Organ Programme

Author(s): Sydney Grew

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THE TEMPO OF 'O REST IN THE LORD.'

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—At important performances of the 'Elijah' for some years past there seems to have been a divergence of opinion in regard to the tempo of the air 'O rest in the Lord.' The reminiscences of an old-stager like myself may, or may not, help to settle the matter.

When Mendelssohn brought out the 'Elijah,' at Birmingham, I was a chorister at Trinity and St. John's Colleges, Cambridge, under Professor T. A. Walmisley. He knew Mendelssohn, and went to hear the oratorio; with him went Mr. John Sutton (afterwards Sir John), a wealthy Fellow-Commoner of Jesus College, and three of our senior boys, Fred Smith, Robert Humm, and James Piper (I mention their names, as I think that two of them are still living). They were all delighted with the 'Elijah,' and as soon as the vocal score and parts were published we had them at our practice-room at Trinity and worked at them daily. I well remember that before we sang 'He that shall endure,' Dr. Walmisley beckoned me to the pianoforte, saying, 'Here, Dan, boy, sing this' (I could always *read*), and forthwith we went through 'O rest in the Lord.' Years after I heard Miss Dolby sing it many times, with exactly the same *swing* that Walmisley had taught it to me. Later on I heard my old friend James Coward play it at one of his organ recitals at the Crystal Palace. It was encored, and he played it again, and each time at the same tempo that Miss Dolby had sung it.

There must be very many people who can remember Sainton-Dolby's rendering of her part in the 'Elijah.' She was a true artist, and always to be relied upon, and in my opinion she never sang it so fast as ♩ = 72. Mendelssohn may have intended that as an indication of the *mean time*, scarcely, I think, as a march time (*i.e.*, in strict time). It has been sung and played as an excerpt so many times that it began in consequence to be *drowled*. On the other hand, when the whole oratorio is performed, it is simply No. 31, but it must not be forgotten that the words touch some of the tenderest chords of the human heart, and so require very delicate treatment. I think that ♩ = 60 would be nearer the real time.

Yours faithfully,

DAN L. WILBERFORCE ROTHAM,
Conductor, Bristol Madrigal Society.

6, Ashgrove Road,
Redland, Bristol.

September 10, 1910.

ORGAN AND ORCHESTRA.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—Mr. Lemare's article on 'The organ as an artistic instrument' must prove in the main instructive and enjoyable reading to all lovers of the king of instruments. There will be many, too, who will endorse his opinion that the study of orchestral music by the advanced player 'will create a striving for the *perhaps* unattainable, as far as the organ is concerned.' Surely the organ is one thing and the orchestra something totally different. The orchestral writer committing his ideas to paper is not looking through the spectacles of the organist: his is a very different conception, both as regards tone-colour and the scope, variety and compass of his instruments with their peculiar technique. It is the age of the specialist, and for the organ and orchestra to encroach one upon the domain of the other is to leave an unsatisfactory impression upon the ears of an ever-increasing musical public who can appreciate the difference between the two; for here again, to quote Mr. Lemare, 'instead of copying another man's, he (the organist) will paint *his own* picture. He will be not merely receptive, but *creative*.' Yes, quite so; and many when listening, even those most capable of doing so, have the feeling that it *is* very much his *own* picture, and his *own* creation. The organ is a king in its own province, and it need not become a rival where it will come off second best. Music of the orchestral

style, of which there is such a fine *répertoire* available, is within its own sphere, and appeals to the serious musician with force and energy, which can hardly be the case when listening to revised editions of heavily-scored orchestral works upon even the best of organs.—Faithfully yours,

Chattisham,
Ipswich.

A. H. STEVENS.

ORGAN PROGRAMME.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—I read Mr. Luther L. Jupp's letter with a pleasure that was enhanced by the courteous tone he adopted and by the sincerity the revealing of his identity betokened. I do not think, however, that any good would come of a discussion. He accepts without reservation the conventionalities I wrote against, and then argues from them as proven and established premises. He will perhaps pardon my saying that he has missed the whole line of my argument and (incidentally) the main feature of musical evolution since the middle Beethoven, proof of this lying in such sentences as 'supposing the movements of the great symphonies and sonatas of Beethoven were constructed on the "unity" as against the "contrast" principle, would they be so enjoyable?' It is evident that unity in a work of art is not the same to Mr. Jupp as it is to me. I think he will read my article in a different light when he realises that the unity striven for is one of fundamental idea or prevailing spirit, as in the Elgar Symphony or in the first famous example—the C minor Symphony of Beethoven. No amount of change from Scherzo to Adagio can effect a break in an extended musical utterance when the composer is struggling to thresh out all that the emotional idea holds for him; and in the same way the unity of a concert programme made up of small items should be preserved. But all this leads over the ground already covered in my essay, and there is no need to continue it.

I am, yours faithfully,

1, Alcester Road,
Moseley, Birmingham.
September 13, 1910.

MUSIC AT LYTHAM.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—In your admirable article in the September number on the season's music on the Lancashire coast, your correspondent, while referring among other seaside towns to Lytham, did not mention the very excellent band which had been performing there for some seven weeks. This band was under the competent conductorship of Mr. Bell, and the selections given (over 130 items a week) were sufficiently varied to suit the musical tastes of all. Among the composers drawn upon may be mentioned Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Wagner, Donizetti, Auber, Balfe, Bishop, Mendelssohn, Gounod, Nicolai, and Sullivan. The solo playing of Miss Annie Kirkman (a violinist of exceptional ability, who led the first violins), was greatly enjoyed. Her playing of Vieuxtemps's 'Fantasia caprice' was marked by brilliancy of execution and rare insight, the band supporting her with excellent restraint. The performances were greatly enjoyed, both by residents and visitors, and it is hoped that the Lytham Council will again engage Mr. Bell (the conductor) for next season.

Yours faithfully,

Wallingford,
Lytham.

HAMPDEN A. MINTON

SCIENCE AND SINGING.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

DEAR SIR,—Whilst offering you my best thanks for the large amount of valuable space which you devoted in your last issue to a criticism of 'Science and Singing,' I trust that in justice to the work you will very kindly permit me space for a few remarks upon the matter.

The writer of the article says: 'he contradicts his statement in p. 9, in which he says "I now know and teach that the vocal cords are not sound-producers at all," whilst