Onomatopœia in Music

Author(s): Ἀντιδονματοποίησις

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players not juniors would feel that such music makes more than a little demand upon execution, and more especially upon interpretative skill. Book 11 contains Three Romances, by Schumann (Op. 94). Here again real appreciation of the music is an absolute condition of success. The three pieces are full of characteristic beauty. Book 12 gives us six of Pleyel's duets for two violins (Op. 8), and Book 13, another set of six (Op. 48). These twelve duets bring us as it were back a year or two, for, interesting and melodious as they are, they make little demand upon technical skill. Every young player will delight in playing with his or her teacher or a fellow-student these really excellent and educational compositions. It may be well to mention that the first set of six (Book 12) can be played wholly in the first position, and the second set (Book 13) in the first and third positions. These violin duets being complete in themselves no pianoforte accompaniment is provided. Book 14 consists of scale and arpeggi exercises, and includes all the exercises of this kind asked for by the Associated Board in their School examinations and those in the Junior and Senior Divisions of the Local Centres. Books 15 and 16 each give three Sonatinas for Violin and Pianoforte by Carl M. von Weber. These light and pretty fancies call for delicate playing, and the violin part demands an acquaintance with the region of the fourth position which will not be an insuperable difficulty to any player who has mastered the pieces in the preceding books of the series.

Correspondence.

THE STREETS OF LONDON.

DEAR SIR,—Referring to the paragraph on the streets of London named after composers, in the March issue of THE MUSICAL TIMES, it is stated that Mendelssohn is unrepresented in that respect. May I be allowed to mention that a huge block of *very* up-to-date mansions (so called) has recently been erected just off Sloane Street, and overlooking the old burial ground of the Royal Chelsea Hospital, to which the name of the composer of 'Elijah' (Mendelssohn Gardens) was given. This has, however, now been changed to a less pretentious title. Possibly the builder repented him of using a name so artistic to a modern block of flats.

I should also like to add that at Fulham is to be found a *Novello* Street. Although the name does not stand for a great composer, yet it is one that spells music, and is dear to musicians the whole world over.—Yours faithfully,

A. HAMPTON BROWN.

44, Redburn Street, Chelsea.

FIGURE NOTATION IN MUSIC.

DEAR SIR,—Having read the paragraph on pp. 171—172 of your March number on the system suggested by Dr. Koller of Vienna for writing tunes by means of figures, and noted your comment on it, I venture to remark that some years ago I published an 'Easy Notation of Music' (developed from the system of singing by numerals in German village schools) and a second booklet entitled 'Music minus Stave,' which contains, besides some exercises in scales and chords, sixteen popular tunes by various composers, arranged for the pianoforte for amateurs who have no time to learn stave music. Both booklets are to be had at Messrs. Novello and Co.'s.

The system is simplicity itself, promotes musical intelligence, and greatly facilitates the study of harmony and counterpoint in Imitation, Inversion and Contrary Motion.—Yours faithfully,

F. WEBER.

Organist of the late German Chapel Royal,
St. James's Palace.

23, Highbury Grange.

THE CENTENARY OF FRANZ LACHNER.

DEAR SIR,—On April 2 next, one hundred years will have elapsed since Franz Lachner, one of the most famous composers of a past generation, was born at Rain, a little town in the Kingdom of Bavaria. I lay emphasis on the words 'a past generation,' for I fear that but few musicians, let alone the general public, will remember the centenary of Lachner's birth, so completely has the name of this composer passed from the minds of the people now living. It is difficult to account for this, as Lachner was a very great and illustrious musician indeed, and also one of the most successful during his lifetime. He composed works in every conceivable branch of his art, as they comprise eight Symphonies, seven Suites for orchestra, three Operas, two Oratorios, two Stabat Maters, several Masses, five String Quartets, many Pianoforte Quartets, Quintets, Sextets, an Octet for wind instruments, Violin Sonatas, Organ Sonatas, Pianoforte pieces, and a large number of songs. Lachner belonged to the strictly classical school of musicians, religiously following the footsteps of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven. By far the finest of all Lachner's works are his Suites, notably those in E minor (Op. 113), and D minor (Op. 115), which once upon a time enjoyed considerable popularity all over Germany and in other countries. Lachner was one of the greatest contrapuntists and masters of fugue who ever lived, and both those delightful Suites just mentioned contain fugues which to my mind are the most magnificent and most glorious ever written for the orchestra. Why such superb compositions as Lachner's Suites should now be ignored by almost every orchestral conductor in the world completely passes my comprehension.

Let us sincerely hope that the centenary of Lachner's birth, of which I have now reminded the public, may be an incentive for reviving some of the splendid works of this most estimable and sterling composer, for it does seem a crying scandal and a burning shame that Lachner's Suites, these grand classical compositions, should be allowed to fall into oblivion, whilst the most ghastly trash of certain latter-day composers is performed, and even applauded by the public. Franz Lachner, it may be of interest to mention, enjoyed the intimate personal friendship of Schubert and Beethoven, and indeed of most of his great musical contemporaries. He lived to a green old age, as he died at Munich on January 20, 1890, in his 87th year.

44, Hamilton Gardens, Yours very faithfully,
St. John's Wood.

ALGERNON ASHTON.

[We make some reference to Lachner's music in England on p. 234.—ED. M.T.]

ONOMATOPŒIA IN MUSIC.

DEAR SIR,—In Mr. Vernon Blackburn's interesting article 'Onomatopœia in Music' there is a reference to Haydn, who, it is said, 'seems in an extremity of delight when he can secure an onomatopœic effect like that of the serpent in "The Creation."' Whether, however, Haydn was so delighted with effects of this kind (I try to avoid that very long word) seems doubtful, if faith is to be placed in A. C. Dies, the composer's friend, who tells us in his 'Biographische Nachrichten' (1810) that the text of 'The Seasons' was the cause of unpleasantness between Haydn and Baron van Swieten, who prepared the words, an adaptation from Thomson's 'Seasons.' Haydn specially disliked the croaking of frogs, and sought to hide it from the ear. For this Swieten blamed him, produced a piece by some old author in which the croak (*Koax*) was prominently set forth, and begged him to imitate it. The latter, enraged, resolved not to be worried any more, and expressed his dissatisfaction in a letter in which he wrote: 'It would be better if the blessed croak were omitted.' This letter passed through many hands, and indeed is said to have appeared in the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*. Swieten was much annoyed at it. Mr. Blackburn is a man of wide reading, yet this old out-of-print book of Dies may possibly not have come under his notice, or surely he would have referred to the passage in question.

Ἀντιονοματοποιήσις.