Proceedings of the Musical Association

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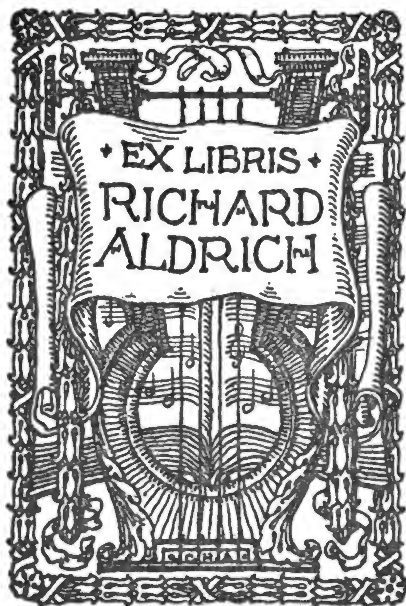

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

MUSICAL ASSOCIATION

FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND
DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE
ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC.

FOUNDED MAY 29, 1874.

NINETEENTH SESSION, 1892-93.

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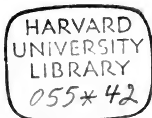
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CONTENTS.

PAGE

"The Oratorio—Its Relation to Church Music." By Rev. Henry Cart 1

"Richard Wagner's Prose." By W. Ashton Ellis 13

"The History and Uses of the Sol-fa Syllables." By W. G. McNaught, A.R.A.M. 35

"On Listening to Music." By Charles W. Pearce, Mus. Doc., Cantab. 53

"A New Note System." By Ludwig Latte . . 69

"The Rhythmical Construction of Bach's Forty-Eight Fugues." By C. F. Abdy Williams, M.A., Mus. Bac., Oxon. 73

"Artistic Landmarks." By James C. Culwick . 95

"A Suggested Method for Teaching Elementary Harmony." By Charles Vincent, Mus. Doc., Oxon. 119

"Ancient Musical Traditions of the Synagogue." By the Rev. Francis L. Cohen 135

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RULES AND REGULATIONS

Passed at Five Special General Meetings of the Members, held at 27, Harley Street, W., on February 7 and April 3, 1876, on January 6, 1879, on December 6, 1886, and on June 2, 1890.

OBJECTS AND CONSTITUTION.

THIS Association is called the "MUSICAL ASSOCIATION" and is formed for the investigation and discussion of subjects connected with the Art, Science, and History of Music; and is intended to be similar in its organisation to existing Learned Societies.

It is not intended that the Association shall give concerts, or undertake any publications other than those of their own Proceedings, or the Papers read at their Meetings.

MEMBERS.

The Association shall consist of practical and theoretical musicians, as well as those whose researches have been directed to the science of acoustics, the history of the art, or other kindred subjects.

Any person desirous of being admitted into the Association must be proposed by two members. Foreigners resident abroad and distinguished in the Art, Science, or Literature of Music, may be nominated by the Council for election as Honorary Members of the Association.

Elections will take place by ballot of the members present at any of the ordinary meetings, and one adverse vote in four shall exclude.

No newly elected member shall be entitled to attend the meetings until the annual subscription be paid.

SUBSCRIPTION.

The annual subscription to the Association is one guinea, which shall become due on the 1st of November in each year.

Any member *may*, upon or at any time after election, become a life member of the Association by payment of a composition of £10 10s. in lieu of future annual subscriptions, but in addition to any annual subscription previously paid or due from such member. Such sums shall from time to time be invested in legal security in the names of Trustees, to be appointed by the Council.

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Any member intending to resign his membership shall signify his wish by notice in writing to the Hon. Sec. on or before the 31st of October, otherwise he shall be liable for his subscription for the ensuing year.

MEETINGS.

An ordinary meeting shall be held on the second Tuesday in every month, from November to June inclusive, at 8 P.M., when, after the despatch of ordinary business, Papers will be read and discussed, the reading to commence not before 8.15 P.M.

An annual general meeting of members only shall be held at 8 P.M. on the last Tuesday in October, to receive and deliberate on the Report of the Council, and to elect the Council and officers for the ensuing year.

Special general meetings may be summoned whenever the Council may consider it necessary; and they shall be at all times bound to do so on receiving a requisition in writing from five members, specifying the nature of the business to be transacted. At least one week's notice of such special meeting shall be given by circular to every member, and ten members present at any general meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Every member shall have the privilege of introducing one visitor at the ordinary meetings, on writing the name in a book provided for that purpose, or sending a written order.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Papers proposed to be read at the meetings may treat of any subject connected with the Art, Science, or History of Music, Acoustics, and other kindred subjects.

Papers will be received from or through any member of the Association.

Experiments and performances may be introduced, when limited to the illustration of the Paper read.

All communications read will become thenceforth the property of the Association (unless there shall have been some previous arrangements to the contrary), and the Council may publish the same in any way and at any time they may think proper.

REPORTS.

A Report of the Proceedings of the Association, including the Papers read or abstracts of the same, and abstracts of the Discussions, shall be printed and distributed to the members as soon as possible after the end of each session.

This Report will be arranged and edited by the Honorary Secretary, under the direction of the Council.

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COUNCIL AND OFFICERS.

The management of the affairs of the Association shall be vested in a Council, to be elected by ballot at the general meeting of the members on the last Monday in October.

The Council shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, and ten ordinary members of the Association.

The Honorary Secretary of the Association shall be *ex officio* an ordinary member of Council.

The President, Vice-Presidents, Auditors, and five ordinary members of the Council shall retire every year, but shall be eligible for re-election.

At the annual general meeting in October, the Council shall present a balloting list, showing the names of the persons whom they propose for the offices of President, Vice-Presidents, and ordinary members of Council for the ensuing year. A copy of this list shall be given to each member present.

In voting, each member may erase any name or names from the balloting list, and may substitute the name or names of any other person or persons whom he considers eligible for each respective office; but the number of names on the list, after such erasure or substitution, must not exceed the number to be elected to the respective offices as above enumerated. Those lists which do not accord with these directions shall be rejected.

The Chairman of the meeting shall cause the balloting papers to be collected, and after they have been examined by himself and two scrutineers, to be appointed by the members, he shall report to the meeting the result of such examination, and shall then destroy the balloting papers. Auditors shall be appointed at the annual general meeting by the members, and the statement of accounts shall be sent by the Treasurer to the Auditors, and be remitted by them to the Secretary in time to enable the Council to judge of the prospects of the Association, and to prepare their report in accordance therewith.

The Council and officers shall meet as often as the business of the Association may require, and at every meeting three members of Council shall constitute a quorum.

ENACTMENT OR ALTERATION OF RULES AND REGULATIONS.

No rules and regulations can be enacted, altered, or rescinded, except at a special meeting of members summoned for the express purpose, the summons stating distinctly and fully the matter to be brought under consideration.

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MUSICAL ASSOCIATION.

FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC.

FOUNDED MAY 29, 1874.

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MUSICAL ASSOCIATION.

EIGHTEENTH SESSION, 1891-92.

REPORT.

THE Council have the pleasure to present to the Members of the Musical Association their eighteenth Annual Report.

The "Proceedings" during the Session have been printed and distributed as usual the volume including contributions of interest and value by Messrs. Louis B. Prout, E. F. Jacques, H. C. Banister, E. Algernon Baughan, Ernest Lake, F. T. Piggott, and Ebenezer Prout, and Miss Oliveria Prescott. The Council desire to thank the above members and others for their several papers.

The Association has to deplore the loss of Mr. Charles E. Stephens, an original member, and one who almost from the commencement had rendered valuable services as successively Auditor, Member of the Council, and Vice-President. He also took part in the "Proceedings" as Lecturer and as speaker in the discussions he will be greatly missed by those who attend the Monthly Meetings.

The Council also regret to record the deaths of Mr. Emil Behnke, an earnest worker in the field of vocal music, who had delivered several interesting lectures before the Association, and Mr. Victor de Pontigny, an original member, and until quite recently one of the most regular attendants at the meetings.

The Council are glad to note that the attendance of members has slightly improved, and trust that it will continue to do so, as otherwise the interests of the Association must suffer. Even if unable to be present themselves they might more frequently exercise their privilege of admitting a visitor by order. It would be desirable also that the Association and its objects should be brought under the notice of those who do not belong to it, with a view to their becoming

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members; the membership is not as large as it should be, the expenses in connection with management and the publication of the Annual Volume being necessarily considerable.

The Council again invite members to contribute papers for the Monthly Meetings, and in addition to these short communications on subjects of interest will be likewise welcomed.

The Balance Sheet has been duly audited and is herewith presented for inspection. It is satisfactory to note that the debt to the Treasurer has been almost paid off, the adverse balance being now very small. Wherever possible, the expenses have been reduced so as to conduce to this result. The Council trust that members will pay their subscriptions promptly and thus cause this regrettable feature of the accounts during the last three years to disappear entirely and finally. They are reminded that their subscriptions are due in advance on the 1st November.

The following Ordinary Members of Council—Messrs. H. C. Banister, Myles B. Foster, Ridley Prentice, W. de M. Sergison, and Dr. Chas. Vincent retire by rotation. They are eligible for re-election, but members have the right to nominate whom they choose for office.

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THE MUSICAL ASSOCIATION.

Financial Year from October, 1891, to October, 1892.

Hon. Treasurer's Statement of Receipts and Disbursements.

Dr.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To 109 Subscriptions, 1891-92	114	9	0			
,, 18 ,, ,, 1890-91	18	18	0			
,, 2 ,, ,, 1889-90	2	2	0			
,, 1 ,, ,, 1892-93	1	1	0			
				136	10	0
,, Sale of Copies (less commission)				4	1	0
,, Dividend on £350				8	10	8
,, Balance due to Treasurer				2	19	11
				£152	1	7

	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions outstanding	58	8	0

ALFRED H. LITTLETON,
Hon. Treasurer.

Cr.

	£	s.	d.
By Balance due to Treasurer on last Account ...	20	12	1
,, Printing	73	3	0
,, Reporting	10	17	0
,, Expenses of Room, &c.	8	6	0
,, Salary of Secretary	30	0	0
,, Advertising	4	10	0
,, Postages, &c.	4	13	6
	£152	1	7

Examined and found correct this 20th day of October, 1892.

D. J. BLAIKLEY, } *Auditors.*
W. S. COLLARD, }

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NOVEMBER 8, 1892.

H. C. BANISTER, ESQ.,

IN THE CHAIR.

THE ORATORIO—ITS RELATION TO CHURCH MUSIC.

BY REV. HENRY CART.

IT will be sufficient for our purpose in treating this question to take the definition of this Italian word "Oratorio," which answers to the Latin and German "Oratorium"—the definition that you will find at the beginning of a very admirable article on the subject in Grove's Dictionary (to which I am much indebted), and which is couched in these words: "A Sacred Poem, usually of a dramatic character, sung throughout by Solo Voices and Chorus, to the accompaniment of a full Orchestra, but—at least in modern times—without the assistance of Scenery, Dresses, or Action."

The saving clause, "at least in modern times," is much needed, for it seems beyond dispute that the Mysteries, Moralities, and Miracle Plays of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries contained in themselves the germ of Oratorio, and were a primary groping after light both in an ecclesiastical and musical sense.

One of the oldest examples of anything like a dramatic representation from Holy Writ of which there is certain record is the so-called, but really mis-named, "Festum Asinorum," celebrated, according to an old missal, at Beauvais and Sens, in the twelfth century, and famous for a sort of carol which was sung at the church doors before the commencement of the Mass on the Feast of the Circumcision. The words of this "Prose de l'ane," which were set to a quaint, but by no means unmelodious ditty, were a strange mixture of mediæval monachism and worldly jocularity, as may be gathered from the opening verse, which runs thus: "Or-i-en-tis par-ti-bus, Ad-ven-ta-vit as-i-nus, Pulcher et for-tis-si-mus, Sar-ci-nis ap-tis-si-mus, Hez, sire Asnes, hez!"—or, to take the grosser French version: "Hez, sire Asnes, car chantez, Bel-le bouche re-chig-nez, Vous aurez

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du foin as-sez, Et de l'avoine à plantez, Hez, sire Asnes, hez!"

You will find much information and much rhetorical explanation concerning this matter in Clement's "Histoire Generale de la Musique Religieuse," and in the section entitled "Liturgical Dramas in the Churches," he takes all the Christian seasons in turn and gives details of the ceremonies performed to the accompaniment of music either before or after the Mass.

As you are, perhaps, aware, it was an old Christian custom to place a manger in the church on Christmas Eve, and to perform the events of Christmas night as a drama or mystery. Boys represented the angels and proclaimed the birth of the Saviour, and then priests entered as the shepherds, and drew near to the manger; others asked what they had seen there; they gave answer and sang a lullaby at the manger. Mary and Joseph were also represented: Mary asks Joseph to help her to rock the Child; he declares himself ready, and the shepherds sing a song. It is interesting to note that this particular custom of "Kindleinwiegen," as it was called, actually survived to Bach's day, hence the *lullaby* in his Christmas Oratorio.

Besides this custom of lulling the holy Child, a symbolic ceremony representing the Angel's message on Christmas night must also have been known at Leipsic. It consisted in placing boys dressed as angels, and divided into four choirs, in four parts of the church, where they sang the Christmas hymn, "Quem pastores laudavere," line for line, alternately. It is not certain that this latter ceremony was still in use in Bach's time, but, supposing that it still prevailed, it may have had some further influence in suggesting to that noble mind such a work as the before-mentioned Christmas Oratorio.

St. Philip Neri, the founder of the congregation of Oratorians, warmly encouraged the cultivation of sacred music of all kinds, and on certain evenings in the week his sermons were preceded and followed either by a selection of popular hymns or by the dramatic rendering of a scene from Scripture History, the discourses being delivered between the acts of the drama. As these observances were first introduced in the Oratory of St. Philip's newly-built church, the performances themselves were commonly spoken of as Oratorios, and no long time elapsed before this term was accepted throughout the whole of Europe as the distinguishing title of the "Dramma sacra per musica."

The year 1600 witnessed the first performance, in Rome, of Emilio del Cavaliere's "Rappresentazione dell' Anima e dell Corpo," and, in Florence, of Peri's "Euridice"—the earliest examples of the true Oratorio and the true Opera ever

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presented to the public. The Oratorio was produced at the above-mentioned Oratory of St. Philip Neri, and in exact accordance with the composer's original intention, which included Scenes, Decorations, Action, and even Dancing on a regular Stage. The principal characters were *Il Tempo, La Vita, Il Mondo, Il Piacere, L'Intelletto, L'Anima, Il Corpo, two Youths*, who recited the Prologue, and the Chorus. The orchestra consisted of one lira doppia, one clavicembalo, one chitarone, and two flauti. No part is written for a violin, but a note states that good effect may be produced by playing one in unison with the soprano voices throughout. The orchestra was, with prophetical Wagnerian instinct, hidden entirely from view, but it was recommended that the various characters should carry musical instruments in their hands, and pretend to accompany their voices, and to play the Ritornelli interspersed between the melodies allotted to them.

It was about the time of Carissimi that the spectacular representation in connection with Oratorio began gradually to fall into disuse, though the dramatic character of the poem was still retained, with certain modifications, chief among which was the introduction of a personage called the "Historicus," to whom was assigned certain narrative passages interpolated between the clauses of the dialogue for the purpose of carrying on the story intelligibly in the absence of scenic action. Carissimi used this expedient freely, and his Oratorios excited such universal admiration that for very many years they served as models which the best composers of the time were not ashamed to imitate.

Carissimi's most illustrious disciple was Alessandro Scarlatti. He gave to the Aria a definite structure which it retained for more than a century—the well-balanced form, consisting of a first or principal strain, a second part, and a return to the original subject in the shape of the familiar *Da capo*. His Oratorios were full of interest, whether from a musical or a dramatic point of view; but it is to be feared that many are lost, as very few of his innumerable works were printed.

The name of Bach reminds us of the introduction into the realm of Oratorio of the national Chorale, which, absorbing into itself the still more venerable Volkslied, spoke straight to the hearts of the people throughout the length and breadth of the land. I do not take account of Bach's Passion Music, as I believe it cannot be accurately described as Oratorio, though the dividing line is slender and hardly perceptible. The "Christmas" Oratorio is divided into six portions: for the three days of Christmas, New Year's Day, the Sunday after New Year's day, and the Festival of the Epiphany. Each division thus constitutes a complete

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composition for one of six days, and this is how it was usually performed, the Church regarding the whole period till Twelfth Night—from Christmas Day, that is, till the Epiphany—as one festival season of which the Birth of Christ was the central idea.

Bach's "Passions" and kindred works are, it is true, a revival of the mediæval sacred drama of the best period, but on an immeasurably higher level—nay, it may be said they are the very culmination and crown of their kind. Bach was himself careful not to attribute the title of Oratorio to his Passion Music. His compositions for Christmas, Easter, and Ascension-tides have, however, kept that name—but it is likely that at that time there was no other or more suitable term in use, and, indeed, they may be regarded as a legitimate development of a particular style and class of music, which may be as fitly labelled "Oratorio" as known by any other title.

Handel, despite his so-much-talked-of plagiarism, is confessedly the master of Oratorio, and he holds a position above all other writers of the eighteenth, and I think one might say of the nineteenth century, analagous to, if not exceeding, that which Palestrina held above all those of the sixteenth—a position to which was attached the title, not of "Primus," but of "Solus."

Handel wrote altogether seventeen English Oratorios, besides a number of secular works which are sometimes incorrectly classed with them.

"In the case of most of Handel's Oratorios, although the chorus is seldom or never to be regarded as representing persons in the drama, yet, for the proper understanding of the artistic idea in its entirety, the consciousness that it is constituted of human voices is of the greatest importance. In Bach the use of the voice is of a much more abstract character; it is regarded rather as an instrument having the property of uttering words and sentences with and on the notes it gives forth. Handel's Oratorio style tended towards laying a stronger and more decisive emphasis on the vocal factor, while Bach's chorus admits of strengthening additions only within narrowly-defined limits, and, from the first, never bore an indirect ratio to the instruments."

The Oratorio of "Esther," eleven years after its performance at Cannons, was represented in action by the children of His Majesty's Chapel, at the house of Mr. Bernard Gates, master of the boys, in James Street, Westminster, on Wednesday, February 23, 1731. The chorus, consisting of performers from the Chapel Royal and Westminster Abbey, was placed, after the manner of the ancients, between the stage and orchestra; and the instrumental parts were chiefly performed by gentlemen who were members of the

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Philharmonic Society. After this it was performed by the same singers at the Crown and Anchor, which is said to have first suggested to Handel the idea of bringing Oratorios on the stage. This second performance was given by desire of one William Huggins, who furnished the dresses. Handel was present at one of those representations, and having mentioned it to the Princess Royal, his illustrious scholar, her Royal Highness expressed a desire to see it exhibited in action at the Opera House in the Haymarket, by the same young performers; but Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London, would not grant permission for its being represented on that stage, "even," as says Burney, "with book in the children's hands." Handel, however, the next year, had it performed at that theatre, with additions to the drama, by Humphreys; but it was given *in still life*—that is, without action. The drama consisted of only two acts; beginning with the recitative, "'Tis greater far," as it had been originally set for the Duke of Chandos.

In March, 1733, "Deborah" was first given to the public, and in April of the same year "Esther" was again performed at the Haymarket.

In 1740 the Oratorio of "Saul" was performed, for the first time, at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

From 1740 to 1751 Handel wrote fifteen of his Oratorios; of these, we are told that "'The Messiah,' 'Samson,' and 'Judas Maccabæus' were sure to fill the house whenever they were performed; but though the rest are hazardous and fluctuating in favour, yet there is not one of them which an exquisite and dashing singer, such as Mrs. Sherridan or Mrs. Bates, could not render important and attractive."

Whilst speaking about Handel I cannot resist the danger of running somewhat off the line and giving you in Burney's words an instance of the exceeding choler of the portly German master. Most of these anecdotes are now well known, but at any rate the mention of one or other serves to relieve the tedium of dry and sometimes uninteresting details.

"In 1749 'Theodora' was so very unfortunately abandoned that Handel was glad if any professors, who did not perform, would accept of tickets or orders for admission. Two gentlemen of that description, now living, having applied to Handel, after the disgrace of 'Theodora,' for an order to hear 'The Messiah,' he cried out, 'Oh, your sarvant, Meinherren! you are tamnaple tainty! you would not co to "Teodora"—der was room enough to tance dere, when dat was perform.'" But there is a reverse side to this—"Sometimes, however, I have heard him, as pleasantly as philosophically, console his friends, when, previous to the curtain being drawn up, they have lamented that

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the house was empty, by saying, 'Nevve moind; de moosic vil sound de petter.'"

In 1784 a grand commemoration of Handel was held at Westminster Abbey and the Pantheon—and I mention this because, at the risk of making you very impatient, I must drag in our friend Burney again, so rich in unconscious humour is his criticism of one of the Pantheon performances. To quote the opening paragraph will be sufficient: "The extreme heat of the weather, augmented by the animal heat of more than sixteen hundred people closely wedged together, must have considerably diminished the delight which the lovers of music expected to receive from this night's exhibition; when the body suffers, the mind is very difficult to be pleased."

The mention of such names as Dr. Arne, Hasse, Haydn, Beethoven, and Spohr must serve to show the onward march of Oratorio.

The Oratorio finds its ultimate development, so far as we are concerned, in Mendelssohn, and he, genius as he was, was content to build up his "St. Paul" on the lines already laid down by his illustrious predecessor, Johann Sebastian Bach. It is said that had Mendelssohn lived to complete "Christus," it is quite possible that he might have produced a work more perfect than either "St. Paul" or "Elijah," but all must regard such a statement as large with doubt, for it is given to few men to create two such sterling masterpieces.

Here, then, we leave the Oratorio in its historical development—for obvious reasons it would not be fitting to carry it further—though one may be allowed to mention with great reverence and appreciation the names of Sir George Macfarren and Sir Sterndale Bennett in connection with this department of music.

With regard to the "future of Oratorio," I cannot do better than read to you some pungent sentences which occur towards the close of the article in the "Dictionary of Music and Musicians": "When the twentieth century dawns upon us, will those who are now in their childhood be able to speak of new Oratorios worthy to stand side by side with the immortal works to which we have directed the reader's attention? Will the revolutionary spirit which is now working such radical changes in the construction of the Opera affect the Oratorio also? Will the neglect of Counterpoint, the contempt for Fugue, the hatred of Polyphony, which so many young musicians—and not young ones only—are rapidly learning to regard as signs of "progress," undermine the very foundations of Sacred Music to such an extent as to render the production of new and worthy works impossible?" The writer goes on to say that "twenty years must pass away before the new century

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begins," and then he draws a picture in glowing colours of a roseate Dawn of Hope. I hope he is not mistaken in his vaticinations, but one cannot but recognise that national art is by no means always advancing—in many quarters I see a distinct decadence.

The province of Oratorio is surely pre-eminently a sacred one, and therefore I hold that it is essentially related to, and is a part of Church music. But how necessary that when viewed in this light it should be guarded and kept within reverential limits. We may admit much work of an essentially dramatic nature within our churches, but nothing that borders on the frivolous or the purely worldly, unless it be in nice contrast to the purely spiritual, and point a moral that can by no means be spared. I can recognise the timeliness of the admonition given by the new Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster to the effect that the music in the churches belonging to that communion should be more of a character befitting the solemnities of Holy Church. It is a constant danger that with an elaborate and fussy ceremonial there should creep in a purely dramatic and stagey element as regards the music, and this remark, of course, especially applies to the Roman Church, though it is not without force as regards our Anglican communion. Even so far back as the year 1857, a Paris paper gives an account of the music performed at a Mass in Normandy—(of course this must be an exceptional, quite exceptional, case, but it illustrates the principle). I will read the quotation: "The Mass of St. Cecilia will be celebrated this year on Sunday next, December 28th, at 10.30, in the church of St. Matthew. The band of the old national guard will perform the following selection—Entrée de la Messe, Marche expressive —Offertoire, Ouverture des Sabots de la Marquise—Elevation, Duo du Chateau de la Barbe bleue—Post-Communion, les Dames de Versailles, de Manon Lescaut—Sortie, Fantaisie sur la ronde de Fanchonette."

With regard to the question whether Oratorio is more fitted to the concert-room than the church, that must depend upon the character of the work to be performed, also to the means at disposal for performance of the same. Our churches, and especially many of our modern churches, are not eminently adapted for Oratorio performances, and the question of expense often puts an abrupt conclusion to all consideration of the matter. During last Lent I had the temerity, though much grumbled at by some of the faithful, to have two performances of Mendelssohn's "Athalie" in my church on alternate Sunday evenings. Mr. Charles Fry recited the connecting narrative, and he told me afterwards that he considered the work gained enormously in impressiveness and spirituality by its being rendered in a devotional manner in

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a sacred building. I have never regretted this innovation, and it has convinced me that a great need of our times is the production of a larger number of Oratorios on the design of "Athalie," though not of course supplied with such unworthy passages for recitation as may there be found. We also want a series of short, tuneful, easy, but thoroughly well-written short Oratorios (not "Services of Song," to which I very much object), following the course of the Christian seasons, with hymns or connected readings interspersed. Herein would be displayed the mission of Oratorio, which is to instruct, to elevate, to uplift—aye, and I would even say, to Christianize. A well-constructed Oratorio, instinct with religious feeling, and performed in a reverential spirit, is as powerful an influence for good as a sermon—were I a layman, I might be disposed to tell you that its usefulness, possibly, far transcends very many sermons. Attendance at a recent performance of Sir Arthur Sullivan's "Martyr of Antioch" has convinced me that that is just the sort of music we do not want in this connection; but of course it was not written for church purposes, and yet one cannot but think how useful such a work would be if it had been adapted both for the concert-room and for the church. I throw out these few undigested ideas, you may be sure, with all humility—they are merely personal opinions—the only thing I would, in conclusion, lay emphasis upon is the undoubted fact that there is, in the face of the enormous revival of Church life and Church work in this land, a vast field open to all musicians in the department of Oratorio; they have the power of being the teachers of the future. Music has ever been known as the handmaid of religion—how can she better acknowledge her claim to such a designation than by aiding in the dissemination of those truths which Handel died trusting in, and which were to Mendelssohn the very source of inspiration? There is no absolute novelty in any opinions I have put forward, for I find that at a meeting of this Association in 1881, the late Professor Monk said: "There is a lack of compositions strictly adapted to the whole course of the ecclesiastical year. We should aim at possessing a great variety by our own countrymen to words direct from English Holy Scripture, or from the Prayer Book Psalter." He also added: "Some music of the great masters is so imbued with true Church feeling that one would never wish to listen to it anywhere else. If you wish to test this, hear Bach's sublime Passion Music at the Albert Hall and then at St. Paul's. It is quite true that the home of the Oratorio proper is in the Church." The principles enunciated are not new indeed, so far as I am concerned, but they are always needing reiteration. I am much obliged to the Association for having allowed me to

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introduce this subject; I am much obliged to all here assembled for their kind attention to what I have said. I only trust that the points raised will furnish material for a lengthy and interesting discussion.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN said.—We are indebted to Mr. Cart for a very succinct and comprehensive account of the rise and development of the Oratorio, from the earliest time to the present.

The vote of thanks to Mr. Cart was carried unanimously.

Mr. CUMMINGS.—Although I have not heard the whole of the paper, I have gathered a little of the line which has been taken. Of course I have had some experience in Oratorio, and I have recognised that the effect of Oratorio is much more impressive, much more solemn, and perhaps more soul-subduing in a cathedral than in a concert-room. Every student of musical history knows that the Oratorio not only began in the church, but also took its name from the church. At the same time, there are two views which one may have concerning this question of the Oratorio in church or Oratorio in the concert-room. If one takes it from the religious point of view—I believe it is a well ascertained dictum that medicine is for the sick and not for the sound—the preachers take the Gospel of God into the streets, back alleys, and bye-lanes to the unreligious; and if it is true that the Oratorio is a great promoter of religion, it cannot surely be so much needed for the people who are already in the church as it is for those who have no religion and who only go to the concert-room. To come to the other point which concerns us as musicians, my strong feeling is that when we take Oratorio to the church, excepting in a few exceptional cases, such as those of the Three Choirs of Hereford, Worcester, and Gloucester, where they take care to have complete choirs and orchestras, the Oratorio suffers from an art point of view, as there is often an incomplete orchestra, and combined with this too frequently the mutilation of the Oratorio. Numbers are cut out so that the performance may come within a certain limit of time. In such great establishments as St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey the time is about an hour and a half. It will be false humility to pretend that one does not recognise this as a serious offence against Art. I moreover strongly object to the way in which Oratorios are done at St. Paul's, just for the sake of carrying out a religious festival. The words of Bach's Passion Music are absolutely taken away from their proper music and others

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are substituted of an entirely different character. We do not have Bach's words at all. In this we are desecrating Art. We have no right to do it. Then the Oratorio is considerably shortened, and is thus mutilated. As for the works which have already been completed, they should be given in their perfect form and as intended by the composer. I of course have no objection whatever to living men writing works of an instructive character. "The Messiah," "Elijah," and the Passion Music of Bach are frequently given, but how often in their entirety and presented as they were intended by the composer?

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—I would observe that Oratorio, since its conception from Carissimi to Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, and the later works, has to a certain extent been rising to a higher sort of change. It has felt the change which has taken place in music as in everything else. Mr. Cart alluded to the "Martyr of Antioch," which was performed at the Crystal Palace on Saturday last. Sir Arthur Sullivan's composition is not an Oratorio, nor a church work. It is a sacred cantata on a sacred subject, and I must say that in the concert-room it is exceedingly effective. Whether it is properly a church work, that is another question altogether. Religion in Oratorio has shown its development. If these old works were originally felt to be fit and right for purposes of devotion in churches, I cannot help thinking that Oratorio in its more modern form should find acceptance there. One cannot but feel that the difficulties which Mr. Cart has so aptly and concisely put before us do exist. As a matter of fact, it is not sufficient to have a band of stringed instruments, but we must also have the wind parts that the composer wrote, and then you incur a very considerable expense, as those who have to deal with the subject know full well. But where there is a guarantee fund of some thousands of pounds—as in the case of the Three Choirs Festivals—where these performances are looked upon as a great feature every three years, and everybody from the neighbouring towns and villages attends the performances, willing and ready to pay for them, it is a different matter. These difficulties take place in churches, who cannot engage a complete orchestra, but endeavour to get one for love, which it seems to me it is impossible to get. Our national freedom in this country extends even to pitch. Organs in churches do not always agree with orchestras, in which the instruments are tuned to the Philharmonic pitch. Here lies a great difficulty, but it is one that naturally opens up a path for modern composers to write some works of restricted accompaniments especially for church use. They must not be so long as the old Oratorios, for I think the tendency nowadays is greatly in favour of tit-bits; people like things

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short, and this must include church works. If, therefore, it is possible to take this view of it, and write works fitted for church purposes, short and without a full orchestra, I think that they will prove very popular. You will not then get cuttings from "Elijah" or "Messiah," but works which will be most suitable for church purposes and also aids to devotion. We all feel that Oratorio is a part of church music, and if works of the character I have indicated find a general acceptance there should be a great future for Oratorio in the church.

Mr. Piggott.—It occurs to me, whether it is absolutely necessary for Art that the whole composition should be given. I doubt very much whether the composer is the best judge to decide what is to be cut, and also whether in the interests of Art some little excisions are not necessary. I am certain that many people will agree with me that Handel was a great sinner in this respect, and I wonder how many people in this room—or out of it—have heard "The Messiah" in its entirety! I cannot help saying that a due amount of artistic excision may be to the benefit of the composition.

Mr. Cummings.—In the case of "The Messiah" we have the composer's own authority for the excisions made. If artists' parts were cut, what would a sculptor say if you took off a leg or an arm from his work?

Mr. Abdy Williams.—One great advantage of having Oratorios in the church is the absence of applause. It is very pleasant for the performers, but in the course of a great work you do not want to have your feelings injured by the applause that comes after every number. I remember a cantata by Mr. Prendergast, which seems to me to be just the sort of thing that is required. It takes about an hour. I did it in my church about a year ago. A good many works of that sort might be written. As to having a full orchestra and choir, I think it is a great pity that the orchestra should be dispensed with. At a church in Chelsea we used to do the whole Oratorio with a full band. I know the performances were very much appreciated, and the church was always crowded.

Mr. Southgate.—The composer of church works gains one advantage which cannot be obtained in the concert-room; it is open to him to introduce hymns and chorales, in which the congregation may join, and thus take part in the performance. This is what is done at St. Anne's, Soho.

Mr. Cummings.—So far as St. Anne's, Soho, was concerned, we had a harp, and that, with the string and wood instruments, was all we could get. We had no brass instruments whatever. I am also bound to say that where the chorales were printed and the congregation invited to join in they really did so. It must be observed by all

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who attend performances of Oratorio in the concert-room that the tendency now is to do away with the applause at the end of every solo. In scenas in operas it is very irritating to hear applause, as it is also in the concert-room. But the tendency is certainly not to applaud except in some place where it is unobtrusive, either at the end of the act or the first part. The last time I attended the Albert Hall I was delighted to hear how very little applause there was except at the end of the part.

The CHAIRMAN.—When one is in church and there is read the magnificent Carmel scene in "Elijah" one is greatly impressed when hearing of the Priests of Baal as a part of the narrative; but I imagine that the Baal choruses of "Elijah," with all their dramatic power, would be very disturbing to devotional people.

Rev. H. CART.—I quite recognise the force of what Mr. Cummings has remarked, that some Oratorios are done scandalously in churches; but until we are supplied with what we want—the shorter and more congregational Oratorios—we are obliged to fall back upon those masterpieces and mutilate them. Garrett's "Harvest Cantata" is very useful for the harvest season—in fact, anything that serves to mark the Church's special seasons is very helpful, and anything that has a part for the congregation, if they could be only induced to join in. I think it would be well if they could attend a preliminary practice. Reference was made to a full orchestra in a church at Chelsea. This is very delightful if you can have it, but you know that it is very expensive, and you cannot depend on the voluntary contributions.

Mr. ABDY WILLIAMS.—In this case it cost £100, and the rector contributed of this 90 per cent.

Rev. H. CART.—I heard of a case where £50 was spent, and all that was collected on the evening in question was £7. I am very much obliged to you for listening to the paper, and am vain enough to hope that it will be fruitful in the direction I wish.

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DECEMBER 13, 1892.

C. A. BARRY, ESQ.,

IN THE CHAIR.

RICHARD WAGNER'S PROSE.

BY WILLIAM ASHTON ELLIS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—When your Council first asked me to read a paper before you, I must admit that I was a little bit nonplussed, for neither am I a professional nor a professing musician; and, though it occurred to me that there might lurk behind the invitation some distant hint that I should discuss Wagner or "Wagnerism," yet I felt somewhat loth to venture among you with my crude ideas upon his musical form. My next thoughts turned to the dramas, on which subject I did, perhaps, feel a little more at home, having devoted a certain amount of time to an attempt at getting to the bottom of them; but would they be quite an appropriate topic on which to hold forth before a *musical* Association? Well, perhaps not. Then Bayreuth and the method of performance there? No, again; for most of you must have already been there, and would be better qualified than myself to give a technical opinion. There thus was only one subject left to me, and that was the Prose writings. I almost feared, at first, that even this subject might not be acceptable, as those writings do not deal in any special manner with the Theory of music; but I was reassured when your Secretary kindly sent me a copy of last year's "Proceedings," and I there found that you admitted the "History of Music and other kindred subjects." It seemed to me that there was so benignant a latitudinarianism in the expression "other kindred subjects," that I finally made up my mind to accept your hospitable invitation and unbosom myself—perhaps I ought to say, un-brain myself—of a few thoughts on what for some time past has been to me an engrossing topic—namely, Richard Wagner's Prose. This subject, however, is so vast that any half-hour's paper can barely touch the fringe of it. I must therefore apologise in advance

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if I hurry you at a breakneck pace from one aspect to another, and only give a glimpse of each.

