great tenor, Braham, first appeared in a selection from "Jephtha," and no doubt moved all hearts with the recitative "Deeper and deeper still" and the air "Waft her, angels," in which he was unrivalled, although it is inconceivable that he can have excelled his great successor of our own times. In 1830 we find Donzelli and Lablache, Rubini in 1833, Tamburini in 1834, Ivanoff in 1836, Staudigl in 1843, Pischek in 1845, Mario and Ronconi in 1842, Roger and Gardoni in 1847. Of other noticeable appearances, we remark Balfe in 1836 and Mr. Parry, jun. (our well-known and beloved John Parry), in 1833, who did not sing "Wanted a governess" (no composition of less than twenty years' standing was allowed!) but Pergolesi's "Lord, have mercy upon me." A few years afterwards he joined Phillips in the duet "The Lord is a Man of war!"

If the general expenses of the Concerts appear to be extravagant, the terms paid to singers of celebrity were much more moderate than those of the present day, and this is more noticeable in the case of foreign singers. The earliest statement of expenditure is dated 1813—probably the time when Birchall became the medium through whom the expenses of the Society passed. In that year the sum devoted to principal singers was much larger than any subsequent year. It amounted to £1,345 11s. for the twelve concerts—about £112 per concert. This was accounted for by the engagement of Catalani, who sang at eight concerts, for which she received the large sum of £472 10s. for her services. It does not appear how this figure was arrived at, but it approaches £60 per night—an enormous sum for those days. No one in the subsequent history of the Society received anything approaching it. In the same year Mrs. Vaughan and Mrs. Bianchi Lacy each were paid £126, *i.e.*, £10 10s. per concert; Bartleman £200 for the season. In the following year payments to principals had dropped to £947 5s.—something under £79 per concert. Miss Stephens appears for the first time in my lists in 1814, singing on ten evenings at £15 15s., and these were her terms for the two following seasons, but in 1818 they were raised to £21, and in 1820 to £25, which is the highest sum she appears to have received. Mrs. Salmon made her first appearance in 1815 at £10 10s. a night. In 1817 this was raised to £15 15s., and in 1820 to £25, as no doubt she and Miss Stephens claimed to be on an equal footing. Of foreign singers, both Madame Fodor and Madame Camporese took £21, and subsequently £25. Miss Dorothy Travis, the Society's *protégée*, was entrusted with solos for the first time in 1828, receiving £76 12s. 6d., which is no definite sum per night, but in the following year she was allowed £6 6s. per night. It must be remembered, however, that she received collateral advantages

in the way of lodging and lessons, but to the end of her time she never had high terms—although as Mrs. Knyvett she became a singer of celebrity—being contented with £10 a night, probably in recognition of all the Society had done for her. Men singers seem never to have commanded such high terms; £295 for the season in 1820 to Bartleman seems to be the largest payment. Braham was by no means a regular assistant; he received £65 for three nights in 1828, and £15 15s. a night for twelve nights in 1832. It is when we come to foreign operatic stars that we are struck with the modesty of their demands in comparison with those of prima-donnas of the present day. Pasta was content with £30 a night; the bewitching Malibransang four nights for £100; Grisi for £21 a night; Alboni for £15 15s.; £21 was paid to that invaluable support of the Society, Madame Caradori-Allan; while male singers of the stamp of Mario, Gardoni, Ronconi, Lablache, Tamburini, received £12 12s., Donzelli and Rubini alone taking £21. Returning to English singers, Miss Rivière appeared in 1831 for a modest £5, but in the following year, when she became Mrs. Bishop, her terms rose to £9 9s. In 1833 Clara Novello appeared once for £5 5s., and in 1834 sang "utility" at eight concerts for £21. For some years her name disappears, but in 1840 she commanded fifteen guineas, a fee much more in proportion with her merits. Among other well-known names appear those of Miss Birch, Mrs. Alfred Shaw, Miss Dolby, Madame Anna Thillon (English in all but name), and Adelaide Kemble, who, giving her services on one occasion, received twenty-five guineas for a single evening. But I must not weary you with further details, although not altogether without interest.

