

The Guild of Organists

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LADIES' SURPLICED CHOIRS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Perhaps the following particulars will interest your correspondent who is seeking information on the subject of ladies' surpliced church choirs. The Rev. Dr. Bromley is credited with having originated the novelty some two years ago at the Pro-Cathedral, Melbourne, where he officiated. At the time of the innovation, the *Church of England Messenger* of Melbourne, it would seem, published an adverse criticism on the "attraction," whereupon Dr. Bromley preached on the subject, and thus replied to his critic:—"It cannot be denied that, considering the extraordinary caprices of fashion in the matter of female attire, it would offend the taste to see the simple uniformity of surpliced men and boys disturbed by the intrusion of the grotesque and daily changing inventions of the Paris milliner. What better solution, then, of the difficulty could there be than to clothe the female members of the choir in an ecclesiastical vestment of such a suitable type as should harmonise well with the surroundings of their position, and at the same time not destroy that distinctive gracefulness of attire to which their sex entitles them?" The "ecclesiastical vestments" worn by the three young ladies of the choir consisted of surplices bordered with black, and caps of college style. I cannot say whether this church continues to have lady choristers, but in the beginning, at any rate, Dr. Bromley's zeal was not allowed to flourish unthwarted. There was quite a powerful party who objected to the choir consisting of ladies and millinery, and who held that the old traditional Cathedral usage should be adhered to. Some of the members of this opposition, when on a visit to Adelaide, happened to attend a service at the Anglican Cathedral there, and were so delighted with the singing that they declared themselves ready to guarantee the expenses of the whole choir if they would go over to Melbourne and give an octave of services in the new Cathedral.

Not long after the Melbourne incident "those who love church order and decency" were terribly shocked to find the same sensation introduced into England at a Harvest festival somewhere in Yorkshire. In this case the surplices of the ladies were not unlike M.A. gowns in shape, and consisted of Scotch lawn with pleated backs, purple velvet caps, similar to those worn by D.C.L.'s, completing the attire. A correspondent, anxious for Canon Liddon's opinion on the startling novelty, received the following reply: "It is difficult to say whether the spectacle of ladies dressed in surplices, and so on, in church, is more irreverent than it is certainly grotesque. It is greatly to be hoped that the good sense and Christian feeling of the Australian churches will steadily discourage anything of the kind, and especially for the sake of the ladies concerned."

E.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In reply to the question of your correspondent in Hartlepool, page 275, issue of May, 1889, right column, last but one.

I read in the *Church Times* of about a year ago that the Cathedral in Melbourne, Colony of Victoria, Australia, had a ladies' choir (or a part of the choir), that the ladies wore an ordinary surplice over a dark dress and had a small cap or biretta on the head.

My niece and daughter corroborate me in this statement. Perhaps the Editor of the *Church Times* could give your correspondent more information on the subject.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

HENRY FAITHFULL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In reference to the enquiries which have been made in your paper as to lady choristers, some of your correspondents may find it useful to know that Messrs. Nathan, Hardman Street, Liverpool, make the surplices and caps

which are used by lady choristers, and no doubt they can supply all information respecting same.

It may also be of interest to know that the originator of the costume was the Rev. Dr. Bromley, of Melbourne, who very justly contrasts the graceful ecclesiastical vestment, harmonising with its surroundings, with the daily changing caprices of fashion in feminine attire.—Yours faithfully,

K. C.

18, Selborne Street, Liverpool, June 22, 1889.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Referring to a query of one of your correspondents respecting ladies wearing surplices in choirs, I would mention that there is a fine surpliced choir in the Melbourne Cathedral. There are twelve ladies, fourteen boys, and sixteen men. The ladies wear surplices with black stoles, black velvet collars, and round black mortar-boards with silk tassels, and the whole costume is very becoming and suitable. I went to the service prepared to regard this new departure in the light of an innovation, but experienced quite different feelings. I thought there could be nothing against so simple and appropriate a costume except the stoles, and these I believe no one has a right to wear except those in holy orders.—Yours very truly,

G. MCARTHUR SCALES.

Belvoir House, Hornsey Lane, N., June 19, 1889.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In reply to a question in the May number of your Magazine with regard to a ladies' choir. While visiting in Yorkshire last year, at the new Church of Skelton, near Saltburn-by-the-Sea, there were four ladies, forming an addition to a very good male choir.

