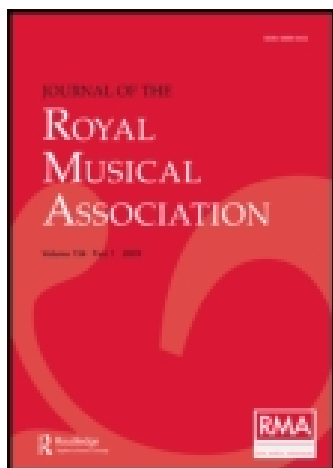


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Brief Sketch of the Career of Sir Robert P. Stewart, Kt., Mus. D., Trin. Coll., Dub., Professor of Music in the University of Dublin

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MARCH 8, 1898.

A. H. D. PRENDERGAST, Esq., M.A.,
IN THE CHAIR.

*BRIEF SKETCH OF THE CAREER OF SIR ROBERT
P. STEWART, KT., MUS. D., TRIN. COLL., DUB.,
PROFESSOR OF MUSIC IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF DUBLIN.*

BY REV. O. J. VIGNOLES, M.A.

I HAD hoped that the MS. of the Memoir of Sir R. P. Stewart, which I have been engaged upon for more than two years, would by this time have been published; but for one reason I am glad of the delay, for the statue just erected to Stewart's memory is to receive its inauguration a week hence at the hands of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on Leinster Lawn, one of the best sites in Dublin, and to which the public there has liberally contributed.* This important remembrance seemed rightly to claim the first place as an enduring memorial of the lamented professor, which those "who run can read" at a glance; whilst a memorial in the shape of a book requires some hours of leisure to peruse and some spare cash to procure. But I now hope that the publication of the Memoir of the lamented professor which I have written may not be much further postponed.

Meanwhile I have been induced by a kind invitation from the Council of this Association to prepare a brief outline of the career and character of my dear and valued friend, to

* This unique event in the artistic history of the British Isles is worthy of remembrance. Is there any other public statue of a musician in our land?

whose tuition some half-century ago I owe the small amount of knowledge and appreciation of the "Divine Art" that I possess. Robert Prescott Stewart came of a Scoto-Irish stock on the father's side, from whom he inherited his strong talent for literature, in the acquisition of which he has been hardly equalled, certainly not excelled, by any musician in our own time. He was born on December 16 (Beethoven's birthday), 1825; two years before that great composer's death, and eight years before the decease of Sir John Stevenson. Stewart's mother was Irish, and he owed to her his deep love of music. Strange to say, however, their son's earliest penchant as a boy was to be sent *to sea*; and it was not without difficulty that the lad was persuaded to become a choir boy. This really has a ludicrous side, for an enduring and invincible dislike of the sea was one of his strongest characteristics. The sea, if I may so phrase it, was his pet aversion. His letters and diaries are replete with the avowal of his utter abhorrence of Neptune and all his works. I may say, in passing, it was with great difficulty that his friends in the University Choral Society induced him to cross the Channel in the summer of 1851 to visit the Great Exhibition. Had it not been for this horror of the sea Stewart would have made his genial personality known in England long before he did, and would have established an earlier and a riper acquaintance with his distinguished musical contemporaries in Great Britain. It was owing to this (as Sir J. Stainer has said) that the subject of my sketch was comparatively so little known over here; may we not add, so much less appreciated by some than his brilliant gifts deserved?

Robert Stewart was well instructed as a boy in the elements of Greek and Latin, and also in drawing (for which he had great aptitude), under the masters of Christ Church Cathedral School. The Rev. Mr. Crosthwaite was his chief instructor, so far as music was concerned, but it did not include counterpoint. It was to him Robert Stewart one day, when he was eleven or twelve years old, brought a *Te Deum* he had just completed. A glance at the MS. sufficed to show plenty of minor faults, besides the unpardonable sin—consecutive fifths and octaves! The query put to his teacher by the ingenuous chorister "Are these wrong?" shows that the young composer had been largely self-taught, so far; indeed, was there ever a disciple of Euterpe or Polyhymnia that didn't try his 'prentice hand without waiting for his master to urge him? But the lad must have possessed no small ability and industry to come out third in a prize anthem competition at the age of thirteen, when Dr. Walmisley was first and Mr. John Smith (afterwards Mus. D. and Professor of Music in the University of Dublin) was second. Two of Stewart's seniors—one, now close upon eighty, Mr. Benjamin Mullen,

