

Orchestral Reform

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it can a series of letters—especially when the latter is doubled, as is the case when the “bridge” tones are employed.

I trust sufficient has been said in explanation of the “opinion” advanced in my former letter, and that, though I may not convince your correspondent that I am right, he will not require further entry upon the well-worn controversy respecting the two systems. In conclusion, I would commend to the notice of Mr. Manson a paper “On the Principles of Musical Notation,” read by Dr. Stainer before the Musical Association, first session, where the subject is discussed at greater length, and by a greater authority (a friend, too, of Tonic Sol-fa) than—Yours faithfully,

STEPHEN S. STRATTON.

Birmingham, September 14, 1880.

A NEGLECTED HYMN-TUNE.

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE MUSICAL TIMES.”

SIR,—In spite of the great change in taste in regard to the style of hymn-tunes in recent days, and the numerous modern contributions to this branch of church music, most collections still retain certain of the old English tunes which have kept their hold on us through all these changes, and which no compiler can afford to omit; such as “Rockingham,” “Melcombe,” “Abridge,” and a good many others. But I have looked in vain in most modern tune-books for one of the finest of the old English tunes, one which I have never seen in print since I first found it in an old collection of tunes with hymns published in the early part of this century (the title was “Devotional Harmony,” but I have no recollection of publisher’s or compiler’s name), where it was called “Evening Hymn,” and ascribed to Jeremiah Clark. The tune would very likely be found in such a collection as Webbe’s “Psalmody,” but as no one seems to know it now, I ask leave to quote it here as a tune which is worthy a place in any tune-book, and which certainly ought not to be passed over and forgotten:—



The harmony is exactly as it stood in the old book I have mentioned, but the movement of the inner parts I think I manipulated a little, transposing alto and tenor in one or two bars, as the parts were not well distributed. I adopted it, at a church at which I played many years ago, for Cowper’s fine and pathetic hymn—

The billows swell, the winds are high,*

the feeling of which the tune seemed to express exactly; but I never heard it in any other church. The tune must, of course, be taken in rather slow time, or its true expression will be destroyed.

Having in my hands the other day the tune-book published by the S.P.C.K., and edited by Mr. Sullivan, I looked

* A hymn which also seems entirely beneath the notice of recent compilers.

with some curiosity to see if by chance my old friend was included in this collection; and there I did find, with the name of Jeremiah Clark appended to it, the following tune, which is evidently founded on the one already quoted, but with the key, time, and melody altered so as to render it barely recognisable:—



I will not insult the critical capacity of your readers by asking which is the finer melody, and which bears internal evidence of having been the original form of the tune; but I do feel some curiosity as to who is responsible for this piece of mangling.

London, September 20.

H. H. STATHAM.

[We feel sure most people will agree with Mr. Statham in his estimate both of Jeremiah Clark’s fine hymn-tune, and of the curious perversion of it published under Clark’s name in the tune-book of the S.P.C.K. The tune is first found in Playford’s “Divine Companion” (second edition, 1709), and, under the name of “Uffingham,” is included in that valuable repertory of our old psalm-tunes, the Rev. Henry Parr’s “Church of England Psalmody” (London, Novello). We may add that Webbe’s tune “Melcombe,” to which Mr. Statham refers, was not originally written as a hymn-tune. It was an “O Salutaris,” and will be found in Webbe’s “Collection of Motetts or Antiphons” (1792).—Ed. *Musical Times*.]

ORCHESTRAL REFORM.

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE MUSICAL TIMES.”

SIR,—With the profoundest respect for the feelings of your correspondent (Mr. Smith, of Limerick Cathedral), I would say that I cannot endorse his opinions upon the subject of reform in orchestral notation. If so humble and obscure an individual as myself may put forward his views of the matter, I would say that a score, written in the conventional manner, is a puzzle and a source of perplexity to even sound musicians and experienced conductors. Disguise it as you will, the fact still remains that, if a conductor desires to see the exact form of any passage in his score, he has to mentally transpose some parts a major second, others a minor third, and still others by different intervals. Why is this absurdity necessary? Why not write each part exactly as it sounds, leaving to the copyist the task of transposing, where necessary, in writing out the separate parts? In my own humble sphere I have always done so, and I think nothing could induce me to follow any other plan. Of course, transposition by the octave being the simplest thing imaginable, I write the octave-flute and the contra-bass parts an octave below and an octave above their actual pitch respectively. All this seems simple and crude enough, but what objection is there to it? It answers most fully all the purposes of a score, both to composer and conductor, because the score thus written *speaks the truth*, since it presents to the eye everything *exactly as it sounds*, the octave transposition of the above-named two instruments (and certain others, perhaps) being previously understood or indicated at the time.