We have now to consider the other side of the account—the amounts received for subscriptions. The original subscription for members was £8 8s., which covered twelve concerts. The tickets were strictly non-transferable, and this absurd regulation was only relaxed comparatively late in the Society's history. The Directors had the privilege of paying twenty-four guineas, though why they should have done so when the office entailed such trouble and responsibility is incomprehensible. Possibly they were allowed to introduce a number of friends into the Directors' box. This was subsequently reduced to eighteen guineas in proportion to that of other subscribers, but Royalty continued to be charged twenty-four guineas. This was probably justified by the fact that a royal visit involved a certain retinue for whom accommodation had to be found. Up to 1795, as already stated, the concerts were given at the Tottenham Rooms. During this time, the list of subscribers in four years only exceeded 400—probably the room would not hold a larger number. On moving to the King's Theatre,

the numbers continuously increased, rising to 684 in 1803. In 1804 the Society moved to Hanover Square, and from this time to 1827 must be considered the palmy days of the institution. The largest number of subscribers was in 1825, when it rose to 742. After this it gradually declined, dropping from 618 in 1829 to 517 in the following year, to 411 in 1832, never again reaching 400, till the Society expired in 1848 with 158 subscribers only. It must, however, be pointed out that in the later years a large number of single tickets were taken.

Regular balance-sheets are, unfortunately, not available. The number of subscribers in arrears was something phenomenal. Royalty showed no greater alacrity in paying up than did commoners. The Duke of Sussex was at one time thirteen years behindhand, the arrears amounting to £302 8s. His brother, the Duke of York, in 1825, owed for eight years' subscription, £167 4s., but he was a notoriously bad paymaster, the column at the bottom of Waterloo Place having been said to have been erected by grateful creditors who could not get their money! In 1827 the total arrears amounted to £1,654 16s. . . . Circulars were issued to the offenders, but the result was small. The amount thus owing was carried on year after year, but at uncertain intervals the list was cleared, apparently by the direction of the Archbishop of York,¹ who, for thirty years, in addition to the cares of his diocese (which in those days do not seem to have weighed so heavily on dignitaries of the Church as in our own times!), found time to devote zealously to the affairs of the Society. In 1830, a sum of £646 16s. was thus written off. From the year 1840 keener methods of business prevailed, and the amount outstanding was reduced to more reasonable figures.

In 1833 the position of the Society had become alarming. The receipts amounted to £3,306 9s., the expenses to £3,452 19s. 3d. It was quite time, therefore, that some reform should be affected. It took the shape of an announcement that "subscribers should have the privilege of introducing their friends to a single concert, by tickets, price one guinea each . . . and as the number of such tickets will be limited, the priority of application will determine to whom such tickets will be given." This air of conferring a favour is very delightful, but the result was not very encouraging; it was therefore determined to reduce, in the following season, the number of concerts to eight, and to reduce "the subscription to six guineas for subscribers retaining the privilege of attending rehearsals; Five guineas for those who do not. That the transfer of tickets between Father and Son, and between Brothers, also between Mother and Daughters

¹ Vernon Harcourt.

and between Sisters, be allowed." These modifications show some spark of good sense, but are still sufficiently preposterous. Who was damaged if good music was listened to by a man instead of a woman? Probably the regulations were constantly evaded, for the door-keeper could not possibly tell at a glance the relationship of the late comers, who invariably stream in as a concert is beginning. These reckless alterations, however, proved inadequate to revive the drooping fortunes of the Society. The receipts gradually dwindled till they became insufficient to pay expenses, and in March, 1849, a circular was sent to the subscribers to inform them "that the number of subscriptions for the present year for which application has been made being insufficient for the maintenance of the Concerts on the accustomed scale of efficiency, the Performances will be discontinued this Season"; and so the Antient Concerts came to an end, as other musical efforts have before and since.

