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Rockstro's "The Good Shepherd."

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are, the indifferent musical education, the poverty of the country, and the utter indifference shown by the aristocracy and wealthy mercantile class of this city in the advancement of musical art in Ireland. Until these causes disappear, we cannot expect that either patriotism, which is satisfied with brass bands, or an *entente cordiale* between the chief musical authorities, which exists scarcely anywhere, will remove this reproach.

While on the subject of musical education I would refer to Mr. Graves's suggestion that a really efficient Academy of Music should be established in Dublin; with that suggestion I heartily concur, and my experience proves that it is a crying need in this city. Since the Dublin Musical Society was founded I have refused admission to several hundreds of applicants, including a large number of the pupils of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, owing to their inability to read music at sight with anything like correctness. However, this is a matter which I hope will in time be remedied.

Within the last twelve months, when it was proposed by a scheme in the Court of Chancery to hand over the Coulson musical bequest, amounting to the sum of £17,000, to the Academy of Music, a meeting of musical professors, numbering nearly forty, was held, at which I occupied the chair; with few exceptions the leading members of the musical profession in Dublin were present, and a statement expressing the opinion of the meeting that the administration of the Academy was inefficient and unsatisfactory was adopted. Owing, no doubt, to the action of the musical profession on this occasion, the Royal Irish Academy of Music have taken the necessary preliminary steps to reconstitute themselves, and have shown their readiness to adopt many of the suggestions made at the meeting above referred to. In their reconstituted form, and with the aid of the Coulson bequest, I see no reason why there should not be in Dublin, within the next few years, a really efficient Musical Academy.—Faithfully yours,

JOSEPH ROBINSON.

Dublin, October 24, 1886.

#### ROCKSTRO'S "THE GOOD SHEPHERD."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In your notice of my Oratorio, "The Good Shepherd," in THE MUSICAL TIMES for October, you speak of my fugal treatment as "faulty." As the accusation has been repeated in other periodicals, and re-echoed in a highly exacerbated form in an American journal, I trust you will permit me to say a few words in reply to it.

I venture, then, to maintain, that every interval, without exception, in my fugal answers, is written in strictest possible accordance with the rules laid down by the greatest masters of the art of fugue, and that, having constructed my answers in obedience to those rules, I am left, by the same great masters, perfectly free to treat them, either with the simple harmonies of the tonic and dominant, or with the harmony of the dominant of the dominant, as I please, the exhibition or omission of the last-named harmony—involving a formal modulation to the key of the dominant by means of a new leading note—being a mere accident, neither commanded nor forbidden by the laws of modern fugue,\* though, in either case, perfectly compatible with them.

It is impossible to dispute the truth of this position, in presence of "Das Wohltemperirte Clavier," in No. xvii. of which Bach treats his answer without any form of modulation whatever, while in No. xxvii., he treats it with a distinct modulation to the key of the subdominant.

I repeat, therefore, that the method of treatment I have adopted in "The Good Shepherd" is perfectly orthodox in its theoretical aspect, while I can scarcely believe that, if it had proved ineffective in performance, the choruses in which it occurs would have been described in the *Times* as "two magnificent fugues."

I remain, Sir, your obedient Servant,

W. S. ROCKSTRO.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have received a letter from the Professor of Music at the University of Oxford confirming my position.

\* By "modern fugue," I mean, of course, the form of fugue practised since the abandonment of the ecclesiastical modes.

[Mr. Rockstro has a perfect right to hold his opinion with regard to the answer of his fugue, if he will only allow us the same privilege. The rule that the answer should be in another key than the subject is one which has been handed down to us from the best authorities, and we beg to say that Mr. Rockstro's answer is *not* in another key. We need scarcely say that we can be in no degree influenced by the assertions of other critics.—*The writer of the Notice.*]

#### THE SIAMESE NATIONAL HYMN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—While on the subject of national hymns, the following amusing incident, related by the late Mr. Markus, Conductor of the excellent Statesmusik (the Viceroy's band) at Batavia, may be of some interest to your readers. In 1871, when the King of Siam visited Europe, he resolved to call at Batavia. Long before the time of his expected arrival, great preparations were made; the King of Holland had given orders that his Siamese Majesty should be received with royal honours, and that no expense should be spared. Mr. Markus, of course, anticipated that, as usual, music would take a prominent part in the ceremonies, and that, no doubt, among other things, the Siamese National Hymn would be required. No one seemed ever to have heard of such a hymn; but the Conductor, recollecting that some time before, a music publisher at Rotterdam had advertised a volume containing a pianoforte arrangement of the national hymns of every country, ordered it, and sure enough there was the Siamese Hymn among the others. Although Mr. Markus had some slight misgivings regarding the genuineness of the piece, he arranged it for his orchestra, and as it was of a somewhat outlandish character, he trusted to his good luck to have found the right thing.

Shortly before the King's arrival, the official programme for his reception was published, and Mr. Markus saw that on the King's entry his band was to play the Dutch National Hymn. Not liking to have his light hidden under a bushel, he went to Government House and asked for explanations. He was told that as no one had ever heard of a Siamese Hymn, the most appropriate tune would be the Dutch National Melody. Mr. Markus replied that he had procured the Siamese Hymn, and that his band would be able to play it on the occasion of the King's arrival. The aide-de-camp was much pleased to hear this, and said he believed the King would consider it a very polite attention. There was a *réunion* at the Officers' Casino the next day, and the Siamese Hymn was asked for; it had to be repeated twice and delighted every one present.

At last the King arrived. The Governor, with a brilliant staff, went on board the Royal yacht to welcome His Majesty. On their stepping on board an excellently trained Siamese band saluted them with the Dutch Hymn. After the exchange of official civilities, one of the officers expressed his admiration of the performance of the Dutch Hymn by the Siamese band, and asked if he might be permitted to hear the Siamese Hymn also. This request, however, could not be complied with, as, up to that time, none of the European bandmasters had succeeded in harmonising that strange tune according to European harmonic laws. The Governor, however, remarked that his bandmaster had succeeded in doing so, and was in a position to receive His Majesty on landing with the Siamese Hymn arranged for European instruments. The King was surprised and much pleased. He said it had long been his great wish to hear his native melody played by a European band, and he should be glad to be allowed to have copies made out at once for his own band.

The next morning the King came on shore. The band was stationed in front of Government House, and as the King's carriage came near, the Siamese Hymn was struck up; it sounded beautiful in the clear, still morning air, causing a feeling of profound satisfaction to Mr. Markus. As the carriage passed the King stared hard at the Conductor, which the latter took for a sure sign of the excellent effect the hymn had produced on his Majesty. In the evening Mr. Markus went to Government House to conduct a Concert. On his arrival he was told that the