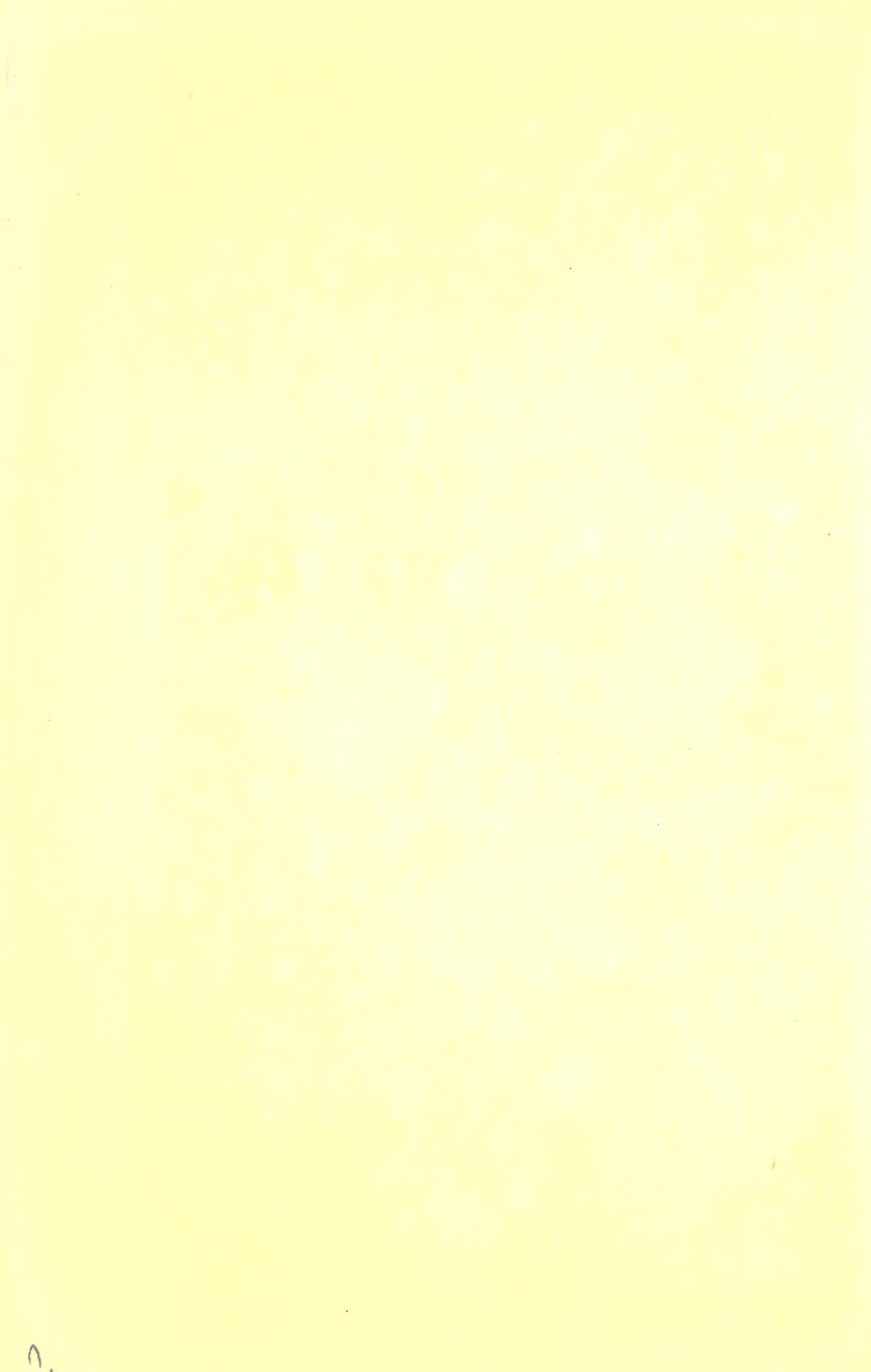


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The Life of
Sir Herbert Oakeley





SIR HERBERT S. OAKELEY





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THE LIFE OF
SIR HERBERT STANLEY
OAKELEY

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COMPILED BY HIS BROTHER

EDWARD MURRAY OAKELEY

LONDON
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1904

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PREFACE

ELLESMERE in Helps's "Social Pressure" suggests that all entertainments, public and private, would be bettered if "bisected." Nor must the entertainments of Literature be exempted from the scope of the dictum; nay, not even the joys of Music: Oratorios, for instance, and Operas new and old. Much more, then, does prolixity in books *about* Music and Musicians stand condemned. "To tell all is to become a bore." The compiler's aim in this short Memoir has been to omit all mere details, while preserving everything that seemed to make for faithful portraiture or general interest. Enough, at any rate, he hopes he has told of a life not poor in interest, and felt by all brought into relation with it to have been one of singular goodness and charm; enough and not too much to

attract a circle of readers wider even than the circle of Herbert Oakeley's personal friends and admirers.

E. M. O.

This book may seem to suffer from a plethora of inverted commas. They are necessary, however, to begin with, to distinguish exact quotations from my brother's notes or diaries, on which the work is largely founded.

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SIR HERBERT S. OAKELEY

CHAPTER I

EALING—BOCKING—FIRST SCHOOLS

IN beginning this record of a life for many years devoted to the cause of music in Scotland, it will not be unsuitable to mention the curious genealogical fact, that the ancient English stock from which Herbert Oakeley sprung had persistently, since the middle of the eighteenth century, chosen to ally itself with the then far-distant North. Shropshire Oakeleys (cadets of "Oakeley of Oakeley") for three successive generations took to wife respectively Aberdeenshire Strachan, Fifeshire Beatson, and Perthshire Murray; and through the second and also through the third of these marriages the future Edinburgh Professor was a cousin—though somewhat distant, even by the characteristically hospitable reckoning of

the land of cakes and of clans—to the founder of his Chair, the late General Robertson Reid.

His father, Sir Herbert Oakeley (whose father, Sir Charles, had received a baronetcy for his services as Governor of Madras), was a Student of Christ Church, and obtained his First Class in *Litteris Humanioribus*, when only nineteen, in 1810.¹ He was Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop of London (Dr. Howley, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), Vicar of Ealing from 1822 to 1834, Dean and Rector of Bocking, 1834–1845. In 1841 he succeeded his friend, Dr. Lyall, as Archdeacon of Colchester. He died in 1845.

Herbert Stanley Oakeley was born in 1830 at Ealing Vicarage. He soon began to disclose his musical aptitudes; and when four

¹ Other First Class men in this and the next years were John Keble, the author of "The Christian Year"; Sir William Hamilton, the famous Edinburgh Professor; Bishop Coleridge; and Dr. Hawkins, well known as Provost of Oriel, and still more permanently famous as the writer of a testimonial containing the prophecy that if Arnold were elected to the headmastership of Rugby he would "change the face of education all through the Public Schools of England."

years old, being shown the notes on the piano and told what to call them, he could, without seeing the keys, name any note or combination of notes which was sounded.

This sense of absolute pitch is often passed over with less notice than it deserves. If a miracle is "that which occurs very seldom," this gift is certainly miraculous. But perhaps it is no wonder that those who do not possess the power should not be loud in its praises, or should even incline to disparage it. But *why* is it so rare? Is the wondrous musical instrument of some three thousand strings—each tuned, thinks Helmholtz, to a certain tone—discovered by Corti in the human ear, more complete in the ears of some few select ones than in the mass of mankind? The analogy that so strangely subsists between sound and colour seems here to fail, or even to turn to contradiction; at least if one may assume that the sensation of pitch in the octave answers to the perception of colours in the spectrum. For in that case, while about one pair of eyes in thirty (but of

Quakers' eyes, one pair in seventeen)¹ is colour blind, at least ninety-nine hearers in a hundred are *tone deaf*. It is true that the essential difference in character between keys comes in to help many of the "tone deaf." If D be sounded after C (a good time after), only about one in a hundred, I fancy, would recognise it as a tone higher. But if a tune played first in the key of C is then played in the key of D, a good many of the ninety and nine unjust ears can recognise a different effect, not referable to the difference of pitch: a change of colour, not merely of shade; as though the tune, red in C, had become yellow in D. I of course by no means pledge myself to a particular colour of different keys; a kind of fancifulness which perhaps found a climax in the poet Schubart's comparison of the key of E minor to "a young girl in a white frock with a red rose at her breast"!

My brother, at any rate, possessed both faculties—sensation of pitch and of key—in absolute perfection, as a single anecdote will

¹ *Transactions of Ophthalmological Soc.*, 1881, p. 198.

show. Entering with him a room where neither of us had before been, I went to the piano and struck a note, A flat. "G," he said to my surprise, for I had never yet known him wrong. I made no remark, but struck with the A flat the other notes of the chord, C and E flat. Then he said: "Ah now, how do you think I know that this piano is half a tone flat?—The first note was really G, but the chord is the chord of A flat."

As a critic at concerts he found this perception of pitch very useful, and occasionally amusing. I remember well his question at some concert (about 1860) slyly addressed to his next neighbour, the musical critic of the *Athenæum*, "Is she not singing it in E flat instead of E?" and the gruff answer, "I haven't the least idea."

The Bishop of Colchester, an old friend of his, writes: "I can give an amusing instance of his accuracy of ear. When he was staying with us at High Wych the pig squeaked. He at once cried 'G sharp!' Some one ran to the piano; and G sharp it was!"

Herbert Oakeley's intimate friend, Sir Frederick Ouseley, was a celebrated possessor of this same power. He could sing any note desired; and name any note sounded, and that whether it proceeded from the band's blown trumpets, or the family's blown noses, or from any other source of sound whatever; even including church bells, whose pitch, in consequence of prominent harmonics, is particularly difficult to determine. When quite a child he could play correctly on a keyboard covered with a pocket handkerchief (a trick also of the other child, Herbert Oakeley); and by some such feat he reduced the volubility of Lablache to the two words, "Le Diable!"

In my brother's childhood, Broadwood's pianos were tuned as low as some 432 double vibrations per second for A on the second space in the treble clef. He used to say that his ear retained that pitch throughout life, and that compositions early known to him always sounded unlike themselves when rendered at the higher pitch used in England from 1840 to 1890. This seems so curious

that it is worth while to quote another equally well authenticated instance—indeed, two instances—of the same experience, resulting from the same faculty.

“When about nine, returning one day from a visit to an uncle who lived in the same town as we, and touching our piano, I” (Charles Hallé) “said to my father that the pitch of my uncle’s piano was a quarter of a tone lower than that of ours, and verification proved me to be correct, to the evident satisfaction of my parents. It became an amusement to them and to their friends to put me in a corner of the room, strike several notes together, sometimes the most incongruous and discordant ones, and make me name them, from the lowest upwards, which I invariably accomplished.