The reasons for this result are not far to seek. In the later twenty years of the Society's existence social habits went through a great change. The whole country was in a state of ferment over the question of Reform, and the middle classes were claiming a much larger share in public life. The difficulties with which outsiders were met who wished to share in the pleasures of the Concerts were wholly out of harmony with the spirit of the age. Moreover, there was a great want of catholicity in the arrangement of the programmes. They were largely devoted to the works of one composer—Handel—whose genius none will underrate; but since his death other men of genius had arisen. It was a rule of the Society that no work should be performed until twenty years after its composition. It thus happened that the name of Mozart did not appear in the programme till 1826. As the great master died in 1791, there appears to have been no great alacrity to move with the times. In 1826 the "Jupiter" and E flat Symphonies and other works were performed. Haydn first appeared in 1834 with the "Surprise" Symphony, and in the following year Beethoven with the "Prometheus" Overture, several times repeated in after years. His Second Symphony was given in 1842, the "Egmont" Overture in 1841. That must have roused them! But as the latest of these works dated as far back as 1810, it was not the rule of the Society which delayed their production. In later years the choice of composers was widened, but the tendency was to cling to old favourite selections both from Handel and other composers, no complete oratorio being ever given, a single part of an oratorio, filling half the programme, being considered enough for the sustained attention of the audience. Here, perhaps, I may mention one custom which has now quite died out,

although I remember old professors in my youth who stuck to the habit—the parts of the Concerts were invariably called the 1st and the 2nd Acts, and this was the practice till the end.

With these drawbacks, can it wondered at that the popularity of the Society waned, especially with the attractions of other undertakings covering much the same ground. The most formidable of these—the Sacred Harmonic Society—was just coming into note, a body of amateurs most humble in its origin, but which, under able management, was fast becoming a musical power. Beginning most modestly in a dissenting chapel in Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn, owing to difficulties with the authorities of that building it removed to the small Exeter Hall in 1834, and on the unexpected success of a charity concert in the large hall of that building, continued to occupy that room till it was no longer available. The concerts were organized on a scale with which the older body could not compete, even with the help of the ladies from Lancashire, and if, under the conductor of that day—Mr. Surman—the performances were sometimes a little rough and ready, they were frequently excellent, while the chorus produced a volume of tone which was really magnificent, as was borne testimony to by Mendelssohn and other great musicians who visited our shores. In 1848, the last year of the Antient Concerts, Mr. Costa became conductor of the younger Society, with a startling improvement in the excellence of the performances. No form of introduction was necessary. Anyone was at liberty to subscribe or to buy a ticket by simple application at the office of the Society, or at the music shops, for three shillings—one-seventh the price for which you could be *allowed*, if properly vouched for, to buy a ticket for the older Society. An average attendance of 2,000 per concert enabled numbers to succeed where exclusiveness failed. The surroundings were naturally less magnificent. No refreshments were served; no guards in bearskins and fixed bayonets were stationed at the doors, at an expense of 16s., with free tickets for "the Field Officer in waiting, Brigade of Foot Guards, and the Adjutant of the Battalion furnishing the Duties," who probably were immensely bored, and would have preferred passing the evening at their club or at Crockford's.

The general management of the Antient Concerts was vested in the Directors, a small body of about half-a-dozen noblemen and gentlemen; among their principal duties was to take charge of one evening in turn, for which they drew up the programme, probably taking counsel with the conductor, but naturally this arrangement led to narrowness in choice, each Director wishing to include his favourite pieces, or being

willing to listen to the persuasion of his lady friends. As I have already said, the Archbishop of York was for many years a most active Director, the Duke of Wellington was for a time in office, as well as Lord Burghersh, afterwards Earl of Westmorland, who was really a composer of some merit, and instrumental in founding the Royal Academy of Music. In later years, Prince Albert performed the duties, and at one of the Concerts, in 1847, under his direction, Mendelssohn appeared as organist, receiving no fee for his services. Another of the duties of the Director for the evening was to entertain his fellow-Directors and the conductor to dinner previous to the concert. When one considers the convivial habits of those days, it is to the credit of these gentlemen that they remained in condition to perform the duties of the evening.

