

Church Oratorio and Higher Choral Association

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Cologne.—Concert Gesellschaft (March 15): Overture, "Leonore," No. 3 (Beethoven); Air from "Taming of the Shrew" (Goetz); Violoncello Concerto (Haydn); Fantasia for Violoncello (Servais); Finale from "Loreley" (Mendelssohn); Symphony, C minor (Brahms).

Wiesbaden.—Cur Orchester Concerts (February 25): Symphony, E flat major (Haydn); "Burns," second Scotch Rhapsody (Mackenzie); Overture, Scherzo, and Finale (Schumann). March 4: Serenade, No. 3, for Orchestra (Volkmann); "Orpheus," Symphonic Poem (Liszt); Symphony, "In the Forest" (Raff). March 18: Symphony, B flat major (Möhring); Suite No. 2 (F. Lachner).

Baden-Baden.—Cur Orchester Concerts (March 4): Symphony, F major (Beethoven); Air from "Oberon" (Weber); Fourth Pianoforte Concerto (Rubinstein); Pianoforte Pieces (Chopin, Liszt); Overture, "Les Francs Juges" (Berlioz). March 9: Symphonie Dramatique (Rubinstein); Violoncello Concerto (Saint-Saëns); "Tasso," Symphonic Poem (Liszt); Overture, "Les Francs Juges" (Berlioz).

Turin.—Stefano Tempia Choral Society (March —): "Crucifixus" (Palestrina); 10th Psalm (Marcello); "La Vergine di Sumam" (L. Bellardi); "Gallia" (Gounod); Chorus from "L'Elisir d'Amore" (Donizetti); 136th Psalm (Gounod).

Baltimore.—Peabody Concert (February 12): Symphony, No. 4 (Beethoven); Suite, E flat major (Raff); Songs (Schubert); Overture, "Les Francs Juges" (Berlioz). Peabody Concert (February 26): Overture, "Egmont" (Beethoven); Songs (Rubinstein); Norse Suite (Hamerik).

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHURCH ORATORIO AND HIGHER CHORAL ASSOCIATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Nothing so effectually strengthens the hands and cheers the heart in true work as the sympathy and interest of fellow-workers. Can you grant me a few lines of your precious space to try and win this sympathy and interest in the musical work that we have set ourselves to do in these northern parts?

Experience in choral organisation proves the exceeding difficulty—I may say utter impossibility—of keeping up the interest of the singers in the usual style of choral festival in which are associated in one and the same service good, bad, and indifferent choirs. The fact is the better choirs grow wearied and disheartened at the heavy and thankless task of dragging on their weaker brethren, and the worse grow dissatisfied at being constantly taken out of their depth by music they know has been set for the purpose of keeping the better singers in good humour. Sooner or later, if the association of choirs is not to die out altogether, the needs and requirements of the better and the worse must be separately considered and separately met. This year, in our district, we are attempting this double work. While the ordinary Choral Association is looking after the smaller country choirs, the Deans of the three north-east cathedrals of York, Durham, and Ripon have invited the larger and more efficient surplined choirs of the three dioceses to join their three cathedral choirs in a grand festival service to be held in York Minster, on July 7. The helpful brightness and refinement of the female voice will be secured by placing efficient sopranos and contraltos on the front rows of the congregation's seats. The service is to be "the shortened Service," and for the Anthem the Church Oratorio "St. John the Evangelist," specially written by Dr. Armes, of Durham, for this festival, with organ accompaniment and solos fit for cathedral principals. The cost of books and the expenses of the festival day it is expected will be recouped by collections after services in various local centres, at which the festival work will be repeated by such members of the festival choir as can be brought together. And afterwards each choir that has joined will find itself perfect in a work that will prove itself a very mine of anthems, for there is not a bar of "St. John the Evangelist" that is not sound choral writing.

Will no one who reads these words help our work by taking up the same work in their own district?

Yours truly,

Bilbrough, York.

J. POWELL METCALFE.

KÜHNE'S "GRAMMAR OF MUSIC."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—I have read with interest the review on my "Grammar of Music" in your March issue, and wish to express my obligations to your critic for the candid statement of his views. His objections, however, to the use of fractional names can scarcely hold ground if we consider

the custom of indicating the *time* by means of a fraction at the commencement of a movement. It need hardly be said that this fact induced me originally to adopt the system referred to. The natural way of marking a piece in $\frac{3}{8}$ time would be ♩ (or six quavers); instead of which, however, a *fraction* is used. I should much like to know how your reviewer would make this clear to a beginner. Suggestions of this kind might form a most fertile subject for discussion at a meeting of English music-masters, if such were attainable.

As to the question of the "Preparation of Dissonant Chords," I purposely avoided troubling amateurs with the "secondary sevenths." I should certainly like to make use of your reviewer's hint by putting this paragraph in a clearer form, if possible, in a future edition. The fact of my applying the term "preparation" to the foundation-note, instead of "connecting-link," has evidently caused a misunderstanding.

In spite of the attempt at originality in my "Grammar," I beg you not to consider me blind to the value of old traditions. On the contrary, I strongly disapprove of complications frequently found in modern works—complications which, to my mind, too often disguise poverty under the cloak of dazzling glitter.

Apologising for thus trespassing on your valuable space,

I remain, sir, your faithful servant,

Yarlet, Stafford, March 20, 1881. CARL T. KÜHNE.

[We are glad to find that Herr Kühne intends to profit by our hint and put his paragraph respecting the preparation of discords in a "clearer form." We need scarcely say that we quite agree with him that the method of marking our time is absurd; but not more so than many other things which we would willingly attempt to reform were we to publish a book to teach what the notation of music ought to be, instead of what it is.—*The Writer of the Notice.*]

THE ORGAN PEDAL-BOARD.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In your number for February it was announced that a Conference of organ-builders and organists is now being held by the College of Organists, for the purpose of securing greater uniformity in the construction of organs, especially the arrangements at the keys. At the meeting which took place on February 3, the chief subject for consideration was the formation and position of the pedal-board; but it was so hurriedly disposed of, that I feel tempted to trouble you with a few lines, in the hope of eliciting the opinions of some of your numerous readers.

The few persons who spoke on the occasion seemed in favour of retaining the straight pedal-board, and fixing the middle C under C of the manuals, an arrangement which, in my opinion, is open to much objection. They did not advance any arguments in its favour beyond their individual preferences, or prove either that it was theoretically right or most convenient for the generality of players.

About thirty years ago or more, when organ pedals rarely exceeded two octaves, and the manuals never went above F, a straight pedal-board, fixed C under C, answered the purpose fairly well; but now that pedals are uniformly made up to F, two and a half octaves, and manuals carried up to A, and even C, I maintain that it is an absolute necessity, if an organist is to have proper control over his instrument, and fully display its resources, that he should place himself in the centre both of manuals and pedals, and not in front of so-called "middle C." Even then he will not be able to reach from one extremity of the pedals to the other without shifting his body, I maintain, unless the pedal-board be made both slightly radiating and concave. It is for the College of Organists to settle what the amount of concavity and radiation should be, but to go back to the old-fashioned straight pedals would be a retrograde movement quite unworthy, I consider, of a public body which ought to take the lead in encouraging all modern improvements.

I await the opinions of some of your more experienced contributors, and remain, sir, yours faithfully,

ALEX. S. COOPER, F.C.O., &c.

Brompton Square, S.W.