“This faculty has proved to have one drawback—that the pitch of that period in Germany, a good half-tone lower than the present one in England, has remained so impressed on my brain, that when I now hear a piece of music for the first time, it seems to me in a higher key than it really is written in; I hear

it in C when it is in B, and have to translate it, so to say. My friend Joachim shares this peculiarity with me, and it is now and then very perplexing.”¹

In 1834 the family went to a new home, as Sir Herbert was appointed Dean of Bocking, near Braintree. The picturesque old Deanery they found in but poor repair, and Lady Oakeley recognised on the nursery walls the self-same papers whose patterns had interested or teased her in her own childhood; for, thirty years earlier, her father, Lord Charles Murray Aynsley, had held this same living.

The chief event of Herbert's childhood was his first hearing of a Cathedral service. His parents made a journey to Lichfield, far distant in those pre-railway days from Bocking. Their vehicle was the old-fashioned “chariot,” pronounced “charrot,” with “dicky” and “imperial,” and post-horses. “The modern reader,” says Mr. Ruskin, “may perhaps have as much difficulty in realising these savagely and clumsily locomotive periods, though so recent, as any

¹ “Life of Sir Charles Hallé,” by his son, page 8.

aspects of migratory Saxon or Goth." And certainly this is the modern reader's misfortune; sadly aggravated too, since Mr. Ruskin wrote, by the advent of the still more modern locomotive period of so-called "cars."

Their route lay through Kirby, Market Harborough, &c., and the return journey to Essex was made by way of Leicester, Huntingdon, and Cambridge. There Sir Herbert alighted from the "dicky," where he was sitting with his little eldest daughter, to see the inn and hear the news. She still (1904) remembers his words when he returned, and how strange and almost incredible, that 21st of June 1837, they sounded: "Well, *a young Queen* is now our Sovereign." For the black-edged newspaper in his hand announced "the demise of King William the Fourth."

The boy never forgot his first entry into the then disfigured but always sublime cathedral at Lichfield. The choral music there was probably above the low level of the time, and the child, accustomed to no ritual more advanced than the squalling of village children to the accompaniment

of flute, clarinet, 'cello, and serpent,¹ found the Lichfield singing a revelation, but also a mystery. "I took the gilt and white paint of the organ for ivory and gold, and good Mr. Spofforth—the hidden worker of miracles, who seemed to play two organs at once, and, for all one knew, blew the bellows also—for some saint or demigod." He remembered always that the chant for the Psalms of that twenty-eighth evening of May 1837 was the one called "Windsor," in B flat, which in his own Psalter he has set to Psalm 81.

In his ninth year, under the careful and loving supervision of his mother, who taught him how to put his ideas on paper, he made his first attempt at a written composition—an anthem, ending with David's lament over Absalom.

In 1839 he was sent to Brentwood school. Its chief attractions to him were pianoforte lessons, taken from Mr. Coombe of Chelmsford,

¹ At Bocking, the village band accompanied the service till 1840, when the Dean—and his young son also—had the satisfaction of seeing an organ take the place of the so-called "Church instruments" of the past.

afterwards organist at Bocking; and still more the music at the services at Brentwood church. Here the Lichfield mystery was partly solved, when, after many barren Sundays, his master at last allowed him the fruition of a peep at the organ keyboard, and he discovered at a glance that the strange instrument possessed the well known sharps and flats of the pianoforte—and, *ergo*, that he could play it! (Accordingly, our eldest brother's diary records under 26th March 1842 that "Herby played on the organ in church; the people were all astonished." And very little later he was entrusted with sole charge of the music on all Saints' days that chanced to fall in his holidays.) The organist, a lady saint this time, was playing as her final voluntary the popular old tune "Helmsley" ("Lo, He comes"), and, as he entered the organ loft, St. Cecilia—or whoever she was—had her hands on the final chord of B flat; "which sounded just like the pianoforte chord, and I returned to school quite satisfied."

After two years at this and another school he was sent with his brother, Henry Evelyn

Oakeley,¹ to Mr. Everard's at Brighton, where he throve on "a liberal diet" of music and athletics; often visiting St. George's chapel organ, and the old cricket ground north of the Steyne, where "Kent *v.* Surrey" and other great matches used to be played. Indeed, for a time Box and Pilch, Mynn and Lillywhite became his heroes, almost usurping the pedestals afterwards assigned to Bach and Beethoven, Handel and Mozart. But for some months both Box and Bach were made impossible by his dislocating his little finger whilst keeping wicket for his school.

The late Lord Rosslyn, a friend of his at this Brighton school, described how late at night he and my brother would stealthily creep down from their dormitory to the master's drawing-room, and Herbert would move his hands over the keys of the piano, *pretending to play*, while the other boy (whose versatile character may be guessed to have contained even then a strong dash of romance) sat by and watched in awed silence the weird childish incantation.

¹ Now Sir H. Evelyn Oakeley.

CHAPTER II

RUGBY—BATH, 1843—1849

IN August 1843 he went to Rugby, to the School House, the house of the headmaster, Dr. Tait, who, twenty-five years later, became the first of three successive Rugby Archbishops of Canterbury; the intimate friend at Balliol of our uncle Frederick Oakeley, afterwards Canon in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster, who had been the best musician in his generation of the family: it is said on good authority that “the organist of Lichfield Cathedral was wont to allow him, when only eight years of age, to play the chant in the Psalms on week-days.” He was remarkable too in other ways, and ever *a laudatis laudatus*; Cardinal Newman describes him in his “Apologia” as “a man of elegant genius, of classical mind, of rare talent in literary composition; he was almost a typical Oxford man.” And Mr. Gladstone wrote, “He gathered round him a congregation” (when incumbent of Margaret

Street Chapel, the germ of All Saints') "the most devout and hearty that I, for one, have ever seen in any community of the Christian world." Archbishop Tait wrote after his death, "I owed to your uncle more than perhaps to any man; he took me under his care, and helped me when I was an unknown undergraduate. I have a distinct remembrance at this moment of him in the Master of Balliol's study, when I was examined for Matriculation, and he never ceased all through our Oxford days to be my kind helper. It was a great grief to me when our intercourse was so greatly interfered with by the step through which—though following conscience—he sacrificed so many bright earthly prospects, and gave himself to a system for which he was too good! At every trial of my life he was true to me, and I never failed to feel deep affection for him."

At Rugby began a more interesting time for Herbert Oakeley; but the usual happiness of life at a Public School was in his case spoilt soon after he went there, by his loss of both father and mother within fifteen months. This to him involved, as it generally must to a clergyman's

children, loss of home as well as of parents ; and though an elder sister did her best to fulfil the absent mother's part to the poor scattered brood, the calamity cast a deep shadow over his youth and manhood. His return in that orphaned state to school—to a Rugby much rougher than now, the Rugby of "Flashman" and his set, as well as of "Tom Brown," "Harry East," and "Arthur"—was a hard trial to a boy of his sensitive temperament. Even music seemed now to depress rather than comfort ; especially as he found little musical sympathy, a thing which he was always most eager for, and, while his mother lived, had never found wanting. "Of all types of humanity, those who are possessed of artistic dispositions are notoriously most liable to an absorbing thirst for sympathy ; which is sometimes interpreted, by those who are not artistic, as a mere love of appreciation or notoriety."¹ This "thirst" was certainly a leading feature of my brother's character. Nor was the natural but unfair misinterpretation of it altogether wanting in his experience.

¹ "The Art of Music," by Sir Hubert Parry, chapter i.

A few kindred spirits at Rugby—one of the masters “who always used to ask for the opening movement of Handel’s ‘Saul’ overture,” and a few boys, especially C. A. Barry, who twenty years afterwards took his place as correspondent to the *Guardian*—helped to comfort him. And the “Big School” organ—then but a sorry “kist o’ whistles” indeed—some chapel services taken for Mr. J. H. Walker the organist, and occasional windfalls like being asked to accompany the songs in “As You Like It” (acted by the boys), saved him from utter musical destitution.

However, throughout his life the Rugby “seed-time” yielded

“Year by year a richer store”

of happiness, due to friendships formed in the old School House; and his tune,¹ composed long afterwards for the hymn just quoted, records and repeats with heightened expression the affection for Rugby which so largely prompted and

¹ Called “Clifton College,” and written for the hymn-book of that school—“The Rugby of the West,” as a competent authority has designated it.

permeated the words. One cannot, by the way, read that other line of this hymn—

“All the good we here have gained”—

without recalling what deep meaning it must have had to the writer, James Buckoll. For he was a Rugby master from before the coming of Arnold till after the departure of Temple! This “seed-time” of forty-five years was certainly in Public School history a remarkable one indeed! His hymn has attained wide acceptance, and with Sir Herbert Oakeley’s setting has travelled far—on the broad back of “Hymns Ancient and Modern”—and is now sung in most English-speaking countries.¹ But this treasure, like others which she has eventually shared with the world, Rugby counts “first her own.”

In spite of Herbert Oakeley’s early loss of parents and home,

“The spell of home affection”

(another felicitous phrase of Mr. Buckoll’s) did not lose its potency as a memory and a motive throughout his whole life.

¹ “Hymns Ancient and Modern,” Nos. 576, 577.

As my readers and I shall only casually revisit Rugby again after the present chapter, I shall here refer to the great occasion—in her annals—of the school concert in December 1869, when in honour of Dr. Temple, who had just been appointed Bishop of Exeter, Mr. James Rhoades's goodbye Ode was sung to Herbert Oakeley's music. To quote the School Magazine, *The Meteor*:—"The scene which followed the last piece but one almost baffles description. The assembled multitude rose to their feet to hear the Ode in honour of Dr. Temple. This was a simple, earnest poem by one Old Rugbeian, set to music by another; and both words and music were admirably well suited to the solemn occasion. Dugdale's singing of the solo was all that could be wished, and it is needless to say that the chorus joined in with the most extraordinary fervour. At the conclusion of the Ode Dr. Temple rose, and with visible signs of struggling emotions within expressed in brief and manly words, which sank deep into the hearts of all present, his feeling of gratitude and encouragement at the words that he had

heard sung.¹ Nothing remained now but to sing with hoarse voices and dimmed eyes the National Anthem; which was followed by cheering more prolonged and vigorous than any we ever heard in Big School. So ended a scene which none of those present will ever forget."

The Ode which had the honour of suggesting "encouragement" to one of the least despondent of Englishmen is well worthy of reproduction here. It ran as follows—all the more trippingly too in its neat-fitting musical dress :

Master, best beloved and best,
Ours for ever, as to-night,
Hands at parting may be pressed,
Tears reluctant dim the sight ;
But, where'er thy name be known,
Rugby hails thee first her own.

Yes, she hails thee loud and long,
Ere the kindly hour departs,
Once again with shout and song,
Evermore with loyal hearts—
Hearts too full to sing or say
All their love and loss to-day.

¹ His exact words were : "I can never forget that the last words Rugby spoke to me were an encouragement to aim high."

Much thou'st taught us ; see ! we keep,
 Noblest of thy counsels, one—
 Not to waver, not to weep
 When there's duty to be done.
 Staunch we stand, O Master, see,
 Ready e'en to part from thee !