The existence of this Prose of Wagner is hardly known to the general public; in fact, I may go a little farther, and say that there are thousands of musical amateurs who do not even know that he wrote the "words" for his own "operas"—quite to leave aside the question of their being dramas, no matter with what prefix. It is only a few months ago that I was amused by the surprise of a lady, when I casually referred to Wagner's being a poet: she played the organ at a church in one of our large provincial towns, and had a very good general knowledge of music; but it had not yet dawned upon her that Richard Wagner was anything but a composer, whose name was to be spoken of course with bated breath, as—well, a trifle heterodox. If one proceeds a little higher up the scale of enlightenment, one finds a recognition of the fact that Wagner *did* write his own words; but one hears that when these words are not dull, the plot is improper, and that it is a great mercy the works are given in a language which no one understands. Higher still, one meets with those who have a glimmering perception that perhaps the dramatic idea is the most important element in the Bayreuth master's works—I say advisedly the *Bayreuth* master's, for it is rare for anyone to be able to obtain an inkling of that idea from performances outside Bayreuth and those theatres conducted by men who have come under the direct influence of Bayreuth. But, except in the case of a few of our very best critics, these prose-writings are generally unknown to people who write about Wagner; although a little study of them would throw light on many features which are left in hopeless obscurity by the general run of performances, and would help to a new critical standpoint from which to judge such performances. I am aware of the difficulties that block the path, owing principally to the fact that we are taught at school sufficient French to enable us to read Zola and other elevating novels; but the language that would open out to us a store of sterling literature, only second in value to our own, is dismissed with perhaps a few perfunctory lessons in our last term. Yet there do exist translations of various essays by Wagner, and of his hitherto published letters. But what has been the fate of the latter, for instance? Not long since, the publishers of the late Dr. Hueffer's translation of the "Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt" informed me that, although they had issued the work in 1888, it was only just beginning to cover the expenses of publication, while the volume of "Letters to Uhlig," translated by Mr. Shedlock, and issued two years back, was, so far, a dead loss. Nor can this possibly be due to either the matter or the manner of the translations, for I am told that even the bright and chatty

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letters of Mendelssohn have never proved a financial success, and certainly one meets with few ordinary people who have ever heard of Schumann as a writer. I can only explain the fact to myself on the supposition that musicians, both amateur and professional, are not a reading class. And is not this proved by the small numbers of those enrolled in any of our musical societies, other than for choral or instrumental practice, and by the difficulty of making any musical journal "pay" in England, unless it be the organ of a great music-publishing house?

In the case of Wagner's prose, however, there have been two other causes of neglect; the one applies to the present, the other to the past. I will take that of the present first, as it can be stated in a word or two—namely, with the majority of those who have at last come to an appreciation of his music, the result seems to have been to almost take their breath away, leaving them no faculties wherewith to face an intellectual problem; whilst those who have arrived at a perception of his dramatic gifts as well, have been unwilling to make further room in their minds for a third installation; and thus the very dimensions of the two aspects have prevented folk from getting round the man to see the third. In the past it was otherwise. Wagner came to London on his trial, so to speak, in 1855; he was considered a suspicious character, in more ways than one, by the musical bigwigs of the day. There could be no question, then, of one of his talents obscuring vision of the others; no one knew which might first be seized on and applauded—the musical, the dramatic, or the literary; so all three were simultaneously attacked by that extremely caustic and influential paper, the *Musical World*. Most of you know how the music was dealt with; I shall have a word to say on the poetry in a minute, but only in illustration of the spirit of the dealing with the prose, to which latter I will therefore turn. The particular work chosen was "Opera and Drama," and it was published *in extenso*, at the rate of six or seven pages a week. This "literal version, one of the longest and heaviest jokes ever perpetrated," as Mr. William Archer calls it, dragged on its weary length from May 19, 1855, to April 26, 1856. Mr. Archer further remarks (in the *Magazine of Music* for April, 1886): "A schoolboy translating Goethe with a dictionary and grammar, and retaining the exact order of words, would produce a sufficiently ludicrous result. This was the procedure adopted by the translator of Wagner, who seems, however, to have made scant use of the grammar, and to have had vague ideas of the difference between the German nominative and accusative; so that when Wagner says, 'The composer writes the music,' we are as likely as not to find in the English version, 'the music writes the composer.'"

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Personally, I owe Mr. Archer a grudge for having anticipated me with the Goethe comparison, an idea which I was just about to write down for you as my own, when I discovered his article; for which, at the instigation of a friend, I had long been searching.

But to return to the *Musical World*. On the first of March, 1856, there appears a lengthy leading article, evidently written by the witty editor; this article at last lays the cards on the table face upwards. I may quote from it the following: "The reduction of Wagner into English has been so painful a labour, that we shall really be surprised if our translator rises from the completion of his task with a single hair of his head retaining its original colour. . . . Perhaps we shall be told that we have helped Herr Wagner to drown himself in the depths of his own theories. It may be so. We shall at least have rendered a service to the art which that false teacher has long struggled to destroy. . . . That ingenious cacophony, the Overture to 'Tannhäuser,' may possibly have deceived a few (only a few) American amateurs; but how long will the deception reign? Not very long, we are convinced. The 'expression which, in every one of its points, contains the poetic intention, but in every one also conceals it from the feelings—THAT IS, REALISES IT,' has yet to be accepted among sensible Yankees. . . . Will they kindly 'realise the poet'—not in the 'co-sounding organ of tone-language,' but in plain English—and place us under a lasting obligation? We look towards them." Never were more extraordinary tactics employed, than this device of first getting a man's work translated into perfectly unreadable stuff, and then asking for "plain English"—"English," mind you, not "German"! But no words of mine will convey the real sting of the thing half so well as the reproduction of that passage of the translation ("Opera and Drama," Part III., Chap. vi.) from which the editor quotes. It appeared the week before the article, and ran thus: "If, therefore, we wish to describe precisely the expression, which as oneful itself should render possible a purport likewise oneful, we define it as one capable of communicating in the most suitable manner to the feelings a most comprehensive intention of the poetic understanding. Such an expression is one *which in every one of its points contains the poetic intention, but in every one also conceals it from the feelings, that is—realises it.* Even for the verbal language of tone, this complete concealment of the poetic intention would not be possible, if a second, co-sounding organ of tone-language were not added to it, which, in every instance that the verbal language of tone, as the most immediate concealer of the poetic intention, must necessarily sink to such a depth in its expression, that, for the sake of the indissoluble con-

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nection of this intention with the tone of common life, it can only just cover it with an almost transparent tone-veil, is capable of maintaining the equilibrium of the oneful expression of feeling." Here not only is the "grammar" cast aside, but the "dictionary" is flung after it, as witness the dexterous manner in which the meaningless word "oneful" is coined to replace the German *einig*, signifying "sole, united, concordant, homogeneous, undivided," or even, if I may be conceded the term, "onefold." In other portions of this masterly obfuscation, however, we get a genuine English substitute for the German word; but its choice is dictated by the principle of the survival of the *least fit*. Thus we start off full sail with a foot-note to the first line of the Introduction to "Opera and Drama" (May 26, 1855; May 19 having been devoted to the Preface): "Herr Wagner is very fond of making use of words admitting of a vast diversity of meaning, and of the most transcendental description, so that a poor commonplace and common-sense translator stands but little chance with him. For instance, Herr Wagner is exceedingly partial to the word *Erscheinung*, which he employs in all the variations of which it is capable, but which we find so often where we never expected it, that we are fairly puzzled how to render it, and, therefore, have determined to adopt one equivalent, the word 'apparition.' In order, however, to do Herr Wagner full justice, we beg to inform our readers that the other significations of *Erscheinung*, as contained in the best dictionaries, are 'appearance, vision (in natural philosophy), phenomenon, meteor,' and lastly, our Epiphany is termed *Das Fest der Erscheinung* (the festival of the *Erscheinung*).—Translator." And the "translator" might have added half-a-dozen more equivalents, such as "manifestment, feature, show, matter," &c.; but no, he is content with the word most likely to turn each sentence into ridicule. Mark the generous concession of "full justice" to his victim.

Perhaps I may be accused of having stumbled upon a mare's-nest here. I must therefore show how carefully this plan of "helping Herr Wagner to drown himself" was laid. On January 13, 1855, it having just transpired that Wagner was to be summoned from Zurich, there was commenced a series of "Reactionary Letters" by Sobolewski, translated evidently by the same hand, and containing many a gibe at the composer of "Tannhäuser," &c. True, that Sobolewski occasionally sandwiched his curses with a streak of blessing, and on February 24, a particularly bloodthirsty gentleman, signing himself "An English Musician," wrote to expostulate with the "ingenious author of the 'Reactionary Letters' (which I regret to find are not so directly addressed against the pernicious doctrines of the Wagner school as I anticipated

from reading the first)." But that is neither here nor there. My point is this: that these "Reactionary Letters" continue down to March 31; an interval of one number then occurs, apparently to give the translator time to recover, said interval being filled up with some reprinted abuse from the *Athenæum;* on April 14 the translator comes out with a brilliant parody—*not* so called, by any means—of the "Lohengrin" poem; this scholarly rendering is concluded on May 5, and the translator is given another rest on May 12, his deputy this time consisting of some reprinted abuse from the *Sunday Times;* whilst, as I have mentioned above, "Opera and Drama" begins its tedious journey on May 19. There is thus an almost apostolic succession in the order of these masterpieces.

And now that I perhaps have wearied you with musty details, I must be allowed to restore your cheerfulness by a passing taste of the quality of this marvellous "Lohengrin" harlequinade. It has an important bearing on my above-made statement, that the whole series of translations was intended as a *coup de grace* to Wagner. I therefore beg your earnest—or should I say, humorous?—attention to the following gems of diction:—*Frederick:* "My Lord, the vain maiden who, full of pride, rejected my hand, is a visionary. I therefore accuse her of a secret love. She, no doubt, thought that, when she had got rid of her brother, she would have a right," &c.—The men as *Lohengrin* approaches: "Look! Look! What a wonderful phenomenon; Is it possible! A swan! a swan!"—*Lohengrin:* "Now be thanked, my beloved swan! retire up the broad stream again."—*Lohengrin* to *Elsa* (seriously): "Thou art already indebted to me for the greatest mark of confidence, inasmuch as I willingly believed thy oath! If thou never shrinkest from observing my prohibition, thou wilt be in my eyes far more worthy than all other women!"—*Elsa:* "Unfortunate, beautiful man, hear what I must ask thee." Are not these lines worthy alone of the immortal Fitzball or the Poet Bunn? I maintain that not only could the conscientious schoolboy make equally utter nonsense out of Goethe, but that the remorseless undergraduate could translate even Shakespeare into a *literal* English version that should be just as preposterous.

To take up again the historical thread of the English "justice" dealt out to Wagner's prose, we find that these sledge-hammer assaults of the chief musical journal, reinforced by its editor's thunderbolts from the *Times*, entirely crushed out for fifteen or sixteen years any interest that a fairer treatment could not but have inspired. And thus, after, as far as I can make out, a period of dead silence upon the subject, we come to the year 1871, and find the *Musical*

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World again armed to the teeth with an English perversion—on this occasion, of the "Communication to my Friends." The German movement in favour of the Bayreuth project was spreading to England, and it was high time to resume the old tactics. What weapon could better serve the purpose than that furnished by Wagner himself, with the exposition (though now twenty years old) of his own aims, his failures, his weaknesses, his methods, and his hopes? The very nature of a self-likeness would lend additional zest to the pseudo-literal reproduction; from which I will only cull the brilliant flower of ignorance displayed in christening *Siegfried* as "the winner of the rock," owing to a misreading of *Hort* ("hoard")—*i.e.*, the Nibelung's, for *Horst* ("crag"). The old hand, however, had lost somewhat of its cunning, and the dreadful example was not so repellent as to deter a man of the energy of Mr. E. Dannreuther from answering the challenge, the next year, in the *Monthly Musical Record*, with an account of Wagner's work and theories and extracts from his prose writings; all of which, with certain alterations and additions, were subsequently reprinted in pamphlet form. Soon thereafter this gentleman followed up his initial movement of defence by several marches into the enemy's country, bearing with him excellent translations of the "Music of the Future" (1873), the "Beethoven" essay (1880), and finally, the brochure "On Conducting" (1887). These and Mr. Dannreuther's brilliant article in Grove's "Dictionary of Music" have been the only important additions, in any connected form, to English knowledge of Wagner as a prose writer; although a few shorter articles have from time to time been translated in the musical journals, and in 1886 Mr. W. Archer, from whose first contribution I have quoted above, commenced, in the *Magazine of Music*, a series of luminous epitomes of Wagner's theoretic writings. Despite these efforts, known to comparatively few, the hare originally started by the *Musical World* parody is still being coursed, and the terrors of "Opera and Drama" are—or certainly *were*, till quite recently—dangled over the heads of naughty musical students.

Having thus touched on the history of our English welcome to Wagner's prose writings, I now come to their history proper, *en route* to a brief discussion of their contents, method, and significance.

The first published article of Richard Wagner, so far as at present known, appeared in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, of November 6, 1834, and was called "Pasticcio"; the last is but an unfinished fragment, written two days before his death, entitled "On the Womanly in human nature," and destined for the *Bayreuther Blätter*. We thus see that his literary labours covered all but half-a-century. Their

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distribution throughout that period, however, was by no means even-handed, and they thus fall into five groups, of unequal compass and extent : the Paris group, of 1840-1 ; the Zurich group, of 1849-51 ; the Munich group, of 1864-6; the Tribschen group, of 1870-2; the Bayreuth group, of 1879-81. That there were a few minor articles strewn between each of these groups does not affect this curious evidence of periodicity; the " beat "—so to speak—recurring about every ten years, excepting in the case of the Munich group, which was thrust forward and out of its proper order by the crisis in the composer's life that occurred in the early "sixties"; although "sister Prose" seems to have made an abortive attempt to gain a hearing for her claims in 1860-1—*i.e.*, at the periodic beat. It is interesting, moreover, to observe that these periods of greater literary activity alternate, taken broadly, with periods of greater poetical or musical activity. Of this we find confirmation in a letter to Liszt: "My faculties, taken one by one, are certainly not great, and I can only be and do somewhat when I concentrate them all upon one focus, and recklessly consume therein myself and them."

Time will not allow me to deal systematically with each of these groups, but I wish to illustrate by this classification a point which has been hardly regarded hitherto—namely, the influence of other authors upon Wagner's style, not only of writing, but also of thought. Even the mere fragments from the time before the first group suffice to show this influence. No one who has ever read the much-neglected literary remains of Weber, can fail to detect the stamp his writings gave to those early fragments of Wagner's. There is in them the same suave—I might almost say, fireside—construction of phrase, and occasional spice of gentle humour, that we find with Weber; and lest there should be any doubt on the point, we have Wagner quoting in "Pasticcio" from Weber's "A Tone-Artist's Life." It is not improbable that the influence of Schumann, the editor of the journal in which young Wagner's article appeared, may have also had something to do with its style; but there is little difference to be detected between the literary methods of Robert Schumann and of the composer of "Der Freischütz," on whom the former appears to have modelled his own manner. Passing to the first real group, that of 1840-1, we find unmistakable traces of Heinrich Heine. There can be no doubt that the reading of Heine's "Salon," &c., and the solitary interview to which that led, left an impression upon Wagner's mind which lasted for some little time; for we find in the collection of short essays entitled "A German Musician in Paris," and still more markedly in the un-republished letters to German periodicals of this date, a strong tincture of that mordant

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irony which made Heine's name famous the whole world over, and to which Wagner later refers as "that irony, that bitter or humoristic sarcasm which, in a kindred plight, is all that remains to our literary poets to spur them on to work." In his own case, however, the bitterness was softened by many a touch of exquisite pathos, as anyone may see in the "Life's End in Paris."

For the second group, we come across a most complex influence—namely, that of the revolutionary literature of the period round about 1848-9. But here, again, it is one man in particular who gives the passing tone to Wagner's writings; and that man is Ludwig Feuerbach, an author now hardly mentioned in England, yet whose essay on "The Essence of Christianity" was translated by no less a personage than George Eliot. This influence Wagner has admitted in his preface to Vol. III. of his "Collected Writings"; nor is it conceivable that certain tricks of phrase in the "Art-work of the Future" and "Opera and Drama" should have appeared at all, but for the "active arousal" by that philosopher's essays to which he there confesses. The distinctive influence of Feuerbach as regards *style*, is chiefly evidenced by the proneness to an epigrammatic, or antithetic mode of utterance betrayed by Wagner at this time; and partly in illustration of this bent, but still more as affording an insight into the origin of this, perhaps the most important group of all, I cannot do better than quote a paragraph from the un-republished Dedication to Feuerbach of the "Art-work of the Future." It runs thus:—

"No personal conceit, but a need too great for silencing, has made of me—for a brief period—a writer. In my earliest youth I made poetry and plays; to one of these plays I longed to write some music: to learn that art, I became a musician. Later I wrote operas, setting my own dramatic poems to music. Musicians by profession, to whose ranks I belonged in virtue of my outer station, ascribed to me poetic talent; poets by profession allowed currency to my musical faculties. The public I often succeeded in actively arousing: critics by profession always tore me into rags. Thus I derived from myself and my antitheses much food for thought: when I thought aloud, I brought the Philistines upon me, who can only imagine the artist as a dolt, and never as a thinker. By friends I was often begged to publish in type my thoughts on Art and what I wished to see fulfilled therein: I preferred the endeavour to convey my wish by artistic deeds alone. From the circumstance that this my attempt could never quite succeed, I was forced to recognise that it is not the *individual*, but only the *community*, that can bring artistic deeds to actual accomplishment, past any doubting of the senses. The *recognition* of this fact, if *hope*

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herein is *not* to be entirely abandoned, means as much as: to raise the standard of *revolt* against the whole condition of our present Art and Life. Since the time when I summoned up the necessary courage for this revolt, I also resolved to enter on the field of writing; a course to which I had already once before been driven by outward want. Literarians by profession, who after the calming of the recent storms are now filling their lungs again with balmy breezes, find it shameless of an opera-poetising musician to go so far out of his way as to invade their own preserves. May they permit me as an artistic man, to make the attempt to address—by no means them, but—merely *thinking artists*, with whom they have naught in common."

But the influence of Feuerbach, like that of Heine, was of very short duration. We see it starting in the work last-named, and can almost see it dwindling as Wagner progressed through the different sections of "Opera and Drama," until in the "Communication" it has well-nigh disappeared. And this is one of the characteristics of Wagner's mind. I suppose that there never was a genius more open to impressions from without—as he himself admits—but, on the other hand, there have been few men who possessed a stronger-marked individuality than Richard Wagner. One feels tempted at first to compare what he took in from outside to food that he immediately submitted to a process of digestion, and then built up into his own flesh and bone; yet, indeed, it was not the substance of thought that he ever borrowed, but merely its *formula*, and therefore I think that the simile of a dose of medicine would be far more to the point. When he went to Dr. Heine, he was ordered Iron and Acid; but he found the tonic too bitter, and it set his teeth on edge. He then consulted Dr. Feuerbach, who prescribed him Arsenic; the immediate result was a brilliance of complexion and a glistening of the eye; but he soon discovered that the brilliance was but skin-deep, the eye began to smart, and warning internal pains compelled him to throw aside the medicine. He had not, however, given up the thought of finding a physician who should understand his constitution, and at last he found one in Arthur Schopenhauer, who simply advised him to continue the form of mental exercise he had already discovered for himself, with the addition of an occasional grain of Indian hemp whenever he found the trials of the world too insupportable. And now comes the notable fact, that, whereas his former advisers had stimulated Wagner to fresh exertions in the realm of Prose, the influence of Schopenhauer led to a prolonged suspension of all efforts in that direction, but incited him to the immediate drafting of sketches for two great works, one of which was shortly thereafter completed as "Tristan und Isolde" and the other

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passed later—if not directly, yet certainly by a slight metamorphosis—into the religious drama "Parsifal." With regard to this point, however, I would guard against the assumption, so often aired, that these works are a rendering of Schopenhauer into poetry; the influence here was merely excitant, for the ideas embodied in those works are the logical sequel of the root-idea of the "Ring des Nibelungen," written before Wagner had read a line of that philosopher's writings. Upon the prose itself, as I have just said, there was no immediate reflection of Schopenhauer or his style, for the simple reason that there was no prose; but if we take up the letters of this period to Liszt, we may guess the reflection that would have taken place, had not Wagner's mind been turned to other realms of production. Whereas, however, the former influences had reacted on his logically-reasoning powers, this new element had expanded his powers of *seeing;* and their only immediate channel of operation must necessarily be an artistic—*i.e.*, a creative one.

Thus even in the next group of writings, that of the Munich period, we find the traces of Schopenhauer less unmistakable than those of the political writer Constantin Frantz; and it is not till we reach the fourth, the Tribschen group, that we find, in the "Beethoven" essay, a direct result of the previous study of Schopenhauer's works. In the final group, that of Bayreuth, we have one or two minor influences added to that last named. However, Gobineau and Gleïzès, together with the Anti-vivisectionists, merely supplied Wagner with raw material for thought, his *style* having long since reached its state of equilibrium.

From this standpoint we may look back along the path, and find how it lay at first through well-trodden highways, and gradually, between influences on the one side and the other, thrust deeper and deeper into the inner reality of the world. Starting from the "formal surface" attacked in those witty articles of the Paris group, it pressed on through rhetorical apostrophe, through brilliant paradox, through deeply-reasoned system, until it reached the mountain's heart, where scarcely a disturbing sound finds entry from outside, and where the word once spoken re-echoes down a labyrinth of meanings.

Yet it was not till the last stage was reached that disturbing factors were completely fenced out. However much these main groups arose in obedience to the call of an inner voice which periodically awoke with claims for utterance, there were various fugitive essays scattered in between, that showed the outer personality stung to active combat. No account of the origin of Wagner's Prose can afford to neglect these minor writings and their cause, for, as usual with the nimble foe, these fractions have been singled out as

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thorough representatives of the whole. I allude, of course, to "Judaism in Music," to portions of the essay "On Conducting," and to the attacks on Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Hiller, &c. Of these it is better not to enter into any discussion here; and concerning another—and the only one that I should honestly like to see suppressed—the "Capitulation," I will merely remark that it appears to have been inspired by Carlyle's letter to the *Times* of November, 1870, and far more reflects the German people's indignation at their previous vilipending by the French, than any personal "Tannhäuser-" revenge taken, forsooth, by the brother-in-law of the very minister "of the light heart" who signed the declaration of war. It seems, however, to be pretty generally believed, or at least asserted, that it was Wagner's own polemics that first set rolling the ball which still is rolling, and which, after half-a-century of abuse, appears to have only slackened in speed, perhaps owing to the *vis inertiæ* of the matter it has caught up *en route*. The contrary, however, is the case. For close upon seven years Wagner's assailants had the field to themselves, however often his Dresden friends may have begged him to take up the cudgels in his turn. Nor, even after that period of quiescence, did he ever take notice of the vile personal slanders that were pelted at not only him, but *his*—still less reply in kind. Nevertheless, wherever an antagonist, who should have been above the tactics of the common herd, thought fit to borrow a cheap weapon from its armoury, there Wagner from time to time engaged in fight. It must be admitted that his attacks would then prove mercilessly galling; yet were they ever honourable and straightforward. Whether posterity will endorse all his musical criticisms, as present taste has proved the truth of some, must naturally remain an open question. Whether he would have been regarded as a more acceptable character if he had always meekly smiled and shaken the dirt from his coat without an answer, I very much doubt; for there is a combative instinct in every man, which causes him to look with disfavour upon the Uriah Heaps of life; and a genius without failings would be a little too much for the mental composure of ordinary mortals.

I reach at last the general contents of Wagner's Prose, and when I state that, taken in the gross, seven out of the ten volumes of his "Collected Writings" are composed entirely of prose, it will be evident that I can only *hint* at those contents to-night. Apart from the division into groups in point of time, these works fall into various groups in point of matter; for the range of topics broached by Wagner is as diversified as that of the speeches or essays of Gladstone—the only man of the present day who can be named in the same

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category of intellectual culture, though we shall find thereunder Goethe, Schopenhauer, and Carlyle in the recent past. To take first the more strictly theoretic section, we have the "Art-work of the Future," "Opera and Drama," "On Conducting," "On the Function of Opera," "On Actors and Singers," and "On the application of Music to the Drama." Then we have essays devoted to the practical exposition of particular musical works, such as those on Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony," "Eroica" Symphony, and "Coriolanus"; Gluck's "Iphigenia" Overture, his own "Tannhäuser" and "Dutchman" operas, and some of his own overtures. Again, no less than four different elaborate plans for the re-organisation of theatrical or musical institutes, besides two essays on the "public." Taking a wider circle, where Art proper is subordinated to social Life, we have "Art and Revolution," "Art and Climate," "On State and Religion," "German Art and German Politics," "What is German?" and "Religion and Art," with its appendices. Turning to individual musicians, apart from their recurrent mention in other essays, we have the "Beethoven" essay (which, moreover, forms the most philosophical treatise on the inner heart of music ever penned), the shorter reminiscences of Spohr, Spontini, Auber, and Rossini. Finally, we have the various monographs in which Wagner told the outside world how his art-works had been created, and the phases of development that he had himself passed through—namely, the "Autobiographic Sketch," "A Communication to my Friends," the "Music of the Future," the various shorter articles upon the "Nibelungen," Bayreuth and "Parsifal," and the introductions to well-nigh each several volume of the whole collection, showing how its particular contents had corresponded to a certain stage in his life-journey.

Of these groups the most important for our study are the last and first, as they afford us the standard whereby Wagner wished his artistic doings judged; a standard which may be briefly summarised in the terms of a footnote to the "Communication": "I shall never write an *opera* more. As I have no wish to invent an arbitrary title for my works, I will call them *dramas*, since hereby will at least be clearest indicated the standpoint whence the thing I offer should be accepted." Of all the works in these two groups, in my opinion the weightiest, as certainly the most eloquent, is the "Art-work of the Future"; yet by some strange fatality, perhaps owing to the stiffness of its first few pages, it has been the most ignored in England. If "Opera and Drama" may be compared to Ruskin's "Modern Painters," this "Art-work of the Future" stands most akin to that author's "Seven Lamps of Architecture." In both the works last-

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named we have the same penetration below the surface of Art to the great principles of Life and Human Nature on which it is based, to which it gives a tangible form, and which should be the governors of its every manifestment. In the present case the one great principle to which Wagner comes ever back, as the foundation and the governor of all Art, is that of Communism, as against Egoism; it is the "*common urgence of every art* towards the most direct appeal to a *common public*." It is from this standpoint, and this alone, that he holds up the united Drama above the works of Absolute Music; and the idea was so much a living truth to him, that it could not but blossom out into a luxuriance of poetic imagery which may offend the sticklers for dry logic, but is perhaps the only possible proof that an idea has taken living root in its expounder's soul; much in the same way as the old legend took the Pope's dry staff and made it put forth leaves for Tannhäuser. Thus we have that splendid Ocean simile in the chapter on "The Art of Tone," in which Harmony is compared to the sea, and Melody and Rhythm to its shores, this sea being "the depth and infinity of Nature herself, who veils from the prying eye of Man the unfathomable womb of her eternal Seed-time, her Begetting, and her Yearning; even because man's eye can only grasp the already manifested, the Blossom, the Begotten, the Fulfilled"; the simile ending with the following beautiful thought:—

"The *Greek*, when he took ship upon his sea, ne'er let the coast line fade from sight: for him it was the trusty stream that bore him from one haven to the next, the stream on which he passed between the friendly strands amidst the music of his rhythmic oars—here lending glances to the wood-nymphs' dance, there bending ear to sacred hymns whose melodious string of meaning words was wafted by the breezes from the temple on the mountain-top. On the surface of the water were truly mirrored back to him the jutting coasts, with all their peaks and valleys, trees and flowers and men, deep-set within the æther's blue; and this undulating mirror-picture, softly swayed by the fresh fan of gentle gusts, he deemed was *Harmony*.

"The *Christian* left the shores of Life.—Farther afield, beyond all confines, he sought the sea,—to find himself at last upon the Ocean, 'twixt sea and heaven, boundlessly alone."

But, indeed, the various art-varieties are here treated with so much dramatic force, that one takes a vivid interest in the portrayal of their scattered fates, and finds it perfectly natural that Wagner should close almost every section with an allusion to the "redemption" of that particular art, a "redemption" which he finally pictures in what he calls the Future Art-work. Thus does he describe the Poetry that is content with printer's ink and paper:—

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"There sate she then, the lonely, sullen sister, behind her reeking lamp in the gloom of her silent chamber,—a female *Faust*, who, across the dust and mildew of her books, from out the uncontenting warp and woof of Thought, from off the everlasting rack of fancies and of theories, yearned to step forth into actual life; with flesh and bone, and spick and span, to stand and go mid real men, a genuine human being. Alas! the poor sister had cast away her flesh and bone in over-pensive thoughtlessness; a disembodied soul, she could only now *describe* that which she lacked, as she watched it from her gloomy chamber, through the shut lattice of her thought, living and stirring its limbs amid the dear but distant world of Sense; she could only picture, ever picture, the beloved of her youth; 'so looked his face, so swayed his limbs, so glanced his eye, so rang the music of his voice.' But all this picturing and describing, however deftly she attempted to raise it to a special art, how ingeniously soever she laboured to fashion it by forms of speech and writing, for Art's consoling recompense,—it still was but a vain, superfluous labour, the stilling of a need which only sprang from a failing that her own caprice had bred; it was nothing but the indigent wealth of alphabetic signs, distasteful in themselves, of some poor mute."

And thus, for a final quotation from this extraordinary work, does he give a graphic sketch of the Opera of his day (1849):—

"The arts of Dance and Poetry had taken a personal lease of Drama *in their own way:* the spectacular Play and the pantomimic Ballet were the two territories between which Opera now deployed her troops, taking from each whatever she deemed indispensable for the self-glorification of Music. Play and Ballet, however, were well aware of her aggressive self-sufficiency: they only lent themselves to their sister against their will, and in any case with the mental reservation that on the first favourable opportunity they each would clear themselves an exclusive field. So Poetry leaves behind her feeling and her pathos, the only fitting wear for Opera, and throws her net of modern Intrigue around her sister Music; who, without being able to get a proper hold of it, must willy-nilly twist and turn the empty cobweb, which none but the nimble play-seamstress herself can plait into a tissue: and there she chirps and twitters, as in the French confectionery-operas, until at last her peevish breath gives out, and sister Prose steps in to fill the stage. Dance, on the other hand, has only to espy some breach in the breath-taking of the tyrannising songstress, some chilling of the lava-stream of musical emotion,—and in an instant she flings her legs astride the boards; trounces sister Music off the scene, down to the solitary confinement of

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the orchestra; and spins, and whirls, and runs around, until the public can no longer see the wood for wealth of leaves—*i.e.*, the opera for the crowd of legs."

I have alluded above to the way in which two ideas, "Communism" and "Redemption," are woven into this essay, or rather, how one forms the warp and the other the woof of it; but this is merely an illustration of the manner in which Wagner has constructed the tissue of the work. The parallelism between this tissue and that of his immediately succeeding musical works is remarkable, for we here have a regular, though unconscious system of *Leitmotiven* of thought. We find a similar groundwork in the "Communication"; but whether it extends throughout the later writings, I am not as yet prepared to say, for it is only on indexing a work that this peculiarity has a thorough opportunity of showing itself. In any case I may observe that, just as with the music of the dramas, there are some thoughts, some harmonies, so to say, common to both the "Art-work" and the "Communication," and many that constantly recur in the one and are almost, if not entirely absent from the other.

I must now hurry to a close, or I shall drown myself and you with detail; but I should like first to touch upon two points. The one is that of Wagner's deep and unaffected reverence for the great masters of music, a reverence which, for some unaccountable reason, has been so often and so ignorantly denied; the other is that of his strain of humour, sometimes boisterous, sometimes sardonic, sometimes gentle, but always unassumed and natural. As to the reverence, I hardly need refer to that creed of the dying musician, "I believe in God, Beethoven, and Mozart," but will adduce a less well-known passage, once more from the "Art-work of the Future":—

"This was the soul of the joyous impulse which created for us that glorious work the Symphony in A major. All tumult, all yearning and storming of the heart become here the blissful insolence of joy, which snatches us away with bacchanalian might and bears us through the roomy space of Nature, through all the streams and seas of Life, shouting in glad self-consciousness as we tread throughout the Universe the daring measures of this human sphere-dance. This Symphony is the *Apotheosis of Dance* herself: it is Dance in her highest aspect, as it were the loftiest Deed of bodily motion incorporated in an ideal mould of tone. Melody and Harmony unite around the sturdy bones of Rhythm to firm and fleshy human shapes, which now with giant limbs' agility, and now with soft, elastic pliance, *almost before our very eyes*, close up the supple, teeming ranks; the while now gently, now with daring, now serious, now wanton, now pensive,

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and again exulting, the deathless strain sounds forth and forth; until, in the last whirl of delight, a kiss of triumph seals the last embrace."

Of Wagner's humorous side I will only notice one example, and that chiefly because it lies buried among some unrepublished letters to a Dresden journal of the year 1841. Taking for illustration a theatrical performance by some travelling company in a provincial town, he jocularly says: "Just as the play was about to begin, I heard a hubbub on the stage, and soon picked out from it an anguished cry, apparently that of the manager: 'The hermit! The hermit! Where on earth's the hermit?' As the boisterous impatience of the public assumed a threatening tone, that cry soon took a more comminative character, such as 'Where the devil is the hermit? The scoundrel has got to begin! Find me the cursed hermit!' An answer could be dimly heard: 'He's still swilling in the tavern.' Then, after a most unrepeatable oath, I heard at last the order given with swift resignation: 'The black knights!' The curtain went up; from opposite sides two black-clad knights came proudly on; with defiant shouts of 'Ha! This shalt thou pay me!' they rushed savagely on one another, and laid out right and left in the most merciless of fashions. Finally, the hermit appeared, and the black knights marched off. But as often as the players could not be found, as often as a scene refused to shift, as often as the leading lady was a little late with her change of dress; in short, as often as the rushing stream of action halted, so often did the unhappy black knights appear, and fall on one another with the cry, 'Ha! This shalt thou pay me!'"

I have only now to conclude with a general recommendation of Richard Wagner's Prose to your earnest notice. Those of you who are musicians will find some crumbs of comfort in its scathing attacks upon the critics; those of you who are critics will find some satisfaction in its laying bare the skeleton of many an operatic or academic cupboard; those who, like myself, are merely amateurs, will find a fund of general knowledge, of deep thoughts on almost every branch of art and life, that in itself is a liberal education, and in its stimulus to independent investigation is of priceless value. Not that I am prepared to maintain that Wagner was always right: for who can be? But even in his so-called errors of judgment there is far more instruction than in the dry-as-dust effusions of mere musical historians, or the well-starched theories of æstheticians. For whatever this man's hand found to do, he did it with all his might; he pulled no long faces, nor put his tongue in his cheek, but simply wrote as he felt he *must* write. And if even he should have done no more than state fresh problems of Art, their plain statement is already

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half-way to their solution. Thus I may say that in these Prose works we have no mere bag of tricks, but a sack of good sound grain; some of which, though only a tiny portion, has already been ground down and turned into light pastry, by the flippant; another handful has been crushed, and baked into the heaviest of bread, by the ponderous; but the bulk remains to take and sow in fruitful soil, where it shall flourish and increase a thousandfold.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am sure you will all agree with me in returning our best thanks to Mr. Ellis for his very interesting paper. Although he spoke of the way in which Wagner's prose had been treated some thirty or forty years ago, he entirely avoided mentioning how he himself had treated it. I must, however, refer to the admirable way he has treated so much of Wagner's prose and express the hope that he will be enabled to continue his labour to the end. I think the translator Mr. Ellis referred to was the late Mr. Bridgeman, but there was one point he spoke of—that was the translation of "Lohengrin." I do not remember whether Mr. Bridgeman's name was attached to that; but I lately came across one of Liszt's letters to Wagner, in which he said: "I will shortly send you an English translation of 'Lohengrin,' that has been made here by a friend of mine." It struck me whether it was that translator or not. I must, however, plead for excuse for the shortcomings of translators. I know that whenever I have translated anything of importance I have always registered a vow that it should be the last time.

The vote of thanks was then passed unanimously.

