

Students' Concerts and Alien Music

Author(s): Gertrude Azulay

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appreciated. The artistic accompaniments are a feature. They escape being bald, and at the same time provide musical interest. Amongst the songs we notice some established favourites such as 'Dashing away with the smoothing iron,' 'I'm seventeen come Sunday,' 'Oh, no, John,' 'Admiral Benbow,' and 'The coasts of High Barbary.' One not so well-known as these, 'O, Waly, Waly,' is among the most beautiful melodies of this class. Another equally charming and graceful is 'The crystal spring.' The cumulative-song, 'The tree in the wood,' provides some amusement. The collection is published in two forms: one edition is complete with the accompaniments, and the other gives in both notations only the vocal parts for class use.

Obituary.

We regret to record the following deaths:

CHARLES SAUNDERS, on July 11, at 6, Fairlawn Court, Chiswick Park, London, W., aged forty-nine years. Recently he suffered a paralytic stroke. He was born at Stratton, Cornwall. After gaining local reputation as a tenor singer, he came to London and studied at the Guildhall School of Music. An appearance at Birmingham in 1898, in the 'Golden Legend,' made him widely known. Later he distinguished himself as an exponent of Handel's oratorio airs, and was much in demand. He visited Australia and South Africa, and gained much success. His style was robust and suited to declamation, and his voice had an exceptionally resonant ring.

J. W. DRY, at Dublin, on July 12, aged fifty-nine. He was a native of Hull, and at an early age displayed an aptitude for music, such that at twenty-one he was appointed organist of St. Luke's. In 1879 he went to Ireland, and was organist of Dundalk Parish Church for twenty years. An illness led to his retirement in 1901, but in 1913 he was able to accept the post of organist of Enniscorthy Parish Church (St. Mary's). In May this year he had to relinquish work, and went to the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin, where he passed away. Ever unostentatious, Mr. Dry was a most capable organist and bore an exemplary character.

HENRY PORTER DICKENSON, at Grantham. He was one of the best-known and most highly respected musicians in the town. He was born at Great Penton, and was seventy-four years of age on the day of his death. When he was thirteen years old he became the organist of Stoke Rochford Church, and subsequently he was organist of St. John's, Grantham, a post he resigned in 1911. As conductor of the Grantham Amateur Musical Union, the Philharmonic Society, and the Amateur Orchestral Society for many years, Mr. Dickenson brought numerous choral and other classics before Grantham audiences.

SYDNEY BLAKISTON, in July, at Ditchling, Sussex. He was born at Southsea in 1870, and at eighteen studied music under Oscar Beringer and Ebenezer Prout, and later under Moszkowski. He was on the staff of the Brighton School of Music, and was a Professor of Pianoforte at the Royal Academy of Music. He was examiner to the Associated Board in 1903, and in this capacity he went, in 1907, to Canada. He was regarded by all who were privileged to know him as a man of strong personality and singular purity of character.

W. H. HOLDEN, at a private nursing home at Harrogate, on June 14. He had been organist and choirmaster of Ulverston Catholic Church for twenty-one years. During a strenuous life he was Honorary Major of the local Territorial forces. He passed away at the comparatively early age of fifty-six, leaving a widow, two sons, and two daughters. His younger brother is organist of Armagh Catholic Cathedral.

EDWARD ST. JOHN BRENON, on May 13, aged seventy-two. He published six volumes of verses, and was a musical writer of much ability. As recently as January, 1916, he contributed a notable article on Verdi to the *Musical Quarterly* (New York).

Lieut. G. F. LAMBERT PORTER, West Yorkshire Regiment, was killed at the Front on June 7. He was a most promising Dublin musician, and was organist of Howth Presbyterian Church. In particular, his services as accompanist of the Clef Club, a Dublin society for male voices, were much appreciated. In private life he was a delightful companion.

HENRY ROBERT COULDREY, late in May, at the age of sixty-two. He had been organist of Holy Trinity Parish Church, Windsor, for forty-three years, and he was the senior assistant music-master at Eton College. He was a very skilful performer, and he met with success as a composer of church music and secular songs.

Correspondence.