Wider fields await thee now,
 Richer corn-land, bleaker fen ;
 Forth to sweeten and to sow
 Haste, O chief of husbandmen !
 Where thou treadest still to bring
 Days of happy harvesting.

England, take from us to-day
 One man more of mighty mould.
 Could we think to cheat thee ? Nay,
 Such thy hero-type of old,
 Strong and tender now, as then,
 Joy of youth and tower of men.

Must we lose him ? Must he go ?
 Weak and selfish thought, away !
 This at least 'tis ours to show,
 This our praise shall all men say—
 Whereso' honoured, loved or known,
 Rugby hailed him first her own.

Leaving Rugby in 1846, the subject of this memoir went to a private tutor at Bath. The Rev. E. Simms, with whom our eldest brother, Sir Charles, was already a pupil, was an excellent teacher, but his views on music—if he had

any—had been corrupted by our well meaning guardian, who assured him that the musical proclivities of which the younger brother was suspected must be checked if possible;¹ and added the warning, that if he did chance to play truant, he would probably be discovered in the nearest organ loft. This forecast was soon fulfilled to the letter. After a fortnight's dose of classics and mathematics, the pupil decamped during school hours, and was run to earth at a choir practice at Christ Church, Montpelier; where the attractions were a good organ, a fair choir, and above all an excellent and friendly organist, Mr. Vincent, the father of the esteemed Dr. Charles Vincent of a later day.

What with Mr. Vincent and other tillers of the soil, the crop of "musical happenings"² was far larger at Bath than at Rugby; it now possessed, too, the appetising pungency of forbidden fruit.

To Bath came occasionally that great pioneer

¹ It must be remembered that our uncle did but share the almost universal opinion of the time about the dangers of a musical bent.

² To use a favourite *Vincentian* phrase.

of orchestral music in England, Mons. Julien, resplendent with gay-coloured waistcoat, gemmed bâton, and velvet chair. His programmes consisted mainly of dance music or operatic excerpts, but also included some pieces of a higher stamp; especially two Beethoven movements, the allegrettos from the seventh and eighth symphonies, both exquisitely performed by his band. This at least was something worth playing truant for; and more than could be expected in those dark ages, long before the day of Manns and Hallé, Richter and Henry Wood.

Once Sims Reeves appeared at Bath, and sang Edgardo's great scene in *Lucia*; once also Grisi and Mario. But the greatest event was the coming of Jenny Lind, then at the height of her fame and powers. She reproduced some of her operatic triumphs, including Agatha's heavenly scena (and the prayer) in *Freischütz*,¹ and some Swedish airs. The effect produced on the young musician could be

¹ Mr. Klein describes in "Thirty Years of Musical Life in London" how he heard her sing this prayer at a Norwich concert. "She was carried away by her emotion to such an extent, that she actually fell on her knees on the platform."

compared, he used to say, only with one other musical experience, that of hearing Liszt for the first time at Rome in 1864. Indeed, from that moment he never wavered in his allegiance—the word is no whit too strong—to that wondrously endowed Queen of Song, whose wide empire over the hearts of men included not only all the musicians and all the populace, but also many men of intellect distinguished in their generation for anything but music. Two of these proselytes of the gate, Archbishop Temple and Dean Stanley, I have heard speak of Jenny Lind as enthusiastically as any musician could. They appreciated her character and—more or less—her genius;¹ though the Dean confessed his difficulty of telling one tune from another “except God Save the Queen, which one knows because every one stands up”; and the Archbishop, asked at a Rugby concert if he did not find a certain Cantata (of portentous length and dulness) “somewhat tiring,”

¹“Her praises were sounded everywhere,” writes Hans Christian Andersen, “the praises not of the artist only, but of the woman. The two united awoke for her a true enthusiasm.”

disclosed his attitude to the Art in the words, "Oh, I would as soon listen to this as to anything else!" (But he had travelled from Lambeth that day, after giving his famous Judgment on the use of altar lights, &c., and had also presided at a meeting three hours long of the Governing Body of Rugby School!)

After the Lind concert, Herbert Oakeley, wild with enthusiasm, sent the singer a note—in his best French—of rapturous gratitude, with a copy of his first published composition, "The Rugby Waltzes," and received in answer her thanks in a few words of the same language, preserved amongst his chief treasures till his dying day. When reminded twenty years later of the incident, she said that though it was impossible to answer the hundreds of letters she used to get, she felt she could not leave this schoolboy's genuine enthusiasm without response.

He used to quote with much gusto instances of the admiration inspired by Jenny Lind: how, for instance, Grisi, once her rival, long thought by all, not excluding herself, the greatest possible "Norma" that could be heard in the part, owned

after hearing Jenny Lind that "there are after all two Normas, and I cannot say which is best."

Charles Hallé wrote, about the time of the Bath episode, "Never have I been moved by any singer as by her, and never again, I feel certain, shall I be. She possesses not only true art and enthusiasm and real but unconscious inspiration, but also perfection of execution in itself a marvel; and one may say without fear of contradiction, we shall never see her like again."¹ Much the same said Mendelssohn: "There will not be born in a whole century another being so gifted as she! She is as great an artist as ever lived; and the greatest I have known!" In fact—to repeat in the words of one of the most fascinating of Memoirs what I have already said—"The admiration for Jenny Lind was not a mere popular fever: its peculiar force lay in this, that it held enthralled the highest and best minds in Europe. It was the men of genius who recognised in her something akin to themselves."²

¹ "Life of Sir Charles Hallé," p. 113.

² "Jenny Lind the Artist," Holland and Rockstro, p. 4.

CHAPTER III

OXFORD, 1849-1855

IN 1849 Herbert Oakeley went up to Christ Church, and began "those four incomparable years" of University residence which are to so many, as to him, the happiest of life.

At his Matriculation, he records being presented, according to ancient custom, with the University Statutes; and "qua Baronetti filius" with a better bound copy than the one usually provided; further enriched, too, by his own charmingly irrelevant inscription: "October 17, 1849: the day Chopin died"!

Christ Church was at this time ruled—many still live to add, with a rod of iron—by "the stern captain" of Ruskin's "Præterita," "who with rounded brow and glittering dark eye led in his thunderous old Latin the responses of the morning prayer." Few Christ Church men of the time can forget the rasping and indignantly remonstrant tones of his "Te rogamus,

audi nos." And those who, like Oakeley, were endowed with the excellent gift of the mimic, felt (in the words of one of them) that "this phenomenon awakened our dormant faculty: such a Heaven-sent subject is not to be lighted upon every day." So there arose quite a school of mimicry of Dean Gaisford—as in later years of Dr. Goulburn at Rugby; and he is thus almost as well known to a younger generation as to his own.

Forty years earlier our father and his friend Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Coleridge had been two of his favourite pupils. He used constantly to mistake for each other their two sons, Herbert Oakeley and William Coleridge, greatly to their friends' amusement and to their own embarrassment. A bit of conversation at the Dean's table has survived, but it needs the *vox viva* of the mimic. It was the first occasion of my brother's dining at the Deanery. The host glares at the two friends, as one not sure of his man, and puts out a feeler to Coleridge: "Where are your rooms, Mr. Oakeley?" "The worst rooms in Christ Church, Mr. Dean,—the top of No. 7 in

Peckwater.”¹ “Those were MY rooms, sir!” After a pause, disturbed only by some tittering and choking of the other victim, (to Oakeley) “What will you take, Mr. Coleridge?” Oakeley (distant from the meats and otherwise confused) chances the reply, “Mutton, if you please, Mr. Dean.” Gaisford, with shout of triumph, “No mutton here, sir!” (The dish was lamb.)

Neither Herbert Oakeley nor his elder brother, Sir Charles, seem to have come in for the reversion of the old friendship between the Dean and our father; for he appeared to delight in worrying both brothers, rustivating the elder for some trifling infraction of college rules, and very nearly sending down the younger for presuming to ask leave to attend the great Duke of Wellington’s funeral, in answer to which request “he simply shouted ‘No, sir!’”

About the same time he outraged the feelings of William Arnold (brother of Matthew Arnold, and father of Hugh Oakeley Arnold-Forster, now Secretary for War), a great friend of Charles

¹ *Oakeley's* rooms; Coleridge answers for him.

Oakeley, by blankly refusing him leave to go up to town to see his brother off to Australia.

In some matters—for instance, in the giving and withholding of studentships—his administration must have been extraordinary indeed. He absolutely refused to nominate T. E. Brown to one, though he was perhaps the most brilliant undergraduate of his time, and had just taken a double first in “Greats”; and when urged to do so by all the resident students, tutors and censors included, he replied: “A Servitor never has been elected a Student; *ergo*, he never shall be!” In another case, he is said to have sent for some one to nominate him for a studentship, but finding that he was out hunting, to have changed his mind! But this story may be more or less mythical.

“Nevertheless, in spite of all his brusqueness and even boorishness, the Dean sometimes showed genuine kindness of heart, and was loyally devoted to Christ Church, and so was on the whole not unpopular in The House.” “The House,” not “The College,” say the orthodox, lest they be suspected of harbouring

the portentous solecism "Christ Church College," pardonable only to the ignorant at home, though even to the learned abroad. A learned foreign University, however, went even farther astray, by announcing certain "*ex Aede Christi*" guests in 1888 (thinking to take these heretics tolerantly at their own valuation) as "members of the Christian Church"—"della Chiesa cristiana"—to the confusion of "ancient and religious" Foundations represented by others of the English delegates at Bologna.

Herbert Oakeley's feeling towards Christ Church was very much that of Mr. Ruskin, and, had his genius led him to literature instead of music, he might have written the beautiful chapter in "*Præterita*" called "Christ Church Choir." For the "petrified music" of architecture, indeed, he had a peculiar aptitude, evinced in his Christ Church days by his beginning whilst an undergraduate to amass the unique collection of English and foreign Cathedral models¹ (how Ruskin would have loved

¹ Made by a true artist, Mr. Gorrings of Cheltenham.

them!) described in the *Strand Magazine* of July 1900.

In his time at Oxford, as in Mr. Ruskin's, there was a large measure of truth in the generous hyperbole that "on the whole, of important places and services for the Christian souls of England, the choir of Christ Church was virtually the navel, and seat of life. There remained in it the traditions of Saxon, Norman, Elizabethan, religion unbroken,—the memory of loyalty, the reality of learning; and in nominal obedience at least, and in the heart of them with true docility, stood every morning, to be animated for the highest duties owed their country, the noblest of English youth. In this choir, written so closely and consecutively with indisputable British history, met every morning a congregation representing the best of what Britain had become,—orderly, as the crew of a man-of-war, in the goodly ship of their temple. Every man in his place, according to his rank, age, and learning; every man of sense or heart there recognising that he was either fulfilling, or being prepared to fulfil, the gravest duties

required of Englishmen. There, in his stall, sat the greatest divine of England; under his commandant niche, her greatest scholar; the group of noblemen gave, in the Marquis of Kildare, Earl of Desart, Lord Emlyn, and Frank Charteris, afterwards Lord Wemyss, the brightest types of high race and active power. For all that I saw, and was made to think, in that cathedral choir, I am most thankful to this day.”¹

With the requisite changes of names, this represents exactly the Christ Church of Herbert Oakeley's time, and his attitude towards it. Sir Charles Alderson, one of his contemporaries at the University, says of him, “He had a niche of his own in a group of very brilliant fellow-students, among whom were included not a few who afterwards became eminent in letters and politics. In this circle his quiet humour, refined taste, and musical genius combined to make him a most attractive personality.” And another friend, Lord Mount Edgcumbe, writes: “Herbert had been at Oxford, I think, some

¹ “Præterita,” vol. i. chap. xi.