senior Vicar-Choral, Christ Church, Dublin; and the other the well-known and venerable Mr. Joseph Robinson (now in his eighty-third year), the best musician of his day in Dublin—and a few others have given me some particulars of Stewart's early youth. He displayed great diligence in copying music (his handwriting being bold and clear), and this brought him both praise and pence, the latter very acceptable, as his family was poor. We hear also of his perseverance in organ practice, and helpful influence exerted over his fellow choristers, getting them around him as often as possible for practice, beating time with a roll of paper, hardly ever looking at the music himself, so strong and sure was his memory.

Mr. John Robinson, the eldest of four gifted brothers, was organist of Christchurch Cathedral, and, being absent on one occasion, the precentor appeared and urged the choir to do their best, as there was no one to take the organ. A little nudging and whispering, and Stewart modestly offered to act as substitute. "Do you think you can manage it?" was the natural query; and the thirteen year old chorister quietly replying in the affirmative, mounted the narrow steps which led to the organ loft (then and for long after perched high up in the West Gallery), and played through the whole service without a hitch. In the year 1844 John Robinson died, and Stewart succeeded him as organist both at Christchurch and Trinity College Chapel, being then a little more than eighteen years old.

This early bloom of musical talent in one destined to become eminent in the craft has been matched by Jeremiah Smith, Attwood, the Wesleys, and a few others; though all these must yield to the amazing precocity of Crotch, who, at the age of eleven, was deputy, and at fifteen was elected organist of Christ Church, Oxford, and seven years later succeeded Hayes as Professor of Music!

As a successful writer of glees also Stewart early developed his gifts; yet art outlives its greatest votaries, and fifty years have—we must confess—staled many of Stewart's early compositions. Mr. Curwen (senr.) has left on record an excellent proof of his facility in glee writing, in his interesting sketch in the *Musical Herald* (September, 1893): "In 1856 Dr. Stewart competed for prizes offered by a society at Ashton-under-Lyne (near Manchester), when no less than seventy-three glees were sent in. These were reduced to six, and ultimately to two. One was entitled 'O Phœbus!' and was for voices alone, the other (written in quite a different style) was named 'Summer.' After several trials the first prize was adjudged to the former, and the latter (which had an *obbligato* pianoforte accompaniment) received special commendation. On the envelopes being opened both

glees were found to be by Dr. Stewart, the Ashton Glee Club pleasantly congratulating him 'on alone being capable of beating himself!'"

At the age of twenty-one Stewart succeeded Mr. Jas. Robinson as conductor of the Dublin University Choral Society, which had been successfully instituted ten years before by that gentleman, with the co-operation of at least one great and good man still living, Dr. Graves, now Bishop of Limerick. This was in 1836, and the Society had proved successful, a success (I may add) which has continued to this day. In his letter of resignation to the committee, Mr. Robinson recommended his young friend in these words: "Mr. R. Stewart is beyond doubt the best musician in this country, and in saying that I do not except myself." Mr. J. Robinson's professional engagements had at the time become very exacting, owing, amongst other things, to the founding of the Antient Concerts Society, of which he was the first conductor, and which flourished for thirty or forty years.

Stewart first came into prominence in public life more than fifty years ago, on the occasion of the organizing of the largest concert ever given for a charitable purpose in the Irish metropolis. The object was the relief of the poor at the time of the great famine in February, 1847. All the chief musical societies of Dublin contributed their *quota* to make up the chorus and orchestra of 250 performers; but besides these, several vocalists and players came over from Liverpool and Manchester, as well as a contingent from London. The "Israel in Egypt" was the only music performed. The leading soloists were Irish, amongst them Messrs. Joe, William, and Frank Robinson, the last-named having a sweet and well-trained tenor voice. Stewart was the conductor, and nobly did he carry through his great undertaking; the impress left by the young man on this memorable occasion serving to put him at once at the head of his profession. The net amount realised was £582.