The first conductor was Joah Bates. He filled the office till his death in 1799, and was succeeded by Mr. Greatorex. He died in 1831, when W. Knyvett, the alto singer, who had married Miss Deborah Travis, was appointed, and continued in office till 1839. At the next season it was arranged that each Director should choose his own conductor, and thus, during that year, Sir G. Smart, Messrs. Bishop, Lucas, and Turle officiated, but the plan naturally did not work well; consequently, Sir H. Bishop was appointed conductor in 1843. It should be pointed out that the conductor's duties were very different from those we attach to the position in these days. Till 1841 he occupied the organ stool, a position most unfavourable for making his influence felt. The leader was a much more important person than now, for it was to him that the band and chorus looked for direction. Mr. Hay (about whom I find no information) was first holder of the office. His successor was William Cramer, who, at his death in 1804, was succeeded by his son, François Cramer. It is on record that on his appointment by George III., the King sent a message to him: "Tell young Cramer to keep his eye on me, and watch my hand, with which I will give him the true time of the various compositions." François Cramer retired in 1844, and was followed by J. D. Loder, by T. Cooke in 1846, and in the last season by the late Henry Blagrove. In Parry's account of the Society, to which reference has already been made, it is pointed out that the assistant-librarian and copyist, Mr. Hedgley, had belonged to the establishment for fifty-three years. His accounts for music copying and hire of music were a serious item in the yearly expenditure, in addition to which he received eighteen guineas for laying out the books in the orchestra and turning over at the organ.

It is to be regretted that the papers in my possession contain no proper balance-sheet. The finance of the Society

was arranged in the following manner: There was a treasurer, who was a member of the Society. In 1807, possibly earlier, Mr. John Keysall filled the office, and there are copies of the banking account with Messrs. Childs from that time to 1813 inclusive. In that year the office of treasurer was handed over to Mr. H. Hammersley, a member of the banking firm of Hammersley & Co., of Pall Mall, together with the balance at Childs' of £258 4s. 3d., and Exchequer bills for £1,500. From that date the banking account was kept with Hammersleys. Birchall, and afterwards Lonsdale, acted as sub-treasurers, paying in moneys received for subscriptions, and drawing the amounts required for tradesmen's bills and salaries to performers. The practice appears to have been to have a "treasury" day appointed soon after the conclusion of the season, taking proper receipts, the stamps on which the Society paid, which according to my recollection was not the usual practice.

On taking a lease of the Hanover Square Rooms, in 1803, the Directors found themselves landed in a peck of troubles. Many repairs and decorations were necessary to adapt the rooms for the Concerts? For this purpose they called in one of the most eminent and fashionable architects of the day, Mr. James Wyatt, who had made a great reputation by the design of the Pantheon and of many noblemen's seats. The Directors appear to have given him *carte blanche*. When the work was complete, the architect sent in to the treasurer, Mr. Keysall, a list of the bills incurred. These amounted to the staggering sum of £9,744 18s. 8d., exclusive of the salary of the clerk of the works, £65 2s., which had been omitted. This amount comprised £5,332 17s. 10d. for structural repairs and alterations, and £4,398 4s. 7d. for ornamental work and furniture. Of this, £2,795 4s. 1½d. (admirable accuracy!) was for carpenter's work done by Samuel Wyatt, the brother of the architect; while Edward Wyatt, carver and gilder, and Matthew C. Wyatt, painter, who may fairly be assumed also to be members of the family, are down for £1,204 9s. 10½d. and £559 9s. respectively. Some sums had been advanced to the tradesmen from time to time, in the usual way, on the architect's certificates, but how much I have no means of telling. In the letter enclosing the list of these bills, Mr. Wyatt "has to request, on behalf of the artificers employed, a further advance of money, which I am sure will, at this time, prove very acceptable to them." Mr. Keysall lost no time in sending a reply on the same day in the following terms:—

"SIR,—I received your account of the enormous estimate of the Rooms which, I am sure, if the Directors are of my opinion, they will never consent to pay. I have their orders