H. S. O.'S "PRINCE" H. S. O.

LORD LOTHIAN

HON. WILBRAHAM EGERTON

Lord Grey de Wilton
From sketch by Lord Valletort (4th Earl of Mount Edgemont) of his rooms at Christ Church

two years before I matriculated, and I found him in the set into which I naturally fell, which included Lothian, Carnarvon, Sandon (Harrowby), Fred. Lygon (Beauchamp), Wilbraham Egerton (Egerton of Tatton), (Lord) Charles Bruce, Raglan Somerset, Edward Legge, W. Warren Vernon, Andrew Cockerell, and some others; among whom he could always reckon upon an appreciative audience in his rooms, as also in my own, where I kept a piano for his benefit—or rather for ours, though no one except him played on it.”

His last *habitat* at Christ Church was No. 8 (the corner first floor) of “Peckwater,” where there was room for the old Bocking Broadwood of low pitch—now equipped with organ pedals—and for other household gods.

He found the choral music at Christ Church “woefully disappointing,” and “as matters became steadily worse,” he at last begged the Senior Censor to allow him to absent himself from the Sunday afternoon service, “when the noise was at its height.” The Censor gave the required permission, remarking in the

vernacular tongue (hardly suited to his profound scholarship, curious intellectual power, and brilliant conversation), "Well, to a musical man the singing must be "'ORRID!" Certainly, if the following singular statements of a recent chronicler¹ are correct, we begin to understand how the "woefully disappointing" state of things deplored by Oakeley had come to pass:—

"There was once, to be sure, a Dean of Christ Church who wrote charming glees and catches, and respectable Church music; but these solecisms of Dean Aldrich were expiated by his successor, Cyril Jackson, who pronounced that a boy 'with no more ear nor a stone, nor no more voice nor an ass' would make an excellent chorister; and by Gaisford, who appointed as singing men worn-out scouts and bed-makers." Mr. Tuckwell goes on to remark that music, in Oxford generally, had at this time but few votaries. "In the 'twenties and 'thirties there were probably not half-a-dozen amateurs in Oxford." Max Müller, "fresh from musical Leipzig," tells much the same

¹ Tuckwell's "Reminiscences of Oxford," chapter vi.

story in his "Auld Lang Syne"; as indeed does Hallé, in his Autobiography, of England at large.

The Professor of Music was Sir Henry Bishop, the versatile composer or adapter of some *ninety* operas—one of which contained the ever popular melody, "Home, Sweet Home" (which though called by him "a Sicilian air," is thought to have been his own composition)—not to mention his excellent part songs, and much other music besides. He had held the Reid Professorship at Edinburgh from 1841 to 1843, and succeeded Dr. Crotch in 1848 as Professor at Oxford, "with a salary of £12 a year; appearing only at Commemoration to play the ramshackle old organ in the Theatre."¹ In 1855, on the death of Sir H. Bishop, Sir Frederick Ouseley was elected to the vacant Chair of Music. He had graduated both in Music and Arts—probably the first amateur who had taken the former degree. Though non-resident, he came up often to superintend examinations, or deliver lectures, which were much

¹ Tuckwell's "Reminiscences of Oxford," chapter vi.

enlivened by Mr. Parratt's "illustrations" on organ or piano, and also by a band. He held his office with distinction for thirty-four years, and introduced some great reforms, the most important of which was the preliminary examination in general culture; from which music, alone of University subjects, had been before exempted. His death in 1889 was a great loss to the cause of Church music; and as an extempore player of fugues and the like, he was in my brother's very wide experience equalled in this country only by Dr. S. S. Wesley.

At Magdalen the popular Mr. Blyth was organist, preparing the way for his two great successors, Stainer and Parratt.

One of Oxford's chief musicians at this time was Dr. Stephen Elvey, brother of Sir George, and like him formerly a Canterbury chorister; composer of some particularly smooth and symmetrical chants, and editor of an excellently "pointed" Psalter. He was now University organist. Herbert Oakeley took from him lessons in harmony; and "summoned by those mellow-toned bells," often attended the evening service

at New College. For there also Elvey was organist, and though by having lost his right leg debarred from playing rapid pedal passages, gave good readings of the slower fugues of "the 48"; and even managed to play with effect the great five-part C sharp minor, No. 4 of Part I., called by that excellent critic of architecture and music, Mr. H. S. Statham, "the finest piece of pianoforte music in existence"; something perhaps of an hyperbole, like Mr. Ruskin's account of Christ Church Choir above quoted; but, even if so, none the worse for that, in a country which still needs waking up to realise the sad curtailment of its pleasures of life due to its want of appreciation of Bach; a country one of whose favourite professors and song writers not so very long ago thus summed up the characteristics of him whom Schumann has called "almost the Messiah of Music"—"Bach's vocabulary was limited, his accent provincial, and his style obscure"!

The University Musical Society, of which Oakeley was Secretary, used to give concerts in the large room at the Star Hotel; and it

was either here or at the Town Hall that Dr. Elvey, the conductor, at the part of the Hallelujah Chorus where the trebles reach the high G, in his excitement achieved bathos instead of climax by stamping himself (with the wooden leg?) through an insecure platform, and disappearing temporarily to the shades beneath.

Here my brother made his appearance as pianist, playing Mendelssohn's "Andante and Rondo Capriccioso," and some of the then recently published "Songs without Words." He also introduced there some original pieces of his own (one of which—a Minuet—was subsequently published in his Pianoforte Suite, Op. 27). Mr. Tuckwell, author of the "Reminiscences" quoted above, thus refers to the occasion in a letter to my brother written in December 1900:—

"I remember one of your earliest performances, if I mistake not, at the 'Amateur'; you called it 'Hommage à Handel,' and old Elvey quitted his conductor's stool to sit amongst the audience and listen to you with an approving



DURHAM CATHEDRAL.

From model made for H. S. O. by MR. GORRINGE



CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

From model made for H. S. O. by MR. GORRINGE

air. I find fewer even than formerly rendering homage to Handel to-day."

Herbert Oakeley spent many of his vacations under the hospitable roof of the Dean of Canterbury and Mrs. Lyall, at Chart Rectory or at Canterbury Deanery, whence in 1849 his sister, Mrs. Drummond, was married in the Cathedral.

Here his taste for Church music and architecture, of which the foundation had been laid at Lichfield, was—to use a metaphor smacking (often unsuitably) of bricks and mortar—"cemented." Entrusted with the Dean's key, he loved to wander by moonlight through the glorious building, from Becket's crown to the west end. Its services made him intimate with almost the whole range of our Cathedral music. The choir, he used to say (after visiting all the Cathedrals) was second only to Durham. Those two great churches were then musically pre-eminent, while elsewhere there prevailed a laxity now almost inconceivable. He recalled as typical of the general lowness of standard how once the beginning of Psalm xii., "Help me,

Lord, for there is not one godly man left," quavered forth by some half-dozen voices more or less out of tune, "fell on the ear with dismal significance." In fact, the music often damped the devotional feelings excited by the architecture. In one famous instance, by the way, laxity itself gave genius its cue. In 1833, at the Church's greatest festival, at morning service in Hereford Cathedral, there was in the lay clerks' seats only "one godly man left"—and he was an amateur—to wit, the Dean's butler! But the difficulty had been foreseen; and the result of the foresight may be read in Dr. Wesley's note to that most beautiful anthem, "Blessed be the God and Father." "This anthem was composed, by request," (the Dean's?) "for the service on Easter day at Hereford Cathedral, on which occasion only trebles and a single bass voice were available."

Even at Durham and Canterbury there were some incongruous elements. At the latter much scandal was caused by certain members of the Cathedral staff, who, when the clergy and choir began to conform to the ancient custom of entering in procession, showed their fear of ritualistic

tendencies by robing apart, and marching in separately, not to say defiantly and truculently, and through a different door from their colleagues. And at Durham, where it was the fine old custom of the place for the Canon in residence to show hospitality to any not unpromising looking stranger who appeared at the Sunday service, the most solemn parts of the ritual were apt to be marred by the strident voice of the verger—"Canon B.'s compliments, and he would be glad to see you at dinner this evening."

The organist at Canterbury was the venerable Mr. Jones, "a perfect accompanist"; the precentor, the excellent and jovial Mr. Stratton; who instigated Herbert Oakeley to try his hand at various forms of composition, including the now well-known E flat service and the still more widely current Quadruple chant for the 78th Psalm—"the one and only quadruple chant," as the late Dr. E. J. Hopkins of the Temple called it; with its splendid effects, then quite a novel experiment, of harmony and unison; which has remained in use at Canterbury without intermission from then (1853) till now (1904).

Mr. Stratton used laughingly to say that, were it dropped, "there would be mutiny in Precincts and City."

In the Long Vacation of 1850 Oakeley made a stay of some months at Durham, accompanied by his lifelong friend from Rugby days, Gregory Smith, Hertford and Ireland scholar; afterwards Hon. Canon of Worcester and Vicar of Great Malvern. Dean Waddington was then the stately head of the Chapter; Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter, Canon Douglas, Canon Townsend, the Rev. J. B. Dykes were among the most prominent members of the Cathedral body. Dykes was Precentor; a great musician, who has enriched our modern hymn-books with many treasures. But the devotional seriousness of his genius was by no means incompatible with the enjoyment of a good joke. Indeed, when at Cambridge he was famed as a singer of comic songs! But it need hardly be added that *his* comedy differed *toto caelo* from the trash that often usurps the name, in being both really comic and also musically interesting. Those who have been lucky enough to hear

the performances in this kind of another Cambridge wit and musician, Mr. Sedley Taylor, will own that the thing is possible. I must not mention Mr. Taylor without expressing the gratitude we owe him for calling attention to Bellermann's curious find—in an old edition of Quintilian, of all places in the world—of one of the few contemporary descriptions extant of Bach's playing. Quintilian illustrates the capacity for doing several different things at the same time by the instance of a cithara player who played and sang and beat time all at once. The editor, Gesner (headmaster of the Thomasschule), annotates thus: "All these feats, O Quintilian, thou wouldst say were but of little account, couldst thou see Bach, my colleague at the Thomasschule, at the organ; with hands going one way and hurrying feet the other, drawing forth whole troops, so to say, of the most diverse yet mutually agreeing sounds; him, I say, couldst thou see, doing what several cithara players and six hundred pipers could not effect, and, besides, keeping all in order about him, and of thirty or forty musicians, recalling one

to time and accent by a nod, another by a stamp of the foot, a third by a menacing finger. I am in general a great admirer of antiquity, but I hold that my Bach contains within himself many Orpheuses and twenty Arions." For the whole description—too long to quote here—I must refer lovers of music to Mr. Sedley Taylor's excellent little book, "John Sebastian Bach." Mr. Dykes told my brother many good stories, but I remember only one (and that incompletely) about a recent missionary expedition of Canon Townsend and his wife and others to Rome, with a view of converting or at least modifying the belief of Pio Nono; the Canon was describing on his return with post-prandial exuberance the ambitious views and conciliatory language of the mission; "*we* proposed to yield" so and so "if the Vatican would relinquish say the doctrine of Trans——," when at that point Henry of Exeter asked in his blandest and sweetest tones, "Am I to understand that you are speaking of yourself and Mrs. Townsend?"

