'Music on the Shakespearean Stage'

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'MUSIC ON THE SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE.'

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—I have recently gone through Mr. Cowling's book on 'Music on the Shakespearean Stage,' and it appears to me that the work displays a lamentable non-acquaintance with first-hand authorities on the subject in question. Only to quote two instances, the recent works of Professor Wallace and of Mr. W. J. Lawrence are ignored. In the present work I have noticed some slips:

1. The reference to the *Fortune* theatre should be to the Blackfriars.

2. The date 1550 for 'Ralph Roister Doister' is inaccurate.

3. The equation of 'a sackbut of Mark Antony' as a property for a play called 'Mark Antony' is wrong; the fact is that the entry chronicles the payment of 40s. for a sackbut bought from the famous sackbut player, Mark Antony Bassano.

4. Shakespeare is accused of making 'a curious slip' in reference to 'jacks' (Sonnet 128). 'He calls the keys of a virginal "jacks," whereas the jacks were quite distinct from the keys.' Shakespeare does nothing of the kind. His simile was intended for the jacks, when a fair lady was endeavouring to tune the instrument:

'Those jacks that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand.'

5. The Musette is not a synonym for a hautboy or shawm; it is really the bagpipe. Shakespeare alludes to the Irish Uilleann pipes as 'woollen pipes.'

But let me add that the book is a useful one, particularly for those whose purses may not feel equal to the purchase of Feuillerat's large quarto, or Mr. W. J. Lawrence's monumental book on 'The Elizabethan Playhouse.' Professor Wallace has written two most researchful volumes on the period, admirably documented, and Dr. E. W. Naylor has recently issued 'Shakespeare Music' with contemporary musical illustrations.

W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD.

'NOTES ON ORGANS AT WINDSOR CASTLE.'

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—In the very interesting article on the above subject in your May issue, Mr. Andrew Freeman asks for information as to 'what became of the Green organ which was a favourite instrument of His Majesty George III.'

I am glad to be in a position to answer this query. Green's organ—the small organ at Windsor Castle—was presented by King George III. to Downpatrick Cathedral (the Cathedral of the diocese of Down), and the King also gave £1,000 towards the restoration of the venerable church. This was about the year 1795. Green's organ was enlarged by Waffington of Dublin, in 1815, and was again repaired and enlarged by Telford in 1870 and 1896. It is now (1913) being reconstructed and restored by Harrison & Harrison of Durham.—Yours faithfully,

May 7, 1913.

W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD.

Obituary.

MISS MARY LAURA EGERTON, of Terrington, York, who died at Scarborough on May 5. The deceased was well-known in Yorkshire society, alike for her social qualities and position as for her zeal in the cause of musical progress. She founded the Yorkshire musical competitions and did much to support the late Miss Wakefield in her missionary efforts to expand the usefulness of the movement. Miss Egerton was co-secretary of the Association of Musical Competition Festivals, and was a considerable force in the affairs of that body. She was laid to rest on May 9, in the God's Acre near the home she loved so well. A writer in the *Yorkshire Post* well sums up the motive that governed her life and endeared her to a large circle of friends: 'Stricken down in the midst of her strenuous labours by a mysterious illness, which laid her on her back for a whole year, she literally to the last moment worked for her fellow-creatures and her God.'

The following are some additional particulars of the career of the late Mr. BARTON MCGUCKIN, whose death on April 17 was recorded in our last issue. For close on twenty years (1880-99) he delighted audiences as an operatic tenor of the first rank. Born at Dublin on July 28, 1852, he commenced his studies under R. Turler, as chorister of Armagh Cathedral, whence, in 1871, he became first tenor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. During 1875-76 he took lessons from Trevulsi, at Milan, and made his début in oratorio at the Crystal Palace Concerts in 1877, also singing at the Handel Festival in 1878. His first appearance in opera was with Carl Rosa at Birmingham, as Thaddeus in the 'Bohemian Girl,' on September 10, 1880, and he created many operatic parts, e.g., in 'Esmeralda,' 'Colomba,' 'Nadeshda,' 'Promersi Sposi' and 'Manon.' In 1905 he was appointed Director of the Dublin Amateur Operatic and Choral Society, and was Musical Director of the Dublin International Exhibition in 1907. His last appearance was at the Coronation of King George V., in June, 1911. In private life he was very popular.

Less than two months after the death of his elder brother (John Thomas) comes the news of the passing away at Ottawa, Canada, of the veteran harpist, THOMAS THOMAS, better known as Aptommas. He was born at Bridgend, Glamorganshire, in 1829, and studied the harp from his early years, giving many successful concerts both at home and on the Continent between the years 1851-67. On January 18, 1872, he performed at the Gewandhaus Concerts, Leipzig, and his playing was much admired. He played on several occasions for Queen Victoria, and as leader of a band of harps at the Belfast Musical Festival of 1879. He settled in America in 1895, and gave a very fine concert at Carnegie Hall, New York, on January 16, 1905. Many of his compositions are well known, including his cantata, 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' and he also published a 'History of the Harp.'

Mrs. D'OYLY CARTE (Mrs. Stanley Boulter), on May 5, in London. She was a business woman of exceptional capacity, and was always an unseen force behind the efforts of Gilbert, Sullivan, and D'Oyly Carte. After the death of the last of the 'triumvirate,' Mrs. Carte had carried on with conspicuous success the management of the Savoy revivals and the work of the touring companies.

H. STEUDNER-WELSING, at Vienna, his native city. At one time, and for many years, Mr. Welsing was resident in Liverpool, where he was well-known as a pianoforte player of great ability and also as a teacher.

THE OPERA SEASON IN NEW YORK.

The Operatic Season which recently came to an end in New York has on the whole been successful. It has been remarkable as being the longest on record in New York, lasting twenty-three weeks uninterruptedly, from the middle of November to a month after Easter. During that period 154 performances were given, the operas staged being thirty-six, out of which nineteen were Italian, twelve German, three French, one American, and one Russian. As will be seen, the Italian works carried the day, not only in the number given, but likewise in the number of their performances, which latter amounted to eighty-six. As usual, the German operas given were almost exclusively works of Wagner, which were heard on thirty-five occasions; Humperdinck was represented by two operas and ten performances; Mozart's 'Magic Flute' was given nine times. After Wagner, the greatest number of representations was accorded to Puccini (twenty-eight), next to whom came Verdi with sixteen.

Seven performances were given of operas by Wolf-Ferrari, who may now be considered to have definitely established himself as a draw at the Metropolitan House. Of Puccini's operas, his 'Butterfly' appears to be the most successful in New York, while his 'Fanciulla del West' does not appear to have attracted, as only four performances were given. Two works that show no abatement in the affections of the New Yorkers are 'Aida' and 'Gioconda,' which are always safe cards to play. It has always been taken for granted that 'Cavalleria' and 'Pagliacci' are inseparable,