to pay you £500 more in addition to what you already had, and if you expect any more you must apply to them for it." It must be admitted that this was a little curt! Mr. Wyatt was evidently greatly nettled. He took Mr. Keysall's advice and addressed a long letter to Lord Chesterfield, one of the Directors, complaining of Mr. Keysall's letter as being "very extraordinary and personally ungentlemanlike towards me." He explains that the sum of £500 offered, in addition to the £1,500 already received, was wholly inadequate, especially as the amount he had already advanced from his own funds among the people employed was much more than the sum of £500. The original estimate was exceeded from the fact that the work had to be done against time, and the number of hours that it had to be carried on by candle-light. He points out that up to that time he had not examined the artificers' bills, the amount of which might be somewhat, but not largely, reduced, and that the people employed will very soon be greatly distressed if they should not receive a considerable proportion of the money due to them. This is not altogether comprehensible. It is inconceivable that the Directors should make such a proposition as to discharge bills amounting to about £10,000 with a payment of one-fifth of the amount. The Directors appear to have put the matter in the hands of their solicitors, Messrs. Strong, Still, & Strong, with the result that Mr. Wyatt, in April, 1805, proposes to refer the matter to some disinterested person; consequently all the documents were handed over to Mr., afterwards Sir John, Soane, the designer of that remarkable piece of architecture known as Sir John Soane's Museum, on the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields. It is worthy of notice that Mr. Soane was a connection of the Wyatt family, having married a niece of Mr. George Wyatt, described as a wealthy builder in the City. This circumstance, however, does not seem to have biased his judgment. The papers appear to have been handed to Mr. Soane before May 2nd, 1805, but in September of that year Messrs. Still & Strong report that it still will be some considerable time before he would be in a position to report on them. In the meantime he and Mr. Wyatt had a serious difference on a point of professional etiquette, which induced Mr. Soane to wish to throw the case up. Messrs. Still report that they have, with great difficulty, induced him to proceed with the matter, pointing out the disappointment it would be were he now to relinquish it. I am sorry to say that I have nothing to show the result of this negotiation—whether Soane persisted in his determination, or whether he ultimately gave his award—but there is a letter from Samuel Wyatt, whose carpenter's bill amounted to £2,795, dated as late as May 6, in 1806, insisting on the fairness of his charges, and begging for £1,000 on account,

"being at this moment much embarrassed." It would seem that he had not participated in his share of the £1,500 already paid by the Directors, nor in the funds advanced by his brother. But I notice that in the banking account for 1807 there is a payment of £1,000 on account of a loan of £4,000 from the treasurer, Mr. Keysall, which was probably borrowed to get over this trouble, and that it was extinguished in 1812 by a final payment of the balance, £300.

In the year 1822, Mr. T. Greatorex, jun., makes his appearance, with a salary of £50. This was as secretary. He seems to have got into a scrape with the Directors over the contract for lighting the rooms, having received something very like a secret commission from Messrs. Barclay & Co., the wax chandlers, which they allowed him (as, indeed, to his predecessor) on the score that the prices of wax and oil had fallen. There is rather a sad letter from his father, the conductor, admitting "that the whole system is very bad, nor can I defend any part of it. One thing I know—my son has it not in his power to repay the sum he has taken up, and I fear that I shall be obliged to discharge the obligation." Probably it was owing to this circumstance that the secretaryship was transferred to his brother, who retained the position till the dissolution of the Society. Mr. W. A. Greatorex was a solicitor, and in that capacity he was called on in March, 1838, to prosecute at Marlborough Street Police Court a person giving the name of John Jones for "intruding himself" at the Antient Concerts. Although, as his bill of costs states, Mr. Greatorex was "engaged a very considerable time in collecting evidence respecting the prisoner's behaviour and supposed object—13s. 4d."—it does not appear whether this was pure love of music which he wished to indulge without obtaining a proper introduction, but the result was that after two remands poor Mr. John Jones was committed (for how long is not stated) as a rogue and a vagabond.

Among the documents preserved are a number of letters, mostly of no great interest except as autographs. They refer to subscriptions, choice of seats, &c., and include notes from the Duke of Wellington, the Duke of Cambridge, Lord Burghersh, and other names well known in those days. Lord Burghersh (and afterwards as Lord Westmorland), from his position of Ambassador at Berlin and from his familiarity with music and musicians, was very useful in obtaining both musical works and performers for the Society. But there is a certain old-world flavour about many of them, showing how customs have changed. For instance, many are on gilt-edged paper, a thing quite unknown in these days. On the other hand, the imprinted address of the writer at the heading of notepaper, so universal in these days, was then quite unknown. Lord Westmorland's letters to

Mr. Lonsdale begin in somewhat haughty fashion: "Mr. Lonsdale, I have not heard of you for some time," or "Mr. Lonsdale, I am sending two parcels," whereas the Duke of Wellington invariably "presents his compliments to Mr. Lonsdale," &c. I remember that it used to be said that the Duke had his notepaper lithographed in facsimile: "F.-M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to," in order to avoid the trouble of writing this invariable commencement. I need hardly say that there is a fair number of letters from performers requesting an advance on account of salary. Double-bass players always send their instruments about with fear and trembling in dread of the accident which always arrives sooner or later. Poor Mr. Dragonetti suffered in this way. He sends in a bill for 16s. (1s. per journey) for sending his double-bass to Hanover Square, with a memorandum to the effect that "the porter employed by the Directors having broken Mr. D.'s instrument by conveying it in a van, which cost 30s. repairing, is the reason he employed the above person."