"Bidding adieu to the quaintly picturesque city, Toledo-like, with its river winding round

the peninsula from which the rugged Minster looks down," he and his friend went on to the North, visiting his cousins at Mortonhall, near Edinburgh, and then seeking the Highland village of Logierait in the Atholl country, within easy reach of Kinnaird House, the home of the Hon. F. C. Drummond and his wife, Herbert Oakeley's sister; that "beautiful place in the midst of woods near Dunkeld on the Tay,"¹ where some years before the good-humoured Buller family had been by turns amused and worried by the scathing wit of their temporary inmate, the dyspeptic sage Thomas Carlyle.

Here the friends read and walked for some weeks. The "Electra" of Sophocles formed part of the work for Oxford "Smalls" that year. A beautifully written notebook on that Play still testifies to sound work done by Oakeley at Logierait. But seldom, perhaps, has

" . . . sad Electra's poet² had the power "

¹ Froude's "Carlyle," vol. i. p. 180 *sqq.*

² Those who recognise the misapplication here will allow it to be justifiable.

to suggest to any of his readers so many reflections on the Art of Music as found their way into this small volume. "Reading between" the lines

"High Zeus in heaven is king,
To whom thine all too bitter wrath committing,
Neither forget thy foes nor hate them overmuch,"¹

this student passes at once to the 37th Psalm—"Commit thy way to Him," and so on to "Oh, rest in the Lord" and Mendelssohn. And who but Handel should be suggested to him by the speech about the chariot race? "Imitated," says the notebook, "from Homer; Sophocles was no plagiarist, but all the poets copy from Homer, just as musicians do from the greatest of composers," &c. Another Logie-rait notebook survives, labelled "Ecclesiastical History"; its texts are not given, but the commentary consists entirely of lists of stops of organs, English and foreign!

The next two Long Vacations were spent abroad with Oxford and other friends. Oakeley

¹ Soph. El. 176, Whitelaw's Translation.

took his degree in 1853, but found it hard to leave beloved Oxford and the many friends still there, and so lingered on some time longer; not without hopes, too, of an All Souls' fellowship, and also of another coveted prize, the University Tennis¹ racquet. Both honours, however, fell to his friend, Godfrey Lushington of Balliol.

¹ Bien entendu—*real* Tennis. No other claimant to the title existed in 1853.

CHAPTER IV

CANTERBURY—LEIPZIG, ETC. ; 1855-1858

AT this time my brother purposed taking Holy Orders, and whilst at Canterbury used to read with Arthur Stanley, then one of the Canons. He happened to go "a theological walk" with him on the day when Tennyson's poem "Charge of the Light Brigade" had appeared in the *Examiner*,¹ and the ever discursive teacher began—by way of interlude, or perhaps illustration—to recite the lines, and gradually remembered them all. The friendship begun at Canterbury continued till Stanley's lamented death; only a short time before which he interested himself in suggesting an epitaph on my brother's favourite Pomeranian dog "Floss"; responding after a moment's thought to his request with the extempore pentameter,

"Flos Regum Arthurus, flosculus illa canum,"²

¹ December 9, 1854.

² "Arthur the flower of kings; this 'Floss' of dogs the Floweret."

and adding immediately the variant,

“Ut rosa flos florum, sic canis ista canum.”¹

Like his great contemporary, Mr. Gladstone, Stanley appreciated the suitability—in the hands of a scholar—of Latin, as for epitaphs, so also for notes and postcards. I wish I could give the context of the following note from him—beyond the fact that it was rather a lengthy epistle which obtained so pithy an answer: “Dear Herbert, Scribenda Scripsi, delenda deleui, A.P.S.”² His Latin cards, too, are generally fairly legible; whereas it is well known that some of his friends possess amongst their choicest treasures notes from him which, though believed to be written in the vulgar tongue, are so far from being “understood of the people” that they never yet have been, and probably never will be, deciphered!

I have a hazy recollection of another card from him, consulting my brother about some

¹ “As Rose is flower of flowers, so was that Dog of dogs.”

² “I have written what ought to be written, I have destroyed what ought to be destroyed.” But the sixteen British farthings are poor enough change for the four good Roman pennies!

ornithological problem or other: "num psittacus supra pontem incedere debet," or something similar, but it is no longer to be found, so I will not hazard an English version.

In 1855 Oakeley made a third and longer visit to Germany. This time Leipzig, from which the rich afterglow of Mendelssohn's noble work had not yet faded, was chosen for his goal, as perhaps even more classical in taste—and certainly less expensive—than its rival capitals of music, Vienna and Berlin. His uncertainty as to how long he could afford to stay making the Conservatorium impossible for him, he took private lessons from Moscheles and Plaidy, and in organ playing from Papperitz. In that genial musical atmosphere work prospered; he made acquaintance too with Clara Schumann, Hauptmann, David, and Röntgen (senior). "These and other great names were more than enough to make the old town, dull in architecture and situation, interesting to the musician; not to mention the glories of its past—for here had lived and worked Sebastian Bach, the mighty 'Cantor' of the Thomasschule;

here Robert Schumann had explored 'fresh woods and pastures new' in Music's fairy realms, and had revealed deeper art mysteries than any one since Beethoven was laid to rest. Here, too, the composer of 'St. Paul' had written that most touching passage in 'Happy and blest are they,' beginning 'For though the body die,' sung at his own funeral in 1847."

Snatching a holiday in Berlin, he saw and played to Paul Mendelssohn, who, pleased with his enthusiasm, gave him a copy of the after-death portrait by Hensel of his illustrious brother, with the motto from the Book of Kings, or rather from the *Elijah*, "After the earthquake there came a fire," &c. He gave him, too, a Mendelssohn autograph.

He made acquaintance here with Herr Fürst, who had translated into German the words of his song, "Happy Hours" (sung by Sims Reeves several times), and called on Meyerbeer, whom he found adapting (for Covent Garden) his "Dinorah" to an Italian libretto; he worked standing, and to avoid stooping used a grand piano mounted on a platform.

Oakeley visited, too, the Royal Library, "whose treasures of Bach manuscripts and autographs are unequalled," containing as it does the first volume of "the 48" (the original "Wohltemperirte Clavier"), the lovely A flat fugue from Vol. 2, the great C and E minor organ fugues, six organ trios, and the Mass in B minor; also Mozart's E flat symphony, and part of Beethoven's 9th.

At Prague (likened by Rubinstein to Edinburgh) he heard—at a garden concert!—"an excellent orchestral transcription by Esser of Bach's organ 'Passacaglia.'"

Soon after his return to England the rumoured excellence of the Norwich boys' voices and of the organ at Great Yarmouth drew him in that direction, especially as his Rugby friend, Olivier, was one of the six curates of Canon Hills, then Vicar of Yarmouth, afterwards Bishop of British Columbia. The organ in St. Nicolas' Church (said to be the widest church in England) "is, for once, well placed, being in one of the galleries of the broad aisles." Here he found delight in

playing at services for the organist, Mr. Stonex, and at other times.

For Norwich he acquired a great love. Dr. Buck, the well-known organist of the cathedral, and devoted trainer of its choir, he highly revered; and often used to enjoy again in retrospect the humours of a certain Sunday dinner with him, at which he had observed, with increasing curiosity, the continual despatch of Benjamin's messes to some invalid, as he at first supposed, in the next room. But Dr. Buck presently solved the mystery by explaining that his head chorister boy, interned in that inner chamber from which was no escape, was feeding in solitary state, "for unless I know every morsel that goes into that boy's mouth, I can't feel sure of the solo in this afternoon's anthem!"

About this time he "opened" the fine organ in Romsey Abbey. Sir Frederick Ouseley preached the sermon, and the two afterwards paid a visit to Dr. Wesley at Winchester. The great composer of "The Wilderness" helped Oakeley greatly both by example and precept. He wrote once to him, "I like your anthems;

you strive after the high and original, and you go on the same tack as I do." But on this occasion Dr. Wesley "had cut his finger" and could not, or would not, play. He gave the friends, however, the run of the organ, and paid them the compliment of listening. Both of them were, of course, ardent admirers of the man and his genius, and could make allowance for his idiosyncrasies, by which strangers were often apt to be much upset—those two organists, for instance, who, having made a pilgrimage to Winchester to hear him play, ventured to express some little disappointment on meeting him descending the organ stairs after merely striking two Amen-like chords as his whole "Postludium," upon which he replied, "Do you then, gentlemen, expect me to give you an organ lesson?" Dr. Wesley had a rooted objection to those injudicious embellishments of the text to which second-rate singers are prone. On a certain Christmas Eve my brother sat beside him at the organ. Part of the anthem was "The people that walked in darkness." At the passage "Have seen a great Light," the

bass soloist, vainly thinking to improve Handel, introduced an elaborate turn of his own. Dr. Wesley, taking his hands off the keys, whispered, "Ha, ha! my friend, all very fine; but one *bad* turn deserves another," and left the abashed singer all alone, to walk in darkness for a good part of the rest of the piece!

Wesley's contemporary, John Goss, often asked my brother to "play out" at St. Paul's. His next-but-one successor, by the way, Sir G. Martin, was then a boy; and the story of his boyhood in part belongs to *my* story:—for it is related that "his musical awakening began when in 1858 a passing stranger—Herbert Oakeley by name—played in Lambourn Church some fugues of Bach; which so affected and unsettled the boy, that Music became henceforth the longing of his life."¹ Another musician, Mr. Warde Fowler, remembers the fugues, and promptly took the player's advice to procure some of them. In 1858 too Oakeley first met W. B. (now Sir W.) Richmond. Drawn together by a common love of Bach, the two became close

¹ *Musical Times*, July 1897.

friends. A favourite lodging of my brother's at Hampton Court, blessed with a view down the cathedral-like aisles of Bushey Park, and within reach of Father Schmidt's organ in the royal chapel (and also near an excellent tennis court), witnessed many "noctes caenaeque deum," for even to the small hours of the morning¹ the friends would play the grand organ fugues of the mighty master. Herbert Oakeley had no sympathy with the objection of some purists to thus making the pianoforte proxy for the organ. He was very fond of doing so himself, either *solo* or with a second performer as "pedal organ"; and held that a consensus on this point of all the newspaper critics in London would avail nothing against the precept and example of Liszt, Clara Schumann, Rubinstein, Von Bulow, Paderewski, Sauer, and most other great players. And to the somewhat flimsy argument that the organ fugues were not written for the modern pianoforte, he answered, "No more were 'the 48' or any other *clavichord* music."