MR. WESCHÉ.—I may say that I am an enthusiastic admirer of Wagner, but I certainly feel that the opinions of all composers upon contemporary composers must be treated with great caution. For instance, compare the opinions of Weber and others upon Beethoven (whose music all schools accept now); he could not stand his music at all, Spohr hated it, one of the Rombergs danced upon the quartets. So it is impossible to take the opinion of Wagner upon the music of Brahms or Mendelssohn with anything but great distrust, the same distrust that we feel on the negative silence of Mendelssohn towards Schumann. There are so many forces acting upon a man's opinion of contemporaries, that you cannot rely upon things he may have to say concerning them. Another thing is that a man is trained in a particular school of music (as Wagner undoubtedly was). Well, one

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may naturally assume that he is to a certain extent prejudiced in treating the works of a musician who only writes abstract music. And, on the other hand, those who believe, as Beethoven and Mozart did, in keeping to the old and well-shaped paths of thought, are naturally startled when they are asked to accept all the theories of Wagner. So I think one must be very careful in accepting as judgment what a man writes or says of another contemporary.

Mr. E. F. Jacques.—What Mr. Wesché has just said is very interesting, but it is hardly fair to accuse Wagner of even a suggestion that he was prejudiced against composers who wrote only abstract music, because it is well-known that he was an enthusiastic admirer of Mozart, who may be taken as a typical writer of abstract music.

Mr. Newman.—There may be a great deal said about one composer's opinion of another, but I suppose all of us will admit that Wagner was not only a composer of music, but also a philosopher. I therefore think Richard Wagner might be entitled to an opinion of the works of his brother composers, if only on the authority of his own philosophy.

Mr. Bernard Shaw.—I may be permitted to express my surprise that what Wagner said about Mendelssohn should be called in question in England, of all places on the earth. I really cannot understand how it is that Wagner should be so misunderstood on the subject. It seems to me that Wagner did strict justice to Mendelssohn, who appears to have treated his music very much in the same way as he conducted it. Any one whose memory goes back to the time before Richter began to conduct, about twelve or thirteen years ago, will remember what a performance of a Mozart or Beethoven symphony was like. It was so rapid that scarcely one idea of the composer was properly brought out. But when Richter came there was a change; people began to recognise the true music and saw the proper conductor; they began to hear the music of the great composers as it was written. Now with regard to Wagner's opinion about Brahms. Brahms is a man of most enormous musical power, but he decidedly is not a great thinker or poet as Wagner was. I do not think that his music will suggest that to anyone. His "Requiem" I take to be a most abominable work, and furthermore it is a work which all cultivated musicians know to be a poor composition. It is intolerably long, and I really cannot understand how people can listen to it. But you find a general tendency on the part of the members of the Press and musical critics to write about Brahms as though he were a great composer. Every contemporary critic is indeed bound to say that Brahms is a composer; so he is, but put him in his proper place, so that our young composers and musicians

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will be better qualified to judge him from that particular standpoint. I can only say that I have never yet met with an opinion of Wagner's that did not seem to me to be a most remarkably critical opinion.

Mr. WESCHÉ.—I really cannot let pass Mr. Bernard Shaw's remarks about Brahms, because he has attacked in a heartless and flippant manner the work of a genius and a transcendental musician. It is easy enough to do this and find fault with anything. But it does not make Wagner any greater to belittle Brahms. I am surprised at Mr. Shaw saying such things of a man who has written chamber music and symphonies worthy to take rank next to Beethoven. But if you judge him from the point of view of a dramatic composer, that is another matter altogether. Each man can be great in his own form of art, without trenching upon the ground of other artists. We *will* look upon a man as a composer of one special form of music, say of symphonies or oratorios, or musical dramas; but is it necessary for a man to do everything? Did Beethoven, who did most things greatly, reach the apex of dramatic art with "Fidelio"?

Mr. E. F. JACQUES.—If I were asked to mention one work of Brahms that might appeal to a Wagnerite I should have mentioned the "Requiem" without hesitation. In spite of its "pedal points" and other technical effects it is, I think, a highly expressive work; one, I should have imagined, that would have appealed to Mr. Shaw.

The CHAIRMAN.—I hope Mr. Ellis will really tell us to what extent Wagner opposed Brahms.

Mr. ELLIS.—Before making a few, a very few remarks in reply to what has taken place, I should like to draw your attention to a certain sentence in the paper I have just read to you. To return to the paper now strikes me as something like resuscitating a bit of ancient history; but when I wrote that sentence I had a sort of impression that the discussion might possibly take the line it has. I will read it: "I allude, of course, to 'Judaism in Music,' to portions of the essay 'On Conducting,' and to the attacks on Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Hiller, &c. Of these it is better not to enter into any discussion here." Well, in spite of my precautions, I find that instead of confining ourselves to "Richard Wagner's Prose," we have been talking a good deal more about Brahms. So be it; but I came here entirely unprepared to make any statements about Brahms; and I may say, in the first place, that I am not going to deny that Wagner said some extremely cutting things about Brahms as a composer on the larger scale. It is certain that in Germany, for some time past, a strenuous effort has been made to elevate Brahms by calling him "the

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modern Beethoven," and Wagner considered this as tantamount to blasphemy. I prefer to hark back to the commencement of the discussion, and to take up the topic broached by Mr. Wesché, when he said that we must be "very careful how we take the opinion of a composer on the works of another composer." Now this is the very thing that I should have wished to have said, excepting that I would go farther, and say that we must be very careful how we take *any one's* mere *opinion* on *anything*. We are all too ready to take somebody else's opinion and save ourselves the trouble of thinking. And this is where the peculiar value of these prose works of Wagner lies; they give us an opportunity of thinking for ourselves. He ploughs up the ground and shows the under side of the conventional clod; you are given every opportunity of differing from his opinions, since he scarcely ever fails to state his reasons why. Those who care to take the trouble to follow his arguments sentence by sentence, and really criticise them, will find they are rewarded by the having gained a new standpoint of thought, no matter whether in individual cases they eventually may agree or differ with the writer. In conclusion, I must heartily thank you for the very kind way in which you have made reference to my own labours in laying these works before the public in an English dress; and, in reply to Mr. Bernard Shaw, I trust they will be continued, for I do not see any immediate likelihood of my health giving way under the task.

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THE HISTORY AND USES OF THE SOL-FA SYLLABLES.

BY W. G. MCNAUGHT, A.R.A.M.

THE object of this paper is to draw attention to a bye-path of musical history. The Sol-fa syllables now play an important part in elementary musical education. It may, therefore, be worth while to give a brief account of their birth and adventures.

Since the eleventh century the syllables have been used for three distinct purposes:—

1st. As names for the scale position of sounds apart from any particular pitch (as musicians use the terms Tonic, Dominant, &c.).

2nd. As pitch names (as in English speaking countries the letters C, D, E, F, &c., are used).

3rd. As voice training aids (by Solo-singing trainers in Vocalises, &c.).

We know, and our ancestors must often have felt, that one set of names cannot without confusion be used simultaneously for these three purposes. It is lamentable to observe that even to-day we seem to be remote from the time when logic and common-sense will rid musical study of this incubus and inconsistency.

In the eleventh century, Guido, an Italian monk, first struck the rock from which the varied uses of the Sol-fa syllables have ever since flowed. In Guido's day there were only the beginnings of a Staff Notation. The rise and fall of sounds had been pictorially, and it would seem very indefinitely shown by neumæ placed above the words to be sung. The admitted chief use of these signs was to remind singers of passages and tunes which they had already acquired by ear. Knowing, as we do, that even to-day the Staff Notation is used in precisely the same way, we can readily accept this statement.

Then the upward and downward progression of tones and semitones in the order of our modern system was fully recognised, as far as pitch relations only were concerned, and the old Roman alphabetical nomenclature—

A, B, C, D, E, F, G,

noted the same relations, if not precisely the pitches that they do to-day. But the pitch-naming was limited to

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"natural" notes, except that B flat was also noted and named. The pitch scale in use was, therefore, as follows:

$A_{|}$, $B\flat_{|}$, $B_{|}$, C, D, E, F, G, A, $B\flat$, B, $C^{|}$, &c.

The modern octave scale with all its inter-relations, however really *potential* in these pitches, was only dimly understood. The view of the successive pitches within an octave, that they formed so many conjunct or disjunct tetrachords—a view inherited from the Greeks—still oppressed the theory of music, and the Gregorian modes erroneously supposed to be a restoration of Greek usage were still looked upon as a sort of finality in music. Then briefly we have:

1. Mere beginnings of Staff Notation.
2. Passages of naturals, plus B flat.
3. Hexachordal views of the scale, notwithstanding the recognition of the octave system in the pitch symbols.

In this, to us, confused musical environment, Guido, anxious apparently to find some means of fixing relations of tones by the principle of association, either fitted, or, as some say, found already fitted, a hymn tune and words in which the initial notes of successive phrases of the melody ascended step by step in the hexachord C up to A. The syllables of the Latin hymn that happened to fall upon the initial notes of each line were then chosen to name the corresponding pitches. The hymn is as follows:—

HYMN TO ST. JOHN.

Ut que - ant lax - is **Re** - so - na - re fi - bris

Mi - - - ra ges - to - rum **Fa** - mu - li tu - o - rum

Sol - ve po-lu - ti **La** - bi - i re - a - tum Sanc-te Jo-han-nes.

Now, whether the hymn and tune already existed in this allied form, or whether Guido himself deliberately and intentionally fitted them together for the purpose of providing syllables to name the successive steps of the hexachord, it is in either case clear that the choice of particular syllables was purely accidental. Whether the syllables suggested the division into hexachords or the previously conceived hexachordal system called for only six syllables, it is beyond my purpose to discuss. No matter how it arose, the hexachordal system was a welcome advance upon the tetrachordal system, and marked an emancipation from a narrower

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view of tonal relations. A point to observe here, is that the Guidonian hexachords represent a fixed *succession* of tones and semitones. Tetrachords may be of various shapes, but the Guidonian hexachords represented the tonal succession, illustrated by the first six tones of our major scale. It was an object, therefore, to express this tonal succession from as many pitches as possible, without using inflected notes. The B flat, however, was, as I have said, admitted. This permitted a hexachord to be expressed from F. By recognising a pitch below A, the relations shown by the syllables could be expressed from three different pitches—viz., (1) from the pitch below A; (2) from C; and (3) from F, the latter hexachord, of course, requiring the B flat, just as that from G required the B natural.

Guido's Over-Lapping Hexachords.

Super-Acute	e*								la
	d							la	sol
	c							sol	fa
	b♮								mi
	b♭							fa	
	a						la	mi	re
Acute (middle C)	g						sol	re	ut
	f						fa	ut	
	e					la	mi		
	d				la	sol	re		
	c				sol	fa	ut		
	b♮					mi			
	b♭				fa				
	a			la	mi	re			
Grave Octave	G			sol	re	ut			
	F			fa	ut				
	E		la	mi					
	D		sol	re					
	C		fa	ut					
	B	mi							
	A	re							
(Gamma)	Γ	ut							

The Combination of Letters and Syllables to Name Pitch.

The fact that each alphabetical pitch name was one Sol-fa name in one hexachord and another Sol-fa name in another

* This "e" in the super-acute part of the scale is an addition made in the fourteenth century.

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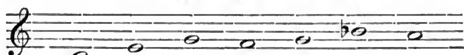
hexachord, led to a curious system of identifying pitches by their alphabetical names, and all their possible Sol-fa names, a custom that was maintained up to the seventeenth century. Thus we read in Morley and other old English writers of C-*fa-ut*, G-*sol-re-ut*, &c. The note added below A was called by the Greek alphabetical G—viz., *Gamma*, and as in Guido's time, at least, this was the lowest theoretical pitch recognised, this note could only be *ut*, and in accordance with the practice of combining pitch and Sol-fa names, was, therefore, called Gamma-*ut* and the word Gamut was also afterwards adopted for the scale series generally. It is curious to observe that this term Gamut was used to describe the key of G for some time afterward. Dr. Blow, for instance, published an anthem described as being in Gamut.*

Mutations.

It will thus be seen that in order to name what we now regard as a complete scale, or to name the notes of a melody that did not happen to be restricted to any one hexachord, it was necessary sometimes to draw upon a contiguous hexachord. The study of where, how, and when to make a change was called the study of mutations, which are practically an anticipation of Tonic Sol-fa bridge notes.

Guido: Ut mi sol fa - ut re fa mi



Tonic Sol-fa: d m s ^f^d r f m

I need not describe the rules that were laid down to govern the choice of the place for a mutation. It will be enough to say that the mutations were considered a most difficult study, and it is said they were regarded by choristers as "a cross of tribulation."

The Guidonian Hand.

The process of Sol-faing was said to be simplified to some extent by the use of what is called the Guidonian Hand, although it is not at all certain that Guido invented it. I do

* Sir William Hunter, in his "The Indian Empire: Its People's History and Products" (pub. W. H. Allen, 1893), says, p. 152; "The Indian art of music (gándharva-veda) was destined to exercise a wider influence. A regular system of notation had been worked out before the age of Pánini (350 B.C.) and the seven notes were designated *by their initial letters.* This notation passed from the Bráhmans through the Persians to Arabia, and was thence introduced into European music by Guido d'Arezzo at the beginning of the eleventh century. [Von Bohlen, "Das Alte Indien." II., 195 (1830); Benfey's "Indien" (Erche & Gruber's Encyclop., XVII., 1840); quoted by Weber, "Hist. Ind. Lit.," p. 172, footnote 315 (1878)]. Some indeed suppose that our modern word *gamut* comes, not from the Greek letter gamma, but from the Indian *gáma* (in Prákit; in Sanskrit, gráma), literally 'a musical scale.'"

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not propose to fully explain the Hand system, because Guido's overlapping hexachords have been sufficiently dealt with for my present purpose. But it may be just as well to warn students not to take in too trustfully the first explanation of the Guidonian Hand they may light upon, because two of the most widely circulated and deservedly popular histories explain the Guidonian Hand in two contradictory ways. In "Grove's Dictionary" (p. 660, Appendix), Mr. Rockstro gives a diagram with the hexachordal syllables read in one way, and in Cassell's edition of "Naumann's History," edited by Ouseley (p. 213), the syllables are made to read in another way.

Sol-faing and Solmisation.

I now leave Guido and pass on to some later periods. I shall use the expressions "Sol-fa" syllables, "Sol-faing," and "Solmisation." Who first suggested these expressions I do not know. The fact that in mutations as in modern music *sol* and *fa* frequently become *ut* may account for the choice, but it might easily have been that to-day we should have to speak of "Sol-re" syllables and "Famisation" or "Utresation." The word "Sol-faing" was certainly in use late in the sixteenth century.

Christopher Simpson, in his "Compendium of Practical Music," dated 1677, says, apparently with indignant surprise: "I have seen songs with a flat standing in A, in B, and in E all at once; but such songs are irregular (as to which we call the *Sol-faing* of a song), being designed for instruments rather than voices."

During the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries the Church spread far and wide the practice of Sol-faing; but as the idea of the complete octave scale with its specialty of a leading note became fixed, the inadequacy of hexachordal Sol-faing became increasingly apparent. We now begin to hear of proposals to alter or add to Guido's syllables; but perhaps the most notable proposal (emanating, I believe, from Geneva, towards the end of the sixteenth century) was that the whole scale should be Sol-faed by the syllables *fa*, *sol*, *la*, *mi*. In that famous old book "A plain and easy Introduction to Practical music," by Thomas Morley, published in 1597, although Guido's movable overlapping hexachords are taught, it is clear that the writer has some inclination to do away with the *Ut* and to use *Fa* in its stead. Of this restricted Sol-fa system I shall speak again presently. It seems clear that on the Continent, at least, the Sol-fa names were now being freely used not only as mnemonics, but as pitch names, and as pegs on which to hang vocal exercises. The most radical change, that threatened for a time to oust the Guidonian syllables,

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was that proposed by the Belgian Waelrant (known to many Choir conductors by his part-song "Hard by a fountain"), who was born in 1517, and died in 1595. He proposed an entirely new set of syllables, and his system was called Bocedisation or Bobibation. The use of this system was strongly advocated in Italy, France, and Germany, but all in vain. It was used extensively by Waelrant's countrymen, but, I believe, it is now entirely forgotten :—

WAELRANT'S BOBIBATION OR BOCEDISATION.

be, ce, di, ga, la, mi, ni.
→ up

HITZLER'S BEBISATION.

The partial success of Waelrant's Bobibation led to the proposal by Hitzler, a German musician, of a rival system called Bebisation or Labecedation. It does not, however, seem that Hitzler's plan had much success :—

HITZLER'S BEBISATION OR LABECEDATION.

la, be, ce, de, me, fe, ge.
→ up

It will be observed that the various plans for new syllables make no provision for other than naturals, and that they are intended simply as pitch denominators.

SI.

About this time—viz., the end of the sixteenth century, *i.e.*, 500 years after Guido—an addition that has survived to this day was proposed and gradually accepted. The seventh syllable, *Si*, was added to the Guidonian six. Whether this syllable was to name a pitch or to name a scale relation is not clear, but in any case for either purpose a name was needed. The syllable is formed from the initial letters of the last two syllables of the Guidonian Hymn already quoted. The credit of suggesting it is claimed for a Netherlander, Puteanus, by some, and for a Frenchman, Lemaire, by others. Mersennus, the celebrated historian, who died in 1648, supports the claim of Lemaire, and he also mentions that *Za* was often used for B flat, the *Si* being reserved for B natural.

Ut. C'.
Si. B.
Za. B♭.
La. A.
Sol. G.

THE FA-SOL-LA-MI METHOD.

The next development was the introduction of the method of Sol-faing known as the Fa-sol-la method. This was in use

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in Geneva late in the sixteenth century, and in the early part of the seventeenth century was making way in England especially, and to some extent in Germany. In this system *Ut*, *Re*, and *Si* are entirely abandoned, and the whole scale is Sol-faed by *Fa*, *sol*, *la* twice repeated, with a *Mi* for a leading note. It is easy to see how this limitation arose out of the Guidonian tetrachordal system. Placing the hexachords side by side, they overlap just so as to lead to the choice of *Fa*, *sol*, *la*, the *Mi* showing the necessary leading note after every second hexachord. Therefore the rule was a *Mi* between twice *fa*, *sol*, *la*.

Morley's "Introduction to Music," dated 1597, makes no direct mention of this method—although, as I have already noted, his practice was tending towards its adoption—but teaches simply the six Guidonian syllables. Christopher Simpson, in his "Compendium of Music," published in 1667, makes no mention of *Si*, but alludes to the six syllables as having been used in former times, and he adds that most modern teachers consider *Ut* and *Re* superfluous, and that, therefore, they are now laid aside. The edition of John Playford's "Introduction to the Skill of Music," edited by H. Purcell, dated 1694, says that the "four syllables are quite sufficient and less burdensome to the practitioner's memory." Even in the latest of these books, while the rules for Sol-faing in keys up to three flats are given, no mention is made of sharp keys. A rhyme in Playford's book gives what seems to affect to be exhaustive rules for Sol-faing in the following words:—

> If that no flat is set in B,
> Then in that place standeth y^r mi.
>
> But if your B alone is flat,
> Then E is mi; be sure of that.
>
> If both be flat, your B and E,
> Then A is mi, here you may see.
>
> If these be flat, E, A, and B,
> Then mi alone doth stand on D.
>
> If all be flat, E, A, B, D,
> Then surely mi will stand in G.

In England, in 1650, it is clear from the evidence of many contemporary writers that *Ut*, *Re* had completely died out, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *fa* alone being used.

It is well known that for some time composers did not care to place more than three flats or three sharps in the signature, even when a piece was in E or A flat, and it has been conjectured that the *fa*, *sol*, *la* plan of Sol-faing may have had something to do with these omissions. In the case of a piece really in A flat, but written with the signature of E flat, the newest essential flat would have to be plainly shown, and the unusual place for *fah* strongly emphasised.

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Playford's rhymes provided no rules for sharp keys. This omission was striking, because the music of his time was certainly sometimes written in sharp keys.

Later than Playford an addition was made to his rhyming rules to meet the case of keys with sharps in the signature. The new rhymes are as follows:

> Learn this, and learn it well by rote,
> That mi is aye the sharpest note,
> For if a sharp on F be set
> To call that mi do not forget.
>
> And if another on C be found,
> Remember there your mi to sound,
> And if one more be set on G,
> Then in that place will stand your mi.
>
> If all be sharp, F, C, G, D,
> Then mi alone will stand in D.

Another point worth observation is, that in all these books no provision is made for accidental sharpening or flattening beyond the calling a new flat "*fa*," and a new sharp "*mi*." In 1686, however, a curious book was published in London, anonymously, called: "A New and Easie Method to learn to Sing by Book," in which a new set of syllables compounded from the alphabetical names and the Guidonian syllables is used, and modified names for sharps and flats are proposed, so far as I know, for the first time in the history of a Sol-fa system. The writer says: "That so few persons (out of cathedrals) understand Prick-song, a main reason is the obscurity and confusion in the method commonly taught, wherein the following particulars make it a long drudgery to attain proficiency:

"1. At first sight we have presented a long bead-roll of hard and useless names to be conned backward and forward in the Gam-ut.

"2. When this drudgery is over, follows a worse, to learn the differing names of the notes, according to the several places of Mi, which in each cliff hath three several stations, being one while in B, another while in E, another while in A, the other names (*Fa*, *Sol*, *La*) attending its motions.

"3. When you are past these two, and can name your notes three manner of ways, you are yet to seek for the chief thing, the tuning of them, if you have not a master at hand to lead you with his voice or instrument.

"4. A fourth difficulty arises from the many cliffs, which no less than seven ways change the places of the notes upon the lines and spaces, and makes it a most tedious thing to be perfect in all, or but some of them."

Further, Fa♯ is to be called *fay*, and C♯ *cay*. But these modifications wholly referred to pitch, the whole system

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being the earliest Fixed Do method, with inflected syllables for sharps and flats, I am able to trace.

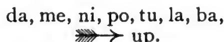
I now turn to the Continent, where during the latter part of the seventeenth century the complete Guidonian syllables, plus Si, were again in almost universal use, but chiefly to name pitch and not scale relations. Numerous systems of syllables were proposed only to be rejected. But one proposal made, it is said, by G. B. Doni, a learned Italian theorist who died in 1669, was lucky enough to command so much support that to-day many millions of persons are perhaps more familiar with the one syllable proposed by Doni than any of the original Guidonian syllables. The proposal arose out of the objection that was felt to the sound of *Ut* in vocal exercises. As a substitute, Doni, or his friends for him, proposed the first syllable of his name *Do*, and it is said that the second syllable *Ni* was suggested as a name for the seventh of the scale of C. It is interesting to reflect that if the last proposal had been as successful as the first, Tonic Sol-faists would to-day most probably be using *Ni* for the seventh of the major scale, and *Na* for its flat, because their sole reason for altering Si to Te is to avoid the initial S already used for the fifth of the major scale.

Do was soon adopted in almost every country in Europe, the only notable exception being France, where to this day *Ut* is generally used as a Sol-fa name for C, and as a name for the major key-note in the Chevé system. But Raymondi, a Frenchman, who has distinguished himself by his writings on the notation of music, constantly uses the syllable *Do* in his " Critical Examples of Musical Notation," published in France in 1856.

The next fact to notice in the history of the syllables is the employment of only initial letters.* This practice is found in the old black letter Bibles of the early part of the seventeenth century, the initials being shown under the Staff Notation notes in order that the singer might know what syllable to use in Sol-faing.

The most notable incident of the early part of the following, *i.e.*, the eighteenth century, was the proposal made by Graun (1701—1755) to substitute another set of syllables altogether—viz.,

da, me, ni, po, tu, la, ba,



The use of these syllables was called *Damenisation*. Their practice, however, was purely local and soon died out. That they were invented at all in the interests of vocalisation is a renewed proof that for this purpose the Guidonian syllables

* See extract from Sir William Hunter's " The Indian Empire," quoted on p. 38.

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were not considered to be adapted. Did they serve any sight-singing purpose at this time? I think they were very little used in this connection. To the extent sight-singing was cultivated on the Continent in these days the syllables must have afforded aid in only the most elementary exercises. When they had served this purpose, attention was given to intervals and pitch, and reliance was placed upon natural abilities and abundant experience. In the conception of an interval the singer no more relied upon a mnemonic connection between syllable and sound than any of us do when we sing to words.

All this, systematised, instead of being picked up at random, is practically the Hullah method and the Hullah treatment of the syllables. The syllables are theoretical names for things, but they are not, and are not intended to be aids to conceptions, such, for instance, as Tonic Sol-faists make them.

Consequent upon the use of the syllables as pitch names, the need for the differentiation of naturals, flats, and sharps was felt—not so much in the interests of vocalisation, in the course of which the singer would have only more to remember, without gaining any compensating advantage, but chiefly in the interests of musical theory.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the alphabetical names for pitch, A, B, C, &c., were dropping out of use in Italy and France, but Germany and England still retained them: Germany gradually abandoning altogether the Guidonian syllables, and England using them concurrently with the alphabetical series.

In 1746 an anonymous writer in Italy suggested names for pitches between the naturals:

Pa	Bo	Tu	De	No
C—D	D—E	F—G	G—A	A—B

and the scheme was approved and adopted by eminent musicians, but it did not long survive its proposal. In 1768 Serva advocated a new set of names distinguishing sharp from flat, and abolishing Guido's names entirely,

♮	Ca	Da	Ae	Fa	Ga	A	Ba
♯	Ce	De	E	Fe	Go	Ao	Be
♭	Ci	Di	Oe	Fi	Si	Au	Bi

but this again failed to obtain support, and so the old syllables continued to do duty for naturals, flats, and sharps.

In England, at this time, the complete series *Do—Si*, movable and fixed, was being used, side by side with the movable limited series (*fa*, *sol*, *la*, *mi*), and numerous other plans, mostly movable in principle, were advocated and practised.

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The next event of importance, measured at least by its ultimate effect, was the introduction, by Wilhem, of a method of practising singing in class, in Paris, about 1815. Wilhem's method brought no new usage of the Sol-fa syllables into vogue. The current use of the syllables in France as fixed pitch symbols was adopted just as it was found. The specialty of Wilhem's method was not the employment of syllables, but rather in the details of the organisation of the classes, each pupil helping less competent pupils, and in a systematic arrangement of the musical facts to be taught. Wilhem died in 1842. But far more important in its after results than even Wilhem's method, was the comparatively obscure publication, in 1835, of Miss Glover's "Scheme for rendering Psalmody Congregational." The leading points of Miss Glover's system were: 1st, The complete divorce of the syllables from the ordinary Notation and the construction of an independent Notation formed from the initial letters of the syllables; and 2nd, The use of a diagram displaying the scale pictorially, just as in these days Tonic Sol-faists show scale relations on their modulator. Amongst the other alterations in the syllables proposed by Miss Glover it will be observed that TE is substituted for SI in naming the seventh of the scale :—

Miss Glover's Names.		
	Doh	
	Te	
(♭7th) **Cole**		*Minor.*
	Lah	**Lah**
(♭6th) **Gah**		**Ne**
	Sole	
(♯4th) **Tu**		**Bah**
	Fah	
	Me	**Me**
	Ray	
	Doh	

Another highly systematised use of the syllables was also being evolved in France during the early part of this century

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on the system known as the Chevé method. This method is founded upon the figure notation suggested by Rousseau. The major key tone is shown by the figure 1 and the other tones of the scale by successive numbers descending. The most curious point, however, is that the figures are named not as numbers, but by the Sol-fa syllables, and in accordance with the usage of France the old syllable *Ut* is retained. The figures form a purely tonic notation and all the chromatic tones of the scale are specially named:—

CHEVÉ'S NAMES.

♭	♮	♯
		sè
	si	
seu		lè
	la	
leu		jè
	sol	
jeu		fè
	fa	mè
feu	mi	
meu		rè
	ré	
reu		tè
	ut	
teu		

In order that some later developments of the use of the syllables may be more easily understood, the publication in Paris, early in the present century, of a book entitled "Music Simplified," must be noted. It was written by a French professor of music named Berneval, and an English edition is dedicated to Lord Burghersh, who was one of the first promoters of the Royal Academy of Music. I believe Berneval was for some time a teacher in the Academy, but I cannot vouch for this. The great features of Berneval's simplification of music were the prominence he gave to the study of the peculiar properties of scale sounds and his contention that it was quite unnecessary to burden the attention and memory of a beginner by studying intervals. He says:—

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"The Monogamic method is distinguished from others by several characteristics. The first that will strike you is, that, instead of beginning, as other methods generally do, by the study of the *Intervals*, our system commences with the *Properties* of sounds. . . . The pupil is generally taught the *Intervals* when his ear is yet unprepared to appreciate or retain them. . . . There are only seven sounds. Each of those sounds differs from all the rest in its manner of affecting the ear; therein consists its *property*. There are consequently only *seven* properties to study, and we in no wise trouble ourselves with the intervals, whose number of major and minor combinations are interminable. The properties of the sounds are to the ear what those of colours are to the eye. . . . There is but one gamut or scale, for all are constructed after the same model. Our knowledge of one applies to all the rest. Once acquainted with the properties of the tonic, the mediant, the dominant, the sensible or leading note, &c., you know all the scales, since, however burdened such scales may be with sharps and flats, the same *seven* properties are therein reproduced at corresponding degrees. Music contains no more, and change the name as you please, the fact remains the same."

Here then we have the Tonic Sol-fa doctrine of mental effect. It is true that Berneval did not systematically ally these effects with the Sol-fa syllables, and it might appear, therefore, to be out of place for his theory to be explained in this paper. It will, however, be seen presently that Berneval's ideas were very materially connected with the syllables at a later period.

I have now to consider the use made of the syllables by two of the best known musical educationists of the present century—viz., John Hullah and John Curwen.

The influentially supported scheme of John Hullah, dating from 1841, was intended to popularise music by means of singing classes. The method employed set aside all the previous movable Do usage of the country and substituted a systematic development of the somewhat indistinct Continental usage, in which the Sol-fa syllables were only roughly used as mnemonics, the independent characterisation of intervals being the guiding principle. The syllables were simply something to say and became practically merely the names of lines and spaces or of pitches. Mr. Hullah, in his "Time and Tune," says that the syllables "are now useful in enabling the singer to concentrate his whole attention on the musical symbol before him, and in naming it to give his teacher the only possible guarantee that he is doing so." In fact, so completely are the syllables, as it were, degraded, that no attempt was made in Hullah's earlier books to differentiate the names for naturals, sharps, and flats. *Do*

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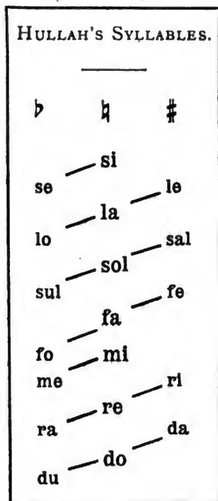
on *sol* might stand for several different pitches and several different intervals. But later, in 1875, Hullah thought fit to add a set of names for the sharps and flats. They are as follows:



If the Hullah or Fixed Do system may be considered to involve the degradation of the syllables, the system advocated by John Curwen may be described as their apotheosis. Curwen got the first suggestions of an independent letter notation and of the upright diagram of the scale and its relations direct from Miss Glover. To this he added the doctrines of the properties of scale sounds or of mental effect taught as already described by Berneval. The syllables were now to stand for the names of conceptions and sensations —the Tonic Sol-faist living, moving, and having his being by their means.

It is not part of my present design to describe the notation adopted and partly invented by John Curwen. It is enough to point out that the law of association of syllable and effect is utilised by Tonic Sol-faists to the extreme point of its availability. Each diatonic note and each chromatic inflection has its own special name, and changes of key of every conceivable degree are expressed by a blend of syllables.

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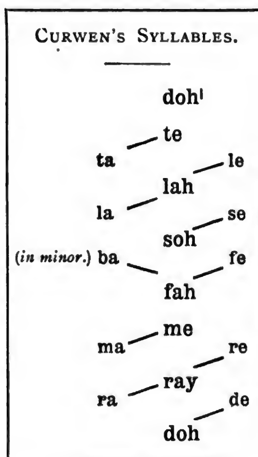

The new spelling was adopted because it was considered the best means of conveying to English speaking people the pronunciation intended. The original selection of Guidonian syllables was entirely arbitrary and accidental. There seemed, therefore, no good reason why the modern spelling should not be altered if the alterations proposed could be shown to be useful.

Many other new schemes of naming or of modifying the old Guidonian syllables have been from time to time proposed, but as they have had so little vogue they may as well continue in obscurity. It is not at all likely that any fresh usage of any practical importance will gain popularity. Considering how extremely difficult it is to alter habits of nomenclature, it is too much to hope that musical Europe will some day agree to separate pitch-denominators from scale-tone denominators. Both facts must in some way be named by the advanced as well as by the elementary student. As it is we find that the Sol-fa syllables are used to name both absolute pitch and position in scale. In this country, at least, where movable Do is so extensively used, it would certainly be a great advantage if we could agree to allow the alphabetical names to stand for pitch and the Sol-fa names for scale-sounds.

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DISCUSSION.

After a few remarks from the Chairman, Mr. Cummings said: It is an extremely interesting task this tracing back the history of the Sol-fa Notation. I quite agree with the practical solution which Mr. McNaught proposes and suggests, that of retaining the Sol-fa syllables for the scale and keeping the letters for the pitch. It is a curious thing that there seems to be nothing new under the sun. As in everything else, so in music. We look back, and I venture to say the farther we look back the more we are astonished. In this book, published by John Day in 1576, we have a movable Do, but using the old Ut of the time, and we find in the preface a very early use of the word Sol-faing. The curious part of this book is this, it contains a process which I think we consider absolutely modern; I refer to the letter note system, for here we have the Sol-fa names against the side of the notes. We think that the use of numbers for the notes is rather new. Mr. McNaught mentioned it just now. In 1560 there was published a book in Lyons, using the Sol-fa system, together with the actual notes and the numbers. The book of 1567, which I have here, is interesting as showing that the movable Do has always been common in this country. And the little seventeenth century book Mr. McNaught referred to, "A new and easie method to learn to sing by book," very clearly shows this. On page 29 it says: "The names of the lines and spaces are easily remembered, without the trouble that arises from the confused shifting of sol, la, mi, fa, *in the old way*." It is worthy of note, in passing, that this book suggests that the best way of learning to sing is by listening to bells, and tuning the voice to the bells. I am afraid the bells in these days would land us into some difficulty if we had to tune our voices by them. I may remark that it is very doubtful what Guido did invent or discover. Then, again, as to the re-discovery of the movable Do and Tonic Sol-fa System—I went to St. Paul's Cathedral about 1840—I received my first lessons on the Gamut, though I confess it was not until recent years that I understood what it meant. I learnt it by heart, but knew very little about it. I may also say that up to the time I left St. Paul's School, in 1842, I was taught Tonic Sol-fa from Dr. Nares's book, with the movable Do, so that the thing had never really died out.

Mr. Cummings then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. McNaught, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. McNaught, in acknowledging the vote of thanks, said: I should not like it to be thought that I have said one word to disparage Mr. Curwen's work. Mr. Curwen

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did not invent a great deal. But his insight was so practical, that he gathered together all that was useful, and his great work consisted in the methodising of the arrangement of the educational material. He did not invent the movable Do, he did not invent the theory of the mental effect of scale sounds; but he made it possible to express everything in modern music by means of the syllables. Since I have been in the room I have been told that Mr. Curwen invented the name Te for the seventh of the major scale, and that Miss Glover used it at the suggestion of Mr. Curwen. I have never heard or seen this stated before, and I desire to mention that fact.*

* The statement that Mr. Curwen invented the name *Te* was made in error, and was afterwards privately withdrawn by the gentleman who made it at the meeting.

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FEBRUARY 14, 1893.

EBENEZER PROUT, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

ON LISTENING TO MUSIC.

By CHARLES W. PEARCE, MUS. DOC., CANTAB.

POSSIBLY at no previous period in the history of our Art has so much been said and written about that very complex human faculty—the action of listening to music. We have only to take down the last of those comely little volumes of the Proceedings of this Association (which now begin to make quite a goodly show upon our bookshelves) to find that no fewer than three papers bearing more or less directly upon this subject were read last session. I refer, of course, to those by Messrs. Jacques, Banister, and Lake. The importance and interest, as well as the comprehensiveness of this absorbing topic must be pleaded as my excuse for venturing to bring it before you again this evening.

