

'Instrumentation: Some Strange Survivals'

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closed, and I shall be grateful if those who intend subscribing but have not yet done so will send me their subscriptions before the end of August.—Yours, &c.,

NORAH DAWNAY

(Hon. Treasurer Parry Memorial Fund).

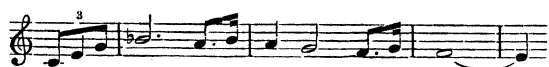
12, Cheltenham Terrace, S.W.3.

July 18, 1922.

'INSTRUMENTATION: SOME STRANGE SURVIVALS'

SIR,—Wagner's method of writing his horn parts is not to be admired, but the statement in the late Mr. Daubeney's interesting article in your July issue that 'Wagner's crook changes are impossible to accept seriously' calls for some qualification. As Richter said, Wagner never understood the valve horn; and, indeed, generally he displayed a lofty contempt for the mechanism of the individual instruments. But he was not quite a duffer at instrumentation. When he changed the key of his horns and trumpets he very seldom intended a change of *crook*. In a long note to *Tristan* he explains his ideas as regards the horns. He assumed that his players would use horns in E along with those in F, and would transpose into one or other of these keys passages written in other keys. Should the cornists, however, prefer other crooks, they were at liberty to use them, provided always that they arranged that notes marked with a + be taken as *closed* notes. Unfortunately, few appear to have digested Wagner's directions, because so often in performances of the opera we hear these notes with a + above given as both closed and *brassy*, which is the meaning attached to the + in *The Mastersingers* and *The Ring*. In *Tristan* the + means simply a closed note, and nothing more.

Wagner was always anxious to make his scores easy for the reader. To that end he varied the order of his instruments. For instance, the cor Anglais, when serving as a third or fourth oboe, is written immediately below the oboes and above the clarinets. At other times it is written below the latter instruments. In Act 1 of *Siegfried* the first violoncellos are placed above the violas—and so on. (In the miniature score of *Tristan* this varying order has been abolished completely, and in those of *The Ring* it has of necessity been slightly modified.) Wagner altered the keys of his tubas in the last three numbers of *The Ring* for the convenience of the score-reader, the keys remaining—as in *The Rhinegold*—in the separate parts, and there is no doubt that his peculiar method of noting his horns and trumpets was with the same object. Rightly or wrongly, he fancied that the part was easier to read, was more horn-like and more 'clean,' as Strauss says, when noted in D, thus:



than if noted in G, the key marked at the head of the Introduction:



but he certainly never imagined any change of *crook*.

The earliest orchestral example of this sudden change of key that I know is in Donizetti's *La Favorita*, where, on page 258, the valve trumpets are in C for bar 6, and, without any rest, in A for bar 7. It is not without interest to recall that Wagner arranged *La Favorita* for pianoforte.

Mr. Daubeney found an excuse for the distribution of the horns in *Tannhäuser*—two natural and two valve—in that it was nearly eighty years ago. But the same combination was used by many French composers till about the end of last century. Saint-Saëns has this disposition in *Samson* (1877) and in his C minor Symphony (1886), and doubtless in later works. It is not generally realised how long the French clung to the natural horn, with its greater powers of slurring and its more human appeal. Even the text-books seem ignorant of the fact that Gounod's *Faust* and Bizet's *Carmen* and *L'Arlésienne* were written for four natural horns.—Yours, &c.,

TOM S. WOTTON.

St. Leonards, July 1, 1922.

'PLAYER-PIANO PROJECTS'

SIR,—I was greatly encouraged by the long and soberly approving account of my invention in the *Musical Times* of May from the pen of Mr. Rorke (whose big little book is becoming known in America). 'Praise from Sir Hubert!' May I reply to the reviewer's doubts as to one or two aspects of a practical nature?

Mr. Rorke's point that the perforations of the roll might interfere with the printed musical notation is well taken. By examination of a large number of rolls I find, however, that the difficulty is avoided if the music texts are printed at the *extreme upper or lower edge of the roll*. They can thus stand clear of the cuttings in the sheet.

As to the placing of descriptive notes on the roll: Mr. Rorke thinks these should be limited to a brief analysis of structure—the rest to be got from books. The answer is that people will not stop to look up data in books, but if printed on the roll they will read it. The cost of printing words and texts in an edition of any size is negligible. Finally, as to reading the music texts, it is thought that few are able to do this. I have found that there are forty persons who can *follow* a music text which they are hearing for one who can read and play it. Mr. Rorke's remark that the perforated roll 'makes one a tourist and a sightseer of the musical world, but the musical notation makes him a citizen,' is a delightful simile and hits the nail on the head.—Yours, &c.,

St. Mark's Chapel, CARROLL BRENT CHILTON.
288, East 10th Street,
New York. June 9, 1922.

BEETHOVEN'S 'JARRING A FLAT'

SIR,—Writing in your July number Mr. Rutland Boughton permits himself to make the following remark: 'Some of Beethoven's ineptitudes[!] were probably due to carelessness,' and mentions in support of his extraordinary contention 'the jarring A flat' in the *Eroica* Symphony. Mr. Rutland Boughton is, then, apparently quite ignorant of the historic fact that the famous 'jarring A flat' in the sublime first movement of the *Eroica* was no error on Beethoven's part, and that he purposely put it there in order to produce the most wondrously humorous and entrancing effect to be found in the entire range of music.—Yours, &c., ALGERNON ASHTON.

22a, Carlton Vale, Maida Vale, N.W.6.
July 10, 1922.

A LIVERPOOL SETTLEMENT

SIR,—May I be permitted to bring to the notice of your readers the musical activities which are at present carried on at the David Lewis Club and the Liverpool University Settlement at Liverpool?

The David Lewis Club is a working men's club functioning on somewhat similar lines to Toynbee Hall in London, and the University Settlement is a residential club of ex-University men (mostly from Oxford and Cambridge) interested in social work. In the hands of these associate members are the entertainments, the orchestras, the dramatic and choral societies. The orchestra has outgrown itself, and the formation of a new string band and a new choral society is projected, the idea in these two schemes being to take good music to the working-classes rather than to extract good music from them. Experience has shown conclusively that this type of audience appreciates good music done well, but prefers bad music done well to good music rendered badly. This scheme is an endeavour to put before a naturally appreciative audience orchestral and vocal music which, while not ultra-modern, is interesting and educational.

May I, Sir, ask those residents of Liverpool, Birkenhead, and the suburbs who are interested in choral and instrumental music to communicate with the Warden, the University Settlement, Liverpool?—Yours, &c.,

CHARLES P. D. CANNON

(B.A., A.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.).

The University Settlement, Nile Street, Liverpool.
July 6, 1922.