¹ *Oftes* at seven o'clock they would suddenly realise that it was morning." ("Sir W. Richmond," *Art Journal*, Dec. 1902.)

In London especially, where Bach's organ music is so seldom heard in the concert room, *never* till lately, the objection seems particularly Pharisaical. The last time I heard Clara Schumann play, she began with Bach's (organ) "Pastorale" and went on to the (organ) E minor Prelude and Fugue!

At Hampton Court was finished the Morning Service, "Oakeley in E flat," of which Stern-dale Bennett wrote, "Allow me to thank you very sincerely for your admirable service, which has greatly delighted me; I hope to hear it some day performed in its proper place." Dr. Buck, in the testimonial he wrote for my brother for the Edinburgh election, expressed the opinion that this Service was "in some parts equal to the best productions of Mendelssohn," an opinion which was received derisively by certain London critics, of whom more later. But when challenged for his testimonial, the writer stuck to it valiantly. "I adhere to my opinion that there is as much genius shown in your brother's 'Te Deum' as in Mendelssohn's." So he wrote, in a letter that I still possess.

CHAPTER V

THE "GUARDIAN"; MUSIC AT HOME AND ABROAD: 1858-1866

FROM 1858 to 1866 Mr. Oakeley spent much of his time in reporting choral festivals and concerts at home and abroad for the *Guardian*.¹ He was well qualified for this employment, starting as he did where most might contentedly finish, namely, with a complete knowledge of classical composers and foreign orchestras, and also of cathedrals—their architecture as well as their music. Consequently he was able from the first to write accounts highly valued both by the editor of the paper and by its readers. But it is hardly to be expected that much of these criticisms would now be found generally interesting. I shall therefore give only some selections from them which seem not to have lost their point with lapse of years.

In 1858 Leeds held its first Musical Festival. The magnificent Town Hall had been opened the

¹ He wrote occasionally also later on music at home and abroad for the *Guardian* and other papers. Some selections from these later reports will appear in chapters xi. and xiv.

day before the first concert by Queen Victoria in person, and thus no time was lost in putting the new possession to its best possible use. The selection of music was much better than at the recent Birmingham Festival, and in its execution also the influence of the conductor, Professor Sterndale Bennett, was in many ways as evident as welcome. His "Mendelssohnian reading" of the Overture and other parts of the *Elijah*, the Scotch Symphony, and some of the *Messiah* choruses, the critic found a great improvement on the immoderate speed of the Birmingham renderings. On the other hand, "Rossini's finest overture, *William Tell*, though well played, seemed comparatively ineffective after the extraordinary performance of the work at Birmingham."

Mr. Henry Smart extemporised on the half-completed huge organ, but he was apparently "not in the mood"; the critic found his playing disappointing after Dr. Wesley; "a series of modulations without form and void: quite uninteresting."

The "May Queen," the conductor's new Cantata, was performed for the first time on this occasion, and was judged by the *Guardian*

“charming, though too redolent of Mendelssohn.” And Gounod’s “Nazareth,” also new, “a beautiful composition, was given with remarkable taste by the rising young baritone, Charles Santley.” “Clara Novello was never greater than in ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth’ and ‘Rejoice greatly,’ these two airs being perfectly given, with the exception of one or two commonplace alterations of the text. The *sotto voce* shake at the end of the former was not unworthy of Madame Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt herself.”

At the second Handel Festival, in 1859, he notes that “it is idle to deny that mere bigness is certainly an element of grandeur (as, indeed, the word ‘grandeur’ itself denotes) whether in natural scenery or architecture; or—as exemplified in Handel Festivals—even in music. Handel himself, it is said, would have liked cannon in the ‘Hallelujah Chorus.’ So he would clearly not have objected to the Sydenham version of his works.” But the full splendour of the Sydenham effects is appreciable only by the front rows of the immense audience, and at the distance of the Press gallery it is quite lost: a

fact which possibly accounts for many depreciatory criticisms!

He quotes some fine sentences of Victor Schoelcher on "Israel": "No theme seems too great for Handel. He moves with sure step, at home amongst miracles. He has music for Sinai, and for the passage of the Red Sea. With what terrific reality is the thick darkness spread over the earth! . . . 'Israel' is an Alpine chain of transcendent choruses, broken by rugged passes of recitative, and a few green vales of song. . . . Words cannot depict these super-human effects of musical Art! When you enjoy them, you wish to have around you those whom you love, in order that they too may share your delight."

At the Gloucester Festival this year at one of the concerts Sims Reeves was ill and could not sing. The audience, enraged at the popular favourite's enforced absence, became turbulent. Clara Novello came forward and said—

"Mr. Reeves being unwell has begged me to sing something in his place, though with less than his ability, that you may not be disappointed.

He explained the cause of his absence to the conductor, to whom alone artists engaged at this Festival are responsible ; and also to the stewards. I address you, ladies and gentlemen, because I will not suffer a brother artist to be unjustly accused, although he took precautions to avert disappointment."

This brave and sensible little speech at once restored peace and contentment.

A reporter in a Gloucester paper remarked of one of the evening concerts that "Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 is too long, and the audience would have been better pleased had only half been given, and instead of the rest, say the overture to 'Guy Mannering,' which is full of stirring Scotch airs."

This absurd flight of provincial criticism, however, was *once* in his experience surpassed, and that in the so-styled "Modern Athens."¹

In this year, 1859, he visited Ireland, and amongst the "wild echoes" of Killarney made his setting of Tennyson's "Bugle Song" in "The Princess," though quite unaware till long

¹ As mentioned in a later chapter.

afterwards, when Tennyson's *Life* came out, that the song owed its existence to the self-same "faintly blowing" "horns of Elfland," having been written at Killarney in 1850.

Of the Mendelssohn Festival at Sydenham in 1860, he wrote that much was lost in the enormous unconfined space; "scarcely a note of the exquisite violoncello accompaniment of 'Blessed are the men' was audible; and the independent staccato figure in the 'Baal Chorus' was quite drowned by the roaring of the Priests." The most striking part was the passage, "But yet the Lord," &c., where seven hundred tenors answered seven hundred basses on a minor second, preparing the sublime modulation from C major to D flat. "The trio 'Lift thine eyes' was almost inaudible, and lost much of its effect in Bartholomew's translation, which, however, is usually so satisfactory. For instance, for 'Hebe deine Augen' we find the weak repetition 'Lift thine eyes, oh *lift* thine eyes,' and afterwards sad havoc is made of the word 'cometh,' which is given with every accentuation but the right one, and occurs three times on the notes which Mendelssohn, with evident

purpose, set to the word 'Hülfe' (help). At the repetition of the passage the unfortunate verb is again worried and torn to pieces with renewed zest, as if the translator had wished to rival (British) Gregorian chanters in false accent and emphasis."

Sims Reeves' wonderful high chest notes were not only audible throughout the concert room (or rather concert *district*), but penetrated far beyond, and were distinctly heard at the spot occupied by Bevington's organ.

Madame Sainton, in "Oh rest in the Lord," dwelt on the closing strain—as sweet as a *Lied ohne Worte*—with such tenderness as must have gone to the hearts of the audience with as much force as any *Worte ohne Lieder* from the pulpit.

Parepa's singing was "probably, in the absence of Madame Novello, the best that could be heard, but she took a most unwarrantable liberty in her final cadence in 'God Save the Queen,' introducing to the subdominant harmony of the key (B flat) a certain A as an appoggiatura."

Under the conductor's desk was exhibited a portrait of the composer, which was lent for the

occasion by Mr. Benecke ; also a fac-simile and translation of an autograph of the Prince Consort, which His Royal Highness inscribed in a book of the words of "Elijah," and presented to Mendelssohn at Exeter Hall in April 1847. The inscription, often quoted, but worth quoting once more, runs thus :—

"To the noble artist, who, surrounded by the Baal-worship of corrupted Art, has been able, by his genius and science, to preserve faithfully, like another Elijah, the worship of true Art, and once more to accustom our ear—lost in the whirl of an empty play of sounds—to the pure notes of expressive composition and legitimate harmony ; to the great master, who makes us conscious of the unity of his conception through the whole maze of his creation—from the soft whispering to the mighty raging of the elements—written in token of grateful remembrance by

ALBERT.

"BUCKINGHAM PALACE, *April 24, 1847.*"

The Prince's well-known musical talent and knowledge were remarkably shown in a

conversation he had, very shortly before his death, with Mr. Oakeley, when there was a probability of the latter being attached as Secretary to the Household of the Princess Alice at Darmstadt. (Eventually it was judged more suitable that the appointment in question should be filled by a German.)

As might have been said also of Dean Stanley, Herbert Oakeley's strong sentiment of loyalty had nothing in common with the mere courtier's love of courts, but was of the chivalrous type not incongruous with the temperament of an artist; whose ancestor, moreover, Lord George Murray, the almost victorious leader of the wild adventure of 1745, had been a main prop of one of those "lost causes" to which the romance of loyalty owes so much of its poetry. Like all who have realised how important a part was the Prince Consort's in the political and social history of the Queen's reign, Mr. Oakeley greatly admired him, and, more than that, thoroughly appreciated him *during his lifetime*, which unhappily cannot be said without qualification of most of the generation of

Englishmen which the Prince served so excellently well.

Mr. Oakeley's description of this Mendelssohn Festival in the *Guardian* led to his long friendship with Sir George Grove, who, after reading his article, wrote to him as follows:—

“I am sorry to find from your able and interesting report of the performance of the ‘Elijah’ that your place was so bad a one. If you will kindly favour me with your name and address, I will take care that on similar occasions you are provided with seats of which no complaint *can* be made. One so well able to appreciate, and to describe what he appreciates, ought to have the best place in the building. Pray accept my best thanks for your report. It is but too seldom one finds one like it in the newspapers. I should like very much to meet you, and hope to have that pleasure before long. Meanwhile, believe me yours faithfully,

GEORGE GROVE.”

At Covent Garden in 1861 the feature of the season was the first appearance of a very young

soprano, born at Madrid in 1843, who, however, had already sung in fifteen operas in America—Adelina Patti. “Her compass extended to ‘F in alt.’ Her *staccato* was extraordinary, and her vocalisation very neat; her voice as yet rather thin.” Grisi and Mario visited London this year, and Alboni, with her marvellous voice of three octaves of perfect notes, from “fiddle G” to G above the line—“the Italian thrush,” certainly, as Jenny Lind was the “Swedish nightingale.”