Among the correspondence is an interesting little series of letters with regard to the engagement of Miss Paton in 1830. It begins with a most business-like letter from her as to terms, on which the Directors desired some reduction. It is well known that in 1824 Miss Paton was married to Lord William Lennox, a son of the Duke of Richmond. The marriage was not a happy one, and in June, 1830, they separated. Early in July, Lord William Lennox wrote the following letter to Mr. W. A. Greateorex:—

"My Dear Sir,

"I addressed your Father a Letter a week since, and not having received any Reply, I fear he is unwell. Can you inform me to whom I am to apply for Payment of the terms due to Lady W. Lennox for the Antient Concerts?

"Yours ever and truly,

"WM. PITT LENNOX"

The delay in sending a reply was probably not owing to any illness of Mr. Greateorex, but to the difficulty the Directors felt as to whom they should pay. The Married Women's Property Act was not, in those days, thought of. The Archbishop of York, always to the fore in the Society's business, had the happy thought of getting a gratuitous legal opinion from one of the subscribers. It was as follows:—

"My Dear Lord,

"It is often said that the opinion of a lawyer is worth nothing without a fee, and, a fortiori, the opinion of an ex-lawyer is still worse. But, as far as my opinion is good

for anything, I believe that you *may* safely pay Lord William the salary due to his wife. If an action were to be brought it must be brought in his name.

"Yours faithfully,

"W. COURTENAY.

"July 16, 1830."

On this advice, the Directors appear to have acted, as, on July 20, Lord William Lennox gave his receipt for £225.

There arrives a sad time in the history of all choral societies when it becomes evident that the voices of many of the elder members show signs of wear. The conductor is placed in a position of great difficulty. It is always among the most diligent attendants at rehearsal, and among those who may be more relied upon to take up the points that this declares itself! But the quality of tone suffers, and the authorities are at their wits' end between the desire not to give offence and the wish to be quit of the old staggers. Even Lancashire larynxes will not last for ever! I find a letter dated January 12, 1832 (9d. postage), from William Knyvett to Lonsdale on the subject. It had been decided to discharge some of the female singers, and Knyvett instructs Lonsdale to undertake this unpleasant duty. He goes on to say: "In a letter from the Archbishop of York, a few days since, I find that it is the determination of the Directors to have only effective chorus singers, and for the same reason that the *old female Birds* have been discharged, so it must follow that the *male Birds*, for such as are not strong and effective in voice, cannot expect to be retained." He goes on to say, that he knows the "Directors would sooner make some little consideration to those discharged than to retain them and suffer the same weakened and reduced effects to follow another season."

Strict rules were in existence as to attendance at rehearsals and sending deputies, with a system of fines, which appear to have been rigidly enforced. A book was kept for performers to sign at rehearsals. This I much regret that I have mislaid, but there are two entries which I remember; the first in a boyish hand, with a specially bad pen, is "The Abey Boys," the next entry, "Mr. Hawes's Young Gentlemen"! Silence was to be maintained in the orchestra; no flourishing, and tuning only when the conductor gave the A on the organ.

But I must bring these somewhat disconnected remarks to an end. Reviewing the course of the Society's history, it must be admitted that the programmes showed an undoubted want of catholicity, in great measure due to their amateur selection. As a critic in the "*Harmonicon*" very justly says in the first volume of that interesting magazine

(1823), "It cannot be expected that so high and dignified a character as the Archbishop of York should descend to the examination of old scores," and no doubt the twenty years' rule was a cramping influence—although I cannot help thinking that there have been moments in our own experience when we should have welcomed such a law. The great English Madrigalian School was but indifferently represented, but it must be remembered that the number available was at that time small. The Musical Antiquarian Society was not founded till 1840, and the labours of Oliphant and Edward Taylor, the Gresham Professor, were of about the same date. The works of Handel had taken a firm hold of English taste, so that it was natural that they should form the backbone of the programmes. Many of his opera airs, now forgotten, were performed, which might with advantage find a place in the Selection Day of the Handel Festivals, and then some of the elders among us would hail an opportunity of hearing a selection of the works of Purcell, Marcello, Pergolesi, and others who fall within the scheme of no society of the present day, and are little more than names to the present generation.

