Concert Pitch and the Diapason Normal

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CONCERT PITCH AND THE DIAPASON
NORMAL.

SIR,—There may be some doubt whether the best brains in the world were engaged in framing the Peace Treaty, but it was generally believed without question that at any rate the most infallible linguists in the world were concerned in writing it down. But attention is being called again and again to mistakes in the translations, such as those concerning Reparation. So far as I can see, there is only one reference to music in the documents, but that one embodies a first-class howler. On page 270, in a list of certain treaties, we find mention on the French side of 'Convention du 16 et 19 novembre, 1885, relative à la construction d'un *Diapason normal*,' and on the English side 'Convention of November 16 and 19, 1885, regarding the establishment of a *concert pitch*.' The translator obviously had never heard of the world battle between concert pitch and normal diapason, which for the time split the musical world into two opposing armies. After this, of course, there is nothing left for the mere musician but to go on believing that the two are the same—C, 540.—Yours, &c.,

A. KALISCH.

Sharps and Flats

If you think of it, striking one palm against the other with a resounding smack is a queer way of expressing your delight: it suggests a monkey-trick of primæval man.—*A. B. Walkley*.

The day will come when audiences will not want to applaud after each movement. Later, the day will come when they will not want to applaud at all, but will go out in rapt silence after a great performance of a great work. But before that desirable day dawns the present breed of prima donna conductors will have to die out.—*Ernest Newman*.

Beethoven is, in fact, a rather tiresome personality.—*E. J. Dent*.

It appears to be the fashion nowadays among a certain class of musical wisecracks to speak slightly of Beethoven, the greatest of all composers.—*Algernon Ashton*.

Bach the bourgeoisie. . . —*H. E. Northam*.

Bach's B minor Mass begins to grow monotonous.—*W. J. Turner*.

A Brahms' Trio completed the items; appreciating tobacco more than morphia, I remained in fresher air during this.—*Leigh Henry*.

Sixty Years Ago

From the *Musical Times* of May, 1861:

HEREFORD MUSICAL FESTIVAL, 1861.

The following arrangements have been made by the committee. . . . The sacred works will be given as follows:—1st morning: 'Elijah.' 2nd morning: Spohr's 'Last Judgment' and the principal part of Handel's Oratorio, 'Samson.' 3rd morning: 'Spring,' from Haydn's 'Seasons'; Mozart's 'Requiem'—the few alterations requisite to fit this great work for performance in a Cathedral will be made in the original words; and Mendelssohn's 'Hymn of Praise.' 4th morning: Handel's 'The Messiah'; it is proposed to give this Oratorio without the omissions generally made. The leading works in the evening programme will be:—1st concert: Overture 'Euryanthe,' Weber; 'Pastoral Symphony,' Beethoven; and a flute solo. 2nd concert: Overture 'Anacreon,' Cherubini; 'Italian Symphony,' Mendelssohn; and a violin solo. 3rd concert: Overtures 'Wood Nymphs,' Sterndale Bennett, and 'William Tell,' Rossini; and Benedict's popular Cantata, 'Undine.' In order to gratify the taste of the lovers of music for stringed instruments, a short concert of chamber music will be given at the College Hall on Friday evening, commencing at about 7, and terminating before 9, thus preventing any interference with the grand ball at the Shire Hall, at the termination of the Festival.

The vocalists engaged are Mlle. Titiens, Miss Louisa Pyne, Madame Weiss, Madame Sainton-Dolby, Miss Susan Pyne, Mr. Sims Reeves, Signor Giuglini, Mr. Montem Smith, Mr. Winn, and Mr. Weiss. . . .

A programme containing finer works has never yet been issued; a glance at the names of the composers, and a list of the works will, it is hoped, give general satisfaction, and ensure deserved patronage.—*Hereford Times*.

DUBLIN.—A Re-union of the Philharmonic Society, of which the Lord Lieutenant is president, took place at the Concert Rooms, Great Brunswick Street, on March 20. Miss Emily Spiller and Miss Clara McKenzie were engaged from London, and Miss Cruise and Messrs. Dunne, O'Rorke, and R. Smith also sang. . . . The two ladies from London were of course the attraction of the evening, and several of their vocal performances were encored with much fervour.

WARBLINGS AT EVE. Romance pour pianoforte. Par BRINLEY RICHARDS. Solo, 2s. 6d.; duet, 3s. 'A little gem, as pleasant and cheerful as it is unobtrusive. Anyone can play it, and everyone should play it. As solo or duet, it is equally attractive; such warblings are welcome.'—*Musical World*. London: Robert Cocks & Co.; and all music-sellers.

Obituary

We regret to record the following deaths:

J. S. LIDDLE, Mus. Bac., organist of Newbury Parish Church, on March 30. For thirty-seven years he was prominent as a conductor and organizer of musical activities in the South of England. At Newbury he built up a remarkably good choral society and an excellent orchestra (full wind and brass included) of local players. He also conducted for various long periods the English Ladies' Orchestral Society, Handel Society, Avon Vale Musical Society, Bournemouth Amateur Orchestral Society, and several others, and he was on the staff of Reading University College. Mr. Liddle had a profound knowledge of the theory and history of music, of all the works of the great composers, and of the technique of the various instruments, being himself a skilled performer on the violin (his principal instrument), the viola, pianoforte, and organ. These qualities, but above all his unselfish and enthusiastic love for music, made him an inspiring and successful teacher and conductor.

HOWARD SMITH, on March 13, for fifty years hon. secretary of the City Glee Club, treasurer for twenty-two years, and president for his last season. He had an extraordinarily wide knowledge of madrigals, glees, &c., and a happy gift of resurrecting old music from unexpected sources.

THE RELATION OF CHURCH MUSIC TO THE
MUSICAL LIFE OF THE NATION

Mr. Sydney H. Nicholson took the above as the subject of his paper read before the Musical Association on February 15. As showing the importance of Church music, he estimated that throughout England there must be quite half a million of persons connected with it, while probably the organist's was the most numerous branch of the musical profession. In a vast number of cases the church or chapel choir was the one form of definitely-musical organization to be found in a district. The organist was in many cases the most prominent professional musician in the district, and by his energy and capacity, or the reverse, he had the power of making or marring the musical life of quite a large community. Yet very little attention was bestowed upon this enormous mass of executants by the general musician, and few of our rising composers cared two straws about Church music as a serious art-form. If it were objected that the general standard of performance by church choirs was not good enough, the remedy was to provide them with good music within their powers, and, by encouraging them, to lead them to improve. Merely to ignore them was to waste