Miss Azulay's letter, subjoined, has reference to an article on 'Pupils' Concerts,' by Mr. Robin H. Legge, that appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* on July 14. We cull a few sentences:

On one programme I find that of about fifteen composers only three were English; on another, on which were at least ten names, not one was more British than E. A. MacDowell, the eminent American; on a third, where ten different groupings of pieces occurred under the names of different composers, there was not one single British name; on a fourth there were four British names to twelve foreign. And so it goes on round the vicious circle. . . . What is the meaning of all this? Is it not a matter to be corrected, a canker of indifference to be cut out? . . . On four programmes lying before me, all of pupils' concerts, there are some forty-seven or forty-eight names of composers. Of these a wretched seven are names of native composers. And we are supposed to be fighting the foreign competition!

STUDENTS' CONCERTS AND ALIEN MUSIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—Many people will be interested in the article by Mr. Robin H. Legge on Pupils' Concerts in Saturday's (July 14) issue of the *Daily Telegraph*—a seemingly righteous complaint which has, however, to my mind, a narrower vision than that of the teachers he mentions. Whilst conceding that the instruction given in the particular schools he refers to is that of the best, and the result of the methods employed is of the highest value, he nevertheless feels that a rebuke is merited for the enemy works chosen as factors in the educational scheme of the said teachers (including myself) as evinced by the programmes of the students' concerts held by us at various concert-halls in the metropolis.

Now I could understand and sympathise with this reproach were it aimed at professional performers who, having already imbibed and assimilated standard classics, could well afford for a time to encourage native talent,—giving it, in fact, their first consideration both in study and in public performance.

Again, it would be appropriate to grumble at contemporary composers of enemy nationality being represented at any musical demonstration—one's feelings should, and would, naturally prevent any such presentation to the public at this juncture. But in the case of young pianists in the making (say, for instance, a school child averaging an hour daily for musical study), it is surely evident that only the best is good enough—the best and most suitable for his own specific benefit, and that which will cultivate his musicality in the most direct way.

Let us ask ourselves, What is the object in giving students' concerts? I think it will be agreed that the answer is:

- (1.) An incentive to the student to work, and to work for a higher standard.

- (2.) To accustom him to play before an audience—rid himself of self-consciousness.
- (3.) To demonstrate to his friends and the public the method of training he is being subjected to, and the results obtained therefrom.
- (4.) To advertise the teacher.

Now, leaving (2) and (4) out of the argument as irrelevant, and bearing in mind the words 'incentive,' 'method,' 'results,' let us ask again: Have we, with all our native music-literature, such works as will serve for a solid foundation and provide a complete musical education for the present 'war-time' generation of young people studying pianoforte?

Whilst wishing to give full credit to the efforts that are being made by English composers to develop on national lines and create an English School, which efforts there is much hope will be crowned later with success (in the same way as the Russians have found themselves, musically speaking: the outcome of sixty years' earnest and intense striving), whilst desirous of being both reasonable and seasonable, it is useless to deny that the time has not yet arrived when we can make good this important claim. We have many charming salon pieces, but there is no special work of any special composer of which it can be said, 'This is epoch-making—this is a masterpiece of world-value that our own and future generations will study with enthusiasm and teachers be thankful to teach.'

Even assuming that some such transcendent and planetary works did actually exist on a parity with the classics (which Mr. Legge prefers to dub 'foreign'), would it be possible for the student to develop musically on one nation's output? *Is the present generation to be debarred from the privileges in musical existence that former generations have profited by, including Mr. Legge himself?* Would he have it that the grandchildren of whom he speaks should be denied the study of a Bach Fugue or a Beethoven Sonata, to have withheld from them the joy of hearing a Mozart opera, or the maturer happiness of playing a Chopin Ballade? (I take it that the latter composer is now taboo, seeing that his birthplace has become 'enemyised'.)

Assuming that we were at war with Spain or Holland, should we deny our art students the benefit of inspiration that should ensue from the study of Vandyck, Hobbema, or Rembrandt? Should we say 'Young man, and likewise young woman, you will, in visiting exhibitions and galleries, be expected to dodge enemy tainted canvases, avoiding a direct gaze at any picture save those painted by native artists. Cooper, Tadema, Stone, Lavery, Orpen, and the like only are suitable for your vision at the present time, when it is seemly that your artistic development should be based purely on patriotic and local lines.'

We might go further and request schools and colleges established for general education to eliminate the study of Greek, having in mind the slipperiness of 'Tino.'