In the sleep-walking scene in the “*Sonambula*,” when Amina has to cross the frail bridge, the plank which ought to crack at the moment when the hand-lamp falls into the torrent had been so strengthened that even Alboni’s weight could not produce the intended result, nor therefore the usual panic among the more nervous of the audience, alarmed at the supposed accident.

The Sacred Harmonic Society gave in 1861 two performances of Beethoven’s Mass (No. 2) in D, announced (quite incorrectly!) as “Service in D”; a ridiculous sop to the Puritan Cerberus, recalling the objection of Ananias in Ben

Jonson's "Alchemist" to the terribly Papistical sounding word *Christ-mas*. The performances were far from irreproachable, and would certainly not have given Mendelssohn cause to qualify his remark, that he had never heard, and never expected to hear, the choral difficulties of the work successfully overcome. At any rate, the *Guardian* thought much more trouble must be taken, and, especially, many more rehearsals be given, before this "*res severa*" could become a "*verum gaudium*."

The chief event of one of the New Philharmonic Concerts, conducted by Dr. Wylde, was "the performance of Beethoven's most difficult pianoforte concerto, No. 4 in G, by Mr. J. F. Barnett. His two cadenzas showed remarkable musical knowledge. Such execution and such conception of Beethoven is seldom attained by our countrymen."

Charles Hallé this year gave the whole of Beethoven's sonatas in eight recitals. At one of these Oakeley sat next to Professor Moscheles, who remarked that the staccato passages "suggestive of bassoons" in the Allegretto (not

Allegro) second movement of the E flat sonata (No. 18) "ought not to be so much hurried." So the tendency, even amongst great players, to undue speed, which we are apt to think specially characteristic of a later and more restless period, was already noticeable. On another occasion, when praising Joachim's perfect time in playing Bach, the *Guardian* complains that many players miss much of the old Master's grace and sentiment, by turning his compositions into mere displays of execution; an unfortunate tendency which the great old organist of Dresden, Johann Schneider, often alluded to as a "musikalische Krankheit" (musical disease) of the age.

Touching another modern fashion, it is amusing to read that Hallé, after playing the first twelve sonatas from memory, thought it advisable at his fourth concert to have the music before him, in order to humour the critics, who cavilled bitterly at the—to them—novel and unpleasing phenomenon! However, by the time he reached No. 21 he seemed to think enough concession had been made to the Philistines,

and returned to his own plan of "reciting," not reading.

About the same year Thalberg gave some recitals in London, playing almost entirely his own operatic or other "transcriptions." His confessed excellences—superb touch, "singing" tone, subtle effects of contrast, cascades of arpeggios from which his melodies (often trivial enough) stand out so perfectly distinct, caused the absence of *the best* from his programmes to be all the more keenly felt. But he received extraordinary applause, clearly showing how many people still find in second-rate pieces played by first-rate performers their greatest musical treat; and marking the difference between London and Leipzig (for instance), where only the highest Art is received with the like raptures.

At the 1862 International Exhibition he notes that Rossini, Verdi, Meyerbeer, Auber, and Sterndale Bennett were asked to contribute Marches. "The Swan of Pesaro declined to spread once more for flight wings closely folded since 'William Tell' was finished in 1829." Verdi went beyond the request, sending a Cantata, which

unfortunately arrived too late. Meyerbeer sent a good March in three movements, the last being a fugue on "Rule Britannia," introducing three other subjects, and ending with a brilliant climax. Bennett set Tennyson's Exhibition Ode, but neither music nor poem was very successful in performance; their greatest effect being lent them by the popular appreciation of the allusion to the lately dead Prince, at which all heads were uncovered:

"O silent father of our kings to be,
Mourned in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to thee."

Here he first heard "a clever young Yorkshireman, Mr." (now Sir Walter) "Parratt, play. He gave on the Willis organ, amongst other things, Bach's great Prelude and Fugue in B minor, then very rarely heard in London."

At the Gloucester Festival in 1862 Oakeley's song "Break, Break" was sung by Madame Sinton. This setting was approved of by the poet "on account of its changes of rhythm, suited to the sense." Mr. Tennyson objected, however, to the repetitions of words made

in this as in other musical settings. "You musical fellows," he said to Mr. Oakeley, "make me say twice what I only said once!" Certainly a most useful hint to the musicians of the period. Yet Poetry herself, in her lyrical—that is, in her most musical—moods, as, for instance, in the first line of the very lyric in question—

"Break, break, break, on thy cold gray stones, O sea!"

sometimes says twice—and thrice—what Prose would say but once; and this would seem to absolve Music, the sister art of expression, from *too* strict control on this head.

At the Crystal Palace, Handel was again heard in all his majesty, especially in the unsurpassable "Polyphemus" choruses, and those from "Solomon," including "Draw the tear from hopeless Love," &c.

In 1863 he went abroad with a pupil. Shaping his course first to Haarlem, he finds the celebrated organ worthy of its reputation. "Its glory is the mellow tone of the pure tin pipes. The diapasons and pedal organ are all that could be wished, and also the *vox humana*: here are no bleating sheep nor tremulous beldames,

but a really good suggestion of a distant choir. At Fribourg in Switzerland—and only there—does this Haarlem stop find its match, though Willis, Hill, Schulze, and Cavaille Coll have each *almost* lit upon the secret of the true ‘klang.’” The organist (Bastian) and his clever daughter of fifteen played everything asked for, including—from the latter!—Bach’s A minor and E flat fugues, and Mendelssohn’s sixth Sonata.

The graceful spire of Strassburg — then “Strasbourg”—they found illuminated for the Fête Napoleon. At Fribourg they listened to Moser’s organ; and soon after heard a larger instrument than either Fribourg or Haarlem at Ulm; “but its double pedal board made it difficult to play Handel’s ‘The waters overwhelmed them.’”

At Munich, Franz Lachner, “a composer most unjustly neglected in England,” was the great attraction.

At Dresden they were surprised to find the populace everywhere able to listen, for a few pence, at *garden* concerts, to all the great masterpieces; and here they saw and heard the great

organists Johann Schneider and Gustav Merkel. Schneider died soon after, 13th August 1864. The account of him signed "H. S. O." in Grove's "Dictionary of Music" speaks of his "grand extempore preludes to the opening chorale at the Hof-Kirche, in a style which since Bach's time has been made a special study in Germany, but is scarcely cultivated elsewhere. His instrument, by Silbermann, though old-fashioned in its mechanism, is of superb tone, and is well placed in the gallery. Schneider was the first authority of his day on the playing of Bach, and possessed a traditional reading of his sublime works."

Sir Frederick Ouseley wrote from Dresden, (October 21, 1851) "I heard the other day old Schneider, the best living organist, play on one of the best organs in Europe; and *I really have not had the heart to touch an instrument since*, so unapproachable does his excellence as a fugue player and accompanist appear to be."¹

Mr. H. F. Chorley well said of him, "whereas others struggle with Bach, Schneider *played* with him."

¹ Joyce's "Life of Ouseley," page 76.

He told many anecdotes of the great musicians he had taught. These included Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, Merkel, Van Eyken, Töpfer, Richter, &c. One story of Mendelssohn was this: Schneider played to him and another—a Professor of music, I think—the B flat minor fugue from Vol. 2 of “the 48.” (He was fond of playing the more “organic” of “the 48” on the organ. Readers of Mendelssohn’s Letters will remember his surprise and delight at hearing the D major (Vol. 1) from him.) At the end of it, Schneider, seeing the Professor looking about unmoved, feared the piece had failed to “find” its audience. But where was Mendelssohn? He was in tears in a remote gallery! Thanks to Schneider’s good custom of asking pupils at the end of their lessons what he should play to them, Herbert Oakeley heard him play all the greatest organ works of Bach; also the six-part fugue on Frederick the Great’s subject, and many of “the 48.”

At Berlin they visited Paul Mendelssohn, and saw his treasures; and heard Haupt, the Hof organist, play the great fugue in E minor,

cleverly named by Best (from the shape in print of its subject) the "Wedge" Fugue.

These "agnomina"—at least when assigned by competent people—are always interesting. Many will remember pugnacious old Samuel Wesley's letter about his pet names for some of "the 48" fugues:—

“‘The Doctor's Fugue' you have accurately, as also 'The Judgment Fugue,' and what I call 'The Saints in Glory Fugue,' by which I mean that in E major. These will furnish enough for many *Rounds* against such as love darkness rather than light, because their eyes—and ears—are evil! Even Germans themselves are not free from the envy of Bach's transcendent genius. I will not tell you the name of the person till Sunday (for I mean to be with you), neither would you believe, and perhaps can hardly credit it on my solemn asseveration, that a man of real talent compared one of those fugues which Horn has arranged (which you do not remember as it is not among 'the 48') to 'A Hog floundering in the mud.'”

Bach's "*Mendelssohn* A minor Fugue" got to

be commonly so called after the latter composer's first visit to England, where till then it was unknown. He played it frequently in London churches, and the story has often been told how, at the afternoon service at St. Paul's, 10th September 1837, he had just reached its last page and the famous pedal solo, when the organ suddenly became dumb! For the vergers, incensed that the congregation *would* stay to listen, wickedly conspired with the blowers, and forthwith

"Venti velut agmine facto
Qua data porta ruunt,"¹

a contretemps or "counterblast" which must have somewhat sorely tried the player; for, as Sir George Grove tells us, he "loved the organ, and was *greatly excited* when playing it"!

Dr. Wesley, also, used to tell of Mendelssohn's "excitement" in playing this same piece. "When he came to the great pedal solo at

¹ "The winds
As in compact array, where vent is given,
Rush forth."

—Rhoades's translation of the "Æneid."

the end he just sat on the organ seat and tore his hair"!¹

Herbert Oakeley was fond of imagining a kindred sublimity in music and mountain scenery, and would amuse himself with matching the great organ fugues with the giants of the Oberland: the A minor (just mentioned) with the Finsteraarhorn, the "augmented" C major with the Schreckhorn, the B minor with the Jungfrau, and so on.

That these Alpine similitudes should have suggested themselves at all to my brother reminds one how *doubly* disastrous for him was his terrible fall in Switzerland in 1872. For perhaps of many walkers in the Alps that year, he was the one organ player; the only climber, that is, who had the full use of his feet, being not only a pedestrian, but also a pedallist. Indeed for "doubly" I might well have written "trebly" disastrous, as the following letter from his friend, the Hon. W. Warren Vernon, will show: "I cannot tell you what

¹ An interesting point as to his "registering" is described by E. J. Hopkins in "Grove's Musical Dictionary" (art. "Mendelssohn").

pleasure you have given me by your kind present of the photograph of yourself in tennis costume. How it does carry me back to the days when we all used to collect in the 'Dedans' of the tennis court, to see you play! We considered you—and it was generally allowed—far and away the best player we had; but it was unfortunate for you that in a *match* you could not help getting nervous, and failed in consequence to win matches against players to whom in an ordinary game we all thought you decidedly superior. Not only was your skill greater than that of your contemporaries at the University, but your movements were so graceful—I used to think that you bounded about like a young fawn—and, moreover, your easy style always reminded me of Barre, who looked so absolutely at home in a tennis court.

