The Parochial Psalter

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Madame Marchesi, whose eminent talent for vocal training is of European fame, and from whose school not a few of the *prime donne* of the day have emanated, has signified her intention of leaving Vienna—where she occupies the post of Professor at the Conservatorium—in order to follow a call to the parallel institution at Bruxelles. The Viennese are, it is said, straining every nerve to induce the gifted lady to reconsider her decision.

Mdlle. Anna Elger, a young soprano of great promise, made her *début* at Königsberg as *Leonora* in “*Il Trovatore*,” and *Agathe* in “*Der Freischütz*,” achieving a brilliant success. She is a pupil of Madame Marchesi.

Herr H. Scholtz, the talented pianist who has made the works of Chopin his especial study, gave an interesting concert recently at Dresden, when the programme consisted entirely of pieces by the Polish composer.

A new Opera by Franz von Holstein, entitled “*Die Hochländer*,” has been most favourably received upon its first performance, within the same week, at Hamburg, Leipzig, and Brunswick. The subject of the Opera, as its title would imply, is taken from Scotch history. Herr Kretschmer's operatic novelty, “*Die Folkunger*,” made a very successful *début* at the Hof-Theater in Darmstadt.

During a recent short stay at Leipzig Anton Rubinstein introduced a new Quintett, for pianoforte and stringed instruments, of his composition to a private circle of amateurs. The work, which has only just been published, is said to be full of power and originality, and one of the most important works of the kind its author has yet produced.

Madame Schumann has taken part, during the past month, in concerts given at Berlin, Hamburg, and Bâle.

The Jubilee Singers, whose performances elicited so much interest during their stay in London, are now carrying on their mission on the Continent. They gave a most successful first concert at Berlin on the 7th ult., and also had the honour of appearing before the Emperor and the members of the imperial family of Germany at a private audience.

We understand that Herr Johannes Brahms is at present engaged upon the composition of his Second Symphony.

A lyrical tenor of great promise made his *début* not long ago at the Hamburg Opera. As a member of a Tyrolese troupe of singers he had attracted the attention of the *impresario* Pollini, who at once caused him to be educated for the operatic stage, and in the existing scarcity of tenors Herr Conradi is likely to prove a valuable acquisition to the Hamburg company.

Recent numbers of the Leipzig *Signale* contain some interesting and amusing “critical letters” from the pen of Dr. Hans von Bülow, dated respectively from Bruxelles and Sydenham (London).

With the 4th ult., the thirtieth anniversary of the death of Mendelssohn, the copyright of the composer's works has, in accordance with German law, expired, their publication in Germany being henceforth free. His musical remains have been handed over by the heirs to the Royal Library at Berlin, under condition that a sum of M. 4,200 be annually granted as a stipend to musical students.

It is now positively settled that M. Gounod's “*Polyeucte*” will be performed at the Paris Grand-Opéra during the forthcoming International Exhibition. The three principal parts in the new work will be entrusted to Mdlle. Krauss and MM. Sellier and Lasalle. At the Opéra-Comique a new Opera by M. Ferdinand Poise, “*La surprise de l'Amour*,” met with a first representation on October 31, and was well received; while at the Théâtre de la Renaissance Herr Strauss's comic Opera, entitled “*La Tzigane*” (remodelled from his “*Die Fledermaus*”) is attracting numerous audiences since its first performance on October 30. The Théâtre Italien reopened its doors on the 3rd ult. with Donizetti's “*Poliuto*,” Signor Tamberlik singing the *titre-rôle*. At the Concerts Populaires the following works were included in the programmes: *Leonore*, Ballad-Symphony by Duparc (for the first time); *Symphonie fantastique* (Berlioz); *Pastoral Symphony* (Beethoven); *Rhapsodie Hongroise* (Liszt); *Pianoforte Concerto*, No. 4 (Litolff). The Châtelet Concerts brought among other pieces, *Tambourin* and *Pastorale* from “*Les Fêtes d'Hébé*” (Rameau), *Pianoforte Concerto* in G minor

(Saint-Saëns), *Intermezzo* from “*Orpheus*” (Gluck), *Minuet* from “*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*” (Lulli), *Fourth Orchestral Suite* (Massenet), *Symphony* in A major (Beethoven).

M. Ernest-Altès has been elected assistant *chef d'orchestre* of the Concerts of the Conservatoire, in the room of M. Lamoureux, who has retired from the post.

Verdi has declined the nomination as a member of the Italian commission for the Paris Exhibition, on account, it is said, of his numerous other engagements.

The directors of the Théâtre de la Monnaie, at Bruxelles, have entered into negotiations with Mesdames Materna and Ehn, and MM. Scaria and Labatt, of the Imperial Opera at Vienna, with a view to the production of Wagner's “*Die Walküre*” on the Bruxelles stage in March next.