Stewart having thus become a man of mark, his engagements were largely increased inside the College walls as well as in the capital and its environs. This additional work evoked all his energies and talents, but at the same time they imposed on him a heavy burden of constant and exhausting labour in the dissemination and practice of his art; a labour which though remunerative was not more than enough for the wants of an increasing family—(he had married at the age of twenty-one)—having regard to some provision for the future. Of this he was ever mindful, never running into debt or (*more Hibernico*) leaving the morrow's cares and responsibilities to shift for themselves! To some,

perhaps, he appeared to be somewhat penurious; but numberless testimonies put into my hands abundantly prove his many and great kindnesses, especially to poor students; not only in refusing any remuneration for long-continued and careful instruction in music; but also in applying his own resources to forward the interests of promising but impecunious aspirants to artistic excellence. Indeed his good nature was inexhaustible. It was in the summer of 1851 that Stewart, after much persuasion from friends, made up his mind to visit England. The chief inducement was of course the great Exhibition then open in London, to which all the world was flocking; but it is doubtful if even that delightful and unique display of industrial art and science would have offered a sufficiently enticing bait to one so home-loving and so abhorrent of travel by sea, had it not been for his keen desire to inspect the collection of musical instruments (organs especially) which was exhibited in Hyde Park, and his hope of meeting with eminent men in his own profession—hitherto only known to him by name. That this visit was beneficial to Stewart in many ways is undoubted: it broke up his insularity, it softened his prejudices (of which he was not devoid), it broadened his sympathies, and gave him a wider outlook over the vast field of his art; and, as we can see from many remarks in his University lectures, it convinced him of the shortcomings and deficiencies of the artistic resources of his own country, while it increased his perception of the many and serious hindrances which hampered the pursuit of art in the Irish metropolis.

Nothing, whether sportive or serious, ludicrous or literary, that had to do with music was without interest to Robert Stewart, who lived as much in the past as the present; and who, by the help of his astonishing memory, seemed to have all "the spoils of time" within his reach. This was exhibited habitually, and with it was blended an amazing *sang-froid* which sometimes took a fantastic form. It is undeniable that amid the solemnities of the Cathedral service Stewart oftentimes might be seen turning round on the organ stool, and, while keeping things going with the pedals and his left hand, would correct mistakes in a hymn-tune, or the false harmonies of an ambitious pupil, or write an answer to a note from the Dean or the Precentor; or (as I myself saw him do) scribble out a chant for some impatient friend (the organ loft being always full of visitors) in a key quite remote from that in which he was playing!

In the coming by and by you may perhaps read of many such fantastic *jeux d'esprit*; and it was the remembrance of some of these, no doubt, which led one of the most cultivated and eminent members of this Association to say, not by any means with an unkind implication, "Stewart's talent was

gigantic, but he had too many tricks!" Well, be it so; he dearly loved a joke (and these *unspoken* jokes in the realms of sound), and he put out many a joke of his own, as sparkling and as evanescent as a firework—and as harmless!

Let me now refer to Stewart at the time (just forty-seven years since) when he received from the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, his Mus. B. and Mus. D. degrees; all the incidental expenses, including a full set of robes, being defrayed by the members of the University Choral Society, and the statutory fees remitted by the College.

I will first read an extract written for my "Memoir" by a very old and highly valued as well as highly gifted friend of my own, and who was a pupil of Stewart half-a-century back—I refer with pleasure to one who is amongst us to-day as our visitor, Rev. Dr. Wm. Torrance, Rector of St. John's, Melbourne, and, moreover, the only Mus. Doc. in our great Southern continent!