The Society had outlived its time. A writer in the "Quarterly Musical Review," in a fine burst of eloquence, expresses himself in these words: "We regard the King's Concerts as the ark wherein is preserved, amidst the deluge of heterogeneous music which threatens to flow in upon us from all corners of the earth, the principles that are chiefly valuable, and out of which, if at all, the regeneration of good taste is to be expected." Though, with the wider outlook which an acquaintance with the subsequent development of the art enables us to take, we may not find ourselves in accordance with the views here expressed, we must at least acknowledge that for a long period the Concerts of Antient Music exercised an influence of the highest value, and that they deserve our grateful recollection.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—We shall be very ungrateful if we do not return our thanks to Mr. Matthew for having prepared this paper, which must have given him a great deal of trouble and could only be written by one who had access to many authentic documents. It so happens that I have some 500 or 600 receipts of these concerts which I also obtained from Mr. Lonsdale, and which I value very highly, because they contain the autographs of many distinguished performers of past times. It is worthy of note that in the earliest times when Mr. Bannister commenced his concerts, which were the first public concerts of any character in London, advertising was not regarded as unnecessary. The Antient Concerts did not advertise, but Mr. Bannister did. I hold in my hand a copy of the *London Gazette* of December 30, 1672, containing the following :

These are to give notice that at Mr. *John Bannisters* House (now called the *Musick School*) over against the *George Tavern* in *White Fryers*, this present Monday, will be musick performed by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future, precisely at the same hour.

That is an extremely interesting thing. That early advertisement I treasure, because it so happens that this tavern was in existence close to where my present Music School is situated. On looking over these records of the Antient Concerts I find several receipts for coals. They had their coals from the wharf that stood just where my School is now built. The firm was Baraud & Co., of which the principal was a distinguished musical amateur. I somewhat regret that we have not in these days patrons quite so liberal as they were in the early days of the Antient Concerts. It would be a very fine thing for us if there were one Society, only one, where there was a considerable amount of money that could be expended for the promotion of the best music. Now it seems impossible to make any concert pay that does not cater for the popular taste, and I am not sure that that always tends to the progress of art. The works of the great masters are shelved, not because we do not appreciate them, but simply because the public will only come to hear the latest thing, no matter whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, so long as it is new. That, I think, is a great pity. I have here an account of Mr. Lonsdale's in his own handwriting for the year 1826, and in that year I see his account came to £5,812 16s.—a magnificent amount of money, which would enable any orchestral society to do very great things. We must remember that this was an orchestral society, in which

madrigals would find no appropriate place. Such a society could surely do much to show the public what had been done in the past, which is equally good with what is being done in the present. There are one or two very notable facts in connection with the Antient Concerts. Mr. Thomas Greatorrex seems to have lived by the Antient Concerts, he and his family. He took £300 for sitting at the organ at the twelve concerts; and though we can imagine he was a very efficient performer, he had a band also. And yet he was obliged to have a man to turn over the leaves for him, which cost £9 for the twelve concerts. Mr. Headley was paid £9 for turning over the leaves year after year. Mr. Greatorrex, in addition to drawing his salary of £300 and taking, I think, £254 for the attendance of the Abbey Boys, also received money for teaching those "Lancashire witches"—one of them is constantly labelled in the Society's receipts "the Lancashire witch"—and he got several members of his own family put in for various offices connected with the Society; so I think he did pretty well. Then, how interesting it is to notice that Kitty Stephens went on receiving £300 for every season after the terms were once raised. There is also another curious fact that, although the people who attended the concerts were *crème de la crème*, they were obliged to secure the presence of the celebrated Bow Street runner Mr. Townsend. He was paid £21 every season for attending to look after the pickpockets, and he had several assistants who were paid very handsomely also. Then we heard of the enormous sum that was paid for lighting the rooms. But we must not forget that that £138 12s. paid for wax-lights was not all; there were also very large bills for lamps. The rooms, of course, were very fine, and it is interesting to remember the Society possessed some very valuable portraits of musicians, which were bequeathed to it under certain conditions; these conditions were so arranged that eventually those portraits come to the Royal Society of Musicians, in whose premises they now are. I can only hope that some day my relics of the Antient Concerts may be united with those of Mr. Matthew—they should never have been separated. Mr. Matthew mentioned the Sacred Harmonic Society as coming to replace the Antient Concerts. I possess the Sacred Harmonic Society's records from the earliest time, so that they form a very valuable record of the progress of Music in London during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Antient Concerts did an immense amount of good in their time, and I am glad that they treated people liberally. I have even found records of their paying annuities to certain old people. We cannot do that nowadays. I know that, in the societies with which I am now connected, in many cases we have to put our hands