Perhaps few writers have treated the subject with greater thoughtfulness than has our President, whose recent Essay (as he modestly terms it), "Music in its relation to the Intellect and the Emotions," I may assume is familiar to most of you. As a kind of text to the present discourse, I propose quoting the paragraph with which Sir John Stainer summarizes the first part of his book—that in which you will doubtless remember he analyses the several processes which go to make up in its highest sense the action of listening to music. The paragraph runs thus: "We find that in the Hearer the sensations of sound are apprehended, analysed, grouped, and formulated by the Intellect; next, that the Intellect is occupied in passing judgment on the conformity of the work to the recognised regulations of the Art; next, that this intellectual operation calls into activity our sentiment of the Beautiful, with which a certain amount of Emotion is always inseparably allied. In short, the action of hearing music requires (1) Sensation, (2) Intellect, (3) Sentiment of the Beautiful, (4) Emotion; or to state it in

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another way, 'there can be no Emotion where there is no Sentiment of the Beautiful; no Sentiment of the Beautiful without an operation of the Intellect; no operation of the Intellect (as far as Music is concerned) without sensations of Sound.'" I propose, as briefly as I can, to consider this fourfold action of hearing music in three different aspects—viz., as it concerns the composer, the performer, and the listener.

Obviously, a moment's reflection upon the first of these aspects will show us that the briefest possible consideration of the influence which listening to his own or other people's music must always have had, and will have, upon the mind of a composer, epitomizes the whole history of written music. Indeed, Sir John Stainer gives us a rapid historical survey of the art by way of illustrating the means whereby the *grammar*, or that part of music which immediately concerns the intellect, has been gradually evolved. Going back to the very beginning, Sir John shows us that probably the adjustment of the sounds forming the scale acted simultaneously with the recognition of the functions of rhythmical melody; then, how the union of tune, poetry, and dance led step by step to a twofold development, leading on the one side to the grandest forms of vocal polyphony, and, on the other, to the initiation and growth of pure instrumental music; and so on up to the re-union of the highest forms of vocal and orchestral art in the oratorio and opera. Time and inclination both forbid one's entering upon such a wide and doubtful discussion as to how our present scale-system might have been evolved from the mere act of listening with a synthetical mind to the various sound-phenomena of nature. Mr. Gerard F. Cobb, M.A., proved conclusively some eight or nine years ago in a telling paper read before this Association,* that no amount of listening to what is known as the "harmonic series" could ever have produced—even in the course of centuries—the common every-day diatonic scale. Nor is it necessary for me to show how the latest nineteenth century developments in harmony, form, and orchestration have been brought about mainly by the cumulative effect of continual and attentive listening to the performance of music. Such matters as these are constantly being discussed by you; I prefer, therefore, in dealing with the historical aspect of my subject, to take you back to a period which is not often touched upon in your lectures, but which, nevertheless, witnessed the conception of many of what may be called the commonplaces of music. An attempt to show how these may, to a certain extent, have been the result of

* "On Certain Principles of Musical Exposition."—Proceedings, 1883-4, page 144.

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thoughtful *listening* will perhaps possess novelty to some of you.

Without making the erroneous assumption for which the late John Hullah* censured both Burney and Hawkins—viz., that the history of all modern music must be traced in that of church music, and with the belief that secular compositions of the date and style of "Sumer is icumen in" may be in existence, it must be acknowledged that the history of *written* music begins in the monastic cloister. National or folk-music, sung by people who could neither read nor write, would necessarily be propagated orally, even as much of the popular stuff of the present day is handed on from one whistling street boy to another. The necessity for not only music, but *written* music in the Church is, I think, clearly shown by Mr. W. J. Birkbeck, M.A., who says: "It would be difficult to draw up rules for *reading* aloud (in church) and, still more, permanently to enforce them; after a time the reading would be sure to degenerate either into a mutter or an unseemly gabble, or, worse still, into that vulgar colloquial style by which our ears and religious instincts are so often offended now-a-days in England. The only effective check on the officiating clergy, as well as on the choir and congregation which could be devised, would be to set every word of the service to music, which could be, and indeed always was regulated by authority. The bishop could insist that those melodies which were written for the sake of rendering the text clearer should answer their purpose, and that those which were introduced for the sake of beautifying certain portions of the service should not transgress the bounds of ecclesiastical propriety."† From the same learned authority I gather that the use of the Staff made its way into English MSS. just about the time of St. Osmund of Sarum, who died in 1099. This is, perhaps, about the earliest period which we can definitely associate with the office of composer—*i.e.*, a *writer* of original music. Such a person would of course in those days have been an ecclesiastic; and we may take it that the limit of what he could compose would be practically unaccompanied melody set to liturgical words. The organ of that day was, as Dr. Hopkins points out, a tiny instrument only capable of rendering melodic guidance and support‡ to the vocal plainsong, scarcely audible (if it could be heard at all) when a large choir of monks were singing. Now, you will say, it is extremely difficult to see how Sir John Stainer's fourfold action of listening to music can be applied in the case of such a mediæval composer as we have before

* "History of Modern Music," page 43.

† "Early Ecclesiastical Music in the Western Church."—*Newbery House Magazine*, Vol. III., p. 173.

‡ "The English Mediæval Church Organ," p. 4. E. J. Hopkins, Mus. D.

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us. But if he had in the smallest degree a sense of intelligent musical perception, every time he heard the choir sing in the great monastic or cathedral church with which he was connected, he could not have failed to observe a very audible and unavoidable accompaniment perpetually surging against the plainsong—viz., that generated by the natural resonance and reflection of the mass of vocal tone from the vaulted roof and other parts of the vast building. Such a mere physical sensation of tone our mediæval composer could not get away from if he were a listener at all; and the intellectual process would be bound to follow. He would gradually be brought by repeated listening to observe the effect which the unavoidable reverberation had upon the performance of the written music—the smoother passages being somewhat marred by the indistinctness arising from the echoed mingling of adjacent sounds in the mode, while the more disjunct phrases would be rather improved than otherwise by the overlapping of the melody notes. I may perhaps be allowed to remark in passing, that this assumed observation of acoustical effects upon music performed in a large building, on the part of a mediæval composer, has become a reality with writers of more recent times. The late Professor Walmisley, you will remember, appended a foot-note to a passage in his well-known Magnificat in D minor,* directing that "if there is not much echo in your church, this [minim] chord is to be played as a semibreve"; and I believe I am correct in stating that all music which retains anything like a permanent position in the service-lists of St. Paul's Cathedral has successfully stood the test of being able to hold its own against the multitudinous reverberations of Wren's great architectural masterpiece. But to return to our listening composer of the Middle Ages. His intellectual observation of the improvements effected in the music by the resonance of the building, as compared with the effect of the same music when heard in the more confined and less resonant area of the song-school or choir practice-room, might, under certain conditions of personal temperament, expand into feelings of positive emotion; for, as I pointed out in a paper read to this Association six years ago,† many of the old plainsong melodies are by no means the cold mechanical successions of unrelated notes some people imagine them to be. At any rate, they had important and distinct association with particular ecclesiastical times and seasons, and the doctrinal teaching connected therewith. Having now attempted to show how the fourfold action of hearing music may be illustrated in the case of a composer belonging to the

* "Services and Anthems," p. 137.

† "Treatment of Ancient Ecclesiastical Melodies."—"Proceedings," 1886-87, p. 63.

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earliest period of written music, we may next briefly inquire into the practical bearing such listening might have had upon the art of composition in that archaic age. Here is an example of a Perielesis group of notes taken from a Gradual for the Feast of a Confessor Bishop, which was composed probably not later than the end of the sixth century:—

If we analyse this fragment we observe that it is founded upon the triads of F major and D minor; the melody actually assuming an undisguised arpeggio form. It cannot be, therefore, unreasonable to suppose that such a passage may have been composed with some sort of idea to make it harmonize with, if not actually to propagate with greater distinctness and intensity, the unavoidable acoustical accompaniment generated by the building in which it would be sung. And to show you that this is not an isolated case, here are two more examples both taken from a single page of the "Liber Gradualis"* (opened at random), which illustrate the same point—

And I gather from my friend Mr. H. B. Briggs, Hon. Sec. of the Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society, that such arpeggio note-groupings are fairly common in plainsong generally; the accentuation of the notes even helping to make the chords more distinct. It may not seem altogether improbable that the idea of accompanying voices by *written* harmony (either vocal or instrumental) may have been originally conceived in this way by some more than ordinarily gifted musical monk.

But let us pass rapidly on to the polyphonic era. It must soon have been observed by listening composers that the perpetual "note against note" or *first species* style of compo-

* Page 200 of the Edition published by the Society of St. John the Evangelist, Tornaci, 1883.

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sition became after a time most dull and wearisome to the hearer. The passing notes of John of Dunstable, and the syncopations of the fourth and fifth species of counterpoint might improve matters a little in this respect; but how did the device of *imitation* come into existence? Here again we may possibly accredit a listening composer with the idea of making one or two of the voice parts of his composition begin without the rest, and next with the further idea of causing a voice previously silent to enter with the use of a figure of melody resembling that just sung by another of the voices. What prominence this would give to the later entry, and moreover,* "the effect of habitual thinning and thickening of the music, caused by one or more voices constantly resting and re-entering was, in itself, a means of imparting a pleasant variety of light and shade to the composition; whilst the emphatic confirmation of the sentiment of the words, caused by their reiteration in successive imitative entries, was a means of obtaining a unanimity of expression not to be gained in any other way." Here, at any rate, may be traced the first three of the mental processes analysed by Sir John Stainer, and if the fourth, the emotional element, be absent, we must remember that we are dealing with what has been called the unemotional period of musical history. Another very common device, that of the tonal sequence, might have suggested itself to a listening fourteenth century composer as an easy means of prolonging or continuing an idea, by repeating a passage upon a higher or lower part of the scale than that in which he originally conceived it; and a real sequence, itself the logical outcome of the tonal sequence, even if it did not actually originate the idea of modulation, would at any rate considerably extend that process. I have said that the polyphonic era has been styled the unemotional age of music, but we can, I venture to think, trace a distinct reaching forward to modern harmonic effects —those great emotional factors in all true music-listening—in some of the fifteenth century madrigals. For example, here is a passage from "The day day dawns," a madrigal by an anonymous English composer, which probably appeared early in 1461, when Edward IV. was proclaimed king in London,† if we may judge of the age of the music from certain references in the words to flowers which had at that time a distinct political signification.

In this madrigal we see, I think, use made of harmonic combinations which can only be regarded from a modern or fundamental point of view as dominant discords—

* Preface to "Songs and Madrigals of the Fifteenth Century," edited by C. W. P.

† "Songs and Madrigals of the Fifteenth Century."—See note by J. T. M., p xvi.

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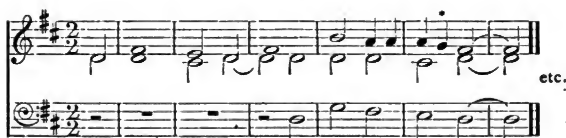
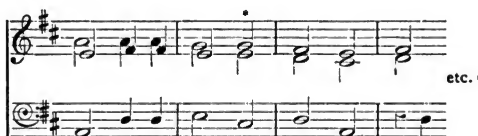


And again, later on, in the same madrigal :—



Then, too, the growing taste at that time for dwelling upon certain mere *chords* (during the prevalence of which all melodic interest and separate part-individuality ceases) can only point to the anticipation of the "perpendicular style" in music, on the part of those composers who loved to *listen* to those abstract harmonic effects. Here is an example of what I mean, taken from another English madrigal, "I loved, loved, and loved would I be," the work of the famous Robert Fairfax, organist or chanter of St. Alban's Abbey, early in the sixteenth century—

One or two sessions ago* Professor F. Niecks drew the attention of this Association to a remarkable feature of

* "Proceedings" for 1889-90, p. 79.

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music composed during the polyphonic era—viz., the surprising difference which then existed between the actual sounds performed and heard and the notation which professed to prescribe the relative pitch of these sounds. I refer, of course, to what is commonly known as *Musica ficta*—literally, "false" music, in which certain notes were chromatically raised or lowered a semitone in performance, but were not accidentally sharpened or flattened in the notation of the written parts. Helmholtz describes this curious anomaly when,* in speaking of the major seventh of the modern scale, he goes on to say that its use as a leading note to the tonic "appears to have begun in Europe during the period of polyphonic music, but not in part-songs only, for we find it also in the homophonic *Cantus firmus* of the Roman Catholic Church. It was blamed in an edict of Pope John XXII. in 1322, and in consequence the sharpening of the leading note was omitted in writing, but was supplied by the singers, a practice which Winterfeld believes to have been followed by Protestant musical composers, even down to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, because it had once come into use. And this makes it impossible to determine exactly what were the steps by which this change in the old tonal modes was effected." Here is an example of *musica ficta* taken from an old English madrigal, "Margaret Meek,"† from the Fairfax MSS. in the British Museum. In the last bar, the two C's, although *written* natural, were undoubtedly *sung* a semitone higher, so as to make the leading note to D—

Of course, such "falsely" written music as is this extract has long ago become obsolete; but the principle of prescribing different rules for writing music to those which are actually carried out in compositions intended to be publicly heard still remains with us even at the close of the nineteenth century. In how many oratorios, operas, symphonies, sonatas, or fugues to which we now listen with delight (not necessarily *new* works), do we find those rules faithfully carried out, which are dogmatised in text-books, and

* "Sensations of Tone," p. 441 of Ellis's translation.
† Additional MS., 5465.

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rigidly enforced in the class and examination-rooms of the present day? Was it not pointed out to us in the concluding paper of last session* that in many respects our current musical theory is something like two centuries behind—not *our* practice alone, but even of John Sebastian Bach? Are we not sometimes even now forbidden to write certain progressions, not because they are offensive to listen to, but because "they *look* bad upon paper" (!) And if we take a score into a concert-room, and follow a composition whilst we listen to it, how many things which offend the academical *eye*, do *not* offend the musical *ear?* One is really tempted sometimes to ask—in this respect how more reasonable is the difference between the prescribed and actual music of the nineteenth century, than was that variance between theory and practice which was blamed by Pope John XXII. in 1322?

The first consideration of a *performer* in listening to the music he himself makes, is the personal sensation experienced in tone-production. This is of the utmost importance, for in the great majority of cases (one might say *always*) whatever is unpleasant, forced, or unnatural to a performer cannot fail to have a similar effect upon those who listen to him. His intellect must ever be brought to bear upon such personal questions as these: Am I producing my tone with the least necessary effort to myself, and with no unreasonable demand upon the mechanical resources of the instrument I am using? in fact, is the physical sensation of tone-making pleasant to myself? For, unless affirmative answers to such queries can be given, there can be no real sentiment of the beautiful excited in the minds of either an intellectual performer or of a cultivated audience, and without this we know there can be no emotional feeling to follow, save perhaps that of pity for a singer or player who has overtasked his strength. In order then to produce beautiful tone, the performer must keep well within the limit of his own physical powers, and he ought also to know (so as to be able to keep within) the mechanical capability of the instrument he uses. All this should surely be nothing more than a truism, yet we occasionally find in books dealing with the use of the voice, that most difficult of all instruments (because so much of its mechanism is concealed from view), such sentences as the following: "It is not essential for a vocalist to understand the exact mechanism of the voice in order to be able to sing, this being no more necessary than it is to understand the anatomy of our limbs in order to be able to move them." Perfectly true and reasonable, no doubt, if only the vocal

* "Fugal Structure," by Ebenezer Prout, B.A.—"Proceedings," 1891-92, p. 135.

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organs were as easily seen and felt, and were possessed of muscles as strong and robust as, say, those of our arms and legs; but when we remember how very delicately constructed is the entire mechanism of the voice; how extremely difficult, even under laryngoscopic observation, it is to see the sound-producing portions of the larynx during the act of phonation; and how easily and how often good voices are entirely ruined by overstraining and forcing—to say nothing of the miserable musical and physical results which invariably follow such voice-abuse—the sentence I have quoted above *does* seem to contain misleading advice for young vocal students to follow.

But vocalists are not only the only gainers by the possession of a reasonable knowledge of the physiology affecting their particular branch of the art. How much valuable time can be saved by keyboard students who make a proper use of hand and finger gymnastics, such as those prescribed in the excellent little book by Mr. Ridley Prentice,* in which we find a well-considered course of exercises (founded upon sound anatomical principles), by the use of which every muscle of the hand and wrist will be specially trained and strengthened for the work it has to do; all injury or over-straining being impossible. Surely a comparison of this book of Mr. Prentice's with any voice instruction-book which speaks disparagingly of physiology as an aid to voice-culture, is greatly to the advantage of the former, which certainly does its best to improve keyboard technique in a really intellectual way. For manifestly all technical practice of any kind is worthless unless it is intellectual; and young students, both vocal and instrumental, cannot be too carefully warned against a merely mechanical use of exercises, their minds being occupied the whole time in thinking about other and extraneous things. Time will not allow of my saying anything else about listening to music from the performer's point of view; and indeed I cannot do better than refer you again to those three papers of last session, which I mentioned when I began, and also to our President's admirable address, entitled "Technique and Sentiment,"† delivered to the Incorporated Society of Musicians at their recent annual Conference, for a full discussion as to how the balance between intellect and emotion should be maintained in the performance of music.

I pass, then, to the final section of my paper—listening to music from the mere hearer's point of view. Sir John Stainer has well said that "our real want in England at this moment is not professional performers or even composers, but intelligent hearers," since "a general knowledge

* "Hand Gymnastics." (Novello, Ewer & Co.'s Music Primers, No 36.)
† *Monthly Journal of the Incorporated Society of Musicians*, Vol. V., p. 24.

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and acquirement of art amongst the many percipients must inevitably raise the standard of excellence amongst the few producers."* It should then be the main object of our great music-teaching institutions, as well as of all private teachers, to train *listeners* rather than performers and composers, for "he who listens to music with a musically untrained intellect, and without an appreciation or knowledge of the laws of construction, progression, and form, can gather no more information, can reap no higher result than is gained by a child peeping into a kaleidoscope. The child will tell you he has been in ecstasies whilst peeping into the kaleidoscope; the untrained hearer of a symphony will tell you he, too, has been in ecstasies while listening to it; both are on the same low level."† Sir John is, perhaps, not over-estimating the truth when he states that "there are millions who can say if a cow is painted *like* a cow, to *one* who can, by hearing a symphonic movement, discover if the accepted laws of binary form have been truly observed."‡ But the difficulty does not end here. Differences of temperament, even in cultured listeners, will lead to astonishingly different results in the emotional effect produced upon the various minds, for "it must not be supposed that all men are similarly gifted either with the special character of intellect which has the power of leading up to and producing emotions, or with the gift of the emotional capability itself."§ "What curious products of the critical faculty, both of *dilletante* and professed critics," writes Sir John, "might be obtained could a new work be presented to them absolutely without any information as to its composer, character, or aim, each hearer being in a separate cell to prevent collusion!" But even a picture will not always create the same impression upon the minds of those who see it for the first time, with their perceptive faculties unaided by any previous information as to the subject of the work or its composition and treatment. Sir George Macfarren once related an amusing story‖ to the effect that in an exhibition of pictures, two friends who had no catalogue admired a certain painting, but were at a loss as to what might be its subject; a beautiful youthful figure held a dissevered human head, and this the beholders surmised must be the daughter of Herodias with King Herod's reluctant gift of the head of St. John the Baptist, wondering the while at the shortness of the damsel's garments, but accounting for this as designed for the display of her recent dancing, and applauding it as

* "Music in its Relation to the Intellect and the Emotions," pp. 57 and 58.

† *Idem*, p. 49. ‡ *Idem*, p. 62.

§ "Science of Beauty" (Holmes-Forbes), quoted by Stainer.

‖ "The Pictorial Power of Music."—*Musical Times*, June 1, 1875.

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a happy suggestion of the artist ; the description in the book was Number so-and-so, "David with the head of Goliath!" Such a story as this seems to point to the suggestion that any information received by the ear whilst the eye is beholding a picture, has very much the same use in shaping proper mental appreciation of a work of pictorial art which any optical assistance may render the listening ear during the performance of a new musical work; hence the origin of the analytical programme, and the frequent appearance of full and octavo scores amongst the audience in a concert-room. But even the use of such optical aids to the unassisted ear does not meet with universal approval, for Jadassohn writes: "The practice of following up in a score a piece of music during its performance, which has now become customary among students of music and certain amateurs, must be regarded as pure nonsense. For if such people are put face to face with a composition which is entirely unknown to them, the simultaneous activity of seeing and hearing will mutually hinder each other. . . . But suppose the piece in question is already somewhat, or fully, known to a person thus reading and listening, the question may be asked, what advantage for the raising of the impression is obtained, when the attention is divided between the dead, cold character, the black head of the note, and the living resounding tone? What would be thought of a man who, during a theatrical performance, kept busily reading his book of the play? Looked at from a practical and instructive point of view, we see as little advantage in following up a score."* Doubtless, most of us have different experiences with regard to this point, but I am not ashamed to confess to having derived infinite advantage from following a score whilst listening both to familiar and unfamiliar music. I entirely fail to see the force of the comparison between the man who loses the entire spectacular effect of a well-staged drama by studying his book of words all the time the play is being acted, and a musician who loses nothing by turning his eyes away from the moving violin bows of the orchestra to the pages of the composer's score. I venture to say that he does not lose, but *gains* by so doing. And further, I cannot agree with Jadassohn that the black heads of the notes are "dead, cold characters" to the musician's eye whilst the music is being performed. *Then* it appears to me—if at no other time—these crotchet and quaver heads are instinct with real life, and the sight of them renders as much assistance to an average musician as the verbal description of a rather puzzling picture might do to a May-time visitor

* "How to listen to Music" (Chap. xxiii. of "Manual of Harmony"). S. Jadassohn.

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at Burlington House, if it were kindly whispered in his ear by a friend, whilst he was gazing at the painting, perhaps vainly endeavouring to discover what was the artist's intention. Without a score to aid an ordinary concert-goer, a new musical work heard for the first time passes before his ear, very much as a rapidly moving panorama might pass before his eye, requiring his most earnest attention to grasp the meaning of what he perceives at the moment. He has little or no opportunity for realising the connection between what has gone before and what he hears at a given instant, and he is left entirely in ignorance of what is coming. It is very much like his trying to grasp the artistic effect of a long processional pageant, *as a whole*, when his only opportunity of beholding it is by looking through a narrow tube. Of course an educated and cultured musician can fully appreciate all the beautiful effects of unfamiliar harmonies, unexpected and enchanting modulations, magical changes in orchestration, and the like. And he may even get something like a complete and full impression of the plan and intention of the new work, if the established rules of formal construction be not too widely departed from; but the tendency is, that without a score he may "comprehend greater or lesser fragments of the whole, but may not become acquainted with the work in its totality."* Should, however, his attention be deviated even for a moment by the incessant coughing or talking of a neighbour, or by any other audible accident, his thread of the musical tale is snapped, hopelessly perhaps for that particular movement. But with a score before him, his memory of what has been heard is greatly reinforced by *optical* as well as aural recollections; his grasp of what is going on in the immediate present is wonderfully quickened and assisted by that mental association which to every musician is inseparable between the written sign and the audible sound, and, should his attention be averted by any accident, the eye will prevent the ear from losing the thread of the music, and so making the rest of the movement a mere puzzle.

For obtaining anything like a complete appreciation of a musical work let us now briefly see what the listener requires. He should first know the exact period of musical history in which the composer lived and wrought. This is most important; for example, much of the enjoyment in listening to Purcell and Bach is considerably enhanced by the knowledge of how these great men reached beyond the music of their own era; and much of our opinion of a composer's work will depend upon the fact that he either lived before or after Mozart, Beethoven, or Wagner. In addition to this preliminary historical knowledge, a listener will be greatly assisted

* Jadassohn, *idem*.

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by knowing whether the composer had any definite aim or programme when designing his work. Imagine listening to either Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony or Mendelssohn's Overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream" for the first time, and not knowing what ideas these works were intended to express! Next, the listener should have an intimate acquaintance with the laws of harmonic progression, contrapuntal fluency, methods of modulation, and the usual orchestral "idioms," as familiar instrumental combinations are sometimes curiously called. To all this must certainly be added an experienced knowledge of the particular formal design in which each movement of the work is cast; and lastly, I venture to think, in spite of Jadassohn, that with the assistance of a score (which he is not obliged to continually look at if he knows the music intimately) he will be able to appreciate the work to which he listens to the very utmost.

If we are to educate the audiences of the future to the intelligent listening to high-class music, and by so doing raise (as Sir John Stainer suggests) the standard of both composers and performers in this country, surely the preparation I have just described in its historical, grammatical, and analytical details ought to be the best means of accomplishing this end. And our great music schools, as well as our great army of private teachers, will be really fulfilling their highest mission in doing this great work very thoroughly.

I feel that I owe you a double apology for the length of this paper and its extreme discursiveness and incompleteness; but we must all feel that the subject is a most important one, and that by being often discussed, there is the greater opportunity of our actually realizing the object of our lives—the training of English audiences for the due appreciation of the highest and best works of Musical Art.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—Our first duty is one in which you will all most cordially join with me, that of offering Dr. Pearce our best thanks for his most interesting and practical paper.

(The vote of thanks was passed unanimously).

I will not detain you with many words on the various points which occurred to me. I cordially agree with what Dr. Pearce said as to distinguishing between theory and practice. I think it a very great shame that musical candidates should be kept back as regards the examinations to which Dr. Pearce referred. Examiners are, as a general rule, with, of course,

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a few honourable exceptions, a hundred years behind time. I will not specify instances that may come to my mind, but will reserve them for some other time. We must all agree with the lecturer in his protest against the abominable system of trying to keep students back by wishing them to reach only a certain standard and not to pass beyond the standard of 100 years ago. Dr. Pearce referred to a story from Dr. Macfarren, and that reminded me of a capital story referring to him which I had the pleasure of telling Sir George. It was shortly after the production of "King David" at the Leeds Festival that a country gentleman seeing the work was about to be done at St. James's Hall thought he would take the opportunity of hearing it. He went. A day or two after a friend asked him how he enjoyed it. "Very much," he said; "there are plenty of pretty tunes in it, but I could not understand why all the performers had their faces blacked." He, of course, went to the Christy Minstrels by mistake. This is one of our appreciative listeners—the kind of men who want educating very much! With regard to following music from the score, I cordially agree with Dr. Pearce. I confess I have learnt an immense deal from taking the scores to performances and following carefully. When I was a young man and began to study seriously, I think I may say that, with regard to instrumentation, I learnt more from first reading the score, and then taking it to the concert, and reading it again directly I came back from the performance, than from any text-books in the world. It was fixed in my recollection. I also learnt a lot about form. I think following a Sonata of Beethoven with a copy of the music before one may be of very great assistance. Dr. Pearce has spoken about the views of Jadassohn. I think they are all nonsense. I do not agree with him at all.

Mr. H. C. BANISTER.—I think that the practice of reading the score while one is listening may be useful in the case of an intelligent person; although I think glancing at a score or analytical programme rather tends to take away from the *abandon* of the music. It has always seemed to me to be alien to the enjoyment of music when I see people looking from the score to the orchestra.

Miss O. PRESCOTT.—We must remember that there are two ways of listening to music. You listen to learn, or to criticise, and you listen to let the music sink into the mind to affect you. You listen from your own point of view, or you listen from the composer's point of view. For the first I think the score is most valuable—you learn so much about the instruments, chords, and form. But if you want to actually enjoy music, you must shut your eyes, and listen with your heart and mind.

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Mr. Abdy Williams.—I am glad to find that others besides myself have derived benefit from reading a score during performance. I have learned a great deal in that way. When I was at Leipsic I was laughed at for carrying scores about, and was told I could not learn much from doing so. When a new symphony was going to be done, I used to go to the rehearsal as well as to the performance. At the rehearsal I simply listened, but took the score to the performance and learned it; and when I heard the symphony for the third time I enjoyed it, because I had a real knowledge of it. At this time of life, however, I would rather not take a score to a concert. I think Dr. Pearce said something about Gregorian music not being emotional. I heard it at Rome, done in its primitive simplicity, and thought it the most beautiful thing I had ever heard.

Mr. T. L. Southgate.—I would like to say a word on the question of the analytical programme and reading it. I remember during the period of Ella's Musical Union, he used very faithfully to send to the members advance copies of the programme, and also a small address with one or two historical notes. It bore a motto in Italian that "too much analysis destroyed the sentiment." He expressly said it was to be read at home, and so go to the concert prepared for what one was going to hear and not destroy its enjoyment in reading it through during the performance. I think Ella was obliged to give it up; but there was undoubtedly an advantage in the mode he adopted.

The Chairman.—I am inclined to think that analytical programmes are not quite so reliable as they should be. I have just been looking at a recent programme of a Monday Popular Concert, which says something is in the key of C, when it is clearly in the key of A minor.

Dr. Pearce, in acknowledging the vote of thanks, said: As to the practice of following music with the score, I disagree with Jadassohn's total condemnation of it. He says it is wrong to follow at any time. I think it is very useful for students to become accustomed to the music, and to get to know the different details of the work.

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FEBRUARY 14, 1893.

EBENEZER PROUT, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT.

IN THE CHAIR.

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*A NEW NOTE SYSTEM.**

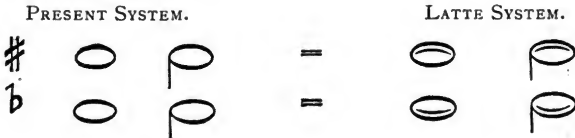
BY LUDWIG LATTE.

THE object of this system is, without alteration of the ordinary notes, so to simplify the reading of difficult keys, which, as is well-known, require a practised and experienced eye, that anyone possessing only slight musical skill can easily master them. The system is not complicated; it is, on the contrary, so easy of comprehension that its advantages can be made use of at once.

It consists of the same notes which have hitherto been used; the simplification is due to the signs of ♭, ♯, and ♮, &c., being entirely dispensed with, both in the signature and in the course of the music; the necessary raising or lowering of a note from its natural position being in the Latte system indicated by the note itself.

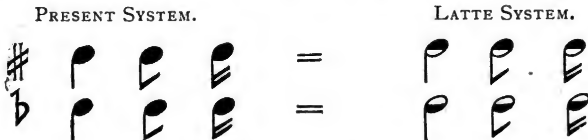
(*a.*) The semibreves and minims which are to be raised (sharps) have a curve in the upper portion of the head of the note; those which are to be lowered (flats) have this curve in the lower portion—

PRESENT SYSTEM. LATTE SYSTEM.



(*b.*) In the crotchets, quavers, &c., the raising or lowering of the tone is expressed by the heads of the notes being only half filled, either in the upper or lower half—

PRESENT SYSTEM. LATTE SYSTEM.



* Read by the Secretary.

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(*c*.) The form of all notes which are to be played as naturals remains exactly as in the present system.

(*d*.) Double flats and sharps are indicated in a similar manner to (*a*) and (*b*), but by a vertical stroke in place of a curve in the head of a note. The note itself is, however, placed in that position on the staff which it would occupy if enharmonically altered—*e.g.*, G× is written as if it were A♮, and G♭♭ as if it were F♮.

This new system, which is based on the ordinary one, does not pretend to supplant the latter, but to complete and simplify it. It will permit the lover of music who is not so advanced as others to play with ease the beautiful classical works of our great masters, which are, however, generally written in the more difficult keys. It must be noted that the system is by no means intended for the advanced player who has overcome all difficulties, but is to assist the *dilletante* in learning difficult pieces, and to aid the less experienced in reading at sight. Of course an elementary musical knowledge is necessary.

Let us take a difficult piece of music in our hand. At the very entrance five, six, or even seven grim sentinels meet our gaze, and keep such strict guard that only those may pass who have years of study behind them, and who possess at least a good memory. And these guards—the flats and sharps at the commencement of a movement—present not only this one difficulty; the way becomes more and more uneven, flats and sharps change places, naturals and double sharps and flats follow each other in quick succession and complete the confusion of the player who is not very advanced. These difficulties discourage the *dilletante;* he gives up trying to play classical music himself, and is compelled to hear the same either by good amateurs or in the concert-room. All signs being dispensed with in this system, whether occurring at the beginning or in the course of a movement, the difficulties of the more complicated keys disappear, so that the amateur is in a short time able to enter into the hitherto closed sanctuary of classical music.

It is naturally of importance that the system be applicable to other instruments than the pianoforte. The inventor sees no difficulty in the matter; on the contrary, he considers it well adapted, for example, to military music, small orchestras, and choral societies.

It may be mentioned that several well-known musicians in Berlin have pronounced very favourably upon its merits, especially Professor Breslauer, who has given a lecture upon the system to a musical society in that city.

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DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I may say I have been looking at these specimens of music; but I must confess, perhaps it is because my eyes are getting weak, that they are a great deal harder to read than the Old Notation.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—I do not believe in this question of alterations. People say it is so difficult to learn our present system as there are so many signs. It sounds a little plausible when you consider the question of sharps or flats, but what would you say to a boy who said he could not learn the twenty-six letters of the alphabet? Why, you would box his ears and tell him to try until he could. Then he gets a little more advanced and has to learn the letters of Greek and, perhaps, German alphabets. The number of signs we have to learn in the musical alphabet is very small.

Mr. BAKER.—One distinction must be kept in mind. The letters of the alphabet are part of our every-day language, and, moreover, are always presented to the eye, whereas sharps and flats, belonging to a less familiar language, have to be carried in the memory.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—One might say in answer that you have to carry in your mind the pronunciation of the letters and certain vowel sounds such as *a* or *ou*, but still it has to be carried in the memory.

Mr. BAKER.—Personally, I do not think anything can be done to simplify our present system of music. Besides that, it holds the field, and, I believe, will continue to do so.

Mr. BANISTER.—Dr. Hullah always said that any so-called improvement or new system of notation would only serve to make the present existing system more permanent.

Mr. BAKER.—I may say that Herr Latte's system is undoubtedly easy of comprehension, and requires very little practice; but I should imagine it to be rather trying to the eyes.

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MARCH 14, 1893.

EBENEZER PROUT, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

THE RHYTHMICAL CONSTRUCTION OF BACH'S "FORTY-EIGHT" FUGUES.

BY C. F. ABDY WILLIAMS.

I WISH to-night to lay before the members of the Musical Association some portions of the theory of musical rhythm, as explained by the late Rudolph Westphal; and with this object have chosen the Forty-eight Fugues for my subject, since their rhythmical construction shows more variety of form, and more instinctive knowledge of the possibilities of rhythm, than perhaps any other modern music. Westphal's investigations and explanations of the principles of rhythm are so important and far-reaching that they must in the near future occupy a prominent place in musical theory; the chief bars to their general acceptation being their somewhat startling novelty, and the large use he makes of unfamiliar Greek terms.

The fundamental principles of rhythm have until quite lately been but little investigated by musicians, and the reason is simple enough. The magnificent system of harmony, orchestration, form, &c., which has arisen since the time of Bach, the founder of modern music, has absorbed all their attention; the modern Melos is a new and splendid departure in musical art, which has to some extent overshadowed the claims of Rhythmus. But the laws and principles of musical rhythm are as old as music itself, and are practically unchangeable. I hope to be able to show you to some extent to-night that they are the same now as they were in the most brilliant period of Greek musical art; that they were forgotten when Greek art fell, under the influence of Roman domination; that they lay for many centuries unnoticed or misunderstood, except in so far as they were observed in the free rhythm of plainsong, which arose on the ruins of Greek musical rhythm; and that they were unconsciously obeyed and brought again into living form by the mighty John Sebastian Bach. This is a large subject to be treated in a short paper, and I must ask your pardon if I have to hurry over some of the details.

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The laws of rhythm are as important as those of harmony; but there is this difference, that the laws of harmony have been constantly developed to suit new requirements, while those of rhythm have remained practically immutable; at any rate, no modern composer, as far as I have discovered, has done anything which cannot be explained on the principles laid down by Aristoxenus, about 300 years before Christ.

With regard to the derivation of the word "rhythm," I believe that given by M. Gevaert in his "Histoire de la Musique de l'Antiquité" is as widely accepted as any. Rhythm, he says, comes from *ῥέειν*, to flow. It means the regular flow of sound or speech during a given space of time. It is the principle of unity and symmetry applied to the arts of movement—namely, music, poetry, and dancing. The laws of beauty demand, that the time occupied in the execution of a musical or poetical work of art should be divided in such a manner that the hearer can discern without effort some kind of regularity in the duration of the divers groups of sounds or words, as well as in the periodical return of repose.