"My recollection of Sir Robert Stewart—'Dr. Stewart,' as he was then called—dates back to childhood, when as a chorister in Christ Church Cathedral, and long after, I regarded him with a degree of veneration approaching idolatry; nor has that feeling altogether left me to this day! As a willing learner at his feet and a student of the art in which he excelled, I still have the most vivid recollection of his almost magical powers on an instrument which he made his own, and to which his peculiar touch and treatment added a new charm. Having heard many great organists in my day, I venture still to hold the opinion that, however brilliant and artistic their performance, none excelled, and few approached him in tenderness and pathos, in evoking the spirit of the divine muse, and in what might be called the power of sympathy, expressed in the higher and more devotional character of music revealed in the tones of the organ. I was mixed up with him a good deal, not only in the Cathedral, but during the old University Choral Society days, when a few of us were picked out to sing at the College choral concerts. There, also, we were all charmed by his pianoforte accompaniments to the various classical works in rehearsal. To this day I can vividly see and hear our conductor, as he sat at the piano, and wove in, delicately and skilfully, the different orchestral effects, always accentuating the voice parts to help an amateur choir.

"Sir Robert Stewart's 'Staccato Pedal' was, in my opinion, a remarkable feature in his organ playing. At times his feet seemed to glide over the notes with a lightness and softness which may be aptly described as 'a touch of velvet'; and in rapid passages the pedals were handled—if I may be allowed the expression—with all the delicacy and dexterity of practised fingers.

"Another striking excellence of his performance, and one which all experienced organists would appreciate, was his clever adaptation of orchestral effects in accompanying great classical works; while his organ arrangements from oratorios and other selections of sacred music, played as 'voluntaries' during the Cathedral service, were, as 'sermons *ohne Worte*,' eloquent, touching, and beautiful—as something which, once heard, could never be forgotten.

"Of Sir Robert Stewart it may be said with truth, that his attainments in every branch of the divine art stamped him as a genius of no common order; as one, in fact, upon whose like the 'Island of Saints' (and of sweet pathetic music) can hope seldom to look again. In the ranks of creative musical power he may perhaps have had worthy compeers among his countrymen; but as a profound musician, a sound theorist, and brilliant executant, Ireland may be justly proud of such a son."

This account of R. P. Stewart's organ playing may be supplemented by a brief extract from reminiscences of Dr. Humphrey Minchin (still living), one of Stewart's oldest friends: "When Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas were first published (some time in the forties), Stewart was so fascinated with them that he went straight away to Christ Church Cathedral, and, locking himself in with the blower, he worked at these sonatas day by day till he knew them by heart. On the Sunday following, after he had played No. 1 of this set, his friends came rushing up to the organ loft to ask what he had been playing, and great was their astonishment when they saw no music on the desk. He, with his usual love of fun, refused to give them any information, and teased them about their ignorance in not knowing such classical works!"

"On one occasion" (continues Dr. Minchin) "I was with Dr. Stewart in the organ loft of St. Patrick's Cathedral, when a slip of paper was handed to him on which was written the name of a piece of music, and these words added: 'A good many years ago I heard you play this; if you remember it will you play it now?' Sir Robert did so; but after service he said to me, 'I have never even thought of that bit of music for these fifteen years.'"

"This is another anecdote" (continues Dr. H. Minchin), "which was related to me by Stewart himself, of one of his early organ recitals in the North of England: 'A young man, a clever amateur, came into the organ loft, and requested to be allowed to turn over the music-pages for me. "Alas!" said I, pretending to be disturbed, "I find I have come without my music!" The polite young man immediately asked what hotel I was stopping at, and the number of my room, and said he would take a cab at once and fetch

it for me ; adding " that perhaps I would play something at once to keep the audience from becoming impatient." " But what adds to the difficulty (said I, smiling) is that I have left my music in Ireland ; but if you will place the programme before me I will do my best." Whereupon I began, and played the whole of the appointed music through, to the evident astonishment of my young friend.' "