into our pockets to cover the expenses. I only wish the spirit of the times would induce royalty and nobility to take more interest in music. I think it is a kind of patronage that would not degrade the art, and would be very much to the credit of the nobility, and I regret there are so few examples of it.

Dr. SOUTHGATE.—We must all echo Dr. Cummings's regret that the aristocracy and those members of the upper ten who devote their time to bridge and horse-racing—I do not think he mentioned pigeon-shooting—and other excitements do not achieve something like what their forefathers did for music. It is quite astonishing when you hear of the large sums which were subscribed by those people so many years ago—they mean, of course, much more than the same sums given at the present day. How very much larger than what is given for music nowadays! One knows that the Philharmonic Society sometimes can hardly get through its season without help from the guarantors. It is impossible to hear music better performed than it is at these concerts; and the directors take enormous trouble to find all that is good in music both old and new; and yet with such assistance as that the Society practically cannot pay its way. If you look down the list of guarantors and, indeed, include the list of subscribers, I do not think you will find the name of a single peer or person with a title, except Lady Stainer, Sir Frederick Bridge and Sir Hubert Parry—I remember that Lord Chief Justice Coleridge used to be a subscriber. It is greatly to be deplored that the aristocracy do not come forward and help music as their forefathers did in old times. I think we must all see that the Society of Antient Concerts gradually got out of harmony with the times. Each director chose his own programme, no doubt with some assistance from the conductor. But that terrible rule that they were to do nothing unless it was at least twenty years old was introducing an element of decay. It is quite clear that if you have to wait twenty years before you can hear a new, fine piece of music, many would be where the novelty will no longer be of any interest. That does not happen now; but I cannot help thinking that the exclusion of the popular element in music was one cause of the Society's dissolution. It was really a collection of fashionable persons who had, or pretended to have, an interest in music. As Dr. Cummings has said, they certainly did something for music, but I am afraid there were the elements of eventual dissolution in their constitution. However, if those who represent the noble patrons of the Society in the present day would only do something like what their forbears did, possibly English music might stand in a better position than it occupies at the present time.

(A vote of thanks to the lecturer was then passed.)

MR. MATTHEW.—I thank you very much for the way in which you have received my paper. With regard to your remark, Sir, that it was an orchestral society, that undoubtedly was the case; still, it occasionally gave madrigals such as "In going to my lonely bed," and one or two others of the better known examples. As a link between the Society and the present day, I may mention that I sent a copy of the programme to a lady who sang at the Antient Concerts in the year 1842. I am afraid the weather was too bad for her to come. I refer to Miss Macirone. And you yourself, Sir, have, I believe, a sort of link with the Society. In the year 1813 Master Hobbs appeared at the Concerts, and I think some years afterwards you married a daughter of Master Hobbs.

THE CHAIRMAN.—That is so. I may also mention that I have a complete collection of the books of words from the commencement to the end of the Society.

DR. MACLEAN.—I propose a vote of thanks to the Chairman. We are in special luck this afternoon. We often have generalizations, and they are not without value. But to-day we have a lecture from a gentleman who ransacks records, and gives us first-hand information supported by details therefrom. Then Dr. Cummings has contributed equally valuable matter from the stores of his experience. Regarding the magnificent close borough of which we have had the story, I really do not think that we can blame those who sit in high places that they do not act the same nowadays. Democracy has swept over everything, whether we like it or not; and it is the people, not social leaders, who must now support music. Society still plays its part in respect of opera. As a matter of fact, wealth does not now rest with the aristocracy, and many peers are as poor as we are.