At a *soirée* recently held at the Belgian capital a young lady, Mdlle. Stella de la Mar, a native of San Francisco, created quite a sensation by the beautiful *timbre* of her voice and her excellent schooling. She is only seventeen years of age, and has adopted the *nom de guerre* of Faustina. M. Strakosch is said to have at once engaged her for five years for his *concert-tournees*. In the same *soirée* the eminent pianist Herr Rummel played with great brilliancy a new Transcription on Wagner's “*Nibelungen*” by Brassin.

Mdlle. Marie Roze has entered into an engagement with the *impresario* M. Strakosch for America, and is announced to appear at the Academy of Music at New York towards the middle of January next.

The Theatre Carlo-Felice, at Genoa, has opened its winter season with Meyerbeer's “*Dinorah*.” The Pergola Theatre, at Florence, will remain closed for the present, the Municipal Government of the town having refused to grant the usual subvention to the establishment.

Herr Antón Rubinstein assisted at a concert recently given at St. Petersburg in aid of a charitable fund. The great musician, who conducted his “*Ocean Symphony*” and afterwards played Liszt's *Concerto* in E flat major and some pieces of Chopin, was made the object of the most enthusiastic demonstrations on the part of his listeners.

The splendid collection of musical instruments, ancient and modern, of M. Ad. Sax was exhibited for sale last month at Paris, but failed to attract a buyer at the sum demanded for the entire collection. It will now be put up at auction to be sold *en détail*, a fact which is to be greatly regretted.

At Venice a poor man, formerly engaged at a porcelain factory in Saxony, is said to have constructed a violin entirely composed of porcelain. The instrument is remarkable for its softness of tone and excellent resonant quality.

Herr Doepler, the gifted painter of historical subjects, whose assistance in the *mise-en-scène* of the Bayreuth Festspiele has been of so much value, has completed a series of pictures illustrative of scenes from “*Die Walküre*” said to be most powerful and striking. Photographic representations of these paintings will shortly be published at Leipzig.

Johann Ritter von Herbeck, for years first conductor of the Imperial Opera at Vienna, and a musician of sterling excellence, died at the Austrian capital on October 28, at the age of forty-six. The death is announced also of C. T. Becker, formerly Professor at the Leipzig Conservatorium; he was in his seventy-ninth year.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PAROCHIAL PSALTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE MUSICAL TIMES.”

SIR,—In your notice of the “*Parochial Psalter*,” in your last issue, I think you were rather hard upon Mr. Cooper. There is certainly some little discrepancy between the title-page and the preface, due in some measure, perhaps, to the author's over-modesty; but this, after all, is but a minor point. It is with respect to the accent that I think your reviewer is not very consistent, and it is, perhaps, also not quite fair to eliminate from the review of the book

all mention of the distinguishing features of it, viz. the marks of expression, simplicity, and the blending of the syllabic and polysyllabic systems of pointing.

Your reviewer says that the best authorities have long utterly condemned the emphasis on certain words. How is it then that in the "Cathedral Psalter," Elvey's Psalter, and others, certain words and syllables have marks placed over them, or are printed in different type, denoting that an accent of some kind is to be placed upon those syllables? Mr. Cooper in his preface distinctly states that only a *slight* stress is to be placed upon the emphatic word. Opinions may differ as to the right syllable in each verse on which to place the accent, but this does not affect the general question.

Having adopted the "Parochial Psalter" for my choir, and having had experience of other psalters, I can confidently assert that the chanting of the psalms has been much more satisfactory since its adoption than before. The choirboys attend to the marks of expression, as they are in plain English, much better than they did the *pp* or *ff* in other psalters; and, on the whole, I think Mr. Cooper has done good service in venturing to add yet another "Psalter pointed for chanting" to the many in existence.—I am, sir, yours truly,

HAROLD E. STIDOLPH.

S. Mary's, Ealing, W., November 13, 1877.

[The inconsistency mentioned in this letter is not in my review but in the psalter itself. In the preface, and also in the "Directions for Use," it is ordered that a *slight stress* should be made on the *last important syllable of the recitation* (marked generally by a circumflex); and it is also said that this should not be allowed to interfere with the *proper accent of the word*. I open the book and begin to chant the following verse, "The singers also and trumpeters shall he rehearse." I pause in confusion. I must, I am told, lay a stress on *ters*, because Mr. Cooper thinks it is the last important syllable of the recitation: and yet the proper accent of the word is *trumpeters*, consequently I must not lay stress on *ters*. Therefore I find myself ordered (1) to lay a stress on *ters*; (2) not to lay a stress on *ters*.