I feel somewhat reluctant to put forth this matter in your columns, because, most undoubtedly, these ideas can be no originals of mine, and I have no wish to forestall, in the mention of them, others, my superiors in the profession, who surely must have felt the truth of the principle long ere this; therefore I have waited and looked in your

correspondence column for some abler exposition of the idea, but hitherto in vain; let that be my apology for writing.

In the midst of the marvellous progress which this, the finest of all the fine arts, is making in our country, does it not behove every true musician to use every endeavour to prevent the growing love for music from finding its only vent in mere technical or mechanical skill, to the neglect or destruction of the true spirit of art? And can anything be more subversive of the latter than a blind supporting of such things as a score which, instead of serving its true purpose and speaking the *simple truth*, demands a certain, and by no means small, amount of mere mechanical dexterity in transposition?

A *truthful* score leaves the mind fully at liberty to search for and grasp the real spirit and meaning of the work; a Chinese puzzle, written some parts in one key and some in another, exhibiting perhaps four or five different keys and three or four different clefs, only perplexes the mind, and demands all its energies for the merely mechanical labour of unravelling the puzzle and arriving at a more or less clear outline of the work embodied in it. Such is my humble opinion. If it bears the stamp of truth, let it be adopted; if it is false, let it be proved to be so, and then I will renounce it.

While upon the subject of orchestral music, may I ask why cannot we employ *three* Tympani, Tonic, *Subdominant*, and Dominant, instead of only the first and last? These *three* notes in any key form a most important formula, Tonic and Dominant *alone* do not. With only *two* Tympani, Tonic and Dominant, how are we to accompany a chord of the sixth upon the subdominant? We can only suddenly bring the drums to a full stop, or, by using the Tonic one, change 6 into 6-5, a proceeding generally inadmissible. Is not this a matter which may well be looked into and reformed?

Apologising for thus trespassing so largely upon your valuable space, I beg to remain, Sir, truly yours,

J. M. STANISLAUS ELLIOT.

Exton, Rutland, September 13, 1880.

[Instances occur where a drum is tuned to the subdominant of the key; and, in rare cases, even to other intervals.—ED. *Musical Times*.]

ORGAN INSCRIPTIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES"

SIR,—Your correspondent who dates from Thiedenwiese need not apologise for his suggestion as to Organ Inscriptions. The quotations he makes are so very apt and sensible that no possible objection could be made to them, and organ-builders and players would, I think, be wise to introduce the custom here. Surely, if it is advisable to place inscriptions on church-bells, it would be still more advisable to add them to church-organs, which have so much greater influence, and are more frequently seen.

It would interest many of your readers if your correspondent would state whether he has come across any other examples in his travels, and among them,

Yours faithfully,

Chelsea, September 22.

A. S. COOPER.

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 greatly 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 pages are always stereotyped, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

STRIKER.—The editor of a Musical Journal is not the person to apply to for counsel on the matter. As soon as you can, seek the advice of

a competent professor, who can judge by your playing the tuition you require. Neither pupils nor patients can be prescribed for at a distance.

W. TOOTHILL.—The notice of the Choral Festival mentioned merely stated that it took place "on Sunday afternoon"; and as there was no indication of the paper from which the paragraph was taken, our correspondent will see we could not give it insertion, and it is now, of course, too late.

INQUIRER.—It is quite practicable for you to learn to play the violin-cello. Place yourself under a good master and practise diligently.

A SUBSCRIBER.—Certainly, as a rule, a student cannot thoroughly learn the science of Harmony without a master; but there is no rule without an exception, and our correspondent may be the exception.

ORGAN STUDENT.—Please furnish your address, and an answer shall be sent you.

W. POTTS.—Our correspondent is quite right in supposing that the Metrical Version of the Psalms was never intended to be sung to chants.

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.

BARBADOS.—The sacred Cantata *The Raising of Lazarus*, composed by Mr. M. E. Doorly, was performed with marked success at Marshall's Hall on the evening of August 24. The local papers speak in high terms both of the worth of the composition and the excellence of its rendering. The band of the "Fourth King's Own" was a decided acquisition in the accompaniments to the work. Mr. N. Cummins presided ably at the organ.

