'Style in Church Music'

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It is possible to play the crotchets in 'In dulci júbilo' in such a way that they are *differentiated from the*

rhythm without being obtrusively independent of the triplet, and I cannot help believing, after many years' acquaintance with the Chorale, that Bach *did* intend a difference to be made.

With regard to the execution of dotted notes against triplets, a widespread misunderstanding prevails.

Ph. Em. Bach's rule, quoted above—which, as he himself explicitly says, applies to cases where 4-4, 3-4, 2-4 are only *careless substitutes for* 12-8, &c.—is often wrongfully extended to genuine 4-4, &c., time.

In the latter, so far from the short note after the dot coinciding with the last note of the triplet, it should be treated as if the note were *double-dotted*.

Quantz, in his 'Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen' ('Attempt at a guide to the playing of the flute'), 1752, Section 5, §22, gives the rule as follows:

'The above rule [*i.e.*, playing dotted notes as though double-dotted] is likewise to be observed when one part has triplets against which the other part has dotted notes. One must therefore play the short note after the dot, not with the third note of the triplet, but after it. *Otherwise it would sound like 6-8 or 12-8 time.* [The italics are mine.] . . . If one played these dotted notes, which occur against triplets, in strict time [*i.e.*, not as double-dotted] the effect, instead of being brilliant and grand, would be lame and stupid.'

It is obvious that the question must often arise, 'Is the time really 4-4 or 12-8?'

For instance, Bach's great C minor Organ Prelude obviously begins in genuine 4-4 time. Are we to suppose that with the entry of the subject:

the time changes to 12-8 interspersed with bars in 4-4 time? It seems more natural in this instance to treat the dotted notes as than as

Ph. Em. Bach ('Versuch,' &c., Pt. 2, 1762, ch. 29, §15) gives a very significant warning against always interpreting rules too literally. He says:

'In the notation of dotted notes there is often a lack of sufficient exactness. It has been attempted to set up a sort of general rule for the execution of these notes, which, however, is open to many exceptions. According to this rule the notes following the dot should be played as short as possible, and for the most part this precept is right, but sometimes the distribution of certain notes in the various parts, in accordance with which they must enter together at the same moment, causes an alteration; sometimes an ingratiating effect, not consistent with the defiant character otherwise inherent with these notes, is the reason why one does not linger quite so long over the dot. If one takes only one way of executing these notes as a basis, one loses the other ways.'—Yours, &c.,

University College, F. T. ARNOLD.
Cardiff.

November 8, 1920.

THE HILLER MSS. AND MENDELSSOHN

SIR,—In looking back at the *Musical Times* for May, 1926, I came across your review of Dr. von Ernst Wolff's 'Life of Mendelssohn—Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy'—in which you state:

'But Dr. Wolff notes two other well-springs which for the present are dry . . . viz., the composer's diaries; also the MS. literary remains bequeathed by Ferdinand Hiller to the Municipal archives of Cologne, which are not to be opened until thirty years after his death, *i.e.*, until 1915; and these, he presumes, will

throw much light on many points in Mendelssohn's life and art-work.'

Much has happened since 1915, and it is possible the custodian of the Municipal archives of Cologne has overlooked these MS. remains of Ferdinand Hiller, and that my inquiry may bring out some interesting information.—Yours, &c.,

OLIVER E. FLEET COBB.

Blean House, Victoria Road,

Sidcup, Kent.

September 8, 1920.

'STYLE IN CHURCH MUSIC'

SIR,—A Bristol paper, reporting a lecture by Mr. Harvey Grace on the above subject quotes him as saying 'Above all there should be a clear ecclesiastical atmosphere. Composers who introduced sacred music into operas were careful in this respect. The sacred music in "The Sign of the Cross" could be taken as a case in point. It had the truly ecclesiastical characteristics.' A suggestion that we should go to 'The Sign of the Cross' for our Church music ideals is astounding.—Yours, &c.,

'BRISTOLIAN.'

[Mr. Grace writes:

It is,—so astounding that I am glad I didn't make it. The reference to 'The Sign of the Cross' arose in this way. The point of the lecture was that Church music, whether ancient or modern, ought to be as definitely ecclesiastical as Church architecture, or as the diction of the liturgy. I showed how modern Church composers—*e.g.*, Stanford, Harwood, Baintow, Ireland, &c.—obtained their ecclesiastical colour by the use of ancient Church themes, or by motives written in imitation thereof. I further pointed out that the method was well-known to theatrical composers, giving as an example 'Shepherd of Souls' from 'The Sign of the Cross,' the opening phrase of which is merely a plain-song tone—viii. 1., note for note. The rest of the music to the play may or may not be ecclesiastical in style. I have never heard it. I am glad 'Bristolian's' letter gives me an opportunity for correcting the report.]

Obituary

We regret to record the following death:

ANDREW BLACK, the famous baritone, one of the greatest singers of 'Elijah' within recent memory. He was born in 1859 at Glasgow, where he became an organist. He studied singing at first under Randegger, and afterwards at Milan. His success at a Crystal Palace concert in 1887 brought him into wide renown, and in 1892, at Leeds, he took his place as a Festival singer. Perhaps the climax of his career was his interpretation of Judas in the first performance of 'The Apostles' at Birmingham in 1903. He died in Australia, his adopted country.

Sixty Years Ago

From the *Musical Times* of December, 1860:

BARREL ORGAN FOR SALE.—Playing 40 Psalm Tunes and Chants. Four barrels, oak case, gilt pipes. Instrument good as new. Price only 25 guineas. Apply to Mr. Dace, Professor of Music, Chelmsford, Essex.

PHILOSOPHIC WHIZ-GIG. A beautiful illustration of the phenomena of light and colour. On one side the colours of the rainbow maintain their brilliancy in swiftest revolution, on the other side the same colours produce white. Price 1s. Enclose stamps to M. A. Wheeler, Upton Scudamore, Warminster.

MADAME NOVELLO'S FAREWELL CONCERT.

Abridged from *The Times*.

ON Wednesday, the 21st of November, at the St. James's Hall, Madame Clara Novello sang her last notes in this country. The audience was exceedingly numerous, and every manifestation of artistic skill met with enthusiastic