The surplices appeared in front just as a gentleman's (long), but at the back pleated in to fit the figure; they also had violet velvet Tam o' Shanter caps (I presume to match the hangings in the church), and wore no gloves.

Any further information you could no doubt get by writing to the Vicar of the parish.

I have forgotten the name of the church, but as there is only one other very small and old one, there would be no difficulty in finding it. Hoping this may prove useful to you.—Believe me, yours truly,

ANNIE MIXER.

7, Keith Grove, Uxbridge Road, W.

May 30, 1889.

ANCIENT ORGAN MAKERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—May I ask your readers if they can give me names and dates of English organ makers prior to 1625? I have found the following:—

York:	John Gyse..	..	..	free	1431.
"	William Nyvell ..	..	..	"	1445.
Norwich:	John Asshwell ..	..	..	"	1446.
"	Arnalt Maynhamber..	..	..	"	1446.
York:	John Ross ..	..	..	"	1463.
"	Edward Boyse ..	..	..	"	1478.
"	William Hall ..	..	..	"	1478.
"	Maurice Biront ..	..	..	"	1485.
"	John Hugh or Hewe ..	..	..	"	1489.
"	James Demps ..	..	..	"	1526.
"	John Heweson ..	..	..	"	1540.
"	William Treasurer ..	..	..	"	1540.
"	Stephen Britten ..	..	..	"	1608.

Yours truly,

R. C. HOPE, F.S.A.

Scarboro', June 3, 1889.

P.S.—The word "free" refers to the date when the individual was made a freeman of the city, before which time he was unable to ply his trade.

THE GUILD OF ORGANISTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—The paragraph in your last issue referring to the Guild of Organists is calculated to mislead those unacquainted with the facts of the unpleasantness between the

Council and myself. I shall feel obliged, therefore, if you will kindly allow me to explain briefly my position with the Guild.

In the first place, I was *not* dismissed from my office of Secretary, for the simple reason that the Council have no power to dismiss an officer. As I was elected at a General Meeting of the members, they alone, at a like meeting, have power to reject me.

With regard to the circular, though cautiously worded, it contains several misrepresentations. I deny that I was the sole means of communication between the members and the Council. The Treasurer had as great facility for corresponding with the members as I had, since he received subscriptions sent by them for membership. Moreover, the Treasurer had full and undivided control over the Guild's banking account, and he alone signed all cheques.

It is quite natural that the Council should object to have their actions exposed, but, at the same time, they should be careful to tell the whole truth, and not to screen themselves by imputing to me errors I have not committed.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

June 22, 1889.

J. H. LEWIS.

PATENT INTELLIGENCE.

DURING the past few weeks the following Inventions connected with music have been registered at the Patent Office, the list being specially compiled for THE MUSICAL TIMES by Messrs. Rayner and Cassell, Patent Agents, 37, Chancery Lane, from whom all further information concerning Patents may be had gratuitously:—

8366. Improvements in Mechanical Musical Instruments. Emile Welte, May 20, 1889.

8392. Improvements in the Pneumatic Action of Organs. Thomas Casson, May 21, 1889.

8398. Muting stringed instruments played with a bow, such as violins, violas, violoncellos, double basses, and stringed instruments of that nature or class. Arthur W. Jerningham, May 21, 1889.

8568. For an Improved Method of using the Monochord; the title of his invention being "The Monochord Harp and Violin." Richard Pilkington, May 23, 1889.