The rhythmical element either consists of a certain rough proportion in the disposition, number, and extent of the periods and members of periods of which speech or song is composed, as in the free rhythm of rhetoric and plainsong, or it penetrates the periods and members in such a manner as to cause them to be divided into small portions of time, rigorously commensurable among themselves. This is the rhythm of measured music, in the sense understood by the Greeks and by ourselves.

Westphal shows that the rhythm of modern poetry and modern music, although differing in kind, yet obey the same fundamental law of dividing time into certain commensurable portions, and that what we call form in music is merely a broad adaptation to a whole composition of those laws of proportion and symmetry which rule the rhythm.

In the times of classical Greece, the rhythm of poetry and music was one and the same thing. Music was the absolute slave of poetry, and took its rhythm from it, and could have no other.

With us this is not the case, for the rhythm of modern vocal music is often independent of that of the words. Modern music has asserted its sovereignty in this particular. The reason for this is soon told. Poetry, since the third century of our era, has depended entirely on accent for its rhythm. Isaac Vossius in his work on rhythm in singing, published in 1673, and Gaston Boissier in his book "La Fin du Paganisme," published in 1891, have shown that during the early days of Christianity, owing to the mixture of nations at Rome, the Latin language gradually lost whatever elements of quantity it had originally possessed,

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and that poetry began to be published in which accent alone was made the basis of the rhythm. The first poet who consciously wrote in this new style was Commodianus, a convert to Christianity, in the third century, and he distinctly asserts that he did so in order to attract the unlearned, who had lost the old feeling for measured poetry. This new departure led to a result which is much deplored by Vossius, and also by our Milton—namely, the introduction of what they called the jingling of rhymes; which were invented in order to distinguish the rhythmical periods of poetry, and became a necessity, when once the feeling for time-division was lost. Another result is seen in the free rhythm of Gregorian music, in which prose words are set to prose music, that is to say, to music in which accent, and not quantity, forms the basis of the rhythm. For the ancients had not arrived at conceiving a musical rhythm independent of words, except for the simple forms suitable to the dance.

The ancient forms of rhythm, which obeyed certain natural laws, were thus lost during the early days of Christianity, and remaining dormant all through the Middle Ages, were again gradually unfolded in those gropings after form which are seen in the instrumental music of early modern composers; and it was reserved for the genius of John Sebastian Bach to reproduce unconsciously, and through his great artistic instinct, nearly all the forms of rhythm used by the Greek poets and musicians, and to obey the natural laws which they obeyed, and which were observed and noted down by the theorist Aristoxenus : and this Bach did, principally, in his fugues. I fancy you will at once say, "But his fugues are polyphonic, whereas, since polyphony was unknown to the Greeks, they could not have had fugues." This is perfectly true; but the first giving out of the subject of a fugue is not polyphonic; and when Bach has given out the subject of any particular fugue, he adheres to the rhythm of that subject, or to some form of it, all through. The only places where there can be any doubt of this is in the strettos—but even there, as Westphal points out, one voice as a rule governs the rhythm of the rest; that is to say, the rhythm of the other voices in a stretto is always subordinate to that of one particular voice. Moreover, as Mr. Prout remarked in a paper read to this Association last year, at least twenty of the Forty-eight Fugues have no stretto at all.

In the year 1785 Morelli, the custodian of St. Mark's Library at Venice, discovered a manuscript of a treatise on rhythm by Aristoxenus of Tarentum, a pupil of Aristotle, and compared it with a copy in the Vatican. Both were in a most fragmentary condition, but a good deal of what was missing could be supplied by means of the notes on Aristoxenus, made by Michael Psellus in the eleventh century of our

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era. Morelli published the Aristoxenian fragments, with the notes of Psellus, and thus placed this work for the first time at the disposal of the learned world.

Boeckh, a German philologist, discovered the great value of these writings for investigating the true rhythm of Greek poetical works, and published an edition of Pindar in 1811, showing the results of his observations.

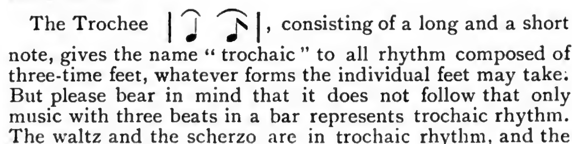
Many other philologists worked at the same subject, and one of them, Rudolph Westphal, has shown how much there is of value to modern musicians in this treatise of Aristoxenus. He discovered, to his great astonishment, that Bach's music explained many things that were incomprehensible in Aristoxenus; and he found that by reversing the process, Aristoxenus explained and threw a new light on many things in Bach's works.

My object to-night is to try and show to some extent what this light is; and I shall have to ask your patience while I go into some rather minute details.

The basis of Greek rhythm was the poetic foot, and if we consent to look upon the musical foot as the basis of modern musical rhythm, the whole subject is easily made clear and simple. What we call a bar is either a single foot, as in the *Scherzo* and in the slow movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony; or it contains more than one foot, as in $\frac{12}{8}$ or $\frac{6}{8}$ measure, the bars of which contain respectively four and two feet. It has often been remarked that Bach's use of the bar-line is peculiar, but his peculiarities in this respect arise from his wonderful instinct for fine rhythmical construction, and are entirely explained on the principles laid down by Aristoxenus.

The foot is made up of a certain number of what Professor Jeble calls "Times," or, to translate the Greek expression literally, we may say "Primary Times." This primary element plays an important part in all modern music. By adding to or taking away one or more primary times from a phrase, its ethos or character may be entirely changed.

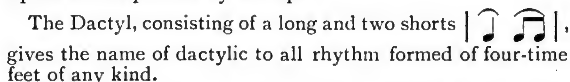
In order to systematise and simplify the study of rhythm, Aristoxenus, and after him an anonymous writer of the second century of our era, whose work was first printed in 1841, have reduced it to four species, which they name after the four typical feet, the Trochee, the Dactyl, the Pæon, and the Ionicus.

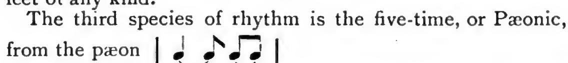


The Trochee, consisting of a long and a short note, gives the name "trochaic" to all rhythm composed of three-time feet, whatever forms the individual feet may take. But please bear in mind that it does not follow that only music with three beats in a bar represents trochaic rhythm. The waltz and the scherzo are in trochaic rhythm, and the

feet correspond with the bar; hence their bars are simple. But the Fugue in C♯ minor (No. 28) is also in trochaic rhythm, and according to Aristoxenus its bar is compound, since it contains four feet. The time signature of this Fugue is $\frac{12}{16}$, showing that Bach did not intend that these groups should be looked upon as triplets; they are distinctly trochaic feet, and as such must be grouped in a particular way, as I shall show later.

Bach's use of time signatures and bar lines is very significant, and shows that he felt the rhythm of his fugue subjects in ways that were not suspected until pointed out by Spitta and explained by Westphal.

The Dactyl, consisting of a long and two shorts , gives the name of dactylic to all rhythm formed of four-time feet of any kind.

The third species of rhythm is the five-time, or Pæonic, from the pæon 

The fourth, or Ionic species, is named from the ionicus

All music, both ancient and modern, is written in one or other of these species of rhythm. Five-time rhythm is so rare with us that for all practical purposes we may consider that there are only three species—namely, those based on the three-time, four-time, and six-time foot.

The foot, the smallest rhythmical section, is made appreciable by its division into two portions, accented and unaccented, having the ratio of 1 : 1 in the dactyl or even foot; 2 : 1 in the trochee and ionicus, or uneven feet; and 3 : 2 in the pæon. I have shown these divisions by slurs.

The even, or dactylic species of rhythm is by far the most common, both in ancient and modern music; as an instance of this, out of the Forty-eight Fugues, thirty-six are in this species, leaving only twelve for the other two. The reason for this is, that time divided into even proportion, or 1 : 1, is the easiest to follow; and uneven, that is, 2 : 1 or 1 : 2, is nearly as easy but not quite; while the proportion of 3 : 2 in the five-time foot is far more difficult to follow, and requires a certain intellectual effort. I shall not trouble you by going further into the details of the feet, but proceed to the larger rhythmical sections.

An unbroken succession of musical feet soon produces a sense of monotony, however good the melody or varied the individual feet may be. Our rhythmical instinct—that is to say, the instinct for symmetry and form—requires that such a succession should be broken up into phrases; and it is best

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satisfied when these phrases have some kind of relative time value among themselves, such as is found in poetry. In poetry each phrase is written on a single line consisting of a certain number of feet, and called a verse. As a rule, the verses rhyme with one another in certain ways, and the pairs of rhymes generally form a period. A certain number of verses are grouped together in lyric poetry, and called a strophe, stanza, or canto. Instrumental music can, as a rule, be divided into corresponding portions—namely, into members, containing so many feet, corresponding with the verses of poetry; periods, containing so many members, corresponding with the rhymed verses of poetry; and larger sections corresponding, though more freely, with the strophe, or stanza of poetry.

Modern poetry has a good deal of variety in the number of feet it admits in a verse, while modern music has as its normal number, four feet in a member or colon, corresponding to a poetic verse; and since the normal number of cola or members in a period is two, there are eight feet in an ordinary musical period. The modern bar contains usually either one or two feet: if the latter, then four bars will make a period; if the former, four bars will make a colon or half-period. In either case we are apt to describe such music (which is by far the most usual both in classical and popular music) as being in ordinary four-bar rhythm. Now Bach very often makes his single bar contain a whole colon—that is, half a period; and in this consists one of the peculiarities in his use of the bar-line.

In using the word colon as a musical term I am merely restoring it to its rightful ownership, for it was stolen some 2,000 years ago by the grammarians, together with semi-colon, comma, and period, from the musicians. Colon means a definite section, containing a definite number of feet and no more; and period means as a rule a combination of two cola; while the word phrase may be used indiscriminately for colon, period, half-a-colon, or even a single foot.

Our sense of proportion makes it easier for us to appreciate cola of four feet than those of any other number, for exactly the same reasons that I explained with regard to the single feet—namely, that they give the simple proportion of 1 : 1. Hence modern composers, losing sight to some extent of the intellectual aspect, while cultivating the emotional side of music, rarely make use of cola which have not this simple ratio; while Bach, with a finer sense of rhythmical possibilities, frequently uses cola in the proportion of 2 : 1, or 1 : 2, throughout some of his Fugues. That is to say, he uses a subject which consists of a colon of four feet, followed by a colon of two feet, or *vice versâ*, and carries this rhythm through the fugue.

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I must explain two other words—namely, Cæsura and Anacrusis. And I shall offer no apology for introducing a few Greek words into the subject, considering the number of terms music, like every art or science, has already borrowed from that language. Cæsura means a cutting off. In vocal music, it is produced by the necessity for taking breath; in instrumental music, by a break in the continuity of the *legato*. The position of this break or cæsura is important, for by means of it, perhaps more than by any other, are the cola and periods marked by the performer; or, in other words, the phrasing is produced.

Composers do not always show very definitely where the cæsura is to occur—that is to say, where the phrase is to end, and Bach gives no indication at all; hence it depends to a large extent on the taste of the performer. A musician, when performing a composition, instinctively makes his phrasing intelligible by cæsuras; if he does not, both he and the listener are apt to find the music "dry" and uninteresting.

The word anacrusis is introduced by Westphal, merely in order to simplify the naming of the feet. By its means we get rid of the multiplication of terms such as anapæst, iambic, ionicus a minore, &c., and reduce the whole subject of the feet to so simple a system that it can be understood, with little trouble, by anyone who is at all familiar with music. The anacrusis merely consists of the unaccented note or notes which precede the first accent of any rhythmical division in a composition. I know of no modern term for it. The Germans have "Auftact," but this is often applied to a whole foot, whereas the anacrusis must be carefully distinguished as a portion only of a foot.

It is produced by the position of the cæsura in the final foot of a phrase. If the cæsura is made at the end of this foot, no anacrusis will be produced in the next colon; while if it is made within the final foot, so as to divide it into two portions, the first portion of the foot will conclude the phrase, while the second will form the anacrusis of the succeeding phrase. For instance, in the Fugue in A flat (No. 41), Czerny, in the Peters' edition, by making the first phrase end with the first bar, gives no anacrusis to the second phrase; whereas by dividing the fourth foot of the subject as follows, we obtain an anacrusis of two "times" for the second phrase, in addition to that in the first—

Aristoxenus tells us that those phrases or rhythms which begin with a weak accent, that is, with anacrusis, and lead up, as it were, to a strong one, are more masculine and vigorous than those which begin with a strong accent, and therefore proceed at once to a weak one.

That Bach felt this difference of ethos seems clear, for he not only begins most of his subjects with the anacrusis, thereby leading up from the weak to the strong accent, and thus giving them masculinity and strength; but he even extends this upward striving to the whole colon, by reserving the strongest accent for the final foot, as Spitta has shown; and, in order to do this, he nearly always places his first bar-line just before the final foot of his colon, and thus causes the bar and the colon to coincide. I have seen it said somewhere that Bach hardly understood the proper use of the bar-line. In reality he uses it more scientifically perhaps than any of his successors.

In its normal form the period consists, as I have said, of two cola. It is convenient to call the first of these the antecedent, the second the consequent. The antecedent announces a proposition, the consequent completes it. This fundamental form is universal in the arts of poetry and music. We see it applied in the Psalms, for instance, to prose poetry; and it can be seen anywhere and everywhere. All other forms of period are extensions or modifications of this.

A combination of several periods, ending with a definite full close in a nearly related key, corresponds with the strophe of poetry. Three such combinations will generally be found in each of the Forty-eight Fugues: the first being very regular and corresponding exactly with the strophe of the German Minnelied and chorale; the second being of larger extent than the first, modulating freely, but coming back to the original key, or its dominant; the third being, as a rule, shorter than either, and forming a conclusion to the whole. Mr. Prout pointed out this threefold construction in the paper I have already mentioned, and Westphal traces the construction of the strophes back to the Minnelieder of the eleventh century, the form of which has been preserved in the chorales, and in much of the church music of Bach's German predecessors; and there seems little doubt that Bach, closely connected as he was with church music, was influenced by a national form so strongly marked as this.

Aristoxenus' definition of the primary time is, that it is the smallest unit of time in a given composition, and, as such, can never be divided. This is the rule given by him, but it apparently admits of exceptions, which were probably explained in the lost portions of his work. Ancient authors sometimes laid down laws as being absolutely without

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exception, and then proceeded later on to give a long list of exceptions. Cicero has done this in one instance at least.

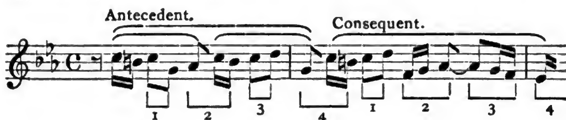
Now, out of the Forty-eight Fugues only in eleven is there any division of the primary time, and in only one of these does it take any important place in the subject. Westphal says that in this matter Bach followed a law of canon, which had the same effect as the Aristoxenian rule. I have not been able to find this law of canon laid down anywhere, but the principle is adhered to, to a remarkable extent, in the contrapuntal works of German composers previous to Bach.

The next law which Aristoxenus discovered from his observation of the practice of the Greek musicians is this:

The antecedent of a period is sometimes divided into two half cola by an internal cæsura, or cæsura within the colon; but the consequent can never be thus divided.

Modern composers almost universally obey this law. Several of our fugue subjects have this internal cæsura either implied in their construction (Nos. 2, 41) or produced by means of rests (Nos. 35 and 37). But every consequent is so constructed that it is almost impossible that a cæsura should occur within it, without producing a very bad effect.

If you observe the construction of the subject of No. 2 you will see that the first colon seems naturally to divide itself into two groups of two feet each; but the consequent cannot be made to do so:—



This construction is used by Swinburne in his threnody on Tennyson in the *Nineteenth Century* for January last, in which each verse contains eight feet. The first four feet are in every case divided into groups of two by means of an internal rhyme, which corresponds to the cæsura in music; but the last four feet of the verse are in no case thus divided. I will quote a single verse as a pattern of the construction of all, and, except for the omission of the anacrusis, Swinburne's lines are of exactly the same rhythmical construction as this C minor Fugue subject:—

"Life sublime, and serene when time
had power upon it and ruled its breath."

The next law to be considered is with respect to the length of the colon. Aristoxenus says that no dactylic colon may extend beyond five feet, no trochaic colon beyond six feet, and

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no ionic colon beyond three feet. There is no doubt that modern music oversteps these boundaries in the case of the dactylic species, for cola of six feet in this rhythm are not at all uncommon; and Gevaert says that dactylic cola of even eight feet exist, but that they are very rare. Now here comes in a matter of taste and opinion. Such Fugues as No. 4, in C♯ minor, which seem to give no indication of a possible division, and yet contain in all seven feet, must, in my opinion, be divided by a cæsura into two cola in order to produce the best result; but whether others will agree with me I do not know. I think this particular one should have the cæsura after the B♯, thus dividing it into the ratio of 1 : 2, since it is one of the proleptic fugues of which I shall speak later.

All modern musical rhythmical forms are constructed on the same principles as those governing ancient Greek verse and music; but while we do not use so large a variety in the cola and periods as they did, yet, on the other hand, our more perfect instruments and finer vocal powers enable us, by indefinitely dividing the primary time, to use a variety of forms in the three species of foot which was unknown to the ancients. One of the peculiarities of Bach's Forty-eight Fugues is that he uses a greater variety of cola and a smaller variety of feet than his successors; thus, in this respect he more nearly approaches the Greek ideal of beauty than any other modern composer. To show this I shall first discuss one of those fugue subjects which consist of six dactylic feet, a form very rarely used as the basis of any composition by composers since Bach.

A verse of six dactylic feet was called by the Greeks a hexameter; and it always had a cæsura within the second, third, or fourth foot, since no phrase could extend to the length of six dactylic feet without a division; and this division must occur *within* a foot in order to produce the anacrusis in the second colon. The subject of the Sixth Fugue contains six dactylic feet:—

By dividing this into two phrases as I have done, we obtain two equal cola of three feet each, the first having an anacrusis of two primary times, the second having an anacrusis of three. I doubt whether any better phrasing can be found than this, which agrees with ancient theory. The reason I divide into three and three, instead of four and two, is that

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the cola may balance one another in accent as well as time division.

This arrangement of the cola does not exclude the use of occasional staccato notes, or particular phrasing of single feet; but Bach himself regarded the Cantabile style as the foundation of all clavier playing, and for my part I think that the dignity as well as the singing quality of these Fugues demand as much *legato* as possible.

Another division of a subject formed out of six dactylic feet occurs in No. 1. In this subject the division should be in the fourth foot, giving four feet in the antecedent, against two in the consequent, or the ratio of 2 : 1. This rhythm is carried through the Fugue, except where a delightful effect is produced in the eighth bar by a repetition of the consequent, and later on where two cola of three feet occur :—

Bar 1. Antecedent. Consequent.

1 2 3 4 1 2

Bar 8.

1 2 1 2 1 2 3 4 &c.

Bar 15, &c., cola of three feet.

1 2 3 1 2 TENOR. 3 1 2 3 4

In No. 16 Bach has himself divided the subject in this manner by means of a rest. As the first Fugue has perhaps more strettos than any other Fugue in existence, it will be well to say a few words here on the phrasing of strettos in accordance with the theory I am advocating.

It will often be found (speaking of Fugues in general) that while one voice is capable of being phrased in accordance with these laws of proportion, other voices either sustain single notes or carry on a motive which it would be impossible to break without damaging the composition. In cases of this sort, the one voice (and there is always one at least) which sustains the particular rhythm on which the

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Fugue is based, should be carefully phrased, while the others may be sustained, played *legato*, or phrased independently of the voice which happens to be leading for the moment. By this means all the cola and periods, while being kept distinct, are yet artistically blended and shaded into one another; their outline being preserved by the voice or voices that sustain the fundamental rhythm. Westphal shows that this is peculiarly the case with Bach's strettos, in which one part will almost invariably be found to be a leading part, as far as rhythm is concerned, while the others are more or less subordinate to it; and their phrasing must depend on the judgment of the performer:—

Bar 14. **Leading part.**

&c.

Subordinate parts to be phrased according to the judgment of the performer.

The alternation of subject, answer, subject, answer, followed by a few more periods and ending with a full close on the dominant, forms what Westphal calls the first strophe of the Fugue. In order to mark the conclusion of this strophe another feature of Aristoxenus' teaching may be used, according to the judgment of the performer. This is the "irrational time duration," consisting of a primary time lengthened beyond its normal value by half. It is a kind of measured pause, which does not break the flow of the rhythm, such as is used in some churches at the end of the second line of a hymn. Again, in my opinion, it would not be out of place if we were to follow the ancient Gregorian method of making a slight *rallentando* on the last foot of the strophe; but this also must be left to the taste of the performer.

The second strophe, or, as Westphal calls it, the anti-strophe, is in this Fugue slightly shorter than the first, and ends in D, the dominant of the dominant. The third strophe ends in the original key, and is succeeded by a *Coda* of four bars on the tonic pedal. At the end of each strophe and the *Coda* I should consider that irrational lengthening, and a slight *rallentando* would be not out of place.

The subject of No. 5 contains only one colon of four feet, or perhaps it may be better described as a period, of which

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the number of feet being only four, there is no division into cola.

No. 11 is in Ionic rhythm—that is to say, the foot contains six primary times. Now Ionic rhythm can, according to Aristoxenus, be only divided into cola of one, two, or three feet, and no more. Its ordinary division is into two feet, but a single foot is often inserted by a composer, for the sake of contrast, in this species, whereas I do not think there are any examples of this use of a single foot in the dactylic or trochaic species. The division of this subject will be this:—

In No. 24 a particularly mournful effect is produced by the use of the cæsura at the end of the foot instead of in its midst. Spitta considers that in this Fugue Bach wished to draw a picture of human misery.

No. 27, in C♯, is the only example of a subject which consists of half a colon, the other half being formed by the answer.

No. 28 is of peculiar interest to philologists as being the only modern example of the rhythmical construction of Horace's epodes and Æschylus' Iambic strophes.

Since the rhythm of the subject forms the foundation of that of the whole Fugue, it is important that it should be very well defined; otherwise the sole interest of the Fugue will be contrapuntal. The Fugues of Bach are acknowledged to have reached the highest that has yet been attained in contrapuntal skill. But this feature appeals more especially to the professional musician, who derives pleasure from the marvellous fertility and resource shown by this composer. Without going so far as Westphal does in saying that if the Fugues of the Wohltemperirte Clavier were played with a due observance of all their rhythmical properties, they would become the most popular of the classics, I do say that a performance of Fugues, with a careful observance of their rhythmical construction based on artistic principles, will go a very long way towards popularising them; for the rhythmical instinct—that is to say, the sense of order, proportion, and symmetry—is very strongly implanted in mankind; but like every other artistic faculty it requires awakening, and, to some extent, training. The modern sense of rhythm is not so highly developed as that of the Greeks; perhaps the nation which, at the present day, has the finest perceptions of rhythmical possibilities is the French, whose composers often produce most piquant effects, merely by the variety in the form of their cola.

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The great masters have, however, in all their important works, either consciously or unconsciously sought to break the monotony of the constant succession of equal phrases by inserting here and there cola which vary from the normal four feet. Beethoven, for instance, directs the conductor in the *Scherzo* of the Ninth Symphony to change from rhythm of four to rhythm of three beats, and back again—that is, to change from the ordinary four-foot colon to the unusual three-foot colon. Richard Wagner, again, uses suspensions and interrupted closes at the ends of his cola and periods, as a protest against the monotony of "arithmetical" division, as he calls it; but in this he was anticipated by Bach, who uses exactly the same means in his Fugues, in addition to getting rid, as we have seen, of the ordinary four-bar phrase altogether, in many cases. Some subjects of the Forty-eight will at first sight appear to be incapable of any such symmetrical divisions as I have mentioned; and I must refer again to the Greeks, and to the practice of later musicians, for an explanation of these.

I will take the Fugue No. 7, in E♭, as typical. Bach has himself divided this into two phrases or cola by means of a rest. But there are seven feet in this subject, a number which cannot be divided into symmetrical portions.

If we go back to the Greek poets we shall find that they occasionally omitted the first foot of the first verse of an ode or chorus, and called this omission a procatalexis; and, moreover, the omission was made up for, and the balance of time completed by a filling up at the end of the second or beginning of the third verse. This is exactly what Bach does in Fugues of this kind: he balances the foot taken away from the beginning, by a *codetta* between the end of the subject and the beginning of the answer. Two others have this construction—viz., 31 and 38.

The use of procatalexis is not unknown in modern poetry, although it is rare. The song "Sabrina fair" in Milton's "Comus" has the same kind of construction, only that here two feet out of the normal five are wanting in the first verse. Milton balances this by making a catalexis of two feet again in the last verse.

Another kind of subject is that in which there is a *redundant* foot at the beginning; and this includes all those subjects which begin on the first beat of the bar, except the three I have mentioned. This redundant foot is found in three strophes of Æschylus' "Œdipus Tyrannus," where it is often written as a verse by itself, and the rhythm in reality commences with the second foot of the piece. But there are plenty of modern examples of it—for instance, when, in a song, the accompaniment has one single chord or one single foot before the voice enters. This foot does not always

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belong to the rhythmical phrase—it is redundant—outside it; a kind of preparation, as Westphal says, for what is about to follow. It must be distinguished from the anacrusis, which is only a portion of a foot. Some examples are Sterndale Bennett's song "Wilt thou forget," Beethoven's "Die Liebe des Nächsten," "Vom Tode," and "An die ferne Geliebte," the last of which is in Ionic rhythm; and in the edition I saw of this song, the accompanist is directed to raise the pedal before the voice enters, thus making sure of the cæsura between the prolepsis and the commencement of the song. Several of Schumann's songs have this proleptic foot, and many other instances can be found. Perhaps one of the most striking cases is in Bach's Organ Fugue in G:—

the subject of which is the same as that of the opening chorus of "My spirit was in heaviness"; but in the chorus the first colon contains the usual four feet, while the Organ Fugue has the redundant or proleptic foot at its commencement.

In all those Fugues of the forty-eight which contain this redundant foot, the last note of the subject will be found to coincide with the first note of the answer. Hence, Westphal suggests that, where possible, we should cut off the preliminary foot from the first phrase by means of a cæsura, and he even suggests that in one case—namely the C♯ minor Fugue (No. 28)—we should make use of the Aristoxenian "irrational lengthening" in this cæsura, in order to mark more strongly the fact that the prolepsis does not form part of the phrase. But this suggestion, which he puts forward with considerable diffidence, must, like everything else I have said to-night, be left to the individual judgment.

You will no doubt be glad to hear that I have now finished with Aristoxenus; and I intend to leap over fifteen centuries and show what influence the Minnelieder have had on Bach.

The old German form of strophe used by the Minnesingers consisted of two portions, Stollenpair and Abgesang—this was continued in the chorale, and in the vocal music of Bach's predecessors—and it is perhaps seen in its highest development, as instrumental music, in his Fugues. A rather elaborate form of it is described by *Hans Sachs* in the third

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act of "The Meistersinger." In its normal form it is as follows: a period consisting of two verses called the stollen is succeeded by a similar period called the counterstollen, and these two periods are connected by interlacing rhymes; the stollen with its counterstollen forming the stollenpair. After this came the abgesang, of a rather different rhythmical construction; and the combination of stollenpair and abgesang formed the strophe.

This form predominates in the vocal compositions, both sacred and secular, of Heinrich Isaak, Ludwig Senfl, Reytter, Finck, Müller, Stoltzer, and others, and the same construction occurs in almost every case in Oeglin's "Liederbuch," printed at Augsburg in 1512. Italian and French composers of that period seem not to have used this form, for I found only one instance of it, in a composition by Gombert, a pupil of Josquin des Pres. Hence we may reasonably conclude that it was a German national form.

Now the subject and answer of Bach's four-part Fugues correspond in rhythmical form exactly with the first stollen of the minnelied, while the second entry of subject and answer correspond with the counterstollen. Hence the first exposition is in reality a reproduction of the stollenpair. This is succeeded by fresh matter, which I have shown is brought to a decided conclusion, generally in the dominant. This new material forms the abgesang, and the whole down to here forms the first strophe of the Fugue.

The second strophe is shown by Westphal to be formed on the same lines, but far more freely, and it is usually more extended, for instrumental music seems to require a fuller and more developed form than vocal. The third strophe is generally shorter than the other two, and is sometimes followed by a short *Coda*. Three and five-part Fugues are modifications of this ground plan, and it is unnecessary to go into their details. Many of our English hymns have this construction. For instance, Wesley's hymn "Rejoice, the Lord is King," is a good example.

The Fugue, No. 2, of which I have already discussed the subject, is perhaps as clear an example of strophic construction as any. The first exposition forms the first strophe, which is regularly divided into stollen, counterstollen, and abgesang; the second strophe is much more extended, but these divisions are clearly marked; the third is considerably curtailed, and has no counterstollen. The Fugue ends with a *Coda*, consisting of the subject on a tonic pedal. The theme occurs in its complete form at the conclusion of the first strophe, the stollen, counterstollen, and abgesang of the second strophe, the abgesang of the third, and the conclusion of the whole Fugue. I will play the Fugue, mentioning the portions as I go.

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STROPHE 1.

Bars 1-2 form the stollen.
Bars 3-4 form the counterstollen.
Bars 5-8 form the abgesang, ending with an incomplete full close in C minor.

STROPHE 2.

Bars 9-12 form the stollen.
Bars 13-16 form the counterstollen, consisting of the stollen-material in inversion and contrary motion.
Bars 17-21 form the abgesang of the same material as the abgesang of Strophe 1, but extended by two cola of six feet each, and inverted.

STROPHE 3.

Bars 22-24 form the stollenpair, curtailed.
Bars 25-middle of 29 form the abgesang.
Bars middle of 29-31 form the *Coda*.

I hope that I have succeeded to-night in awakening enough interest in some of my audience to cause them, at any rate, to look into the views enunciated by Westphal, and to judge for themselves whether they are of value or not. For my part, I am thoroughly convinced that when once they can be systematised and simplified, they will prove a valuable acquisition to all musicians, whether as composers, conductors, performers, or teachers.

Moreover, they help to show that these Forty-eight Fugues of Bach are not merely ingenious exercises in contrapuntal skill, as is apt to be thought by the general public, but are works of art which, perhaps, approach the Greek ideal of perfection of form more nearly than any other modern music. They are the embodiment of abstract beauty in sound, apart from their contrapuntal features, and, as such, will endure as long as our system of tonality lasts. But in order to give them their full effect the performer, while not neglecting the fugal elements, must be careful to attend to their rhythmical features, and this can only be done by intelligent phrasing. They are not easy to play, by any means; but they are, at any rate, not very difficult to understand when once the idea of symmetry and proportion in grouping the phrases is grasped.

Since I prepared this paper, Mr. Prout has called my attention to the works of Hugo Riemann on Musical Construction, &c. I have not had time to read any of them yet, but I am delighted to find in Riemann one of those who have seen the great value of Westphal's works. I shall take the liberty therefore of quoting to you a few extracts from the

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introduction to his "Lehrbuch der Musikalischen Phrasirung." He says: "When Rudolph Westphal's 'Theory of Musical Rhythm since J. S. Bach' appeared in 1880, no small amazement was expressed at the fact that the rhythm of Aristoxenus could be made to serve as a theory for modern rhythm. Although the gaps in this theory were not unnoticed, yet it could not be denied that we had a great deal to learn from Aristoxenus; and though misconception and hostility arose against Westphal, yet there were not wanting those who recognised his valuable and timely services in basing a modern theory of rhythm on the firm foundations of antiquity; and of these I am glad to be able to say that I was one of the first.

(In this book), "however, I have not adhered to Westphal's plan of explanation, and I have entirely dropped Greek nomenclature, for I have found by experience that musicians do not love Greek."

Thus far Riemann. I have not had time to do more than glance at his theory, but I find that his results with regard to the cola divisions of the Fugue subjects coincide with those that I have obtained through my study of Westphal; and I believe that, with Riemann, I can say that I am one of the first among English musicians to have recognised the value of his works, although they are well known to Greek scholars. I have not, however, like Riemann, been able to avoid the use of Greek terms, but I have used them as sparingly as possible.

I hope that the discussion which will now follow may help to clear up some of the points over which I have been obliged to hurry to-night.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—Ladies and gentlemen, I should like to say how deeply indebted I personally feel to Mr. Williams for the most admirable paper he has given us. I have had the honour of being a member of this Association since its foundation in 1874, but never have I been more interested in a paper than in that of to-night. It is full of material and I may say that I have been instructed by it. I have not the pleasure of knowing Westphal's book, to which Mr. Williams referred so frequently, but I do know a pretty good deal about Dr. Hugo Riemann, as I have studied his theoretical works in connection with a book on "Form" which I am now writing. He does not go with Westphal altogether. As to Bach's phrasing, I do not think we can go by the ordinary idea of bars. We cannot divide up his Fugues into

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the regular four-bar rhythm. There is not merely the question of strettos to which Mr. Williams referred, but the whole irregular lengths of period. I think the great principle of the unit of measurement is, the one accent preceded by the anacrusis—the accented preceded by the unaccented note. Mr. Williams referred to Bach's use of the bar line. It is very interesting to compare Handel's use of it in his own MSS. This is very noticeable in "The Messiah," which has been recently photographed from the autograph copy by Dr. Chrysander, as also has "Jephtha." If we look at his autograph we see very much the same sort of thing. Speaking from memory, I think he marks the position of the principal accents for four bars by a line reaching down the score, and intermediate bars he simply marks on the single stave. This marking the more important accents and bars in his work was similar to Bach's use at the beginning of fugues where he wants to show the position of his principal accent. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Williams's arrangement of the D minor and C sharp minor with the cæsura. It appears to me to be the only intelligible and reasonable way. There is just one illustration I may perhaps give. I do not know whether all would remember the phrase, a very charming phrase in 5-4 time, in Boieldieu's "La Dame Blanche," which is an admirable illustration of this five-bar rhythm; where we have alternately one bar of 3-4, followed by 2-4, and after the 3-4 bar there is a dotted bar. This is an excellent illustration of the Pæon, a particularly clear example of this quintuple time so seldom met with. I have come across two examples of the seven-bar rhythm. There is one in Liszt's "Dante" Symphony and another in Berlioz's "Childhood of Christ," occurring where *Herod* calls upon the *Magi*. In the incantation there is a phrase of seven crotchets in the bar. He writes alternately 3-4 and common time, changing his time after each bar. Before I sit down I must ask you to give a most cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Williams for his interesting and excellent paper.

The vote of thanks was passed unanimously.

Mr. Banister.—There is very little one can say on a paper so crammed with fresh material. It is one of the most learned I have ever heard. Before I can discuss it I should like to read and ponder upon it, as it is so packed with thoughtful matter that one can only just mention a few points. Mr. Williams, I think, hinted at one of the reasons why fugues are looked upon as unintelligible and dry. The perfection of fugue playing is that each note should be played with its proper rhythm and that the subject should be properly considered. The same rhythm should be carried right through the fugue. I should be almost inclined, however, to a continuity of the *legato* in the very first stretto after the close of

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the Exposition in the C major Fugue of Bach. It is difficult, I know, but I think it is designed that there should be no break between the B natural and the E. I think it should be impressed upon pupils that the subject of a fugue should be phrased and accented throughout, just as it was phrased and accented in the first instance. In the C sharp minor Fugue the suggested rhythmical division seems to take away a little of the beauty of the rise from the B sharp to E. That seems to be one complete idea, and it always reminds me of the "Wretched Lovers" chorus. I quite agree that staccato should be as much avoided as possible in fugue playing. Anything like Czerny's version is dreadful.

The CHAIRMAN.—Czerny had staccato on the brain.

Dr. PEARCE.—Speaking of the staccato in fugue-playing, I rather like organ fugues with a little staccato to mark the accents, and this is most desirable. There is a little difference in playing organ and pianoforte fugues.