At the Dargan Industrial Exhibition in May, 1853, Stewart presided at a large organ which Telford had just completed for the Rev. R. Corbet Singleton, of Radley, Oxford. It was found, however, at the rehearsal the day previous to the opening ceremony, that this instrument was too flat in its pitch by half a tone. There was great consternation, as the orchestral band was unable to play in so low a pitch and it was too late to have the organ re-tuned ; so the whole performance was threatened with collapse. Stewart immediately undertook to transpose all the organ parts of the score half a tone higher. This extraordinary feat he carried out to perfection, to the delight and enthusiastic admiration of his friends. The members of the orchestra—the major part of whom came from England and the provinces—were astonished at what happened, and expressed unbounded amazement at such a marvellous exhibition of artistic skill. Even his *fidus Achates* (Dr. Minchin), who had been an eye-witness of Stewart's cunning in his art on so many occasions, was greatly impressed by this unexpected display ; and as he well said, " only thorough musicians could appreciate the difficulty of the task, who knew what it was to transpose at sight the intricate harmonies of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, and Mendelssohn, from whose writings the programme of the Festival was made up." Mr. Joseph Robinson, who had known so many proofs of his young friend's marvellous powers, said at the public meeting in the Mansion House, after Stewart's decease : " I was perfectly astonished at the facility with which he effected his difficult task on that occasion, and the brilliancy of his performance."

No doubt the subject of this memoir was gratified by the distinction of Knighthood conferred on him by the Lord Lieutenant in 1872 ; but Sir Robert probably valued more the compliment paid him ten years previously, when the University of Dublin elected him as their musical professor. In this capacity he did much service to music by raising the standard of examination, which example was followed some years after by Oxford and Cambridge. As a lecturer there was no man more delightful to listen to. His natural eloquence at once attracted attention, while his special gift of explanation compelled even the dullest understanding to grasp his meaning.

The Tercentenary of Trinity College, Dublin, was an event unique in the history of the University of Dublin. But I have no intention of sketching for you the week's celebration, during which there was a constant succession of functions—academic, vice-regal, musical and literary. Jupiter Pluvius mercifully withdrew in favour of the Sun-god, and there was no drawback to mar the programme, which was the result of careful foresight, unstinted labour, and generous expenditure on the part of the Board of Trinity College and their officers. One memorable feature was the performance of the Tercentenary Ode written by Professor Armstrong, of Queen's College, Cork, and the music composed by Stewart. I quote a few remarks by the former: "There were passages in that composition which expressed the emotions I had felt when writing the lines in a way that appeared to me miraculous. I found there the best that had been in my own mind intensified and elevated, and surrounded with innumerable beauties which only music could enshrine. And yet it was not so much, perhaps, in the melody of the work that the power and depth and subtlety of Sir Robert Stewart's musical genius exhibited themselves, as in the magnificent orchestral colouring."

Sir Robert Stewart died very suddenly on Easter Eve, 1894. The sad event made a profound impression in Dublin, and in less than a week an important public meeting was convened and attended by the leading citizens and representatives of the University and of the Cathedrals, when it was resolved to set up a public memorial to Ireland's most distinguished musician, which eventually took the form of a white marble statue erected on Leinster Lawn.* Besides this, memorials have been placed in St. Patrick's and Christ Church Cathedrals, the inscriptions on which are as follow:—

Inscription on tablet under stained-glass window erected in St. Patrick's Cathedral:

This window was erected to the glory of God and in loving memory of Sir Robert Prescott Stewart, Vicar-Choral, and for 43 years organist of this Cathedral, to whose services he devoted his great gifts and matchless skill, and by them ministered to the worship of God, and the increase of devotion among men. His master hand is stayed, but his work remains in the prayers and praises, not only of this Cathedral, but of all the Churches throughout the land.

N.B.—This dedication composed by Rev J. P. Mahaffy, F.T.C.D.

* This statue was unveiled by the Lord Lieutenant on March 15, 1898.

Inscription on memorial brass in Christ Church Cathedral:

1896.

—
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF

ROBERT PRESCOTT STEWART, KNT.,
DOCTOR OF MUSIC.

Trained as a Chorister in the Cathedral School,
He was appointed Organist at the age of eighteen,
And continued in that post during fifty years.
His name stands foremost among the many who,

For seven centuries,

Devoted their musical talents to the service of God
Within this Ancient Sanctuary.