8697. Improvements in Electrical Musical Mechanism. S. H. Gibson, May 27, 1889.

8784. Improvements in Pianofortes. Henry Witton, May 27, 1889.

9098. Improvements in Bugles and Trumpets. J. P. Browne, June 1, 1889.

9122. A New Tone Producer for Musical Instruments. Reinhold Handel, June 1, 1889.

9142. Improvements in Reed Musical Instruments. Walter Brierley (Carl Baudenbacher, Germany), June 3, 1889.

9216. A Moveable or Sliding Block at the back of hopper of piano. Charles Barker, June 4, 1889.

9141. Improvements in Banjos. C. C. Boileau, June 7, 1889.

9849. Improvements in Pianoforte Actions. J. T. Johnson (Gustav Lyon, France), June 15, 1889.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**** Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.**

Our correspondents will oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

Correspondents are informed that their names and addresses must accompany all communications.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Notice is sent to all subscribers whose payment (in advance) is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed. We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers that, although the music is always kept in stock, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

AN ADVERTISER.—The Guildhall School of Music may be confidently recommended, and the London Organ School does good work. The Royal Academy is the chief teaching institution.

AUSTRALIA.—You had better at the outset try and work up a connection in the two capacities. There should be no difficulty for a man of skill to make headway in either place. The Transvaal is also spoken of as a likely place to encourage enterprise.

EMBRYO.—1. Apply to the Manager of a Company. 2. About two pounds a week. 3. Study with a competent master.

J. C. H.—Much obliged for your correction.

R. J. CAIN.—There are scholarships at the Royal Academy of Music and at the Royal College of Music, which are to be gained by competition. You might make application to the Secretaries of each of those institutions for particulars.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF COUNTRY NEWS.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this summary, as all the notices are either collated from the local papers or supplied to us by correspondents.

ABINGDON.—A performance of orchestral music was given in the Corn Exchange, on the 4th ult. Mr. Oldfield S. Marshall was Conductor. The programme, selected entirely from works by English musicians, was excellently rendered by the band, under the leadership of Mr. Hayes (Oxford):—Macfarren's Overture to *Robin Hood*; Sterndale Bennett's Overture to *Parisina* and "Caprice" for pianoforte and orchestra; W. Macfarren's Concertstück for pianoforte and orchestra; and four numbers of an Orchestral Suite by the Conductor (who also played both pianoforte works). Songs by Bishop, Stainer, and Cowen were sung by Miss Bessie Latham and accompanied by Mrs. Slade Baker. The violoncello obbligato to Stainer's "Slumber Song" was played by the Rev. H. Deane.

AUCKLAND, N.Z.—The Auckland Choral Society in the report of its proceedings gives an interesting list of works performed during the past year, under the conductorship of Herr Carl Schmitt. Handel's *Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *Christus*, Spohr's *Calvary*, Schubert's *Mass in E flat*, Barnby's *Rebekah*, and Sullivan's *Martyr of Antioch*, altogether a very creditable record. The Society has a chorus of over 200 and a band of forty-two performers. The solos have been taken chiefly by members of the Society. The financial position shows a large balance of funds in hand. The scheme for the season now in progress includes such works as *The Messiah* (two performances, one of which is open free to the public), *Jephtha*, Gade's *Erl-King's Daughter*, Stanford's *Revenge*, Cowen's *Rose Maiden* and Rossini's *Moses in Egypt*.

CAUNTON.—The last Concert of the season was given in the school-room, in aid of the school funds, on Thursday, the 6th ult. The programme was miscellaneous, and was well performed by Miss A. Gilbert, Miss Mellers, Miss Taylor, Miss Vickers, Mrs. Holden, Mr. Nelson Stokes, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Waglish, and Mr. Clarke. One of the chief features of the evening was the performance of the part-music, of which Hatton's glea "Beware," by Messrs. Stokes, Sheppard, Waglish, and Ellis, met with an enthusiastic encore. The Concert, which was one of the best ever held at Caunton, was under the able direction of Mr. S. Reay.

