

Graun's Antony and Cleopatra

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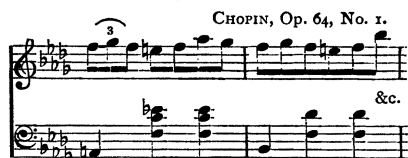
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notes. Many typical examples in which this convention would be useful are to be found in the Chopin Valses. In passages of the following type :



it is clear that the damper pedal must be taken with the first crotchet of each bar, in order that the note may be a crotchet and not, say, a dotted quaver. In these Valses the special indications for the use of the pedal by means of Ped.....\* almost always lead to over-pedalling—as, for example, in the edition of R. Pugno, where the use of the pedal is indicated for two-thirds instead of for one-third or less, of the bar. The Rachmaninov Prelude in C sharp minor furnishes many good examples in which pedal indications are superfluous ; and yet another type of passage, where pedalling is clearly implied, is that in which the theme lies in the middle register of the instrument, and has harmony below and widely spread decorations above. In all these types of passages I suggest that damper pedal indications are superfluous, and should be omitted.

A typical example of the inconsistencies referred to is shown in the following passage from the Chopin Study, Op. 10, No. 8, as edited by Klindworth and revised by Scharwenka :



Here we have four rests and two staccato marks, none of which can be followed with the given pedalling. This is not, of course, an isolated example of inconsistencies. They occur many times in the same Study, both in this and in other editions ; and, in fact, throughout the whole of pianoforte literature.—Yours, &c., W. H. GEORGE.

Beeston, Notts.

November 8, 1922.

#### GRAUN'S ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

SIR,—In 'C.W.'s' review of *Shakespeare and Music*, by Christopher Wilson (published at *The Stage Office*), it is stated : 'one of John Sebastian's contemporaries, Graun, must have had some acquaintance with the poet's work, for he wrote an Overture to *Antony and Cleopatra*. The author thinks that this is the earliest work of the kind.'

Both Christopher Wilson and your reviewer seem to be unaware of the fact that there are in existence more than fifty French, Italian, Spanish, and German plays founded on the love story of Antony and Cleopatra. Many were written and produced long before Shakespeare became known as a dramatist. All are, of course, based on Plutarch's 'Life' of Antony, which will be found in every edition of his *Lives* (original and translated). Besides, Graun's *Cleopatra* is an opera, and was produced at Berlin in 1742. The *maestro di cappella*, Hiller, in his biography of Graun, gives an account of its production. He does not even mention the name of Shakespeare.

Graun, a successful courtier, would have been the last composer in the world to offend his powerful patron, Frederick the Great, who heartily detested Shakespeare and all his works. The King of Prussia read Shakespeare's plays in the French translations of La Place and Letourneur, and there is no record of his having ever given permission to his 'comedians' to produce any adaptation of the great English dramatist's works at the Court Theatres in his kingdom.—Yours, &c.,

ANDREW DE TERNANT.

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#### 'PAINTED MUSIC'

SIR,—In the course of an article in the November *Musical Times* on 'Painted Music,' the writer, after asserting the fascination that music exercises over painters, and quoting examples of pictures with either musical subjects or incidental references to music, proceeds to inquire where are the 'analogous' cases of pictures representing the painter engaged upon his own work ?

It is not difficult, however, to find examples. In one of Velasquez's most noted pictures, 'Las Meninas,' there is not only a full-length portrait of the painter at work with palette and brush upon a large canvas, but the subject upon which he is engaged can be seen reflected in a mirror. Again, there is Goya's spirited portrait of himself at work in his studio ; and, as a present-day example, may be quoted a water-colour of Sir W. Orpen's, showing a studio with an artist and his picture on one side and the model on the other.

But that a painter at work on a picture is analogous to a musician performing a piece of music can surely hardly be conceded. The one is engaged upon a creative and constructive work, occupying perhaps some months, and complete only when his brush is finally laid down ; nor can the full expression of his conception be realised until then. The musical performer, on the other hand, is the human agent, the interpreter, upon whom the composer (who also may have spent months in fashioning his music) must rely for the expression of his work. If analogy there be, it must be sought rather between the composer and the painter : between the picture and the performance.

No doubt, as Mr. Brent-Smith says, painters used (and still use) music in their pictures because of its attractive setting, and also, surely, because it was a natural feature of many of the sacred subjects painted in the days of Raphael or Fra Angelico, when the chief patron of the art was the Church. (As to whether the studio with an individual in a paint-besmeared overall would be an attractive setting is another matter.) But the somewhat startling suggestion that a History of Music can be deduced from a study of the picture galleries of Europe must, it is to be feared, be discarded, when we consider the lamentable ignorance of the painters. Men who apparently knew neither the correct use of a violin-bow nor even of a pianoforte pedal cannot be accepted as reliable 'evidence.' Even the seven-stringed viol may be merely a careless mistake in arithmetic.

Mr. Brent-Smith thinks musicians seem unsuitable sitters to the eminent painters of the epoch. They lack affluence [he says], and that may be generally true. They would certainly prove unsuitable if they couldn't afford to pay. But some painter managed to get a remarkably fine portrait out of J. S. Bach as a sitter, and this year's Academy showed us a portrait of a present-day musician by an eminent painter which in both subject and execution was certainly one of the finest things there.

Finally, it is not surprising that the Bach D minor Toccata should when performed upon the pianola prove 'ludicrous,' apart from its lacking the vision of the pianist's hands 'leaping to the interrogation and pouncing to the reply,' for many of us are hardly satisfied with it even when played by a Busoni. But let us hear it upon the organ in some noble church, and we can certainly dispense with the sight of the hands and yet enjoy the music.—Yours, &c.,

November, 1922.

LOUIS A. HAMAND.

#### A CHOIR-TRAINER'S DILEMMA

SIR,—For a considerable time I have been a frequent attendant at the larger competitive Festivals held in the North of England. This has not been done for the purposes of 'pot-hunting,' but out of a sincere desire to hear the criticism of acknowledged authorities on choral matters. The benefits which have accrued are enormous, but I must confess that on certain occasions I have witnessed an inconsistency which is baffling. At the Morecambe Musical Festival, held in May this year, Sir Ivor Atkins, organist of Worcester Cathedral, stated in his remarks that 'what pleased him most was the fact that throughout the performances he never saw an odd boy take his eyes off the conductor.' At the Lytham Musical Festival, a month later, Mr. Julius Harrison said of the same choir that 'the