Again, I find that Mr. Cooper thinks the *last important syllable* (1) of the recitation to be as here indicated by italics: increased, vanity, heathen, trapped, beholdest, darkness, arrows. If it were intended that these syllables should be held *longer* (although I cannot understand why they should be prolonged) he should certainly not use a mark which directs (at his own wish) a *slight stress*. Mr. Stidolph claims as special merits of the "Parochial Psalter" the introduction of breath marks, and the blending of the syllabic and polysyllabic systems. If he will kindly turn to the "Cathedral Psalter," published (as far as I remember) two years or so before the "Parochial Psalter," he will find marks of expression, breath marks, and numerous instances of the fusion of the two systems of pointing; and he will *not* find that hopeless confusion between "stress on a note" and "length of a note" which characterises the "Parochial Psalter," and which cannot be talked away by any amount of friendly advocacy. I cannot find in Elvey's Psalter any direction that an unimportant syllable is to receive a stress; on the contrary, such an occurrence is carefully guarded against.—*The Reviewer of the "Parochial Psalter."*]

THE HISTORY OF MUSIC-PRINTING.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In Dr. Chrysander's interesting articles on the above subject I find the following sentence: "I regret that, in following the traces of the originators of the new method, I have to commence my exposition by destroying the opinion that music-engraving is an English invention." The doctor then devotes much space to prove that the "Parthenia" was *not* the first musical work printed from engraved copper plates. Dr. Chrysander is evidently unaware that we had previously refuted the error at the Caxton Exhibition by showing engraved Italian books of an earlier date than "Parthenia," and also by calling special attention to the fact in our preface to the Musical

Section of the Catalogue. In an article of mine on the Caxton Exhibition, which appeared in the *Athenæum* in August last, I wrote as follows: "The next section which presents itself to our notice is that of music printed from engraved plates, and here again we are enabled to correct the prevalent error in respect to the 'Parthenia' produced in London by Hole in 1611, and always regarded as the earliest of its kind, but which had really been anticipated by Kapsberger's works, some of them published in Rome in 1604."

WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**** Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.**

Our correspondents will greatly oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

Correspondents are informed that their names and addresses must accompany all communications.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Notice is sent to all Subscribers whose payment (in advance) is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed. We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers that, although the music pages are always stereotyped, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

THOMAS J. LEAMAN.—*The custom of publishing music with one sharp or one flat less at the signature than the number required by the key was by no means uncommon in Handel's time.*

We are compelled to hold over the letters of W. Newberry and Inquirer for want of space.

Cases for binding Volume XVIII. will be ready on January 1, price 1s. 6d. The Title and Index will be issued with the January number.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF COUNTRY NEWS.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this Summary, as all the notices are either collated from the local papers or supplied to us by correspondents.

BANBURY.—The members of the Choral Society gave their first Concert this season in the Town Hall, on Friday evening, the 2nd ult. The first part of the programme consisted of a selection from Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and the second was miscellaneous. With the exception of Mr. Randell, of Birmingham, the artists were local amateurs. Mr. Hardacre conducted, and Miss Draper presided at the pianoforte. The opening Recitative and Air were effectively rendered by the Rev. C. M. O. Parkinson, and Mr. Randell sang the bass Solos in a satisfactory manner. "Hear ye, Israel" was well sung by Miss F. Edmunds, and Miss Edmunds' rendering of "O rest in the Lord" was equally effective. The tenor Air, "Then shall the righteous," found in Mr. Ellis a good exponent. The Choruses, with some trifling exceptions, were sung well throughout. Some Part-songs were given with much precision and care.

BEDFORD.—The third Concert of the eleventh season of the Amateur Musical Society was given on Tuesday evening, October 30, in the New Corn Exchange, before a crowded audience. The first part of the programme consisted of Sir Julius Benedict's Cantata, *Undine*. The solos were sustained by Miss Catherine Penna, Miss Alice Fairman, Mr. Bernard Lane, and Mr. Henry Pope, and the band was assisted by several members of the Royal Italian Opera. The Cantata, which was conducted by the composer, was exceedingly well performed. Mr. P. H. Diemer conducted the second part of the concert, which was miscellaneous.

BERKHAMPTSTEAD.—On Thursday evening, the 15th ult., Mr. Macrone gave his ninth Annual Concert in the Town Hall, under distinguished patronage. The first part of the programme consisted of sacred and the second of secular music. The selections of sacred music were chosen from the works of Mendelssohn, Handel, Haydn, Spohr, Curschmann, and Scotson Clark; and the secular included a selection by the *bénéficiaire*. The professional vocalists were Miss Annie Lauri, Miss Warwick, and Mr. W. Monk. Mr. Flint presided at the harmonium, and Miss Cook at the pianoforte.

BIRMINGHAM.—A Chamber Concert, of great artistic importance, was given by Mr. C. J. Duchemin, in conjunction with Messrs. Rogers and Priestly, in the Masonic Hall, on Thursday evening, October 25. The performers were Mr. Carrodus, Mr. Val. Nicholson, Mr. Doyle, and Mr. Howell, strings; Miss Emma Beasley, vocalist; and Mr. Duchemin, pianoforte. The programme included Spohr's Quintett in D minor, Op. 130; Schumann's Quartett, in E flat, Op. 47, for piano and strings; and Beethoven's String Quartett, Op. 18, No. 2. All were admirably performed; Miss Beasley gave her songs with excellent taste.—The first of a series of Classical Chamber Concerts, under the direction of Mr. Hayward, took place at the Royal Hotel Assembly Rooms, on Tuesday the 6th ult. The artists were Messrs. H. and C. Hayward, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Owen, strings; Miss Hargreave,