BEXHILL.—Miss Annie Tate, R.A.M., gave her first Concert on Wednesday evening, the 8th ult., at the Bexhill Club, under the patronage of Mr. Brassey and the neighbouring gentry. Miss Tate was highly appreciated, many of her songs receiving hearty encores. The programme contained vocal and instrumental pieces which were well sustained by several ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood; the performance of Mr. Edwin Smith (solo harp) and Mr. G. Cuthbert (solo cornet) gaining especial favour with the audience. Mr. W. Roe (Organist of St. Mary's, Brighton) was a most able Conductor.

BIRMINGHAM.—The Carl Rosa Opera Company gave six performances at the Theatre Royal, commencing on Monday, the 6th ult. The operas performed were *Martina*, *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Zampa*, *Bohemian Girl*, and *Mignon*. Although all were rendered with that attention to ensemble which distinguishes this Company, special interest was attached to the last two. In the *Bohemian Girl* Mr. Barton M'Guckin made his first appearance in opera. His voice told well in "When other lips," and his action and dramatic feeling are extremely good; he was very cordially received. In *Mignon* Mr. Maas created quite a sensation, and Miss Julia Gaylord, Miss Georgina Burns, Miss Josephine Yorke, and Mr. Ludwig were warmly welcomed, and highly effective. On Thursday, the 16th ult., the Philharmonic Union gave the first Concert of the season in the Town Hall, when Handel's *Judas Maccabæus* formed the programme. The principal vocalists were Miss Yates, Mrs. Bellamy, Miss L. Yates, Mr. Joseph Maas, Mr. Breeze, and Mr. Pope. There was an excellent band, and Mr. Stimpson at the Organ lent valuable assistance. The work was very well rendered; the choruses steady and bright in tone. The solos were generally effectively given, but Mr. Maas carried off the honours of the evening, receiving an enthusiastic encore for "Sound an alarm." Dr. Heap conducted with judgment and skill. There was a very large audience. A Ballad Concert was given on Saturday evening, the 18th ult., in the Great Hall of the Lower Grounds, Aston, which was well attended, and highly successful. The principal vocalists were Miss Annie Sinclair, Mr. Harper Kearton, and Mr. Thurley Beale; and solos were given on the violin by Mr. Fred Warde, and on the flute by Mr. Gregory. The orchestral selections were extremely good, under the direction of Mr. C. J. Stevens.

BRADFORD.—On Thursday, August 26, the new organ, built by Mr. Abbott, of Leeds, at a cost of nearly £700, for St. Jude's Church, Manningham, was opened by Dr. Roberts, Organist of the Parish Church, Halifax. There was full choral service, during which several organ voluntaries were introduced. The Magnificat was from a Service in F, composed by Dr. Roberts; and the anthem, "The Wilderness," by Sir John Goss. At the conclusion of the service an excellent selection of pieces was played. In connection with the opening of the organ, a beautifully illuminated address, bound in morocco, and a purse containing £125 were presented to J. G. Walton, Esq., the honorary Choirmaster, from the vicar, choir, and congregation of St. Jude's Church.

BRISTOL.—On Saturday, the 18th ult., Mr. George Riseley resumed his weekly Organ Recitals at the Colston Hall for the season. The programme was highly interesting, and included selections from the works of Beethoven, Handel, Mendelssohn, Lemmens, Schubert, &c.—On the 20th ult., the opening Concert of the fourth season of the Monday Popular Concerts was given at the Colston Hall; the band, as usual, being the principal attraction. A splendid programme was capitally rendered; the most important items being Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony, Beethoven's Overture in E to *Fidelio*, and Weber's Overture to *Oberon*. Amongst the lighter pieces given were the following: Rubinstein's Ballet Music from *Feramos*, Suppé's March "Fatinitza," Massenet's Entr'acte "Sevillana," and Th. Michaelis's March "The Turkish Patrol," intended to illustrate the approach, passing by, and gradual disappearance of a Turkish patrol. The vocalists were Miss Norman and Miss Marian McKenzie, both of whom were most efficient. Mr. A. W. Waite was leader of the band, and Mr. George Riseley conducted. The popularity of these Concerts appears to be fully established, the large hall being, as in previous seasons, well filled.