Upright in life and modest in spirit,

He gained the warm affection of a large circle of
Friends, and Universal honour and respect.

A brilliant organist and composer, he impressed
His genius on the Use and Mode of Services

In this Cathedral Church,

And

Enriched its Library with many noble compositions.

Born 1825.

He entered into his Rest on Easter Eve, 1894.

"We praise Thee, O Lord," &c., &c.

N.B.—This last phrase is given in musical notes, being the opening theme of Stewart's grand *Te Deum* in E flat.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, our first duty is to thank Mr. Vignoles most heartily for his very interesting paper, which has given us a great deal of information about Sir Robert Stewart and his work.

The vote of thanks was carried unanimously.

THE CHAIRMAN.—One of the letters quoted by Mr. Vignoles mentioned a performance by Sir Robert Stewart upon "the great organ, by Hill, in the 1851 Exhibition"; but the instrument, popularly known there as "the great organ," was built by Willis, and I would ask whether that organ or Hill's was really referred to.

MR. VIGNOLES.—Mr. George Herbert tells me that the one Stewart played was Hill's.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Mention has been made of the fact (known to most of us) that Sir Robert Stewart strenuously urged the imposing of an *arts test* as a preliminary to examinations for musical degrees at Dublin University; and it struck me that he was possibly influenced by recognising the advantage of his own good general education. As to his glees having, to a great extent, become obsolete, that may

be accounted for by their having been mostly written for mixed voices, and such glees seem to have gone comparatively out of fashion, while male-voice glee singing still holds its own. In reference to the subject of prize glees, it may be mentioned that in the year 1789 the "Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club" offered four prizes for a Catch, a Canon, a Serious Glee, and a Cheerful Glee respectively, and that Dr. Callcott succeeded in carrying off all the four prizes; one of the glees being the well-known "Go, idle boy." I was glad to hear the remarks of the lecturer upon Stewart's light pedalling, for it has often occurred to me that too much use is made of the pedals. The late S. S. Wesley and James Turle would often accompany an entire Psalm without using the pedals except for one or two occasional effects, which, consequently, always *told*. Many players seem to find no rest for the soles of their feet except on their pedals; they should remember that no orchestral writer would keep his double-basses continuously at work.

Mrs. J. SPENCER CURWEN.—I should like to say just a word about Sir Robert Stewart as a teacher. I was only his pupil for a few organ lessons, but I had the pleasure of seeing him give lessons at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He could (as he says in a letter to me) make himself a child, putting himself on a level with his pupil. One lesson I specially remember. Seating himself at the piano he gathered us girls around, and taking up a book which happened to lie on the instrument he opened it at random, playing the first passage that came and asking some question about its form, key, chords, &c. He gauged the general knowledge of the class by the variety of questions which were suggested by the score as he turned over the pages, playing all the time. In the same letter to which I have referred, he says: "I avoid conventionalities and technicalities." He left out conventional terms and put in familiar terms. He was an intuitive psychologist, able to present new facts in the light of the old. One appreciates such lessons more now than at the time.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—We have had from time to time various notable musicians commemorated at our meetings, some of whom ought to have been more appreciated during their life. I may mention Sir Sterndale Bennett, Sir George Macfarren, and, after him, Sir Frederick Ouseley. The Council are grateful to Mr. Vignoles for what he has said about Sir Robert Stewart. I can claim an acquaintance with Stewart extending over several years. I suppose Stewart's misfortune was (if it be one) that he was born in Dublin and not in England. He was little known in England. When I asked Mr. Manns to play a piece of his at the Crystal Palace, the Introduction of the "Eve of St. John," he was much struck with the beautiful music of the Dublin professor, and said:

"What a pity, he is not better known in England!" Sir Robert seldom came to England. If he had been here working and teaching at one of the great schools in the midst of our active musical life, I venture to think he would have held a much higher rank in our music hierarchy than is the case at present. The first time I was at Dublin I went to his chambers in Trinity College and had an interview with Stewart. He enquired whether I was not a member of the Musical Association. I replied that I was. He then proceeded to take exception to a lecture we had had on Irish music, and pointing to the well recognised volumes of Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," asked if I knew them. I meekly confessed that I was one of the contributors to the work. He rapidly turned to the article on Irish music, and I had to acknowledge that I had not read this. He afterwards took down a volume of our Proceedings, and on looking at it he rather altered his tone, saying, "I see you did make some remarks." It appears I had questioned some of the statements of the lecturer, particularly the assertion that the early Irish harps were first strung with wire; Sir Robert was pleased with that. The lecturer has spoken of his wonderful extempore playing; it was indeed extraordinary—wonderful is the proper word—and I have heard some great extempore players in my time. One afternoon I went to St. Patrick's Cathedral, and he requested me to give him a theme to extemporise upon. I took out a piece of paper and pencil and jotted down a subject. When he came to the Anthem he put the scrap of paper on the desk and it was really wonderful to note what he did. I never heard such singularly rich and varied treatment. He had an extraordinary grasp of the organ. He had large hands and powerful wrists, and the way in which he ran up the instrument in chords was truly astonishing. Then as to his influence in the granting of University Degrees in Music. This is an important point, and it so happens I am qualified to speak on that, as in my capacity of Hon. Sec. of the Union of Graduates in Music, I received a great deal of assistance from Stewart, who was to have been our President the year he died; indeed, he had promised to attend the annual dinner, and I have his last letter in which he says, "D.V., I shall be with you"; however, he was taken from us. I think the academical world little knows how very much we owe to Sir Robert Stewart. Before his time it was not at all a difficult thing to get a degree; a man had simply to write an "Exercise" in a certain form, and if it was good enough when the fee was paid the degree was given. He said if musicians were to take proper rank then they must be equal to other degree holders in all things as well as in the mere exercise of their profession, and he insisted on a literary test.

The Trinity College authorities did not, at first, quite accept this theory; but Stewart struggled and struggled, and at last got his way, and an arts test was introduced. Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley told me it became necessary to do the same at Oxford as at Dublin, and this was followed by Cambridge, and, later, at the University of London, where Dr. Pole went still farther on this path. Thus the standard has constantly been going up, and those musical gentlemen who have taken degrees in music in later years have found the task to be much more difficult than before; this is all due to Stewart. His influence has been very great, and we owe a debt of gratitude to him for what he has done in this respect. I will only trouble you with one further remark. I was anxious to hear the Irish bagpipes when I went to Ireland. Their absence in the Irish regiments contributes quite an Irish grievance; the Scotch have theirs, which possess merely a chanter and drones; on the Irish (which are much softer in tone) chords can be played. With some difficulty Stewart found for me a bagpipe player, and after a great deal of cleaning up I heard the instrument played; I will hazard the opinion that it is to be regretted this instrument is fast disappearing.

Rev. Dr. TORRANCE.—Like my friend, Sir Robert Stewart, I had the misfortune to be born in Ireland; but for the last half-a-century I have lived in a much hotter place on the other side of the world. I have listened with great pleasure to the paper, and hope soon to have the book the lecturer informed us was coming out shortly. He has told us many anecdotes about Stewart, but he did not tell you that on many occasions I have had my ears boxed by him when I was a chorister. I have a distinct recollection of the boxing, but he did it very kindly. The influence Stewart has exercised on the musical profession is great indeed; he grasped the principle that a man must not be a mere musician, but something more. His idea was that, as for degrees in other arts at the University certain examinations had to be passed, musicians should do the same and so should be able to show they had education also. With respect to Mendelssohn's Sonatas and how he practised them continuously, I distinctly remember that we were allowed to go into the Cathedral and play marbles and spin our tops while Stewart was locked in the organ loft day after day. From thus continually hearing them they sank deep into my mind.

Mr. VIGNOLES.—I am glad I did not make the paper too long, as we have thus had an opportunity of listening to the excellent remarks of the various speakers. I am sure it was much more pleasant for me to be too short than too long.

A vote of thanks was then unanimously accorded to the Chairman.