CLACTON-ON-SEA.—The members of the Choral Society gave some selections from Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at the Assembly Rooms, Royal Hotel, on Whit-Monday evening, under the direction of Mr. F. W. Lewellen. Good service was rendered by a compact little orchestra, which, with the chorus, was kept well in hand by the Conductor. Miss Dawson was ably assisted by Mr. Richard Stokoe at the harmonium, and Mr. Parsonson, of New College, was at the pianoforte. The soloists were Miss Kent, Miss Rose Moss, Mr. White, and Mr. Hazelgrove. The performance, the first ever given of the Oratorio in Clacton, was an undoubted success.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—The Second Annual Choral Evensong by the United Surplised Choirs, was given in Trinity Church, on Ascension Day, May 30, when nearly 100 voices took part. The usual choir was augmented by the choirs of Grace Church, St. Mary's, St. John's, and Trinity Church. The Responses were sung to Tallis, Proper Psalms to chants by Barnby, Woodward, and Russell; the Anthem, "Leave us not," by Stainer, was excellently sung; the Processional Hymn, "Hail the Day," by W. H. Monk, a great favourite with the congregation, being the same as that chosen the previous year. The remaining hymns were "All hail the power of Jesus' name," "Now thank we all our God," and "Onward, Christian Soldiers," the broad effect produced by the harmonies being very impressive. In Bunnett's simple but attractive setting in F of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis the choirs were thoroughly at their ease. Books of the Service, containing both music and words, were printed for the choirs, a separate Order of the Service, words only, being supplied to the congregation. The Choirmasters were Messrs. Fox, Barrett, and Foote, who acted in conjunction with Mr. F. Norman Adams, the general Director of the Music.—A Concert was given on the 17th May, for the Women and Children's Hospital Fund, at the Music Hall. Mr. F. Norman Adams, the pianist of the evening, performed several pieces with conscientious correctness and evenness in execution. Among them was Beethoven's "Sonate Pathétique," which was well rendered. Mrs. Ford sang Meyerbeer's "Shadow Song," and two German *Lieder* by Ries, with her usual success. Mr. Charles Heydler gave several solos on the violoncello.

DALKEITH, N.B.—An Organ Recital was given on the 12th ult., in the Parish Church, by the Organist, Mr. James Bryce, who was assisted by Mr. Chas. Bradley, the Organist of South Leith Parish Church, and the Edinburgh Choral Union. Mr. Bryce played Handel's Sixth Organ Concerto in B flat, an Andante of Smart's, and a movement from Sterndale Bennett's "Cambridge Installation Ode"; and Mr. Bradley's solos were Mendelssohn's Second Sonata, Prelude and Fugue in D (Bach), and Smart's Postlude in D.

FROME.—The organ at Wesley Chapel, after several repairs and improvements, was re-opened, on the 6th ult., by Dr. J. Frederick Bridge, Organist of Westminster Abbey, who performed several pieces by various composers, including the March from his own *Callirhoe*.

LYTTLETON, N.Z.—The Musical Society gave a Concert on May 16 at the Rink. The two works selected for production were Gade's *Crusaders* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Mr. Wallace was Conductor. The principals were Mrs. Townend, Miss Spensley, Mr. Püschell, and Mr. Ziesler. The *Crusaders* has been performed by the Society before. On that occasion there was perhaps more volume of sound in the chorus, which was in other respects excellent. At the present the chorus was thinner a little, but on the whole more artistic. In other words, the Society has improved. The ladies were particularly successful with the Song of the Sirens, and the male voices with the Pilgrims' Chorus. The successful production on the same evening of two high-class works of such different styles is an achievement as creditable to Conductor and the members of the Musical Society as it was pleasing to the large audience which was present.