Mr. WESCHÉ.—There are some little pieces of Paderewski in 5-4 time. There is also a very remarkable song by Robert Franz in F sharp minor in 7-4. In Gounod's "Mireille" there are some 5-4 beats in the bar.

The CHAIRMAN.—Chopin's First Sonata is throughout in 5-4 time.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—There is, in a Violoncello Sonata by Balfe, a solo movement in 5-4, which is very charming. As far as I remember, the grouping of it answers exactly to the description which our lecturer gave. The whole Sonata is worth playing, although it is by Balfe.

Mr. STATHAM.—I am more familiar with Bach's Organ than with his Pianoforte Fugues. Dr. Pearce suggested there was a difference between the two. It is true that fugue playing requires more staccato on the organ in consequence of the immutability of touch. The only way in which you can accentuate the notes is by a staccato. You must do this to a certain extent, though I agree that fugues should be played as *legato* as possible. The subject and answer should be clearly defined throughout, more particularly when you come in with it on the pedals. In the small B minor Fugue there is a close stretto at the end, where the one part governs all the rest. I must protest against the new reading Mr. Williams suggests for the magnificent C sharp minor Fugue. It would take away the monumental grandeur of the subject.

Mr. WILLIAMS.—I must first of all thank our Chairman for the kind way in which he has spoken, and the audience for the flattering way in which they have received and listened to my paper. My object has been to bring this theory of rhythm before musicians and the public, and I have been endeavouring to do so for the last two or three years. It has often stood me in good stead when listening to new music

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for I have been able to get a grasp of it that I have never been able to before, at a first hearing. With regard to the case mentioned by the Chairman, in which Handel shows his sense of the importance of principal accents by dividing certain long bars by means of dotted lines, he does this in order to distinguish between principal and secondary accents as Bach has done in one of his fugues. As to five-time rhythm, the ear can grasp it, but not easily. The phrasing of the stretto is a matter of individual taste; but there is generally a leading phrase, and as a rule I fancy that Bach when he begins a subject in stretto, carries it on to the end, and there is always some voice which sustains the fundamental rhythm. With regard to the C sharp minor subject in which there are seven feet, Aristoxenus says that no colon may extend beyond five dactylic feet, and this predisposes me to consider that this subject should be divided. Westphal calls Czerny's version of the C minor Fugue (No. 3) with the staccato notes a "rope dance." He says that this Fugue should in reality be made to sing as much as possible, that it should be a kind of "song without words." Dr. Pearce mentioned the use of staccato in organ fugues. Personally, I am not fond of staccato on the organ, though now and then it may be useful: I think the phrasing should generally be as *legato* as possible. Mr. Wesché spoke of five-time rhythm. I have a collection of some thirty-five specimens, kindly sent me by correspondents to the *Musical News* some time ago.

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APRIL 11, 1893.

H. C. BANISTER, ESQ.,

IN THE CHAIR.

ARTISTIC LANDMARKS.

BY JAMES C. CULWICK.

WHEN I was requested to read a paper here, my surprise and my pleasure were great; but knowing as I do the wide scope, as well as the high value of the work of this Association, I questioned if there could be any subject left over that had not already been considered. Under these circumstances I judged it best to give a simple utterance to what is of present interest to myself. I am happy in the conviction that, wherein I am found to fail, the deficiency will be supplied by the discussion that is to follow.

The estimate of the value of analysis and criticism formed by various musical thinkers will be found to differ very widely. Some are wholly unable, or unwilling, to subject music to analysis; while to others the exercise of the critical faculty gives their greatest, it may be sometimes their only, enjoyment. The first of these positions would seem to have been that of more than one strong musician; the second may be that of anyone whose intellectual resources are in advance of his poetic insight. But these views are faulty, and might tend to serious error and loss; for if we skim the surface only, vaguely accepting the good things of Art without any intelligent enquiry either as to its source or its intention, we shall miss many things of great worth; and, on the other hand, if we had a feeling too sensitive, and a vision too keen (to use the words of a great novelist), "It would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence."*

Certainly, when our analytical study is fashioned after a dogged, hard-headed, inflexible system, which banishes poetic

* George Eliot.

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delight and all sympathy with the artist's personality; or if we demand a mere cast-iron precision of form within lines of narrow conception, and allow the materialistic questions to overgrow the spiritual, analysis is a baneful habit. But if, on the contrary, it has for its object the gaining of wider views, a fuller sympathy, and a more exact knowledge and estimate of an author's intention and of the motives inspiring his work, the habit is an unmixed good. Unfortunately, the office of critic is frequently the first task undertaken by the student and he finds many ready to join him. But this office can be adequately filled only by such as are exceptionally endowed and specially educated. "Most of us blunder from too much egoism and too little sympathy,"* and few of us as critics possess those four indispensable qualities: knowledge, honesty, courage, and sympathy. There must be a nice balancing of emotion and intellect before there can be sound criticism.

Burney held the opinion that criticism in this art would be better taught by specimens of good composition and performance. Of course much would here depend upon the nature of the compositions displayed, and something upon the performance of them. But it would seem that his words express but half a truth, and do not touch the root of the matter — omitting to take into account the fundamental principles of work. Neither hearing with the ear, nor reasoning, nor devotion to scientific study, not even a long habit in these directions, invaluable, indispensable, delightful though they are, would, of necessity, and taken alone, bring a man into touch with the great moral facts, and first, universal, and everlasting principles that lie at the foundations of art, and which are the real roots from which spring—perhaps unconsciously spring—our best art-work. Acoustics are inseparable from the foundation and constitution of music; so is philosophy. But as acoustics are wholly and properly held in reserve by the practical musician, so philosophy seldom forms any part of our formal or conscious study. Yet these principles, though they are often hidden away, and lie deep down, deeper than reason could probe, and more widely spread than coldly scientific, uninspired speculation would be likely to hint at, when they are recognised they fasten upon us, and they affect us more permanently than even the sweet sounds of music itself. Music, it is true, reaches us through the delighted ear; our reason, too, is satisfied; but the music, the spirit of the music must find its way into the recesses of our mind, and it must touch a sympathetic and responsive chord in our nature before it can affect us very deeply, and before we can give out again to

* George Eliot.

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others any artistic warmth, whether we are inventors or interpreters. Those are not the choicest parts of music that merely tickle the ear; nor are they those which address the reason. The best, the highest come, to such as are able to receive their impressions, in part through the ear, in part by the intellect, but chiefly by intuition, by a special instinct, and through that swift artistic prescience which is the artist's birthright. And though it is true that we cannot, as practical musicians, live our fullest, healthiest life without a knowledge of the material groundwork upon which the art is built; yet when knowledge is perfected, there is still needed the clear voice of the sensitive artistic conscience. This guides the inspired composer and his worthy interpreter safely and surely, when men less gifted, and whose sense of right and wrong is less delicate, beset on all sides with snares, and pitfalls, and by-paths would be led astray. A German anatomist has dissected many a human body and declares he has never found a soul. Not all parts of music can profitably be subjected to merely intellectual analysis. An intuitive sympathy and a balanced judgment, the outcome of many virtues, will be needed to enable us to taste its finest flavour.

In attempting to point out the artistic landmarks I should not be greatly surprised to find myself opposed by some whose first and only law of art is that there is no law, and that no limit or check can be imposed upon an artist, whom they may chose to regard as an aerial creature living apart, sipping the wine of the gods. But as we readily admit the beneficial force of the moral *laws*, albeit moral truths are not capable of rigid demonstration, so, similarly, we must admit that there are bounds which an artist should never seek to pass, though no one should lightly take upon him to fix by rigid definition the limits of right and wrong in artistic practice. It would seem that, so far as the laws of artistic action can be codified, they are, after all, but an extension, a paraphrase, or corollary of that code of morals established from the world's beginning. Nothing is new under the sun—at least, nothing in philosophy or morals, as many a would-be revolutionist could tell us. Laying aside technicalities, which it is not my intention now much to deal with, I believe that every distinctive school of thought which has been manifested in the artistic works in our hands, may be classified as the direct outcome and natural outgrowth, or logical consequence, of some one of the ancient Cults. Among musical thinkers we see those whose natural sympathies may be said to lean distinctly towards this or that school of philosophy; now, as ever, to use the words of Ben Jonson: "Some wits are swelling and high; others low and still; some hot and fiery; others cold and dull." The honest

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observance, or the stiff-necked ignoring of the four cardinal virtues, which formed the foundation of the philosophy of the wisest among the Ancients, has had much to say to the shaping and the balance of many an architectural triumph or failure, the general drift and expression of a musical composition, or the design of a beautiful picture. Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, might well form the headings of chapters upon musical compositions. So it was that Schumann said: "The laws of morality are also the laws of art"; and this is true, probably, in a sense more widely reaching than is generally admitted.

It follows, then, that to map out the world of Art we should have to deal not only with material things which are well understood and readily admitted, nor should we have merely to register hard, dry facts. Our duty, and indeed our chief care would be to mark the limits and bounds of the great moral and spiritual dynasties. We should describe the directions and measure the force of the currents and tides of emotions that for good or evil sweep through our lives and govern our impulses. Our map would describe the calms and the storms that make the sunshine and shade of our existence and keep us from stagnation, our latitude and longitude lines would be those deeply scored lines of demarcation which separate the good from the bad, the true from the false, the strong from the feeble, the noble from the mean. In Art no other system of classification is half so important as that which points out to us these vital things. As the soul guides the habits of the body, so are Melody, Harmony, and Rhythm—the body of music—inspired by the measure and the manner of that spirit which ruled them in the making.

In determining to avoid technicalities I have designedly laid aside many interesting branches of our subject—"Artistic Landmarks." For instance, we might have discussed the subject from the material standpoint, and considered musical literature and musical practice in detail, after the manner of the student of comparative anatomy. Then I should have felt justified in citing instances and balancing authorities. But from this course I was turned aside, remembering the words of Edmund Gurney: "It is," he says truly, "the most useless sort of musical controversy and it is most rampant—the endless disputation and dogmatism about the comparative merits of composers and compositions." For this reason I have made no special citations.

Or we might have followed the historical method, and once again—and we never do so without profit—we could have traced and counted over the landmarks in the development of the Art, point by point, as it "slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent." Here the main lesson would, no

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doubt, have been this: that all that is great and pure may be counted as ever-living, and that only the untrue dies:—

> "Be sure the works of mighty men,
> The good, the faithful, the sublime,
> Stored in the gallery of Time
> Repose a while—to wake again."*

But we are to follow another, and a less frequented path.

It would appear, and it is an interesting circumstance, and full of significance, that our landmarks, various, numerous, and widely extending as they are, will be always found set up by pairs, one directly opposite another. They stand, like opposing signal lights, marking the limits of a land-locked sea, this fixing the limit of safety in one direction, that in the other. Within the ample space marked out by these landmarks we may move with safety. To try to push beyond them is dangerous, if not ruinous.

However, when dealing with such questions, we must be cautious; for there is nothing in Art more difficult to define than Truth; no duty requiring a more widely sympathetic mind or more wise tolerance. It is our duty—the duty of each one of us—to use our best efforts to work out a satisfactory definition for himself. Scarcely should anyone hope to produce such a formula as would prove in all things acceptable to any other mind. Nor does it seem quite necessary that we should hold in undoubted or fancied possession the whole of truth: "for it is the endeavour after it that determines a man's place." "Knowledge and light be to him who has laboured and striven with tears to attain!" But this much is plain—there are limits in Art, which we should not try to pass, just as there are truths in morals, which, if we observe not, we shall justly find ourselves in the position of outlaws. The constant aim should be to find a golden mean, avoiding all excesses; neither on the one hand imitating those laggards who live only in things long ago perfected and brought to completion, nor yet on the other adopting the tactics of inventors who disdain obedience, and whose works are more like the dreams of a distempered brain than the exalted enthusiasm of a sound and true genius, mistaking eccentricity for originality.

I have spoken of the dual and opposing nature of our landmarks; and if we regard the matter carefully, we shall see that all the activity and movement in the artistic arena are carried on in a sort of friendly strife. The never-resting pull and push of opposing influences agitate and vary the conditions of every conceivable division and sub-division of the artistic ground. All questions, we commonly say, have

* Goethe.

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two sides, and, as the gentle Sir Roger would have had it, "much might be said on both sides."

The salvation of all Art expression and practice would seem to lie in the perfect adjustment of the opposing influences, or in the balancing of complex attractions. This, too, is nature's rule. Do not the worlds swing in their orbits and run their mighty courses in safety through the nice adjustment of counter attractions? Suppose all the heavenly bodies suddenly ceased to oppose one another, what would become of the universe? In our human anatomy there is no muscle without its opposite. Were there no such opposition there could be no activity in life, no healthy exertion of faculty. A limb once placed would remain uselessly inactive. All life's lessons teach us the same, and art repeats what life has taught us. For instance, a line and a curve, placed in opposition, each increases the other's value; the opposing of one colour by another results in adding freshness and brilliancy to both. So a passage of solid-sounding plain counterpoint, or a phrase in unison occurring in contrast to the complexities of an involved choral fugue, always gives additional character to the work; and so a well-contrived modulation increases the pleasure we feel upon coming back to the home key; the discord makes the concord the more prized; and what concerns us nearly, the true artistic use of agitation and emotional storm is to enhance the effect of the sweet calm which should follow it.

Nor does this diversity, whether in things natural or things artistic, imply any imperfection, but rather the healthy activity of every part of a great unity. All such considerations should lead us, however, when discussing any controversial subject, to hold to our artistic convictions with a laudable tolerance. For even those whose views differ most widely from our own, may deserve our respect, and we may quite disregard only such as are colourless and devoid of all individuality. Not all of right lies on one side of the artistic field, not all of wrong on the other. Heaven-born genius, honesty and success are found among the champions in every part of the field. It is happy if they can see that all are working towards the perfecting of some larger symphony than any of human designing.

How true a picture we have in this aspect of Art (and particularly in the musical art) of the life we now live! There are many joys; there are brilliant hopes yet their realisation is imperfect. We have struggle, opposition, partial conquests, yet never perfect rest. These make our day—these our music; or, as Shelley points the lesson:—

> "Our sincerest laughter
> With some pain is fraught;
> Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

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One of the most fascinating attributes of music is its power of faithfully portraying human character, and of speaking in a language most subtle and truthful of human struggles and emotional experiences.

And viewing this matter from the highest vantage points, we might well exclaim, both as men and artists:—

> "I thank Thee most that all our joy
> Is touched with pain,
> That shadows fall on brightest hours,
> That thorns remain."*

To show reason for my assertions, let me indicate some particular instances of this contrary pulling among the forces that shape Art.

Every view we may form, every virtue we may rest upon, will be found to have its opponents or opposites. On the outset we find among the philosophical analysts of Art a wide divergence of opinion even as to the first rudimental foundations, or the reason and origin of Art, which differences, carried out to the end, land us at the opposite poles of style. Hence such controversies as that between Charles Avison and Dr. W. Hayes. Darwin, a representative theorist, considers that music was primarily used and perfected in relation to the propagation of species, and so he comes to make *agreeable sounds* the *sole* object of the musical art. Herbert Spencer derives the sense of music from the cadences of emotional speech. From the one we should get "absolute music," intellectuality having a smallest share in it; from the other, music that hesitates not to be ugly, provided it is natural. The truth lies in neither extreme, yet it may be both these views supply us with some part of the truth.

Now look in another direction. If a teacher lay great stress upon the importance of a solid intellectual foundation for Art, some other authority will surely rise up warning us that "cognition and emotion tend to exclude each other, and an extreme activity of the reflective powers tends to deaden the feelings."

Again. If someone speak of the many deep ethical questions involved in this healthy development and the balancing of thought, another may scornfully turn away denying the necessity for any such considerations. Some, indeed, without any prick of conscience, will attempt to invest subjects mean or impure, or vile, with musical interest.

Or, if one adopt the teaching of old Morales, who said: "The object of music is to strengthen and ennoble the soul; if it does else save honour God and illustrate the thoughts and feelings of great men it entirely misses its aim"—I say,

* A. Proctor.

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if one adopt this standard, he will certainly find himself confronted by others who assert that "ethical effects do not belong to the essence of the Art"; and we shall find those who seem to think that "our judgment is sound in proportion as we speak with the pure voice of sensation and nothing else." In close but unacknowledged affinity with these are those comfortable people who are quite content to occupy their whole lives mechanically producing, performing, or teaching such soulless music as aims only at a transitory and flashy effect, and of which the aim is wholly meretricious. Some men patiently and painfully struggle to excel; others take life, Art, and all things as they find them, anxious for nothing. An enthusiast is not too frequently met with, but if he appear, it cannot fail that he will find himself chilled by the opposition of some callous, mercenary person, vexatiously placid, calm, and calculating.

A large and important company of musicians still hold together, who raise their artistic structures submissive to law and order. Veneration is a strong point in their nature, and they ever strive to show that "things can be good without being dull, or wanting in life and elevation." The music of their making is formful, rounded, and chaste. Such students as these often feel startled, and even pained, when those who are their opposites, like pioneers, strike out for themselves quite new paths, where was no path before, asking for no law or custom for guide. Their aim is to be a law unto themselves. Yet it is through the action of these daring spirits that the bounds of the acknowledged artistic world are enlarged, and the landmarks pushed out and re-ordered so that they may include new fields for artistic enterprise.

When the leader of any new departure is strong and wise, the world will soon get news of him and learn the benefits of his enterprising leadership, and these benefits will be gratefully accepted. But often such a man, by a personal magnetism and the right of exceeding genius, will gather about him a fanaticised cluster of "young and ardent minds, blindly devoted to him, who will ask nothing better than to take part in a crusade against old dogmas and to preach the new gospel."* "These hair-brained fellows, who fear no exaggeration," will treat everything that has gone before as useless old rubbish. When such iconoclasts are at large let them be closely watched. Their destructive powers are generally far in excess of their constructive abilities. "Joy, humility, and usefulness always go together; as insolence with misery, and these both with destructiveness."† The real use of such men is that when a truth by long use has become warped, has lost some of its burden of truth, and is but a

* Camille Saint-Saëns. † Ruskin.

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shadow of a shadow, they act the part of the microscopic scavengers in the physical world and save us from the dangers of a putrefying stagnation.

A few workers may still be found who, in the care they bestow upon their work as well as in their manner of working, remind us of the old race of fine gold workers, or of the ancient illuminators, so jealously do they scan the form and finish of their work. Their ambition may not rise very high, but every part must be pure to the finest detail; and this they perfect at any sacrifice of time and trouble. At the contrary pole we shall find others depending altogether on a swift general effect. Their efforts being wholly directed to colour, expression in line and finish of detail they are quite content to forego.

I need scarcely try to weigh the claims of such as regard genius as sufficient without knowledge, nor, on the other hand, of those who consider law as superior to imagination. Nor shall I more particularly notice the claims of the classicists and romanticists. All these, and more, would continually run into excess and error if not held in check and balanced the one by the other. Together they voice the complex spirit of our times.

Many other similar instances might be adduced, but these are sufficiently suggestive of the never-ending pull and push of opposing artistic agencies, which should result in a happy compromise, as far removed from the character of excess on the one side as on the other. Our hope is that by watching this struggle we shall be able to take hold of the clue to methods of work, through their springs in human character, and to perceive unerringly where they lead, and where lie their weakness and their strength.

One other example of this contention and balancing of influences I have reserved for special and more detailed comment: It is the all-important struggle of Power with Beauty, and it presents in epitome what is going on all round us in every field of artistic activity.

Many writers, in as many fashions, have attempted to explain this part of Æsthetics, each in a manner fitting his own temperament. Adam Smith bluntly asserts that custom and fashion rule absolutely over Architecture, Poetry, and Music. Kant's treatment is purely intellectual. "Dugald Stewart and Bain speak of the beautiful as a man almost colour-blind would of a painting."

But Burke and Mr. Ruskin, with a firmer grip, a finer sympathy, and with a largeness of handling, seem to carry us on to conviction, and we feel that if they do not succeed in telling us the whole truth, at least, by their sympathetic writings, we are carried much nearer the truth.

In Mr. Ruskin's teaching, Power and Beauty represent

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two classes of Art broadly contrasted. One characterised by a severe, and in many cases mysterious majesty, which we remember with undiminished awe; the other by an exceeding preciousness and delicacy, to which we recur with a sense of affectionate admiration. "A great work should express a kind of human sympathy by a measure of darkness as great as there is in human life. There must be in human art some equivalent expression for the trouble and wrath of life; for its sorrow and its mystery." But this strength secured, beauty should then fill out and complete the structure; beauty with power being proportioned and designed in each case in accordance with our feeling of right and wrong and fitting the tale we have to tell. Neither power nor beauty can be enjoyed—nor can they be admirable nor reach perfection wholly separated the one from the other. Each modifies and controls the extreme actions of its opposite, producing another joy, a something in a transformed state of beauty—a beauty strengthened, a power refined. It is like the eternal struggle between good and evil, joy and sorrow. Music all gloom—formless, violent, dissonant, and cruelly strong, gives us an effect very similar to Byron's ghastly poem "Darkness," which one cannot read without pain. Music, all sweetness, undulating, and winding about with no point of force, without the shudder of a discord, or a disturbed or contrasted rhythm, or any variation of tone or pace, grows on the mind like the palsy of an uneventful, lazy existence, and is only fitted for—"A land where all things always seemed the same."

Burke held similar views, but for Ruskin's word "Power," Burke uses the word "Sublime." Burke classes under this head—the sublime—all such things as cause in us the impressions of terror, mystery, power, infinity, difficulty, magnificence, suddenness, and pain; while he finds beauty in those qualities which cause the sense of satisfaction that arises in the mind upon contemplating anything that calms, soothes, and gratifies.

We must be most careful to observe the meaning here given, for the sake of scientific classification, to the word Sublime. Burke certainly does not mean that what is sublime cannot contribute to our "mental health, power, and pleasure." He uses the word in contrast to beauty, to show that things sublime, and things beautiful appeal to two separate classes of emotion. In fact, Sublimity and Beauty, two most important among our artistic landmarks, are set, l ke all the rest, over against one another. They divide our e notions, ranging them, as it were, in two contending parties or camps; each division acting in constant opposition to the other; from which results that balance of parties where neither is allowed undue mastery—and the struggle issues

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in life and perfectness. Music, so balanced, satisfies our intellectual judgment, and presents a true picture of life. But should one class or the other act a tyrannous part, crushing or annihilating its opposite, we lose that truth and we see that the composer has failed, either, on the one hand, by becoming lost to the sense of the beautiful, the softness, and the joy of life; or, on the other, by being insensible to the solemn and mysterious aspects of the world.

In short, these two principles, Sublimity and Beauty, underlie all Art-work, and they mix, and contrast, and act as mutual correctives, keeping the work alive and healthy; and they colour it according to the proportion of their admixture, which is always in unison with their author's mood.

All worthy Art is the direct outcome of human character and human emotion; for if we examine it closely, we shall always see in a man's work a direct outcome and index of his inner life. This must have been in Mendelssohn's mind when he wrote to Pastor Schubring: "I can only imagine music when I can realise the mood from which it emanates." And what is true of one man is equally true of a nation. If among the people there is to be found ripe energy and earnest resolution to do with might whatever the hand findeth to do; and if these qualities are tempered and directed by education and softened into graciousness by a strong inborn sense of beauty there shall not be wanting great artists and noble Art.

In the hands of some writers, music seems to breathe a feeling of firmly based confidence and manly courage. It shows the philosophy of common-sense glorified by not common intellectual strength. So we feel the music is invigorating and notably wholesome. Others by its means, like Wordsworth, drew from Nature as from an inexhaustible source of inward joy. They make us feel and share the joys of all human beings whose vision is not dim to the beauties of life, and order, and nature.

Men with a wider emotional experience, tenderly, and with a wonderful sweetness, have combined the bitter things of life with the sweet, in language at once lofty, dignified, and true.

But there is other music which tells us only of a sore and weary spirit. In it "suffering lies naked." And yet again there is music in which strange eccentricity, or a swelling, immoderately or unpardonably exaggerated, alternating with long periods of dulness or uninteresting—often hideous—waste, rarely enlivened by a gleam of lovely light, produces a phantasmagoria—a will-o'-the-wisp kind of music, echoing the philosophy that inspires it.

So then we see a work is linked to the mind and nature of its author as a consequence naturally following, and it is difficult to imagine an artist bringing to perfection any

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creation greater or more noble than his own nature, nor indeed, one greatly differing from it. Hence, no doubt, it arises that some music, like some companions, brings more of happiness and has a decidedly beneficial effect upon sensitive minds, while it has been remarked that some other music, if taken in quantities too large, or too frequently, may, to receptive natures, be positively poisonous; and we shall not be far wrong in agreeing with Sir John Stainer that there is "an undoubted connection between the 'beautiful' and the higher sense of 'the good.'"

We shall rapidly pass in review some of the manifestations of these artistic forces—Power (or Sublimity) and Beauty as seen in musical practice.

First, the power felt in any work may be caused by the qualities of gloom and severe simplicity. This effect may result from towers of solemn-sounding fundamental triads boldly massed, and from employing a rhythm from which all lightness has been excluded. Such, used either as a ground plan or as an occasional effect in contrast to passages of complex construction, favours a feeling of solidity and solemnity in a marked degree.

Another kind of sublimity is gained by size or breadth of handling. He who has stood upon a crag, where his eye could measure the unbroken sweep from the foot to the summit of some great mountain, will have felt the majesty of nature bear upon his mind with affecting force. Music creates the same feeling through the large, unexcited, forceful development of some grand thought, or chain of thoughts, finely and deeply felt. Such we often meet in the huge and severe simplicity of Handel, and in the clear, multitudinous complexities of Bach.

But, besides these aids to the expression of power, a sense of anxious suspense and deeper gloom is produced by clustering discords; by delayed resolutions; by the holding back of resting points; by a harassed rhythm; and by a fretful striving and a reaching forward with painful longing to some object which is never grasped.

By means of these harmonic and melodic contrivances, with all those corresponding to them on the rhythmic side, the effects of passion and violence may be inordinately increased. But we should carefully note, that as these effects gain ground we "lose proportionately in the diviner quality of beauty." These contrivances with others, used in suitable, varying proportion, are most valuable, and put intensity and much dramatic force into the hand of the capable composer. It is only when the restless, rebellious, unrestrained heart and will prompt him to excess, that we feel how painful is force when untempered by beauty; and not only is it painful, but it is nearly always untrue to life.

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Instead of presenting a record of brave struggles nobly borne, out of which we hope to see the sufferer rise triumphing, it is to be deplored that so large a portion of the work in what is called the "advanced school" either laughs itself hoarse in hollow mockery of life, seeking to hide a sore spirit under a contemptuous ignoring of any of its serious moods; or it spends itself upon the morbid realization of scenes of hopeless torture, or strained anxiety, without any hint being given of coming relief. Large tracts lie in the shadow of perpetual discord. There is a growth of music that tantalizes, and leaves us athirst for a deep, clear, draught of melody, and of which the total expression conveyed is disappointment and racking uncertainty. Music, like men, may become stark mad and damaging to the public weal. As a great art critic has said: "The expressions of fear and ferocity are the most foul and detestable." Readily we should acknowledge this as applied to other arts, though in music familiarity has blinded us to the fact that these are undoubtedly of all others, and without rebuke, the subjects most frequently chosen by certain writers for musical treatment. It is unfortunate that these expressions are easily rendered, and that men, able perhaps to accomplish little else, can here make a great sound and show. When such means are used in excess the music assumes such sublimity as is felt in the dangerous, swollen rush of the mountain torrent; or in the relentless cruelty of the strong sea, as it beats and breaks on the unsheltered coast.

It is a truth none can gainsay that Art, if it is not progressive, must languish. Yet, in spite of the large accumulation of serious and splendid achievement which fills up the history of the last half-century, we cannot, if we stay to think of it, view certain phases and the prevailing tendencies without anxiety and some regret. I pause a moment to make a quotation from a magazine devoted to art subjects. In the number just published we read: "'Impressionists'—'Independents'—'Incoherents'—these societies of the French artistic novelty-hunters, are not enough, it seems, to satisfy the cravings of the Parisian painter. So he has started a new society for which he has found an excellent name, 'Les Inquiets.' 'The Society of Unrest' is good as a title, and thoroughly explicit."* We shall not fail to see the bearing this has upon our present subject.

> "Lo! as the wind is, so is mortal life,
> A moan, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife."

Such is the oft-recurring text which forms the motive of a large section of our present-day artistic work.

An epidemic of pessimism has prevailed, and probably will

* *The Magazine of Art.*

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prevail for some little time longer; though we are confident that this rule of thought cannot be permanently attractive, either in its emotional or in its rational form to more than a small section of civilised society. There is a morbid delight in the horrible. What is said to be real is eagerly grasped, no matter how vile, or mean, or repulsive. And in our musical feasts there has been a growing distaste for any wholesome dish dressed in the sweetly reasonable style of past days. There is a loss of appetite for anything but what is of the most pungent nature, and this craving for sharpness goes so far that the dish has sometimes been compounded altogether of the most fiery ingredients. In things artistic as in things spiritual, there is a disposition on the part of some to affect a freedom which would come within a measurable distance of anarchy if carried out to the bitter end; and in music, as in poetry, there is a ready renunciation of the higher, the more pure and nobly chaste for the lower, the loud-sounding, and the startling. There is an eager grasping of, and delight in, all things that are new and surprising, however shocking to the ear, mean in construction, or repulsive in subject; and so many are "carried on by the current till they have found a refuge for themselves in what, in its literary parallel, we know as the 'fleshly school.'" We may well adopt the words of our poet:—

> "O God, between the fierce extremes
> Of light and darkness, bliss and woe,
> Subdue my heart's too giddy dreams,
> Uplift it when it droopeth low.
> That I forgot not those who weep,
> Nor yet reject thy liberal joys,
> But grave-ward walk in hope, and keep
> My life in wisdom's equipoise!" *

This equipoise is precisely the quality we are now most frequently found to want, and there is reason to fear that unrest and violence, unnaturally and constantly insisted upon, would, little by little, if the inroads be not stayed, rob us of every shred of quiet, sweet, winning beauty. Viewed merely as artistic policy this method is unwise. Strength in any of its artistic forms used so as to become monotonous in its excess, is quite wasted. It is then only that which Carlyle defines as "strength that has not yet found its way." Count over the examples of sculpture that in any degree approach the excesses that now appear so commonly in some schools of music. You will be able to find nothing comparable except in the distortions of the grotesque Japanese masks. In the highest flights of fancy or imagination, reason ought to preside from first to last. Lessing and Mozart alike impress upon us this canon of Art. Lessing

* George Savage-Armstrong.

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said the wise Greek confined painting to the imitation of beautiful figures only. From all such emotions as are expressed only by losing all the beautiful lines, the ancient masters either abstained entirely, or reduced them to that lower degree in which they are capable of a certain measure of beauty. Mozart, a true prophet of beauty, the Raphael of musicians, thought that music when describing the passions, however violent, should never offend the ear, but should always remain music.

To get a full sense of the qualities that go for strength, it is necessary to present in contrast telling points of quiet and repose. In richness of harmony, in inventive rhythm and every device of complication, in the rush and multitude of sounds, in overpowering orchestral cries, consummate skill and unlimited intellectual strength may often be seen; and work conceived after such a manner may be desperately in earnest and urgent, and fully successful in so far as the author has put into it a record of his convictions, and his own emotional experiences. But if he has nothing more to show us than a morbid and perverse enjoyment of pessimistic gloom, if we see him engaged in a maddened search for erratic, eccentric newness; if we have no place for repose, and if the agony of longing, and unrest, and never-to-be-relieved struggling are constantly present; if there is distressing insistence in telling things ungrateful, and an unwholesome lingering near the dark pools of life, which can only end by a weakening of our mental and moral stamina, we must feel that we are in bad company. Music made up of such thoughts has become biassed and bent from its true line of progress. So an arrow flies wide of the mark if the bow be bent unequally.

Yet not with the musician would I quarrel. It is against the false philosophy that has poisoned his life that I would raise my voice—

> "Wiser it were to welcome and make ours,
> Whate'er of good, though small, the present brings—
> Kind greetings, sunshine, song of birds and flowers,
> With a child's pure delight in little things."*

At least let us not forget the saving influences of calm and serene beauty—the beatitudes of a pure, faithful, and well-poised artistic nature.

There is a world of wisdom in these two lines of Tennyson, pointing to the true source of strength. He says—

> "My strength is as the strength of ten,
> Because my heart is pure."

Here is matter for reflection, both for the man and the artist.

It is in acting as a counterpoise to the strained mental

* Archbishop Trench.

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state such as that just noted, that beauty finds one of its most important duties. And in Art, beauty occupies a corresponding position to that of religious faith and joy of hope in the life of man. It brings light where else all would be dark, mysterious, uncertain, and often painful. "Art, also, in its higher forms, like religion, is an aspiration after the ideal, and the love thereof is its own exceeding great reward."*

In a materialistic sense music is not an imitative art, but the more intimately we become acquainted with the deep things of music, the more clearly shall we see that, in the very highest manifestations, its beauty, its balance, its form, and its general conduct follow upon the ideal of life and the loveliness of nature. Such works, rare in their perfection, embody all that is noble, beautiful, and elevating; and they have this last highest merit—that they most truly mirror man s life, and his best and his happiest thoughts, and reflect his noblest feelings and aspirations; and so it is that we are enraptured by viewing humanity, as in a vision, perfected and sublimed. It is of such music we may truly say: "It is the outflow of a beautiful mind." "The contemplation of such music re-awakens our confidence in the originally healthy nature of the human mind, when uncramped, unharassed, unobscured, and unfalsified."†

As for the formal laws of beauty made by man, they can be profitable only in so far as they help in preventing gross mistakes and in controlling disorderly flocks of ideas. Nor can any teach us to discover beauty; nor can we make it after any prescribed formula. Things of admitted beauty in all parts of the field stand as landmarks. These are our rallying points both for attack and defence, and it is around these that we gather, and formulate, oft-times with a full measure of haste or of prejudice, our artistic doctrines and our rules of conduct.

The sense of beauty, with the quick recognition of it, is born in us and cannot be learned by precept. The love of it should grow with our growth. But (as Kingsley has said), "it is only the pure soul that will perceive purity, the noble soul nobility, the beautiful soul beauty, whether on earth or in Heaven itself."

* J. Forbes-Robinson. † Helmholtz.

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DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—We are always thankful to any one of our lecturers who leads us into higher views of the nobility and beauty of our art, if indeed it be possible to lead us to higher views than we already have about that. Mr. Culwick has dealt with many landmarks, which I have tried to sketch until I have quite a landscape of peaks before me on my paper. I do not know how to leap from one to the other. He first of all gave us four most invaluable landmarks—knowledge, honesty, courage, sympathy. I think, perhaps, in the matter of knowledge we consider ourselves such a learned Association that he might have dealt with that which he avoided, the matter of technicality; as we think ourselves, rightly or wrongly, so learned that we could have stood any amount of it. But we must be thankful for his honesty and courage in telling us about the pitfalls into which we are liable, in these disastrous times, to fall. I think the matter of sympathy is one of exceeding importance for us to take into consideration, as there is so very much that is put before us in the nature of music now-a-days, with which, I feel sure, no beauty of soul is allied, and with which no pure soul can feel any sympathy. We may profess all sorts of views about what is called advancement, and so on, but the fact is, music as an art must appeal to all our true human sympathies. I do quite think that what our lecturer alluded to—the matter of music being an expression of the vicissitudes and changes of human emotion in connection with human life—was very true. We don't want to think of music in connection with that which is detestable and which is a horror to our moral feelings. I have on one or two occasions in this Association dealt with this question. I think we ought to deal with music as leading us to that which is pure, beautiful, and true; although I don't think that music teaches us ethical principles, yet it ought not to be representative of that which is vile, and in any sort of way lowering to us. With regard to the matter of the "both sides" and the "golden medium," Archbishop Whately says somewhere, that with regard to truth and error there really cannot be two sides. There may be a great deal said that may appear true on both sides, but truth appears in one balance and the absolutely false in the other. Truth is unique, and anything said against truth cannot be really argumentative, forcible, or true. I am very glad that I differ from our lecturer on one point. He said about certain modern critics and advancers of certain theories that their destructive power was greater than their constructive—I am delighted to be

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able to say that I do not agree with that. I believe their destructive power is at a minimum, is, in fact, zero, while their construction must be absolutely nowhere. Our lecturer alluded to the question of religion in connection with truth. Religion is not a mere aspiration, but an emotion and principle of human life founded not upon our merely aiming at something better—at spiritual purity—but upon a revelation of that which is absolutely true.