No! War is after all a transient condition, thank God. Art remains for all time. Nations fighting in hatred now will in years hence have their feuds healed. Allies will probably be future foes, unless the Millennium is at hand. Meanwhile Egyptian friezes and Sappho's poems will remain just as precious, just as important as they have been and are now, long after the direful results of the war are, so to speak, obliterated by unborn humanity. As in a former period the emanation came from Germany, so to-day in France lies the crystallization of the modern spirit of music-genius, and neither that exceptional past nor the particular present can we afford to eliminate from our scheme of musical well-being,—in my opinion and, apparently, that of my colleagues.

Nevertheless, when museums are divested of exhibits, when libraries delete shelves of books and galleries bury or destroy pictures, fashioned, written, and painted by natives of countries with whom we are at present at war, then, although the education of our pupils will be a lopsided affair—the poor things will be but poorly nourished, it is to be feared, on the war-diet; we need variety in music as well as in food in order to thrive—we music-teachers must fall in line and choose only native compositions to be played by our young people.

Meanwhile critics must set-to and draw up a list of such works for hundreds of pianists of all ages and stages, one

that should be satisfactory inasmuch as it will have to fulfil the requirements for an all-round musical education hitherto contributed by many sources. Furthermore, the desirability must be borne in mind of not more than fifty per cent. studying the same compositions, seeing that *the horizon must not be narrowed*.—Yours, &c.,

GERTRUDE AZULAY.

2, Goldhurst Terrace, N.W.-6.

ORGAN ACCOMPANIMENT AND THE 'CATHEDRAL TRADITION.'

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—The article by Mr. Bernard Johnson on the above subject was to me, as doubtless it was to many more of your readers who are organists in nonconformist churches, a welcome feature. Mr. Harvey Grace's articles, which have appeared in the *Musical Times*, while of great value and interest to all organists, have dealt almost entirely with the problems which confront those who officiate in Anglican churches. Those of us for whom the chief, if not the only, musical interest of a service lies in four or five hymns have our own difficulties to face, and it was good to find some of them dealt with in your columns.

Not however that we are entitled to consider good hymn-singing a peculiarly nonconformist attribute, but in so many cases it provides the only medium for the active participation of the congregation in the worship. The more to our shame be it then that the finest work, both in research and practice, in this branch as in others of Church music, is done by that more advanced section of the Anglican Church which, under the name 'High Church,' we are, or were, supposed to abhor. The fact remains that here, where there exist many other beautiful musical (and congregational) aids to worship, the greatest trouble is taken to make hymn-singing alive and interesting, instead of the perfunctory acts they so often are. I allude to the use of antiphonal singing (by men and women alternately); occasional verses with melody in tenor, the congregation keeping the melody; unison verses, sometimes varied by the addition of a descant for choir sopranos, and the like.

Mr. Bernard Johnson very rightly says that such devices are not for every verse, nor yet for every hymn; but judiciously used they will go far to correct that tendency to monotony which, do what one will, seems to creep into some of our services, particularly when all five hymns in the minister's list are common metre! That this treatment is not uncongregational I can testify. One needs simply once or twice to emphasise that there is a true 'people's part,' and a short congregational practice occasionally, before or after evening service, will be willingly attended if such points are dealt with. So far from being 'bowled over' or 'bearing with it' (to quote Mr. Johnson again) the people rise to a sense of responsibility when they realise that not merely are they 'requested to join in,' but that they have their own part which is essential to the desired effect.

To Mr. Johnson's 'great point' of *pace* let me add that of *pitch*. The 'Cathedral tradition' has caused our hymn-book editors to think in terms of the choir-boy, and therefore the tunes are too high for congregations. The 'English Hymnal' is an honourable exception.

Let me close by expressing my delight at discovering in the new 'Scottish Mission Hymnal' some fine Plainsong and old French and English tunes, and the John Dowland version of the 'Old Hundredth,' with melody in tenor. The equal-note version of most Psalm-tunes has, however, been retained. This is a survival that I hope will soon disappear.

J. S. YATES.

(Organist and Choirmaster, St. Andrew's, Pretoria, S.A.)

London, July 7, 1917.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—May I suggest that Mr. Bernard Johnson, in his article on 'Organ Accompaniment' in your July issue, throws his weight on to the weaker method in giving *melodic* elaboration such prominence in his examples. Melodic variation, especially of the chromatic type he advocates in the last example, adds, in my opinion,

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