

Orchestral Notation

Author(s): Stephen S. Stratton

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a new system of musical notation. A fearless and outspoken critic, Hahn made himself many enemies, but he also won over to his ideas many earnest musicians by his honesty of purpose and enthusiastic application to the cause he had at heart. From having been a military officer in earlier life, he subsequently devoted himself exclusively to music, occupying various positions in the profession during his career. Having latterly exchanged his residence at Königsberg for Leipzig for the purpose of founding a school for the teaching of his "chromatic" system at that town, he died shortly afterwards on the 14th ult., at the age of fifty-two.

Louis Gueymard, the once highly esteemed tenor of the Paris Opéra, who had retired from the lyrical stage in 1868, died on the 5th ult. at Corbeil, in France.

We subjoin, as usual, the programmes of concerts\* recently given at some of the leading institutions abroad:—

Paris.—Fêtes of July 14, Festival Concert of M. Colonne: Chant du Départ (Méhul); Marche des Drapeaux (Berlioz); Choruses (Boieldieu, Bazin, Hérold); Ballet, "Etienne Marcel" (Saint-Saëns); Fête Bohème (Massenet); Chorus, "Paris" (A. Thomas); Soldiers' Chorus from "Faust" (Gounod); "La Marseillaise" (Rouget de Lisle). Festival Concert of M. Padeloup: "La Marseillaise"; Overture, "L'Etoile du Nord" (Meyerbeer); Selection from "Faust" (Gounod); Marche au Supplice (Berlioz); Overture, "Zampa" (Hérold); Invitation à la Valse (Weber-Berlioz); Overture, "La Muette" (Auber); Selection from "Aida" (Verdi); Entr'acte, "Mignon" (A. Thomas); Méditation (Gounod); Marche Hongroise (Berlioz).

Leipzig.—At St. Thomas's Church (July 3): Prelude (Bach); Deus Canticus, for five parts (Orlando di Lasso); Toccata (Walther); Motett for double chorus and soli (Oscar Wermann). At the same (July 10): Andante (W. Stade); Kyrie, Credo, and Gloria from Mass (E. F. Richter); Prelude, B flat minor (Bach).

Baden-Baden.—Concert of the Curorchester (July 2): Jubel Overture (Raff); Violin Concerto, No. 9 (Spohr); Concerto, C minor (Beethoven); Danse des Sylphes from "Dammation de Faust" (Berlioz); Chaconne (Bach); Polonaise, E flat major (Chopin); Reitermarsch for orchestra (Schubert-Liszt).

Turin.—Concert of the Stefani Tempia Choral Society (July 4): Fragments from Mass in E flat (Jomelli); Pater Noster for five voices (S. Tempia); Miserere (Allegri); Twenty-eighth Psalm and Fugue (Marcello); Hermits' Chorus from "Faust" (Schumann); Introduction to "Nina" (Paeiello); Shepherd's Prayer (Kreutzer); Wedding Chorus from "Amanti Consolati" (Sarti).

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### LESLIE'S CHOIR.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—It would be our duty to acquiesce, with whatever regret, in the dissolution of this Choir if any unanswerable, or even respectable, reasons could be adduced for so melancholy a necessity. But what are we to say when we find that the reasons alleged, in so far as they have any weight at all, tell directly against the conclusion they are supposed to support?

"The time has come" (I quote from the Book of Words of the last Concert) "when the heart and soul of this great choral body must have less arduous work." If this means that the majority of the members of the Choir are themselves tired of it, and feel the necessary labour beyond their strength, there is no more to be said. If it only means that Mr. Leslie wishes to retire, then it is absurd that such a cause should be allowed to ruin the Choir, because it assumes that there is but one man who can conduct it.

Mr. Leslie gave as another reason that "he had not the heart" to suggest to certain veteran members of the Choir that it was time for them to retire—in other words that the Choir wanted weeding. That much needs to be done in this respect will not easily be believed by those who heard them on Monday last; but even if we grant this to any required extent, what are we to think of it as a reason for breaking up the Choir? If a garden wants weeding, a wise man will weed it, not abandon it in despair. The problem has, I believe, been successfully solved in other choirs.

Mr. Leslie went on to say that a difficult choral piece required some eighty rehearsals, and an amount of labour greatly exceeding that necessary for the most elaborate orchestral symphony.

\* Contributions intended for this column should indicate clearly the place and date of performance, as otherwise they cannot be inserted.

This may well be believed, and is the most convincing reason why a Choir which has attained a perfect mastery over such music should continue to live, and to hand on the skill and knowledge they have with such labour acquired. For Mr. Leslie would not, I imagine, be understood to say that the labour was ill spent, or more than the compositions themselves deserved.

The course to be pursued by the members of the Choir, if a humble admirer may venture so to speak, seems obvious.

Like *Barnardine*, in "Measure for Measure," they should "refuse to die." They should hold a meeting, elect a representative committee, and enter into negotiations with some competent musician.

That such may be found, who can doubt? A man who would quickly win the confidence of the Choir and lead it again and yet again to victory.

This will they do if they love their art and value it above mere questions of names and persons.

Mr. Leslie has passed, musically speaking, to his well-earned rest; and the Choir may no longer be called after his name. But that under some new and appropriate title they may yet live to charm us is the earnest wish of

Your obedient Servant,

July 18, 1880.

Μούσικος.

## ORCHESTRAL NOTATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—So long as we have transposing instruments it will be found necessary to write their "parts" accordingly; but whether the proper key might not be adhered to in the score is at least a subject worthy of consideration. The plan for abolishing the tenor clef, referred to by your correspondent "R. S.," affords another illustration of the proverb "There is nothing new under the sun," the same idea having been suggested by a contributor to the *Harmonicon* in 1826. The objection to it may be seen at once by looking at the octave as shown on the treble staff:—



When notation reformers can convert a line into a space they can use the C clef as suggested; but so long as the staff notation in its present form, and the relation of one clef to another is maintained, the practice cannot be other than false. A clef representing *pitch* is improperly employed when intended to denote other than its true notes; the falsehood is doubled when the note it is supposed to represent could not possibly be there according to the principle of the staff. It may be readily admitted that the staff notation is far from being perfect: it is at least consistent.

For my own part, I deprecate these concessions for the sake of saving trouble. Half the time and ingenuity expended in efforts to "improve" the notation would suffice thoroughly to master it. Notation is not music, and will never be anything but a stepping-stone to art, however perfect it may become.

The Tonic Sol-Fa notation is simple at the commencement; but as the intricacies of remote modulations are considered, it becomes, in my opinion, more difficult than the staff notation. There is, however, this good feature about it; there are no attempts to shirk difficulties; the "method" is admirably planned and carefully graduated, and must be studied thoroughly—hence, the earnest student becomes a good musician.

Yours faithfully,

STEPHEN S. STRATTON.

Birmingham, July 16, 1880.

## ORGAN VOLUNTARIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—It is a matter of regret to all lovers of the beautiful in the musical service of the Church, the amount of carelessness and ignorance which seems to prevail as to the use of the Voluntaries, the selection and performance being in many cases a scandal; and were the use and abuse of