The Chairman then moved a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Southgate.—Our lecturer's paper has ranged over such a large number of subjects, it is so deeply thought out, and put before us in such charming language, that it is not easy to stand up and take the various points categorically. There are, however, two or three which struck me. At the beginning of his paper he specially drew attention to the fact that the enjoyment of music is of a dual nature. We must be able to analyse music, and at the same time be able to enter into the intentions of the composer and endeavour to find out what he meant when he wrote his piece. That reminds me that one of our members, whom I am glad to see present, has already said some words upon that point, and I remember very distinctly how glad we were to hear her say that music must not be merely looked on in the same way as a man does who is preparing a skeleton or a subject for the dissecting knife; we must endeavour to see what is meant and whether the production was consonant with our own feelings. Therein comes the beauty of music apart from the analysis of its construction. I understood our lecturer to say that in the complete enjoyment of music both these qualities must be united, and then we possibly shall be able to get the author's meaning and enjoy his music to the greatest extent. There is one point he put before you which has already been touched upon by our Chairman. I think we have been very happy in the choice of our Chairman to-night; his books dealing with our art so faithfully reflect its qualities, and are so charmingly written that they enable us to hear music with much greater enjoyment. It has been said that music practically is a beautiful art, and that it should not represent that which is bad, vile, or unfit for musical treatment in the general way. Where music is allied to the drama we get some tale of human passions, possibly good and bad passions; there are all sorts of things in dramas—love making, murders, and so on. If we have to use music to represent these sins and passions, and to set the whole thing in a musical frame, the music must necessarily then partake somewhat of the sentiments, and we shall get what might be called bad music. Of course whether these things should be represented in music or not is a very large question indeed; but the demands

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which are made upon music to represent scenes and incidents are so large that there must be a great difference in the music itself. We may get a placid pastoral movement, and then the next scene may be a benediction of daggers, just before the people are going to commit murders and other horrible crimes. Music to represent this successfully must be to a certain extent degraded, since it must fall very much away from the ideal of beauty. Music is undoubtedly a beautiful art, but as it is sometimes called upon to represent bad passions we necessarily get music that jars upon us. I think our lecturer observed that music should not offend our ears. Owing to the advance of music we are getting quite used to having our ears offended. There are many now who disregard the old declaration that *mi contra fa diabolus est*. In some cases, therefore, music does offend the ears—a great deal of it offends me very much ; some of it I consider barbarous. Mr. Banister would call some terrible where consecutive fifths and octaves are tumbling about everywhere. He is too good a musician not to know that these effects are both wrong and bad. The pieces of music that are published are really sometimes horrible and barbarous, but there are people who do not seem to mind them. We can, in fact, now stand almost anything. I said something like that the other day to a musician, and told him we need not go much farther than Beethoven, who in the Choral Symphony has placed every note in the scale in one chord. But its position suits the portion of Schiller's poem in which it occurs, although the horrible row does offend the ears; but it is perfectly obvious why Beethoven wrote it: it was put there for a definite purpose. Our lecturer spoke of the balance of power and beauty, or sublimity of music ; the sublime is also the beautiful. We may have beauty in small graceful pieces without their necessarily being sublime, but the great charm of music is, I think, the one point that our lecturer so well insisted upon—namely, variety ; that there should be a balance between what may be considered the strong and the tender, the beautiful and the ugly. When we get such a balance it enables us to enjoy music, and goes to make up one harmonious piece.

Miss PRESCOTT.—I think Mr. Southgate has said almost all that I would have said, so there is nothing much left for me beyond that I agree with much that I heard. There is the well-known story of a man dissecting a dead body in the hope of finding the soul. Of course the soul was not there. If he had dissected a live man he would have killed him, and then he would not have seen it. What we musicians have to do is different. If we analyse a piece of music we have to examine a living body without killing it. It is quite possible, however, to so carry on the analysis that you kill

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every scrap of music in it. The thing is to analyse without killing. I quite agree that we must have a balance of opposing qualities in music. Is it not that the use of the bad shows up the good? I think that is so with the ugliness of music. The consonances sound more beautiful after the dissonances.

Mr. Wesché.—I have to thank our lecturer for the excellent paper he has read. It not only gives us great incentive to thought, but his literary treatment and quotations were most admirable. There are several things that we might discuss, though approving of the paper as a whole. One might feel a little diffidence in going the whole way with him. Some of the greatest music is an expression of the storm and stress of life. We should be deprived of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven if we were to say that no music but that which is pleasant, and expressed a pleasant view of things, should be permitted. Mozart, in writing his Dramas, composed nothing that could offend the ear. His music is always charming, lovely, and beautiful, but somehow fails to express strong dramatic situations. In the other matter of the balance of beauty and power, that is a most important thing. As Mr. Southgate has just said: "The difference between the sublime and the beautiful is certainly very small"; but when one comes to the question of power and beauty, many works strike one as being powerful on first hearing, but it is often a long time before we perceive their beauty. It exists nevertheless. One may feel that Bach is immensely powerful, say, in the works of the Passion music. It is some time before one knows the music and loves the detail. Mr. Manns remarked to me on some music of Brahms: "It is difficult to find the melodies, but when you have found them, you love them." One almost feels it is impossible to draw the line between beauty and power. What is beautiful is frequently powerful. What is powerful is not necessarily beautiful; but still, in the vast majority of cases, what is powerful is also beautiful. Another point is the expression of the grotesque or the horrible in music. If we carried out these theories to the extreme point, we should lose works like Berlioz's "Faust" and "Symphonie Fantastique." There are many points that I could raise of great men breaking rules with good results. If you carry out rules you cannot do harm; but where would the Art of Music be now if the great masters had not broken hundreds of rules? Perhaps it is the exception that proves the rule.

Dr. Todhunter.—I must confess to feeling a little disappointed after hearing our lecturer. The reason of my disappointment is that I hoped we were about to hear him go against some particular school, which would provoke discussion; but his lecture was so terribly sound that it gives

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us very little to discuss. He talks about the impressionists of modern music and those terrible critics. As I detest immensely the work of certain composers of the very new school I feel I must speak with judgment. They are doing more and more harm. I feel that as music progresses we shall have more discord, and the only question is whether you can resolve these discords; I do not use resolution and discord in the ordinary technical sense, but in the sense of bringing them into a sort of cosmical home—the home of art. I think the verdict must rest with posterity. Perhaps they will admire music which now offends our ears. Even when Mozart wrote his first music he was regarded as a great innovator and his music was not much liked. Now nothing is too good to be said about him. And what about Wagner? Surely he suffered enough. Well, if posterity supports all these things which people in their generation deride and laugh at, I suppose it will be all right for some of our present composers in the distant future.

Mr. Blaikley.—I only wish to recall a very interesting paper read by Lord Justice Grove a few years ago, which in some points runs parallel with Mr. Culwick's. The subject was "Antagonisms," and although Lord Justice Grove dealt with antagonism in physical and intellectual things, the scope of his arguments was somewhat like that we have had so ably put forward by Mr. Culwick, and was applicable to artistic things also. The two papers I should like to read side by side and I think anyone so reading them would find a great deal of instructive and interesting matter. It has been remarked that in artistic things it must either be stagnation or progress. That was in a certain sense the line of thought in Lord Justice Grove's paper. We must have either stagnation or progress, and all progress is due to antagonism. Antagonism elevates, and the want of it produces vice or ugliness. In any case antagonism enhances the result by the contrast, and, to follow up Mr. Southgate's remark, after an amount of love-making our senses are prepared to view these scenes again when we have listened to the villain for the time; this is due to the antagonism between them. The wicked by their contrast enhance the beauty of the pure and lofty.

Mr. Southgate.—I would like to refer to some observations that have been made during this discussion. I do not intend to defend Mozart, who needs no defence; but in reply to Mr. Wesché, who called attention to the fact that there are no very strong or powerful points in his dramas, I would say, Mozart followed his nature, and I do not think this was a very strong one. In his operatic works, with the exception of "Don Giovanni," they excite in me very little strong feeling—in fact, in many respects they are monotonous. His

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"Requiem" has many points of great power and deep solemnity. One point more. The first time I heard the "Episode in the life of an Artist" Symphony, with the reference to Pandemonium and the travesty of the "Dies Iræ" by the witches and devils, the music seemed horrible and repulsive. When I first heard this I was very much struck, and, perhaps, horrified. Now I recognise its cleverness, but it is not the true mission of sweet music to depict such horrors.

Dr. TODHUNTER.—Mozart as a dramatic composer is one of the most charming of writers. He is very intense in a strong situation, which he strongly expresses. Mozart is not so dramatic as Beethoven or Wagner, but he has a sense of character portrayal in his music, and each character is a distinct type. Mozart does not use the *Leitmotive* of Wagner, but each character is possessed of a certain and distinct form of melody. There is a counterpoint of character running throughout everything he wrote. It is scarcely true to say that Mozart had good librettos, with the exception, of course, of "Don Giovanni." It has often been found, as in some of Weber's operas, that unless the musical composer select a good libretto the opera will never live, and in this respect I think musicians are not careful enough in their choice of librettos.

Mr. WESCHÉ—I should like to explain that in speaking of Mozart I suggested certain things that appear to me to be lacking in his music. I would rather hear "Fidelio" from a dramatic point of view than "Don Giovanni," for the grave-digging scene in the former seems to me the most marvellous piece of dramatic composition that I know of. It is this dramatic quality, this virile grasp of a strong situation, that one looks for, and looks for in vain, in Mozart's work.

The CHAIRMAN.—I believe one reason why people depreciate Mozart's operas is that they lack a perception of wherein lies true beauty. Dr. Todhunter's expression, "The counterpoint of character," is, I think, a very valuable one. With regard to that other matter of ugliness and beauty in music, in connection with wickedness and purity and excellence, I do not think at all that when we talk about wicked music we necessarily mean ugly music. I believe some of the prettiest music going is wicked, the reason being that it is so voluptuous. I believe one of the things people aim at in certain kinds of music, supposed to be designed for a certain purpose, is to try and make it as voluptuously pretty as possible, and to avoid anything like discord. With reference to the question of the expression by music of some of the vilest passions and ugly things in life, I am afraid we get into another very great problem, which has never been solved and never will be—that is, the whole question of the origin and

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purpose of the existence of evil in this world. It would be nice to have a world all virtue and goodness, but it is not so, and I am afraid, therefore, that this problem must remain unsolved. But music that expresses these evil passions and other sins is not wicked. Mr. Southgate mentioned something about this, but the thing is, I think, that such evils exist in this world, and are expressed dramatically in music. In history there are many unpleasant incidents, and there are also some in the Bible. There are very many incidents of virtue, but still we have their counterparts in the evil passions of some good men.

Mr. Culwick.—I have been told that the use of a discussion is to bring out variety of thought, but I think that this evening my paper has failed in that, seeing that we have almost all agreed about it. Several sidelights have been thrown upon some of the questions it contained, and I have kept due account of them; but I do not think it would be proper now to enter upon them, as they would take me some time to express and might lead to further argument.

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MAY 9, 1893.

EBENEZER PROUT, ESQ., B.A., VICE-PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

A SUGGESTED METHOD FOR TEACHING ELEMENTARY HARMONY.

BY CHARLES VINCENT, MUS. DOC., OXON.

BEFORE proceeding to the suggested method which it will be my privilege to place before you, I must ask your kind indulgence should the matter prove of too elementary a character, or be too superficial for the consideration of such a distinguished body as the Musical Association.

That the methods now generally adopted in teaching harmony are in a measure adequate for the needs, and are a great advance on those our immediate predecessors employed cannot be gainsaid, and that the teaching of the advanced stage of harmony is exceedingly thorough and exhaustive must be acknowledged by all who are in touch with the numerous English and foreign text-books of the day. I said that the methods adopted are "in a measure adequate" for the needs of those who employ them, and therefore necessarily for those who have to adopt them. I used this qualification advisedly, as it will be my endeavour to point out that the methods employed and the results obtained by teachers of elementary harmony are not, in most cases, quite satisfactory to themselves or their pupils.

I cannot but approach this subject with hesitation and diffidence; however, knowing well your kindness and the consideration you always bestow on subjects of this character, I venture to place my suggestion before you.

Remembering the many difficulties I met with when commencing my studies in harmony, knowing at the present time that thousands of school girls and boys devote some time each week to the subject, and reflecting on the generally unsatisfactory results obtained, I feel at least justified in entering the arena and taking my place amongst those who with "good intentions" desire to be of service. Of course, those who make music their profession must face and combat the many

difficulties the early and mechanical period of the study presents; but the amateur student, who takes up the subject either from a love of music and the attraction of the name "harmony," a thirst for knowledge, or the needs of examination in the near future, can relinquish the study whenever it becomes irksome. It is sad to reflect what numbers do this owing to difficulties they meet with in the early stages. If now and again one comes across exceptionally gifted pupils who find no trouble or difficulty with the subject, that is no argument that the present methods are entirely adequate.

William Horsley, Mus. Bac., Oxon., after enumerating the elaborations and perplexities introduced into the study of harmony, quaintly says: "After this, we ought surely to rejoice that the study of harmony is yet pursued among us."

The Mechanical Period and its Difficulties.

I am not so sanguine as to believe that the act of composition can be acquired by those who do not possess the innate faculty; at the same time, I would submit the desirability that all who study music, in whatever branch, should become thoroughly acquainted with the generally accepted rules of chord formation and combinations, and thereby acquire something more than a superficial acquaintance with the art they pursue. Pianists cannot possibly interpret that which they do not fully understand, and critics ought not to analyse that which they do not comprehend synthetically.

With all who approach the study of harmony (save the gifted few) the early stages are, and must be, more or less mechanical; exercises are worked and corrected, rules given and learnt in a purely mechanical manner.

I do not see how this can be avoided; if it be granted that the mechanical period must be gone through by all, then it appears to me that a suggested method which could shorten that period would be of value and be welcomed by teachers and learners. The method it is my privilege to submit to you this evening endeavours to carry out this aim.

My objection to the present methods in general use is that students are rushed through the simple triads and taken into discords before they are really able to write even a little bass part of their own, to harmonize an easy melody, or, in fact, to put the simplest chords together; the usual result being that, after about two years' work, a student can harmonize a figured bass and tell you the roots of various complicated chords; but ask for a bass to be written or a melody to be harmonized and you will generally ask in vain. These come in time after many experiments of their own.

The method I shall submit for your consideration insists upon students writing their own basses from the first, and rules are given for the accomplishment of this, the figuration

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of melodies and their harmonization in a simple manner. In order that the basses may have variety and be more interesting, a system of modulation is introduced, which does not necessarily require a perfect cadence to denote the key through which the modulations proceed.

Up to a certain point I suggest running on the same lines as those traversed by most existing text-books—viz, Rudiments, consisting of notation, scales, intervals, and the formation of diatonic triads. After these have been thoroughly understood, then I suggest the following table for the construction of basses. One great advantage, I consider, consists in its simplicity, which is proved by the fact that very elementary pupils can use it freely, and the use of it interests them and leads to an intelligent understanding of the more advanced branches of harmony.

Upon a bass part common chords may be constructed. It is necessary to understand how this bass part may be written so as to ensure a satisfactory connection between one chord and another, and for this purpose the following table is suggested:—

MAJOR.—TABLE FOR COMPOSING BASSES.

CHARACTER OF CHORD.	DEGREE OF SCALE.			DEGREES OF SCALE.
Major.......	I.	May be followed by		IV., V., vi.
minor	ii.	"	"	V., vi., (vii°).
minor	iii.	"	"	vi., (vii°)., I.
Major.......	IV.	"	"	(vii°)., I., ii., V.
Major.......	V.	"	"	I., ii., iii., vi.
minor	vi.	"	"	ii., iii., IV., V.
diminished	vii°.	"	"	iii., IV., V.

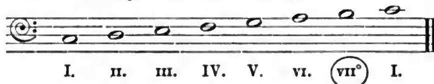
Uniformity in the numbers will be noticed, with the exception of an additional number following IV., V., vi.

EXPLANATION OF THE TABLE.

The Roman numerals refer to the degrees of the scale; I. being the lowest note, or first degree of the scale (keynote). Large numerals (I.) signify degrees of the scale which bear major chords. Small numerals (ii.) signify degrees of the scale which bear minor chords. A small circle after a small numeral (vii°.) signifies a minor third and diminished fifth—a diminished triad. A ring round a numeral indicates that it

may only be used in sequence, and should be avoided till sequences have been explained.

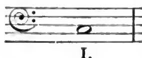
The scale of C major would be shown thus—



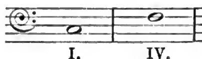
(I need hardly say that the system of numerals is that ordinarily employed in Germany.)

To illustrate the manner of selecting numerals from the table and of translating them into notes, I must ask you to bear with me while I construct a simple bass.

Each exercise should begin and end with the tonic, or root I., therefore our example will commence with I., which, in the key of C, will be C—

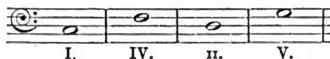


It will be seen by the table that I. may be followed by IV., V., or VI. Let IV. be selected, which, in the key of C, is F, the fourth degree of the scale—

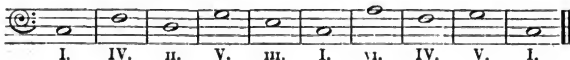


Referring to the table, it will be seen that IV. can be followed by (VII°)., I., or II. As (VII°). is to be avoided at present, our choice rests between I. and II. We have had I. so recently that we will select II. for our third bass note—

Root II. may be followed by V., VI., or (VII°). We will select V.—



Following on in this manner we construct a complete example of a workable bass part, upon which an exercise of common chords might be written—



The last two roots of the exercise form the bass of what is termed a cadence or close.

Then explain the perfect cadence. At this early stage it will be found advisable so to construct each exercise that it shall conclude with a perfect cadence—V., I.

Then should be taught elementary rules, *re* melodic progressions, forbidden skips; after which, exercises might be written in 8 or 12 measures in length, one note in each measure, each example commencing with the root I. and ending with roots V., I.

Before harmonizing basses, rules relating to the correct progressions of parts, chord connection, compass of the voices, and other kindred subjects must be understood. After which, basses may be harmonized with uninverted triads, adding the treble part first.

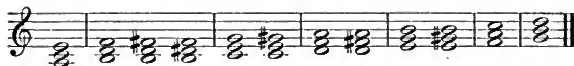
Sequences should then be explained; and let me remark here that I would relax the rules for the formation of basses in the following way when treating of sequences:—

The pattern of a sequence should be in strict accordance with the table, but when it is formed, the bass part may copy this pattern on a higher or lower degree of the scale without any reference to the formula for writing basses. Regular sequential progressions, to which the old masters were so partial, will enable the ear to tolerate many arrangements of roots which might otherwise be considered harsh.

At this stage I would suggest the study of cadences and elementary form, so that the exercises to be written might be made more interesting.

Minor Table.

The following is the table I have arranged for constructing basses in the minor keys. Doubtless many improvements can be made in this table; certainly in its present state it is cumbersome. On account of the irregular nature of the minor scale, I have not been able to construct a table which shall appear uniform, like that derived from the major scale. Owing to the greater selection of chords derived from the minor scale the number of workable triads is greatly increased. The twelve possible chords which may be used in the minor scale are as follows:—



There are several other chords I might have included if I had wished to exhaust the possible triads derived from this scale.

The addition of the major chord on the supertonic of the minor scale, is an addition which I shall not attempt to

explain or defend. The D♯ does not occur in the minor scale I have placed before you.

With regard to the construction of the table, I ought perhaps to say here that the selection of chords to follow one another is purely individual; no general law is followed, nor can I see that in a matter of taste such as this it is possible to establish such a law. I have experimented with these chords and find the following progressions can be effectively used in connection one with another, as exemplified by the table.

I would not say that my selection is final, in fact, I frequently add to or take from the formula. It is more than probable there will be some who will differ from me in the selection; to them I would say, make your own table or selection. Composers can be identified by their progressions, and it would be a serious matter if one stereotyped sequence of chords existed for all. Our sensations are given to us, and in a measure are under our control in order that individuality may appear. In matters of choice we cannot say this is wrong or that is right; each must decide for himself, and select means which to him appear effective and pleasant.

In teaching, I should not recommend the complete table of harmonies possible in the minor mode to be given to a pupil at the first; a selection of the most ordinary triads should suffice till freedom has been gained, and then additions gradually made to the table.

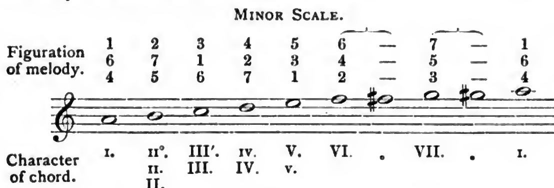


Table.

Character of Chords.	Numerals.			
m.	i.	May be followed by		II., V., VI., iv.
a.	ii°.	"	"	iv., v., VI., V.
m.	ii.	"	"	v., V., VII.
M.	II.	"	"	ii., IV., v., V., VII.
M.	III.	"	"	i., III'., iv., v., VI., VII.
aug.	III'.	"	"	i., V., VI.
m.	iv.	"	"	i., ii°., ii., IV., V., VI.
M.	IV.	"	"	ii., v., V., VI.
m.	v.	"	"	i., ii., II., III., III'., V., VI.
M.	V.	"	"	i., ii., II., III'., iv., IV., VI.
M.	VI.	"	"	ii., III., III'., iv., V., VII.
M.	VII.	"	"	ii., II., III., III'., iv., IV.

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This table is to be worked in a similar manner to the previous one.

Example.

I. IV. V. VI. III'. VI. IV. I. II. V. VI. IV. V. I.

It will be necessary at this stage, owing to the number of chromatic alterations in the minor series of chords, to introduce further laws relating to progressions, such as false relations, chromatic skips, &c.

Thus far I have treated only of the construction of basses. I will now proceed to the consideration of the

HARMONIZATION OF MELODIES,

and will endeavour to explain how it is possible to make use of the tables for this purpose.

A note of melody may be harmonized by three chords—the chord of which it is the root; the chord of which it is the third; or the chord of which it is the fifth.

A melody may be figured to denote this in the following manner—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1
6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4

The figures denote roots and refer to the Roman numerals in the tables.

The first note, "C," may be harmonized by I, 6, or 4; in other words, by the chord having root I. for its bass (the tonic); the chord having root VI. for its bass (submediant); or the chord having root IV. (subdominant) for its bass—

I. VI. IV.

The tables will assist the student to decide which of these

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roots will be satisfactory when selecting a bass for a melody. An example will perhaps best show how this may be accomplished—

1	3	2	1
6	1	7	6
4	6	5	4

&c.

The root I. will be the best bass note for the first chord, as previously explained. In looking at the table it will be observed that root I. may be followed by IV., V., vi. Now unless we prefer to repeat root I. for the second chord root vi. is the only chord open to us, as iii. may not, according to the table, follow root I.

Having selected root vi., we look at the table to see what it may be followed by, and find ii., iii., IV., or V. Of these, two appear in the figures of the melody—viz., 2 and 5. If 5 were selected consecutive fifths would result, so we select 2. Root ii. may be followed by vi.; we thus obtain the following result—

&c.

I. vi. ii. vi.

Another example—

1	2	1	7	6	6	5	3	4	4	6	6	7	1
6	7	6	5	4	4	3	1	2	2	4	4	5	6
4	5	4	3	2	2	1	6	7	7	2	2	3	4

I. V. vi. iii. vi. ii. V. I. IV. ii. vi. ii. V. I.

Modulation.

I will now proceed to show in what way modulation can be introduced in order to infuse interest into these preliminary exercises.

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Should a lengthy exercise be written from the table, even with the interest which well-contrasted rhythmic phrase could infuse into it, a feeling of tediousness must be the result. Relief from this can be obtained by modulation.

By using the table in the following manner a system of modulation can be introduced, one which must prove of lasting use to the student.

After an exercise has proceeded, say, five or six measures and a new key is desired, consider the chord you have reached as belonging to another scale, retaining its character only. Thus, in the Major Table, chord I., being major, may be changed to either IV. or V.; V. may be changed to I. or IV. The minor chords ii., iii., and vi. are likewise interchangeable. After a chord has been so changed the chords that follow it must proceed according to the table, but in the new key.

Example.—

KEY C. KEY G.

I. V. iii. I. IV. ii. vi. / ii. vi. IV. V.

KEY C.

iii. iii. / vi. I. vi. IV. V. I.

The seventh chord, vi., in the key of C, being a minor chord, may be considered ii. or iii. of another key; if it be considered ii. we are in the key of G, if it be considered iii. we are in the key of F. In the above example it is considered ii.; we thus continue in the key of G according to the table. At the twelfth chord a change is made back to key of C by considering chord vi. of G as the iii. of C. (Observe that there is no perfect cadence in the middle section key of G.) Major chords may be made minor and then the new minor chord considered as ii., iii., or vi.

Major and minor tables can now be interchanged and exercises worked introducing various keys. I am often astonished at the beautiful quaint harmonic effects produced by this means.

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Short example—

C. F minor. A♭. C minor. C major.

I. IV. II. VI. IV. I. V. I. {II. IV. V. {I. VI. IV. {V. V. I.

The sixth chord is made minor and considered I. in F minor, the ninth chord is considered as II. in the key of A flat, the eleventh chord is considered as VI. in the key of C minor, the thirteenth chord is the dominant of C major as well as C minor; it is considered in C major, and thus the exercise concludes in that key.

I could enlarge on this branch to an almost unlimited extent, but I think enough has been said to explain this little "fad," may I call it? and some of its possibilities. Anyhow, I hope I have made its working clear enough to ask you to discuss its merits and demerits.

I quite anticipate that the members of this Association will judge the matter of too trivial a nature; but I also hope that the suggestions may prove of use to some teachers, or at least may receive a trial by them; in which case, I know from my own experience, having used the plan for quite ten years, that it will be found of considerable value in certain cases.

Should any students find the suggestions I have made of assistance, or any teacher find them helpful, I can assure you I shall be more than repaid for the little trouble I have taken in putting these few sentences together.

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DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Our warmest thanks are due to Dr. Vincent for the most interesting, instructive, and useful paper—to pupils as well as teachers—which he has given us this evening. I have been especially interested because, as you will be aware, he has been dealing with a subject which it is my particular business to teach, and in which I am chiefly engaged—musical theory. He need not have apologised for dealing with a simple subject. These elementary matters are often the most difficult to teach, and the early stages, the first six or twelve months, of a pupil's work—learning the rules of harmony which he or she wishes to master—are often found the most difficult. Anything that will help us to smooth these first steps for learners is most valuable, and I am therefore indebted myself to Dr. Vincent for the trouble he has taken in explaining his system. He has been good enough to refer to my book on Counterpoint. I am warmly in agreement with him so far as the major key of his table is concerned, but I am afraid I cannot agree with him in the minor key. I may have misunderstood him ; but I want to know why he has not included the leading note in the minor key in the same way as in the major? That seems to be an omission in the table. There are one or two other things I am rather surprised to note. The minor chord on the dominant—when he gave us that example in the minor key, the chromatic chord of the supertonic was followed by the minor chord on the fifth of the scale, so that there was a modulation in the key of E minor; I cannot understand this, and should like a little enlightenment. Dr. Vincent introduced the minor chord on the dominant, which is met with in its first inversion in Mendelssohn's "Ruy Blas." This is the only case where we find the minor chord used on the dominant. There is not quite the same objection to the old major chord on the subdominant, which belongs to the Dorian Church scale. Here is another point—the major chord on the minor seventh degree of the scale. With the B D in A minor I cannot feel that is in the key of A minor. Neither can I understand the common chord on the mediant. Dr. Vincent's table is, however, most excellent and most useful. I would suggest that even in the earlier exercises it would be advisable to make the pupils put their own bars from the first, so as to initiate them into the feeling of rhythm. Dr. Vincent wrote all his notes as semibreves without any bars to them. I should begin with two minims in each bar so as to mark the accent, taking care to arrange the pupil's bar-lines in such a manner that the last note was

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the accented note. This subject touching accent and the alteration of it is the very life of music. Elementary pupils can never understand this, and it must be explained to them. The plan of harmonizing melodies which Dr. Vincent has suggested is excellent. But I find pupils learn by instinct the progression of harmony. I agree with him on the subject of modulation. One of the most common methods of modulation is by means of a triad belonging to the key you are quitting and the key you are going into.

Dr. VINCENT, having obtained permission to reply to each speaker in turn, said: I am very much obliged to Mr. Prout for the kind words he has said and also for the several suggestions he has made. In each case he has left it an easy matter for me to reply to him. In the first place, he asked me why I do not introduce the chord on the raised seventh in the minor scale. In reply, let me say that I would certainly do so if I were dealing with inversions; but this table refers to uninverted chords only; in the major table the chord is introduced in sequences, however, in the minor a sequence is difficult to construct. With regard to the chromatic chord on the supertonic followed by the minor chord on the fifth of the scale to which Mr. Prout referred, undoubtedly these chords are in E minor, but I would allow them in A minor on account of the ambiguity of the scale; further, I do not feel that a modulation has been established by their introduction: it would have been better not to have introduced the supertonic chord so early in the exercise. Mr. Prout was good enough to suggest that the chord of E minor in the key of A minor was not permissible; in this I cannot agree with him. As I said before, the selection of a scale is arbitrary, so I say the selection of chords is arbitrary. It is a matter of individual feeling, and to me the introduction of this chord is unobjectionable. I do not think we should allow students to be so cramped in these matters. In my paper I recommended that rhythm might be introduced to the student immediately after the making of basses has been understood, and at this stage I would suggest the study of cadences and elementary form.

The CHAIRMAN.—I still feel that progression to be in the key of E and not A minor. Although I perfectly agree that one chord will never establish a key, two chords together very frequently do establish a key.

Mr. HOPPER.—In your illustration why don't you include the chord of the second which may follow the chord of the first in the major scale?

Dr. VINCENT.—Because I don't think it advisable at the earliest stages to introduce it in this position.

Mr. CORDER.—The table is very ingenious, but I always find elementary pupils are apt to deal with harmony, and to

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write exercises without using their ears, and it seems to me that this system is only calculated to lead them farther in the wrong path.

Dr. VINCENT.—I have referred to this part of the subject in the paper.

Mr. BANISTER.—Dr. Vincent spoke about a system that was satisfactory to teachers and pupils alike; claiming for his system for teaching harmony that it has proved thus satisfactory. I have been teaching for forty-three years and I have not yet lighted on such a system. With regard to the question of modulation, it is all part and parcel of the matter which Macfarren sanctions—viz., the supertonic and tonic discords resolving to the dominant harmony. There must be something in the context to indicate that it has not modulated to another key, but still remains in the original key, for the time being. When one travels from here to there we speak of having passed through certain places on the way, which does not mean that we have walked round about them. When teaching, and despite all my long experience, I find it very difficult indeed to put myself in the position of a learner. I never learned elementary harmony at all. I know, I suppose, the advanced portion now; but how in the world I ever learned the elementary parts I don't know. I never passed through that stage. I remember the time when I knew nothing about it, and everything seemed an unexplored country. Somehow I began to teach it, then found out what I did not know. Dr. Vincent spoke about William Horsley. He was a somewhat crusty and crotchetty old man and found fault with everybody and everything, and I don't think his cited opinion is worth much. With regard to the matter of composing basses, although it is recommended on such high authority as Sir George Macfarren's, I never could perceive how students should be taught to compose basses apart from the whole composition. The bass is part of the whole. We know the old non-musician's question, which appears to us so very stupid—"Do you begin with the bass?" I always say to them: "Do you draw or paint?" "Do you begin, when you commence a landscape, with the cow or the cottage?" Of course they admit that they think of the picture as a whole. That is exactly what we do. As musicians we think of the whole. We don't begin with the bass or other parts. We think of it altogether. I think that Dr. Vincent's table is extremely ingenious and very nice; but, indeed, it is precisely that kind of thing my pupils would be puzzled at. I find pupils cannot remember three or four simple rules as to what should follow such and such a chord. What I find better than all the rules is for the pupil to use his musical instinct. I would advise teachers to give very few rules and depend more upon instinct. If

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you don't get that all the rules in the world won't diminish the trouble of the master.

Dr. VINCENT.—In reply to Mr. Banister let me say that I only claim for the system I have ventured to suggest for your consideration, that it *has* proved of use to my own pupils, and possibly other teachers might like to give it a trial. It has been my endeavour to show pupils what they may do. May I point out to Mr. Banister that I used the word construct and not compose when speaking of basses.

Miss PRESCOTT.—I find very useful this list of Roman figures. I think they are borrowed from Richter's Harmony. I should like to cut out the second column of the table. I should then tell my pupils that either of those common chords, with the exception of 3 and 7—which I should scratch out—may be followed by any of the others, except to putting 2 before 1. I should then leave them to their own choice. I should write the figure 1 and put down just what they chose, 4, 5, or 6, because I could make them all follow one another. I think you must teach pupils part-writing at the same time.

Dr. VINCENT.—The numerals I have made use of are adopted by Richter and are in common use in Germany. I fear the exercises written on the plan suggested by Miss Prescott would not be very pleasant.

Mr. WESCHÉ.—We don't want to teach mechanical music. Unless a person has musical instinct it is labour lost to teach him harmony, or anything of the sort. There is a very excellent passage in Stainer's "Composition," which gets rid of the whole matter. He recommends all students to endeavour to understand and realise the effect of chords. He advises them to study a simple hymn tune away from the piano, and try to realise the effect of the chord written and then to play it over on the instrument. Pupils with a musical instinct would be successful in a very short time. It is merely a matter of time.

Dr. VINCENT.—In reply to Mr. Wesché, I would repeat what I have said before—namely, that the early stages are, and must be mechanical, and my endeavour is to shorten that period. By all means, as soon as possible introduce the mental effect of chords into each lesson and thereby add to the interest and value of the lesson.

Mr. WESCHÉ.—The use of this system in music to realise the effect of chords and everything else does not come into the ables. That comes in the teaching; but what I wish to ask is this: is it possible for a mathematician to go through the whole course of work and to be no wiser at the end of it than at the beginning? If he has no musical ear will he be able to realise the effect of chords?

Dr. VINCENT.—That comes in teaching and has nothing to do with the table.

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The CHAIRMAN.—The table in my book is much more elaborate. It takes in the whole of the first inversions of major and minor keys in the same columns, but I never tell my pupils and never expect them to commit them to memory. I cannot repeat that table myself, but I have got the instinct for the correct progressions. I can testify from repeated experience and what has been said to me over and over again that from constantly referring to my table they get the instinct for correct progression. Nothing will make them composers if they have not the natural gift. We can teach them how to use these chords, but cannot give them ideas, or make them composers. I will ask you to join with me in a vote of thanks to Dr. Vincent for his interesting lecture.

[The vote of thanks was passed unanimously.]

Dr. VINCENT.—Thank you very much, and allow me to thank Mr. Prout for the kind way he has presided and for allowing me to answer each speaker in turn.

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JUNE 13, 1893.

SIR JOHN STAINER, MUS. DOC., PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

ANCIENT MUSICAL TRADITIONS OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

BY THE REV. FRANCIS L. COHEN.

IT has become almost one of the commonplaces of the historian of Music to contrast the absence of men of Jewish race from the list of distinguished musicians of the past, with their remarkable frequency among the more eminent composers and virtuosi of the present. It is not without justice that this contrast is attributed primarily to the results of the humanitarian sentiments which have arrived at so noble an elevation in this century. It was the declination of prejudice against the ancient people, and the gradual removal of the excessive civil and social disabilities under which they so long had laboured, that led to ready application to the most spiritual of the Arts on the part of a people whose quick sensibility and emotional energy had been cultivated during long consecutive centuries of intimacy with, and regard for, every form of literary production. Yet it is remarkable that the Jew, with all his adaptiveness, rose to pre-eminence in music sooner and more readily than in any other art. And if we turn from the composers of Hebrew origin, and concentrate our attention rather on the Israelite executants to be found in every orchestra, and on every concert-platform, we speedily are prompted to ask why the number of Jewish musicians of every grade not merely far exceeds the trifling numerical proportion which their race bears to the rest of the population, but is out of all comparison with the number and the corresponding proportion of Jewish painters, sculptors, architects, or, generally, followers of any art other than music.

