

Analytical Programmes

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ANALYTICAL PROGRAMMES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Referring to my article on the above subject in your September issue (p. 573), I have received a letter from Mr. Robert A. Marr, of Edinburgh, together with a copy of his book "Music for the People." In the Introduction to the latter (p. lxxxvii.), he states that "It was at this period [1836] that John Thomson, afterwards first Reid Professor of Music at the University, commenced to write what are believed to be the first published analytical programmes. They were small 12mo leaflets of four pages. 'Brief Notices of the Music to be performed by the Professional Society on 3rd March, 1838,' is the title of the earliest one seen by the writer." I at once wrote to Mr. Marr, asking him whether he could possibly let me see some of these earlier programmes. He kindly lent me eight of these "Brief Notices," dated March 3 (incomplete), April 28, 1838, and February 2, 23, March 2, 30, April 20, and May 4, 1839. In the "Brief Notices" of April 28 readers are referred back to that of November 11, 1837, for a "complete exposition of the style and character" of Spohr's Symphony in F, "The Birth of Music."

But I find that there must have been still earlier "Brief Notices." In an account of the third concert of the Edinburgh Professional Society (formed in 1836), in the *Musical World* of February 24, 1837, and reprinted from the *Edinburgh Observer*, there appears the following: "The idea of preparing 'Brief Notices' of the Instrumental Music selected for performance at the concerts, for the use of the Associates during the rehearsals, is one of so useful a nature that we regret it was not sooner acted upon."

The expression "for the use of the Associates during the rehearsals" deserves particular notice. It is difficult to do two things well at the same time; difficult to listen to music and attempt to analyse it simultaneously, as concert-goers often try to do when some work is performed for the first time. Why, then, should not concert programme-books be on sale a week before the concert takes place? But to return to my subject.

The *Musical World* reprints *Edinburgh Observer* notices of the first and second concerts of the Professional Society, yet without mention of any "Brief Notices." In the first notice, however, the writer refers to the rehearsal of Beethoven's Symphony in C at the London Philharmonic Society, and relates the story mentioned in my "Analytical Programmes," as I found it in a later programme. I, therefore, conclude that the writer of this first notice had before him a "Brief Notice."

In the eight "Brief Notices" which Mr. Marr has sent me there are two or three matters of interest, to which, if not trespassing too much on your valuable space, I should like to refer as briefly as possible.

In a notice of the "Eroica" we read:—

"The second movement represents the last scene of a warrior's career. There is the profoundly solemn march—the high service in the cathedral, with a fine fugal point given out by the violins—the fading away of the receding procession, to the last dropping notes (*pp*) denoting the completion of the solemnity. Then follows the *Scherzo*, descriptive of the military returning home 'with merry march to the tent-royal' of their new chief."

This picturesque account of the middle movements of the "Eroica" is quite in the spirit of the admirable notices of the Beethoven Symphonies by Sir George Grove.

For the "Practice" on May 4, 1839, Mozart's "Grand Symphony" (No. 2) in D major (Köch. Cat., No. 504) was the chief feature of the programme; and concerning that work Mr. Thomson gives some very interesting particulars as told to him by Thomas Attwood:—

"There is an anecdote connected with this portion of the movement (*i.e.*, of the *Allegro*) which, as it is authentic, is interesting. Mr. Attwood (the late distinguished composer to the Queen), who narrated it to the writer of these papers, was a pupil of Mozart's at the time this symphony was composed. Mozart had the conduct of a series of concerts at Leipzig [? Vienna], which took place every alternate Monday evening. It was his custom to write something new, such as a symphony or other orchestral piece, for each concert; and for one of these he commenced the symphony in question. Attwood,

who absolutely adored his master, was of course anxiously watching its progress, but was in an agony to find that Mozart had not, by the Thursday previous to the concert, reached beyond the middle bar of the first movement, although he had written most part of the other movements. Mozart, passionately fond of billiards, was very impatient of advice, and therefore it was with no small fear and trembling that his anxious pupil ventured to hint at the delay of the symphony. Mozart paid little heed to the hint, merely saying he would be in time. Attwood was in despair, till, on going to him on the Sunday forenoon, he found the floor covered with music paper flung down as it was used and Mozart in high spirits, just finishing the last few bars of the movement. Mozart explained that so many modes of treatment presented themselves, he had been allowing the phrases (above alluded to) to float about in his mind until he was satisfied as to which was best, and then he had no difficulty in making them assume the permanent form in which they now appear."

It is interesting to read, at the end of the "Brief Notices" of April 28, 1838, the following remarks of the analyst:—

"The writer of these papers has reason to know that his exertions have not been altogether in vain. If he has indeed been successful in originating or stimulating among any of the Associates a relish for the classical works of the great masters, he has only to assure them that he will not relax in his endeavours to render the 'Brief Notices' of next season equally intelligible and useful."

Yours truly,

J. S. SHEDLOCK.

October 9, 1897.

A SUGGESTION TO MUSIC PUBLISHERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—I should like to make the following suggestion to music publishers through the medium of your columns: that they print on the title-page of the music of the classic composers the year of birth and death—thus: Hungarian Dances, &c., Brahms (1833-1897)—the time at which the composer lived would then be constantly impressed upon the mind of the musical student.

I am not aware that this has ever been done, and think it may be worthy of notice.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

PRELUDE.

Deniliquin, N.S.W.

MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE financial result of the Triennial Musical Festival is more satisfactory than was anticipated at first, and the General Hospital will probably benefit by it to the amount of £5,000. As the musical part of the festival is specially dealt with in this number of THE MUSICAL TIMES, there is no need for me to cover the same ground.

The musical *Matinées* in connection with the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists were inaugurated on the 9th ult., under the best possible auspices. There will be ten *Matinées* during the season, for which Mr. Oscar Pollack, the musical director, has secured some of the best vocalists and instrumentalists in the Midlands as well as a number of well-known glee quartets.

The first of a series of Promenade concerts was given at the Curzon Hall on the 11th ult. The promoters are Mr. Ffrench Davis, Mr. F. Beard, and Mr. George Halliley, well known local musicians, who have endeavoured to frame these concerts after the style and upon the scale of the London Promenade Concerts. There is an orchestra of about sixty performers. Madame Alice Gomez and Mr. Charles Manners were the principal vocalists at the initial performance, and created quite a *furor* by their impressive singing. Messrs. Davis and Beard act as conductors and Mr. George Halliley as accompanist.

The Midland Musical Society gave a performance of Haydn's "Creation," in the Town Hall, on the 16th ult., with band, chorus, organ, and the following principals: Miss Ethel Locker, Mr. Samuel Roper, and Mr. William Evans, with Mr. C. W. Perkins at the organ. Mr. H. M. Stevenson conducted. The higher or old Philharmonic