

Orpheus Glee Societies

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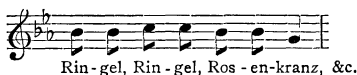
German child that ever went to a Kindergarten or elementary school knows by heart—both words and music:



Again, the *Witch's*—



is a well known tune, used with various words, but principally as—



Will Mr. van der Straeten still contend, I wonder, that all the melodies in "Hänsel und Gretel" are Humperdinck's own inspiration?

And now, in conclusion, may I ask one or two questions?

(1.) Can the introduction into an opera or other work of a tune which has been common property for ages past be called a plagiarism? If so, then Meyerbeer and Wagner were plagiarists when they used Luther's Chorale in their "Huguenots" and "Kaisermarsch" respectively; Schumann, when he introduced "The Marseillaise" in his "Two Grenadiers"; Flotow, when he used "The last Rose of Summer" in his "Martha." Could not such a charge be brought with much greater justice against a melody which so closely imitates another that, without being actually like it, it is yet felt by everybody to have its origin in it? And, if this is so, then it is Mr. van der Straeten, and he alone, who, through his letter, stamps Humperdinck as a plagiarist.

(2.) Has anybody ever thought of blaming Humperdinck for using these well known tunes in his work? Not to my knowledge. Everybody, on the contrary, will admit that it would have been distinctly against the very spirit of his work had he attempted to set new music to lines which, with their respective melodies, have been known to, and beloved by, every German from times immemorial.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

14, Carlton Hill, N.W. GUSTAV ERNEST.

ORPHEUS GLEE SOCIETIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—I am closely associated with the Workington Orpheus Glee Society, but although the word "Glee" is attached it has not, up to the present, any significance, because we have performed nothing but sacred works. At present the Society has Gaul's "Holy City" in hand. The composition of the Society is boys with unbroken voices, soprano and alto; young men, bass and tenors. I am very much interested to know if such a choir is in existence so constituted for the purpose of performing works such as I have named, and I would take it as a great favour if you could ascertain this fact through the columns of your valuable paper.—Faithfully yours,

March 17, 1895. R. THEXTON.

PURCELL'S TE DEUM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Will not one of our Festivals do honour to Purcell by including his Te Deum in D in its programme? When the new edition, which I have prepared from the original autograph score, is published, it will, I am sure, surprise many musicians who have hitherto thought Boyce's version was a fair representation of Purcell. Let any one refer to "We believe that Thou shalt come," if they wish to see how Boyce ventured to *re-harmonise* and spoil Purcell.

Yours very truly,

J. F. BRIDGE.

The Cloisters, Westminster,
March 22, 1895.

RECENT DISCOVERIES IN EARLY ENGLISH MUSIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—At the last meeting of the Sussex section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, Mr. H. Davey read a paper on "The Recent Discoveries in Early English Music," and quite astonished us all by what he said. He read extracts from German musical journals telling us many things about English music, one of which was that polyphony was invented by the Englishman, John Dunstable; and also exhibited the first part of a "History of Music in England," written by a German. May I suggest that any information on this subject, whether relating to new discoveries or to known facts, would probably be most welcome to many readers of THE MUSICAL TIMES. That the Germans gave us the credit of such importance in musical history was news to me, and I think it would be news also to most English musicians.—Yours faithfully,

GEORGE LANGLEY.

Eastbourne, March 20, 1895.

[Our comments on this letter will be found on page 230.—
Ed. M.T.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

** *Notices of concerts, of which programmes must invariably be sent, 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 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.

A SUBSCRIBER.—*The works most suitable for your requirements are to be found in Novello's Series of Music Primers; Ralph Dunstan, on Bases and Melodies (there is also another work on the latter subject likely to be issued before long); James Higgs, on Modulation; E. Pauer, on Musical Forms.*

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.

ASHFORD, KENT.—An excellent performance of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" was given, on the 14th ult., by the choral and orchestral societies of this town, the solos being taken by the members. Dr. Wilks conducted with his usual skill.

BACUP.—Mr. Charles Nuttall gave an attractive Piano-forte Recital on the 12th ult., in the Mechanics' Hall, and played a comprehensive selection from the writings of Mendelssohn, Chopin, Raff, Rubinstein, and Liszt with much facility.

BRIGHTON.—The patriotic scheme of the Brighton and Hove Choral and Orchestral Society deserves the heartiest support. The first Concert of the proposed three, to be devoted to the works of leading English musicians, was given on the 21st ult., when the programme was entirely drawn from the writings of Dr. Hubert Parry, and consisted of "Job," the "English" Symphony, and "Blest pair of Sirens." The soloists were Mr. Edward Branscombe, Mr. Paul England, and Master Sterndale Bennett, and the choral numbers were excellently sung by the choir, under the able conductorship of Dr. Sawyer.

CAYTHORPE (NEAR GRANTHAM).—The Caythorpe and Fulbeck Choral Society gave an excellent performance, on the 15th ult., of "Elijah," in the Parish Church. The soloists were Miss Jessie Hotine, Miss Mary Willis, Mr. Dunkerton, and Mr. Charles Ackerman. Mr. H. R. Dickenson presided at the organ, Mr. S. Powell at the piano-forte, and Mr. Edmond Roysds conducted.