To one acquainted with the history of Israel during the last two thousand years, the explanation appears obvious. For he will be aware that until quite recent times there prevailed in the inner Jewish life a marked distaste for the representation of figures and forms, founded upon an acute application of the Biblical fulminations against idolatry. Further, pictures or buildings were not a form of property

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that would readily escape pillage or destruction during the centuries of persecution known as Jewish history. For melody, on the contrary, an affection has been ingrained in the Jewish nature ever since the days when the Temple of the Hebrew capital stood pre-eminent for its elaborate and highly organised musical service. There is no lack of continuous contemporary testimony in Hebrew literature to bear witness to the extent to which the Jew has incessantly delighted to associate his daily worship, and even his literary exercise, with some form of vocal tunefulness. Hence the Hebrew found ever a befitting occasion for, and a ready facility in, the employment of music, while his songs needed neither transport nor protection, because they were graven deep upon the hearts of his people.

The Liturgy of the Jews, round which their traditional music centres, is characterised by exceeding in the number and length of its devotional exercises that of most other religious bodies. Their singularly rich literature is almost entirely based on their religious doctrine and discipline; and the hours are many which the observant Jew devotes to public worship, extending to the whole of the day on the most sacred occasion of the religious year. As tradition requires the celebrant to utter with the singing voice every word he recites aloud, the chants that have been handed down are in consequence numerous. It thus becomes necessary to bear in mind the history of the Jewish Liturgy when considering the antiquity of this or of that musical tradition of the Synagogue. These literary considerations are of high interest in themselves, but it will suffice here if they be very briefly summed up. The student of Hebrew literature learns that from the period when the Book of Psalms was compiled the Jew has been continuously exhorted to devote his highest musical attainments to the service of the Sanctuary. The chant associated with text, praise, or prayer has always been melodiously definite, for from an early date it was found expedient to delegate to a professional Reader or Precentor what had originally been the duty and privilege of any competent member of the congregation. Thus down to our own day there has been a sequence of specialists in Hebrew melody, which implies a faithful tradition of the older chants and a capacity to introduce new ones as occasion arose. In brief, there is incontestable external evidence for the hoary antiquity of some portion of the Jewish worship-music.

When we turn to the more technically musical side of our investigation, and attempt to discriminate from internal evidence between ancient, mediæval, and modern synagogue music, we find it necessary to brush away a host of inaccurate assumptions. Few go so far in their anachronism, perhaps, as the clergyman who printed a fly-leaf I have, giving the

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words of a Hebrew hymn written by a mediæval Spanish Jew, with a simple modern-toned tune composed for it by a lamented old friend and teacher of my own. On this fly-leaf appears a statement, put soberly, to the effect that "it is believed that these words and this tune were composed for the dedication of the Holy Temple by Ezra." The Doctors of the Talmud were very prone to refer antique institutions to Ezra, but of such an anachronism they were scarcely capable. And yet serious musicians have often almost as readily overlooked the peculiar features one might justly expect to find in ancient Jewish music, and have been too prone to instance as characteristic the passages in which a Western tonality has come with a familiar pleasantness to their perceptions. Take, for example, the collection of synagogue tunes made in Waterloo year by John Braham and Isaac Nathan, for which Byron wrote his famous "Hebrew Melodies." Only one of these airs—the one which Robert Franz has so admirably arranged for the pianoforte—has any traces of Jewish song older than the grandfathers, at most, of the two compilers.

In having the distinguished privilege of addressing you this evening I am obliged, by the time at your and my disposal, to limit myself to the more ancient musical traditions of the Synagogue; and therefore I at once proceed, by a process of exhaustion, to eliminate Jewish music of modern and mediæval origin. I first reject the whole body of the choral music used in the Synagogue, where the general employment of a four-part choir scarcely reaches back more than a generation. I then set aside, because of their obvious modernness, all melodic passages that are merely echoes of the tonal expression of the Gentile musical world. I next pass over tunes set to texts of a measured rhythm, since Hebrew verses measurable by rhythmic alternation of stress and non-stress are, at the very earliest, the product of mediæval Arab influence. Just so, strictly mensurate music cannot claim to be ancient. For a similar reason almost the whole of the traditional music of that important section of the Jews which long dwelt in Spain is set aside, its Moorish origin being readily apparent.

Although the greater bulk of what is customarily termed Jewish music has now been eliminated, a mass of important dimensions and of fascinating interest remains. It is this which I propose to introduce to your notice and, I feel confident, your admiration this evening. I have found difficulty rather in limiting my selections than in selecting representative passages from the older chants of the Jews of Northern Europe, by whom alone any ancient Palestinian traditions have, in my opinion, been preserved. In certain important respects the rendering of the illustrations to

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which you will, in a few minutes, be listening, differs from the actual form followed for ages in the synagogues. In the first place, the *Hazan* (the Reader, or Precentor, of a synagogue) will be represented by a lady vocalist. But, as Mrs. Cohen is the daughter of one of the most eminent *Hazanim* (Precentors) of the day, there is a precedent for the rendition, by her, of these Hebrew melodies. In the year 1275 the congregation in the city of Worms set a monument over the grave of the sweet-voiced and learned lady Urania, who was the daughter of the chief Precentor of their synagogue, and who used to chant the service in the chapel of the Worms Synagogue reserved for women. And in Polish synagogues even now you will not fail to come across the aged person who acts as "sagerin" (readeress) for a select circle of associates less profoundly versed in the Hebrew tongue, crooning forth the prayers in a dove-like lament, and usually weeping most bitterly at the most joyous passages of the ritual. The traditional service is couched in the Hebrew language; but to bring home the peculiarly apt tonal expression of the text, I have given an English paraphrase to most of the selected passages. Then I have endeavoured to present most of this ancient synagogue music in an outer garb approximating to the modern array of vocal music, so that while I leave the melodies in all their antique and characteristic freshness, my accompaniments, crude as they are, will possibly tempt you to compare them with the style of melody more familiar to our Western ears.

Until the present day, when the organ has been introduced into a few synagogues, the solitary instrument played upon in Jewish worship has been the *Shophar*. This is an early form of the old Oriental trumpet, of which the Roman *lituus* is a developed type. The traditional *Shophar* is a ram's horn, manipulated after long soaking in hot water, when the solid part of the horn is straightened and pierced, its tip cut off, and a very elementary mouthpiece, of more or less oval shape, moulded; after which the interior is pared smooth, and the exterior planed and polished. It then usually possesses a roughly cylindrical bore of small calibre, expanding at the curve upward towards the original base of the horn into a sort of flattened parabolic bell, the side walls fairly parallel. The length of the instrument varies from nine inches to two feet, but may be said to average fifteen inches. The pitch, of course, varies according to the length, &c. In the Oriental world, the horn often keeps its original curled form. But that appears to be but a fancy variant; and if the horn which was discovered in the foundations on rebuilding premises in Leadenhall Street in the year 1855 really dates, as may fairly be assumed, back to the Jews who resided in England before

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the Expulsion in the year 1290, then we have ocular demonstration of the antiquity of the customary form of the *Shophar*. This empirically constructed instrument is pressed to the right side of the lips, and tongued in trumpet fashion. The quality of tone is thrilling and incisive, but if skilfully blown, neither undecided nor harsh, as might be expected from the irregularity of the tube.

The calls on the *Shophar* generally employ the third, fourth, and sixth partials of the tube's harmonic series; and, as two notes only are used, these are either tonic and dominant, or dominant and its octave. Two combinations of these notes have been in use ever since the tenth chapter of Numbers was written. They are the *Tekiah* (stroke) and the *Teruah* (sound). Towards the close of the Temple period, there existed a kind of time-notation in the Talmudical record that one *Tekiah* measures three *Teruoth*, and one *Teruah* measures three *Yebaboth* (sobs), or three *Shebarim* (broken sounds). Each flourish was then ordered to comprise three calls—viz., a *Teruah* preceded and followed by a *Tekiah*. In the Temple, these flourishes were sounded on the long straight silver trumpets as signals, in the same fashion as modern military bugle calls. There were, we learn, a number of trumpeters varying from two to one hundred and twenty on duty; and they sounded daily a series of flourishes ranging, according to the importance of the day, from seven to sixteen. After the fall of Jerusalem it was arranged that three flourishes on the *Shophar* should be sounded in the synagogues during Morning Prayer on the first day of the seventh month (Lev. xxiii, 24; Num. xxix. 1). But it soon became apparent that the confusion of tradition consequent upon the grave political catastrophes of the time had extended to the particular form of the *Teruah*, and that while some held that it resembled three sobs, others had been taught to give it as a long shake, or a rapid succession of double-tongued notes. In order, then, to sound the same calls as had been heard in the Temple from the silver trumpets (including those very ones that are depicted on the Arch of Titus), it was ordained by the great Cæsarean Rabbin, Abbahu, about the beginning of the third century, that the three required flourishes should be sounded once with each of the two variants of the *Teruah* and with the combination of them. Hence the order, observed to the present day, of nine flourishes or thirty calls, the series concluding with a prolonged or "great" *Tekiah*.

TEKIAH. TERUAH (SHEBARIM).

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The oldest vocal traditions of the Synagogue are enshrined in the *Neginoth*, or accentual cantillations of Scripture. These Jewish systems of declamation are far brighter and more expressive than any other ancient cantillation, whether of the East or of the West; and what, if anything, they lose in solemnity they more than gain in vigour and vivacity. The recitation of the sacred text is by no means left to the free impulses of the reader. True that in the scrolls used for the public lessons the text is written in consonants alone, without any of the pointing by which the Hebrew vowels are designated. But just as in printed Hebrew Bibles you find the vowel points added to the text for the study of its vocalisation, so do you find the tonic accents added for the study of the cantillation; and the Precentor has to devote considerable time to learning by heart the chant-melody of several chapters at once. The cantillation no doubt existed in a highly developed form long before any notation for it was invented. The accents themselves—the mere dots and strokes—were probably evolved by the Massoretic school of Tiberias, about the seventh century. They, to a certain extent, resemble the *Neumes* of the old Gregorian ritual-books in appearance and in employment. Their functions are, however, much more complex. The signs, placed above or below the text, serve three distinct purposes—(*a*) they mark the tone-syllable of each word, the few enclitics excepted; (*b*) by their relative and inter-dependent values they indicate a most delicately-shaded syntactical punctuation; and (*c*) having been in origin (as I think) rough diagrams of the movement of the voice in oratorical declamation, they denote a chant which, with the most scrupulous fidelity, designates the mutual relation of the words of the text.

There are two systems of accents, the one employed for the three poetical books (Psalms, Proverbs, Job), and the other for the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures. Although there are traces of it as late as the fifteenth century, the original musical signification of the system of the Three Books has fallen out of use; but several ancient forms of chant still exist for the cantillation of the Pentateuch and the prophetical and historical lessons. With each individual accent there is in each system associated a particular fixed sequence of notes, sometimes extending to a whole phrase. This is sung upon the tone-syllable of the word, as marked by the accent. The signs, some thirty in number, form a notation

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at once sufficient to answer every need of the grammarian and the student of the cantillation. The melodic phrases, finally, blend smoothly into a homogeneous chant as a whole.

LAMENTATIONS. Cap. I.

Lento quasi recitativo e molto dolente.

1. A - las! . . . . . How . . doth sit . .

sol - - - i - ta - ry the ci-ty that once was

full of peo- ple! Now is she . . like a widow. She that

great was among the na - - - - - tions, prin-

- cess a - mong the pro - vinces, is be - come . . .

tri - bu- ta- ry. 2. She weepeth sore in the lone - - ly

night, and her tears are on her cheeks; None are com - forters of

all her lov- ers. Her friends have all be-trayed her:

now . . . . are they her e - ne - mies.

These chants have reached our age from hoary antiquity without material alteration in character or structure. This

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conclusion may be induced from examination of the transcription of the ordinary Pentateuchal cantillation, which was printed by Reuchlin (*De accentibus, etc.*) so long ago as the year 1518. In the humblest Jewish Bethel of to-day precisely the same melodic phrases and style of combination will be heard every Sabbath, even where the name or the works of that great scholar have never been dreamt of. It is clear from Talmudical evidence that such a form of cantillation was used in the Herodian Temple, and none the less by the pleasant-voiced men who were exhorted to take the Precentor's place before the Ark in the synagogues. For temple and synagogue were contemporary. Not merely were there synagogues in foreign and provincial cities long before the Romans overwhelmed Zion, but in Jerusalem itself they numbered as many as four hundred and eighty. A distinguished Rabbin, Joshua ben Hannania, has recorded that he, with his fellow Levites in the Temple choir, used to proceed from the Sanctuary when its elaborate musical services were ended, to take part in the ritual of the Synagogue. There can be little doubt that the Temple was not behind the Synagogue of to-day in utilizing the tonal system favoured by the musicians who were most regarded in contemporary civilisation. Thus, in all essentials, Hebrew music, in the days of the Second Temple, must have been founded on the same Asiatic systems as was the Greek music of the same age. The instruments recorded in the Psalms, in Chronicles, and in the contemporary traditions of the Talmud were instruments from the workshops of the most renowned makers of that day, who were naturally all Greeks. The coins that have survived make this clear pictorially on the one hand, while the absence from the Temple orchestra, as given in detail in the Talmud, of all instruments but those in similar use amongst the Greeks, makes it clear on the other. Even the name of the most famous singing-master of the Temple school, Hygros the Levite, has a Greek sound. These coincidences no longer surprise us when we remember that Greek music itself derived its basal system, and even much of its terminology, from Western Asia. Nor is any objection to my contention to be derived from the fact that the same accentual signs are applied by Jewish tradition to quite ten different schemes of chant. That these have been transmitted from the synagogues of the distant period when the same tonal influences were prevalent in Syria as moulded Greek music, becomes clear when we find that they almost entirely fall in such scale-forms as are known to students of Plainsong as the Æolian, the Mixo-Lydian, the Hypo-Dorian, the Hypo-Æolian, and the Hypo-Mixo-Lydian modes, to mention a few of the most favoured.

The very diversity of the modes in which these can-

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tillations have been transmitted, co-existing with their close similarity in structural form, in melodic outline, and in method of combination, has led me to put forward a solution for that crux of commentators, the "headings" of the Psalms. That these are technical directions for musical performance is beyond dispute. I accept for these obscure headings none of the customary explanations —neither names of melodies, nor names of instruments, nor figurative references to the subject-matter—but I see in them simply the names of the form of chant, the scale or mode, in which the vocal movements afterwards designated by the accents were to be variously performed. When the present vowel-pointing was fixed by the Massoretes, several centuries of confusion had elapsed; and although tradition had probably preserved the musical practice of the Temple, the musical theory of the Levitical singing schools had probably been forgotten. Now if, instead of adopting the Massoretic attempts to make sense of the headings, we point the Hebrew only a little differently, we arrive at such expressions as Gittith, Aiolith, Javanith, Susan, Elamith—*i.e.*, Gathite, Æolian, Ionian, Susian, Elamite, and so on. Some of these names have exactly the same connotation in Greek, and the rest are paralleled by similarly geographical titles for the modes—*e.g.*, Phrygian, Dorian, Lydian, or Locrian. If this be correct, it comes about that the Psalms used to be chanted in the Temple in a form tonally parallel to the Plainsong of the Western Church, and still more so to the Antiphons of the Byzantine Greeks. But it by no means follows that the Churches have inherited the authentic Temple tradition, as used to be claimed. Gevaert's investigations into the history of Gregorian music have proved that the Christian chant first came into existence in Asia Minor, and arrived in the West by way of Antioch, Byzantium, and Rome. It is important to remember that the Plainsong originated amongst and was developed by men avowedly hostile to any form of "Judaising." But just as other details of Temple ceremonial have been accurately transmitted by the unbroken chain of Jewish tradition, so this Jewish system of cantillation has lived on in its continued use by the children of the men by whom it was originally introduced into Hebrew worship. Just as I, as a descendant of Aaron the High Priest, know how to pronounce the Levitical benediction over the congregation in the same manner as my ancestors pronounced it in the Temple, because the ceremony has been year after year through the centuries performed in the same way; just so may I know how to chant the Scriptures in a way similar to that favoured in the Temple, because the living tradition of synagogal practice will have transmitted it direct from the same ancient source.

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When Scriptural passages were quoted in the course of the synagogal Ritual, it was customary to utter them with the appropriate cantillation. Some of the passages formed the central point of a service, and so from very early times the *Hazan* (Precentor) intoned them with a liberal embellishment of the ornaments ever favoured in Oriental melody and equally noticeable in the performance of modern Eastern musicians. Thus in course of time a florid form of recitative has become developed, based on the cantillation, and while originally reserved for the particular text with which it was associated, afterwards applied to the prayers recited in the immediate connection as well. In these, the recitative would be repeated with slightly less wealth of vocal embroidery, and with such variation of the original theme as would be necessitated by the differences in the length and syntactical structure of the succeeding sentences. While the melodic essentials of the passage are traditionally fixed, much freedom is allowed to the Precentor in the selection and combination of his roulades, so that there is scope for individual taste and style in the rendering of the recitative. Take, for instance, one distinguished German Precentor's rendering of the traditional chant for Genesis II., vv. 1 to 3, intoned in the Sabbath Service, the resemblance of which to characteristically Arab music is very marked :—

Senza rigor di tempo.

Thus were fin-ish-ed . . . the heavens and the

earth, and all the host . . . of them. Then

fin-ish-ed God . . on the seventh day the work which

He . . had made, and rest - ed on the seventh day . . from

all . . His work . . which He had made. Then bles- sed God the

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f seventh . . day, . . and hal - low-ed it. . .

p For that in it . . there rest - - ed God . . from

mf all His work . .which He had cre-at - ed and . . made.

After the reading of the Scriptures the most important portion of a Jewish service is the sequence of benedictions known as the "Prayer" *par excellence*. This is a very ancient composition, its essentials originating as long ago as the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the form in which it is now recited dating back, as a whole, to at least the second century. Just as in the case of the Scriptural cantillations, so with the "Prayer" parallel forms of melodic utterance were anciently reserved for the same or similar passages, identical in structure and style, but varying in tonality according to the particular day in the liturgical year. Hence again we find the modes which distinguish the Plainsong of the Church employed in the prayer-motives of the Synagogue. The simplest of these motives is the one for week-day Morning Prayer, which is limited to the lower hexachord of the Phrygian mode (I throughout use the Church terminology), or rather, perhaps, as one of the notes appear to be but a chromatic ornament, to the antique Pentatonic scale. But others range more elaborately in the tonalities regarded as characteristic of the particular service and season of the religious year, through the Dorian, Phrygian, Hypo-Dorian, Hypo-Phrygian, Ionian, Mixo-Lydian, and other modes, which they well show to exhibit the characteristics ascribed to them by Adam de Fulda and other mediæval critics.

These chants for the chief prayer anticipate in remarkable fashion the form of the "Rondo," as they consist of a distinctive, if somewhat free, chief subject with which the text special to the occasion is introduced, after which the Precentor proceeds to intone elastic secondary subjects. These he will in turn develop according to the structure of the text, but will in each case work back to the original motive, which finally leads into a characteristic and well-defined *Coda*, the words to which are usually the doxological benediction closing the paragraph or section of the prayer.

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In developing his theme, the *Hazan* is allowed considerable freedom of form, rhythm, and style; and he takes every advantage of that Oriental tendency towards *fioritura* which the Jews who have been for centuries located in Northern Europe, far removed from the home of the vocal arabesque, even yet display. The old-time *Hazan* was still fonder of "graces" than the Highland piper of "warblers," or the *bravura* singer of "divisions"; but the fixed nature of the *Coda* has sufficed to preserve a general agreement among the renderings favoured by the various local schools of "precentory." I may instance the themes for the Sabbath Morning Prayer, the "pauses" marking the reciting notes:—

Even where the mode is diatonic these motives are not strictly so, but a chromatic change is occasionally made of some one note of the scale, with a very beautiful melodic effect. Then, too, as will have already been seen, motives are found in tonalities closely resembling those of the Byzantine plain chant and the folksong of Asia Minor in the employment of the interval of an augmented second between the second and third degrees of the scale—and sometimes between the sixth and seventh as well, as in the modern harmonic form of the minor mode. In fact, there is a tendency among the Precentors of Eastern Europe to approach the modes of the Perso-Arab musical system in their incessant introduction of diminished and augmented intervals. The most frequently employed mode of this kind might indeed

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be regarded as a plagal form of the minor or Æolian mode (as its sixth, the *Do*, has the effect of the Dominant of the Gregorian modes), were it not that *Mi* is clearly its Final, which makes it rather a chromatic form of the Phrygian mode.

Even compositions of comparatively modern date are to be found constructed in these ancient tonalities. Notable examples of this are hymns of which the refrain alone is chanted by the congregation, or in which Precentor and congregation chant antiphonally the alternate verses. Many of these are quite modern, and in all cases the words were written by European Jews of at least the earlier Middle Ages. But the tunes are often constructed in such modes as the Phrygian, Æolian, or Mixo-Lydian. The hymn to which belongs the tune known in English hymnals as "Leoni" (after the Jewish vocalist who sang it to Thomas Olivers, the author of the verses associated with it) possesses also an exquisite antiphonal setting in the chromatic Phrygian mode to which I just before referred, which was probably composed by a Polish Precentor in the early part of the last century. It has been used by Asger Hamerik in his "Trilogie Judaïque":—

PRECENTOR.
Lento.

CONGREGATION.

There is another synagogal form, rather in the mould of a "chant," of greater liturgical and musical antiquity. I refer to the versicles in rhymed prose, as it is called, which recur throughout a whole service or even series of services. The strains associated with them are very short; and as they are required for verses of greatly varying length they are usually constructed somewhat after the form of the Gregorian tones for the Psalms, with a reciting note, a mediation, and an ending. Yet their melodic character is far

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more definite than is the case with the Gregorian tones, and most of the endings constitute a characteristic and effective musical phrase. Some again show a tendency towards rhythmical structure. These are marked by ancient tonalities; and are first given out by the Precentor in a *Reshuth* (announcement to the congregation of the introduction of praises or supplications supplementary to the regular Liturgy), and chanted as a refrain at the close of each meditation silently read by the congregation, or when a few stanzas of devotional verse introduce a new section of the prayers. Here, for instance, is the chief versicle-chant of the Atonement services—falling in the Dorian mode, save for the accidental, which is, however, a distinct melodic improvement—

Largo doloroso.

With low - ly heart I seek . . His throne; with hope for . .

par-don my sin I own. Ah! . . . . . . Ah!

Such short vocal phrases, again, are often welded together, if one may so express it, when the particular ideas with which they are respectively associated appear in combination at any portion of the service, and particularly at the approach of what may be termed a devotional crisis. And here we have an interesting anticipation of the modern use of the *representative theme*. It has been for ages the custom in the synagogue to associate certain strains with definite religious ideas, and to turn the devotional sentiment in the desired direction by the use of the appropriate musical enshrinement of the particular thought. Such leading motives find their chief employment in the form of anticipatory announcements, when they carry the mind on to the ensuing sacred day. They are also used in what may be termed Introits, where they often appear in the form of a *pneuma*, or wordless phrase in which the Precentor gives free vent to his emotions. Notice the combination of several such short subjects in the following illustration, including a portion of the *Kol Nidre*, which Max Bruch's transcription has made familiar. Observe, too, the many transitions from mode to mode, and even from key to key, in this one short passage from the Service of the Day of Memorial, the tonal sequence of which, however, is traditionally fixed—

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Lento. *p* *Andante.*

Lo! . . . . . . the . . King. Who sitteth on a

mf

throne ex - alt - ed high: He dwel - leth aye sublime, and holy

is . . His name, and 'tis writ - ten: " Ex- tol, O ye

righteous the Lord; to the just becoming is . . praise." The

mouth of up - right saints . . . Thee shall praise, and the

lips of the god - ly Thee shall bless, and the tongue of Thy

pi - ous shall laud Thee; and the migh - ty . . host of Thy

rit.

ho - ly . . ser - vants sanc - ti - fy . . Thy name.

affettuoso *mf* *sf* *p*

Re - ceive . . our praises, E - ter - nal, Al - migh-ty,

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appassionato.

Sov - ran, earth - ly blessings a-bove! Him a-lone be -

- longs . . . . . all cre- a - tion's praise. Ah! .

. . . . Ah! . . . .

stringendo.

. . of mar-vels He is Lord: He who deigneth to ac -

rit.

- cept our song, King . . Al - migh - ty, Life of all . . worlds!

While the *Hazan* (Precentor) is traditionally entrusted with so much of a recitative character, there are numerous responses in which the congregation join in. These are mainly echoes of the last few notes of the Precentor's chant. Before the introduction in this century of organised choirs, the congregational part of the service was intoned by the worshippers in a simple and vague fashion; but there were also some definite chants in use, chiefly for Psalm verses or other Scriptural quotations. These were sung in unison; and the effect was very much more tuneful and varied than that of the Anglican chant, for there were often more notes than words to be chanted, and the tunes were of a definitely melodious nature. Most of those still in use possess a modern sound, but one or two include ancient phrases that are also met with in other forms of synagogue music. Notice, for example, the freedom and variety in the rendering of a few verses of a chant of the kind, antiphonal between Precentor and congregation. In this illustration we may also mark the plagal drop of a fourth at the close, which is so frequent in ancient synagogal phrases. We may observe, too, how the

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chant, itself Hypo-Dorian, is eked out for an exceptionally long verse by the passing introduction, as a representative theme, of the subject in the Phrygian mode which is associated with the service next in order in the Liturgy.

Very much of the synagogue music that originated in the West, and was constructed after the tonal fashion of Gentile neighbours in Europe, was yet characteristically expressive of the Oriental origin, however remote in time, of those who sang it. The Hebrew of the Middle Ages, checked all around by an iron wall of isolation, turned inward for musical expression. The Precentor was inspired by the magnetic force of his congregants' sympathy to voice the aspirations after peace and freedom which soared heavenward from the hearts of a downtrodden people. He in his turn inspired the vocally gifted youths among his congregation to emulate his life-work. There was thus ever a guild of *Meshorrerim* (singers) who, while the assistants of the *Hazanim* (Precentors), were in effect their apprentices also. They were often literally journeymen, seeing that minstrel-like they wandered from synagogue to synagogue, assured of welcome and hospitality in every congregation of their brethren, whither they brought the compositions or peculiar versions of their master, and whence they carried to other cities the inspirations of their hosts. Until Precentors in our own day, learned in the technicalities of music, began to transcribe and print the traditional melodies, it was these itinerant rhapsodists alone who preserved the uniformity with which the ancient chants have been handed down.

It is especially in the *Selihoth* (propitiatory supplications) that the inspirations of such wandering Precentors survive. These are formless intonations of a pathetic tone, but often with a hopeful glance upwards towards the close of the chant corresponding to what is called the catholic expression in mediæval painting. The most famous of the masters among the Precentors of the past was the illustrious liturgical authority, Jacob Moelin Hallevi, Rabbi of Mayence, who died in the year 1427, and to whom the final redaction of the more ancient synagogue-music is with some justice attributed. He attached such excessive importance to accuracy in musical tradition, that when his only daughter died he considered

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himself smitten in punishment for intoning the wrong melodies on a recent occasion when he had officiated as Precentor in the city of Regensburg. It is told of him that once, when the wise councillors of Mayence had forbidden their Jewish fellow-townsmen to employ any musicians, he put himself to the expense of carrying a bridal party, with the whole body of synagogal officials and of wedding guests, to another city, rather than permit the solemnization of a Jewish marriage without the presence of a band. But it was already before his time that the deeply pathetic tone of Jewish music in Northern Europe—its excess almost of feeling—had developed. For the previous centuries had been the age of the Crusades and the Black Death, when Jewish blood flowed more freely than water. Every reminiscence of the remote past, when Israel had been an independent nation, received an additional force from the contrast of contemporary servitude; and one can well understand how, in the recital of such a passage as the Talmudical description of the scene in the ancient Temple on the great Day of Atonement, the Precentor would rise to the highest point of wrestling with the cruel hand of his people's fate, and pour out his full heart in perfervid supplication. Here is the rhapsody, replete with inarticulate vocalisation of a moving character, as a Precentor of the old school would give it, and preceded by the strain which is used as a refrain or chant-like ritornello to usher it in—

Grazioso.

Grave.

And the priests and the peo - ple that were stand - ing in . . the Tem- ple Court, Ah! . . . . Ah! . . . . When they

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stringendo.

heard, ... Ah! . . . .

. . . . the dread Name, Ah! . . . .

. . . .

. . . . pro-noun-ced

by the . . High Priest with ho - ly awe and so - lem-ni-ty;

a tempo.

at that mo - ment, Ah! . . . . Ah! . . . .

. . . . Ah! . . . . Ah ! . .

. . . . they pros - trat - ed them -

più mosso piangendo.

- selves, Ah! . . . . bowing

poco stringendo.

down, Ah! . . . .

. . Ah! . . . .

a tempo. *cres.* *rit.*

. . Ah! . . . . and . . fall - ing on their

grandioso.

fa - ces, and said: Bless His Name, whose glo-rious

king - dom is for ev - er - more.

Such was the music which took its characteristics from its Oriental birthplace, and in its quaintness and its pathos records the European history of the people among whom it was developed and preserved. Since, however, the combined effects of the Renascence and the Reformation began to be felt in the greater personal and social liberty of the Jews in Europe, they have utilized the musical progress of their Gentile neighbours in their own service of song. This, indeed, had been done by the Jews of Spain from the year 711, when the Moors crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, and introduced into the Peninsular a musical system cognate with that of the Hebrews, until Granada was surrendered in 1492, and Torquemada's fell hand was able to wrench his Israelitish compatriots from the soil in which their hearts had taken root. These Spanish Jews, like the Mozarabian Christians around them, had in the course of the centuries adopted innumerable Mauresque chants into their own worship-music, some exquisite examples of which their descendants have preserved to this day. One of their later

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poets, indeed—by name Israel Najara—has left us as many as six hundred and fifty Hebrew lyrics, mainly devotional, which he specially wrote to fit Arab melodies, and even arranged in the order of the Eastern scale-forms, in which he deemed their underlying sentiments individually found aptest expression. The German Jews, on the contrary, amid an alien culture and an alien art, and politically and socially degraded, tenaciously maintained the relics of their own ancient Oriental music. It was only in Italy that Solomo de' Rossi, singing master at the ducal court of Mantua, could have published his collection of twenty-eight original compositions for synagogal use, as he did in the year 1623. But in the last two centuries all this has happily been changed; and to such an extent has the old isolatory spirit disappeared from both without and within, that the congregations are not few, indeed, in which but a small proportion of the traditional music is ever heard; and some have even made the error, as I think they must acknowledge it to be, of abolishing the old Jewish florid intonation and reciting the whole of the service either with the speaking voice or in monotone. But, in compensation, just these congregations are remarkable for the elaborateness and high excellence of their choral arrangements. Where the old musical traditions are perpetuated, the improved tonal education of the general community has not been without its effect, and compositions on the lines of the chants, hymns, and anthems of the Protestant churches are with ever-growing frequency introduced. Thus, while treasuring their own ancient inheritance of song, modern Jews fall into line with their Gentile fellow-citizens, and even in that solitary direction—their religious practice—in which they agree to differ, in music, as in other arts, they work only for the common advantage of the great brotherhood of civilised humanity.

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DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—I think we all expected to have an intellectual treat, but I was not prepared to have a musical one as well. I have been extremely gratified by the very charming lecture. Mr. Cohen touched on one or two points of deep interest to me. It has always been a puzzle to me how it is that Christianity has managed to lose all its Asiatic music—Semitic music, I should say. Perhaps Mr. Cohen could tell us something concerning that question, about which it is very difficult to get any information. I am going to ask some other questions. I came to-night to learn as much as I possibly could. One I wish to ask is whether Mr. Cohen has any reason to think that there was never an enharmonic scale amongst the Semites. Another question I should like to ask is this: have the beautiful chants to which we have been listening a regular recurring form? I could not quite trace it. Also, would Mr. Cohen tell me when mensurable music first found its way into Synagogue use? I cannot sit down without expressing to Mr. Cohen my gratitude for the great amount of information in his paper.

The Lecturer.—It may promote clearness if I answer each speaker in turn. The earliest Christians, who were Jews, naturally used Hebrew music in their devotions. But when the work of the Apostle Paul began to be effective, Christianity was no longer closely allied to Judaism, and the Gentile art amidst which the Gentiles newly gathered into the fold had grown up was the influence felt in the choice of worship-music. Certainly that music at first, being Greek, was of a system parallel to that of the Jews. Yet I cannot doubt that the profound feelings of dislike which were afterwards felt against religious tendencies of Jewish origin affected the worship-music of the early churches—and for the same reason, it being naturally of a tone alien to the unexpressed sentiments of the Christians who so recently were Pagans. Bishop Ambrose, of Milan, was one of the most virulent Jew-haters in history. Little probability was there of *his* introducing Semitic tones when he adopted the Oriental methods of church vocalisation. The great Gregory was certainly a wider-souled teacher, yet he would not consciously have "judaised." The use of music in the Church grew up gradually and it is only to be expected that it was affected by local considerations rather than by Semitic—and therefore foreign—traditions.

There is no need to assume that enharmonic scales never

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existed in ancient Jewry, because the relics yet preserved of the ancient songs have intervals diatonic or chromatic only. Eastern Jews have been affected by the undiatonic intervals of the Perso-Arab song; and quite to the same extent have European Jews had their ears accustomed, and consequently their voices tuned, to European intervals.

The melodies of the cantillation consist simply of the florid cadences associated with the individual accents blended in a fluent sequence. Their recurrence is wholly dependent upon the syntactical structure of the sentence, which thus determines the chant itself, since the accents are but the notation of its individual elements. When measured verse in rhythmical form found its way into the synagogal ritual after the ninth century, the door was opened for the use of measured music. This, I think, exhausts the points raised by Sir John Stainer.

Rev. C. R. Taylor.—May I ask what the lecturer thinks of the association by the commentators of the title *Gittith* with the city Gath, and so of the Psalm with the fall of Goliath; and also what interpretation he favours for the word *Selah* in the Psalms? Were the accompaniments played with the illustrations traditional or modern? I have been extremely interested in the whole lecture.

Mr. Cohen.—*Gittith* literally means "proceeding from Gath." But *Gath* as well as being the name of a city, is the Hebrew for "winepress." Some, therefore, have considered *Gittith* to be the name of an instrument of the guitar class shaped like a winepress. I take the word, consistently with my theory, to be the name of a scale-form derived from the city of Gath. "Selah" has a host of interpretations; the traditional one, which appears in the Targum, is "for ever." Others take the Hebrew letters which spell the word —S, L, H—as initials of three words denoting *da capo*. Others connect it with the verb "to raise," and take it to mean an ascending passage, or a *crescendo*. But as the Talmud relates that a short symphony or *ritornello* was played between the chanting of each section of the daily Psalm, I hold with those who interpret "Selah" as "pause for instrumental interlude." No instrumental accompaniment of any kind has been traditionally in use in the Synagogue. Those given with the illustrations this evening are almost all arrangements I have myself attempted.

Mr. Weber.—Our lecturer derives Jewish music from the Greeks. I think the Hebrews were earlier in their music than the Greeks. He did not seem to make a difference between the Shophar and the silver trumpets. The Shophar could be blown by anyone, but the silver trumpets were in the hands of the priests alone.

Mr. Cohen.—The last speaker forgets I discussed the

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music not of Biblical but of post-Biblical times, and that Greek music was of origin cognate with the Oriental Syrian, from which the Jewish descends. The Shophar you have seen this evening; the silver trumpets exist only in effigy.

The Chief Rabbi.—Allow me to express my extreme gratification with what I have listened to to-night, to the very fascinating lecture of our friend Mr. Cohen, and also to bear testimony to this point—that in her singing of the music of the Synagogue Mrs. Cohen did in no way embellish it, but rendered it with faithful and perfect fidelity. I would add that Mr. Cohen has in no way exhausted the subject in his illustrations. He has only touched the fringe of it, and there is ample material for him to delight you with on another occasion.

The meeting concluded with cordial votes of thanks to the Lecturer and Mrs. Cohen.

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