A Musical Blackbird

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music. A Holy Week book (Paris, 1828) has music which I cannot find anywhere else, and in a Gradual (Metz, 1805) and a Vespéral (Avignon, 1819) the plain-chant is utterly different from that of Mechlin. The former has frequently not only time-signatures, but also sharps before many notes in the hymns.

Two years ago, in Rouen, at the Feast of the Assumption, I heard a very fine Credo, in the fifth mode, sung in unison by the whole congregation. It is quite unlike any given in the Mechlin edition, but the Digne Gradual (1855) has it, with, however, an intonation different to Dumont's. In the Municipal Library of Rouen there is said to be a MS. plain-chant book which is maintained to be pure, and I was told of a monastery in the neighbourhood where the Gregorian music is said to be uncorrupted.

A study of the various French Graduals and Vesperals leads me to conclude that each diocese went its own way in arranging the plain-chant. I read somewhere that a Commission had been appointed to decide on a single system. Many hymns seem to be peculiar to a particular locality, and one instinctively feels the influence of local popular tunes. In some this is quite undeniable, but the subject is too enormous to go into here.—Yours faithfully,
September 21, 1893. W. W.

DUKE ERNEST'S OPERA "SANTA CHIARA."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In the last issue of your periodical (p. 534) I see a most astounding statement regarding "Santa Chiara" opera, by the Duke Ernest.

In his book "Aus meinem Leben und aus meiner Zeit," he states that his "opera was performed more than sixty times" in Paris.

Enclosed please find extract from the "Bibliothèque Musicale du Théâtre de l'Opéra," by Théodore de Lajarte, a copy of which you will find at the British Museum, from which *official document* it appears that "Santa Chiara" had only nine performances at the time.

DLIII.

Sainte Claire (Santa Chiara).

Opéra en 3 actes.

Musique de S. A. R. Ernest, duc de S. Cobourg-Gotha. Paroles de Mme. Birch-Pfeiffer. Traduites par G. Oppelt.

Représenté pour la 1re fois le lundi, 27 Sept., 1855.

A.—Partition d'orch. Trois cahiers in-fol., man.

B.—Partition vocale (souffleur). Quatre cahiers.

C.—Répétiteur de Ballet.

D.—Vingt-six rôles.

E.—Quatre-vingt-dix parties de chœurs.

F.—Conducteur d'orch.—Trois cahiers.

G.—Cinquante parties d'orch.

9 représentations.

Respectfully yours,

ALBERT ZOLLINGER.

Théâtre National de l'Opéra,

34, Rue Dauphine, Paris, September 12, 1893.

[We are not, of course, responsible for the late Duke's statements, and have no means of explaining the discrepancy between his account and M. Zollinger's. We feel inclined to believe, however, that the Duke referred to the total number of performances, in Paris and elsewhere, although the passage in the book reads as if sixty performances in Paris were meant.—ED. M. T.]

A MUSICAL BLACKBIRD.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—The Blackbird mentioned by your correspondent F. R. C. in his letter concerning the song of the Yellow-Hammer, must have been in the habit of frequenting some Cathedral close, or have escaped from the home of a Cathedral chorister, as his *Leitmotif* proves to be identical with the opening phrase of Thomas Attwood Walmisley's Anthem "Father of Heaven," save that the bird trilled a minor third and Walmisley uses the major.

Yours faithfully,

HENRY KNIGHT.

4, Umfreville Road, Haringay, N.,
September 13, 1893.

THE SONG OF THE YELLOW-HAMMER.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—I see there has been a good deal of discussion on the song of the yellow-hammer.

Will you kindly insert the following, which I have found to be correct in Cornwall?—

This is quite correct as regards the notation, but the yellow-hammer has a tendency to sharpen slightly the D, and instead of B, a note a quarter-tone between B and B flat, thereby flattening the B. This is, of course, very unmusical.—Yours, &c.,

Cornwall, September 10, 1893.

H. T. B.

P.S.—To render the proper effect of the bird the notes will have to be played in the uppermost octave of the pianoforte.

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 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 is always kept in stock, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

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.

BLACKPOOL.—Dr. Horton Allison's Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra, originally produced at the London Westminster Orchestral Society's Concert on December 9, 1891, received a favourable reception here on August 29, when it was performed at Mr. de Jong's Concert.

BOLTON.—A Musical Service was held on the 18th ult. in the Wesleyan Chapel. Mr. A. E. Jones, the Organist, played a varied selection of organ music, Mr. G. W. Nelson contributed two violoncello solos, and Miss Marjorie Eaton's singing of "On mighty pens" was much admired.

CAPE TOWN.—The Dean of Cape Town, on the 4th ult., presented Mr. Barrow-Dowling with a handsomely mounted *bâton* in recognition of his services as Organist and Choirmaster of the Cathedral.

CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND.—Mr. Wallace, on July 20 last, commenced a series of classical Chamber Concerts which promises to prove highly successful. Schumann's Pianoforte and Violin Sonata in D minor, Beethoven's Sonata "Pathétique," Tartini's "Devil's Trill" Sonata, and Haydn's "Emperor" Quartet were included in the first programme, which was excellently rendered. The following week, on July 27, Mr. Wallace introduced to a Christchurch audience, assembled in the Oddfellows' Hall, Mr. F. H. Cowen's cantata *St. John's Eve*, the melodious and graceful character of which greatly pleased. The soloists were Miss Bonnington, Mrs. Jennings, Mr. F. Woodhouse, and Mr. Day.

DUBLIN.—Sir Robert Stewart, on the 13th ult., received in the Examination Hall, Trinity College, a deputation of distinguished musicians from London to explain the objects of the Incorporated Society of Musicians. Mr. Chadfield stated that the Society now included 136 Doctors of Music, 53 Bachelors of Music, 33 Fellows, Members, and Associates of the Royal Academy, 32 Licentiates of the Royal Academy, 6 Professors of the Royal College, 95 Fellows of the College of Organists, 30 Licentiates of Trinity College, London, 10 Professors of the Guildhall School, 19 with degrees from foreign conservatoires, and 306 holding appointments as Organists. The approval of the scheme by Sir Robert Stewart will doubtless secure the co-operation of many Irish members.

HALESWORTH.—Through the liberality of Mrs. Warwick, of Halesworth, the organ in the Parish Church, built by Messrs. Norman Bros. and Beard in 1889, has now been completed. The instrument was opened on the 10th ult.

HANLEY.—The fifth season of the Meakin Popular Concerts was opened on the 18th ult. in the Town Hall, before an audience of 3,000. Dr. C. S. Heap was heard in Mendelssohn's Pianoforte Concerto in D minor and in Weber's Concertstück (Op. 79), and Mr. F. Ward,