“I cannot help alluding to this while thanking you for the photograph; for when a man of an unusually athletic nature has the deplorable calamity to be struck down by an accident such as yours, and to be deprived of his former elasticity and vigour, it may seem to him a

comfort to be reminded, by a friend who deeply sympathises with his misfortune, of what he once was. Dante says :

‘Nessun maggior dolore,
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria.’¹

That is true ; but I think that *sometimes* the converse is the case, and that when one is totally precluded from taking part in some particular exercise, it is a consoling thing to be reminded that one stood, as you did in former days, my dear Oakeley, in ‘le jeu du Roi,’ in the first rank.”

The travellers went on to Vienna, the town of Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven. The Viennese “man in the street,” however, when asked by my brother, “Is yonder house the one where Beethoven lived?” replied, “Beethoven? Das ist kein Wiener Name ; ich glaube der Herr ist gestorben.” (Beethoven? That is not a Vienna name ; I think the gentleman must be dead.)

They made pilgrimage to “the sacred vale

¹ [Paraphrased by Tennyson—

“A sorrow’s crown of sorrows is remembering happier things.”]

of Heiligenstadt, where the Pastoral Symphony of Beethoven, with its gay reminiscences of that bird-haunted region, was devised ; where too, some years later, the composer, now stone deaf, asked his companion the sad question, what birds he heard. ‘Here I composed my Pastoral Symphony ; and here the birds composed with me. Can you hear a yellow-hammer?’ ‘No,’ wrote the friend on the conversation slate, ‘and I only recollect the nightingale, quail, and cuckoo in the Symphony.’ ‘The composer in answer wrote on the slate the G major arpeggio passage for the first flute in the 58th and 59th bars of the ‘Brook Scene.’” The friend, who was more remarkable for humility than humour, seems to have concluded that the passage had been intended, like the other bird-reminiscences in the movement, as a direct imitation. But, inasmuch as the little performer here in question is by no means given to arpeggios, either Beethoven must have merely meant that the passage recalled to him the moment when the bird was “composing with him,” or else—which is likely enough—he was joking at his companion’s expense.

Returning by Munich, then in mourning for its wayward ruler King Ludwig, Wagner's friend, they reached London by Easter; and "found the pitch higher, and the standard of performance lower, than in Germany." The *Coriolanus* Overture sounded in C sharp minor (instead of C), and the *Pastoral* Symphony chiefly in F sharp! This, to some delicate ears at least, curiously altered the effects. "It was as if hues of sky, trees, and wild flowers had become rather less rich and less natural; the murmurings of the brook in the second movement a trifle less soothing and dulcet, and the tints of its banks too pale a green. Whatever truths these fancies may represent, at least it is certain that the nightingale's complaint was altered to G flat and A flat, while the unduly elated cuckoo called E flat and C flat. A few weeks later the Symphony was heard again at its right pitch, and doubts and perplexities were dispelled. Instead of a constant attempt to reconcile, as it were, two stereoscopic photographs not quite in focus, all now seemed clear and well defined."

In 1864 the choir and transept of Chichester Cathedral were under repairs rendered necessary by the effects of the catastrophe in 1860, when the tower and spire, collapsing like a closing telescope, fell to the ground. So the Festival was held in the nave and aisles; the only double aisles, except at Manchester, found in English cathedrals. The admirable pointing of Dr. Stephen Elvey was used (as always at this cathedral), and the generally ill-fated words "righteousness," "enemy," "victory," "wickedness," &c., for once got their rights of correct accentuation. The organ was finely played by Mr. E. H. Thorne, afterwards indefatigable at St. Anne's (Soho) in his devotion to the vocal and instrumental works of Bach.

"Under the glorious and now almost unequalled roof of Ely Cathedral," crowned by the far-visible lantern — "that excellent translation into Decorated Language of the Romanesque octagon of Germany and Italy,"¹ was held one of the best Festivals of the year. The splendid decoration of that roof, which Mr. Gambier

¹ The Rev. J. L. Petit's "Church Architecture."

Parry of Highnam Court (father of Sir Hubert Parry, and like him a true artist) was still at work in completing, was only one of many great works of restoration or embellishment lately taken in hand by the Dean and Chapter. The magnificence of the minsters and churches of the Fen country is proverbial; it is indeed the boast of East Anglia that fine cathedrals looking over wide plains are no bad substitute for the glories of the more romantic scenery of the west and north, and this architectural superiority should afford some consolation to the typical mountain lover like Dr. Arnold, who felt some sinking of the heart when he looked out to the east from his study window at Rugby and said to himself that there was hardly a hill fifty feet high between him and the Ural Mountains!

After the Choral Festival Season, a second tour abroad with the same friend as before occupied the next nine months. Five of these were spent at Rome, and a full account of Music in Italy was despatched to the *Guardian*, but was intercepted by the Pontifical Post. Some extracts from it follow:—

“The remark of the great Roman orator may be accepted as descriptive of the present artistic state of Southern Italy. There, at least, ‘The works of Nature are more perfect than those of Art.’¹ To the same effect writes Mendelssohn : ‘In her scenery, and her monuments, and in these alone, lies true Art now in Italy ; and so it will ever be, for our instruction and delight, as long as Vesuvius stands fast, and the balmy air, and the sea, and the woods remain.’” To Oakeley, as to Mendelssohn, Music as an Art in Italy seemed dormant, though not dead ; for no one could deny that the people, if unenergetic, are still *instinctively* artistic. “But at the churches at Rome the music was generally light, trivial, and theatrical. The organists were strangely bent on introducing the most inappropriate operatic airs. As a typical instance—on the last day of December 1864, when the Pope repaired to the Church of the Gesù, to return thanks for the mercies of the year, and was making his solemn entry with his arms crossed on his breast—a player on one of the four organs

¹ “Meliora sunt ea quae natura quam quae arte perfecta sunt.”

saluted His Holiness with the well known tenor air in Flotow's Opera, 'Marta, Marta, tu sparisti!'"¹

The ceremonies of the Holy Week have often been described, and as to the music in the Sistine Chapel especially every one knows Mendelssohn's interesting account. Our travellers went through the whole programme, including the exhausting four or five hours of standing in evening dress, crowded together like sheep in pens, to hear the singing of the "Miserere." They saw the ceremonies of Palm Sunday, for which the palm branches are sent from Bordighera, by traditional privilege granted by Sixtus V. to a native of that place, the sailor Bresca. For he it was who averted the imminent downfall of Caligula's obelisk in the Piazza of St. Peter's by shouting in the nick of time, "Acqua alle funi!" (Water on the ropes).

On the same occasion is sung Palestrina's "Pueri portantes ramos."

The Lamentations, Nocturnes, and Laudes, sung to dull and uninteresting strains, and the

¹ "Martha, Martha, whereto vanished?"

fifteen Psalms to Gregorians—in all their *sancta simplicitas*—without organ too, the Pope not being present—reminded some present of “the use” of Presbyterian Scotland. “I cannot help it,” says Mendelssohn of this part of the service, “but I own it does irritate me to hear such sacred and touching words sung to such dull, drawling music. They say it is Gregorian, &c.; no matter. If at that period there was not the capability to write in a different style, at all events we have now the power to do so. People came to me saying how splendid it had all been. This sounded to me like a bad joke, and yet they were quite in earnest!”

At the end of each Psalm, according to the ancient custom, one candle is extinguished; and after the Fifteenth and last the only remaining light is hidden behind the altar. The chapel grows almost dark, and the red vestments of the kneeling Pontiff are only just visible. Meanwhile, Michael Angelo's huge fresco, sixty-four feet in length, of the “Last Judgment” becomes ever more and more weird and terrible, till only vague and ghostly shadows

of its gigantic figures are faintly discernible, moving towards eclipse. Then at last out of the gloom, after an awful silence, is wailed forth Allegri's "Miserere," a work famous as the composition which marks (and partly makes) what Mendelssohn has called the most sublime moment of the Holy Week's Services, and also as the subject of a wonderful feat of Mozart's. "On the fourth day of Holy Week, 1770, that gifted boy—then just fourteen years old—wrote down the entire 'Miserere,' after having heard it sung once only in the Sistine Chapel. On Good Friday he returned with the MS. hidden in his cocked hat, and (at risk of excommunication!) corrected it with a pencil as the Service proceeded. And not long afterwards, he sang and played it with such exact attention to the traditional 'embellishments' that Cristoforo, the principal soprano, who had himself sung it in the chapel, declared his performance perfect."

Every day in the Holy Week has at St. Peter's its own functions and music; the latter by Palestrina, Allegri, Marenzio, or Baini.

The Easter Day ceremonies, beginning at

dawn with a salvo of artillery from the fortress of St. Angelo, culminate at the elevation of the consecrated elements, when the whole multitude that throngs the vast Basilica drop at once to their knees, the clang of the soldiers' muskets resounding through the building. Then "faint and far" from the lofty cupola the clear tones of the silver trumpets seem to emphasise rather than interrupt the profound silence of the previous moments. Distance here indeed lends enchantment, and softens into the ineffable sweetness of unearthly strains the rough blare of the instruments, though the composition is not really of any superlative excellence, nor is it executed by performers of any unusual skill. The composer was a certain Count in the "Guardia nobile"; the trumpets are of no more precious metal than brass; the players are members of the band that plays daily on the Pincian hill.

Mr. Oakeley, like Archbishop Benson, became unusually statistical in describing the huge dimensions of everything in St. Peter's. However "unsatisfactory in other matters," as Lowell says, "statistics are of service here. I have

seen a refined tourist who entered, Murray in hand, sternly resolved to have St. Peter's look small, brought to terms at once by being told that the canopy over the high altar (looking very much like a four-feet bedstead) was ninety-eight feet high. If he still obstinates himself, he is finished by being made to measure one of the marble *putti*, which look like rather stoutish babies, and are found to be six feet, every sculptor's son of them. Murray gives all these little strategical nudges to the Anglo-Saxon imagination; but he knows that its finest nerves are in the pocket, and accordingly ends by letting you know how much the church cost . . . but almost the most illuminating fact after all is that this architectural world has also a separate atmosphere, distinct from that of Rome by several degrees, and unvarying throughout the year."

Perhaps, however, the unstatistical methods of Poetry are even more effective :

“What is this that rises propped
With pillars of prodigious girth?
Is it really on the earth,
This miraculous dome of God?”

With arms wide open to embrace
 The entry of the human race?
 Has the angel's measuring rod
 Meted it out—and what he meted
 Have the sons of men completed?"¹

As my brother did not in any way resemble Lowell's typical John Bull, he did *not* enter St. Peter's "with the dome of St. Paul's drawn tight over his eyes, like a criminal's cap, and ready for instant execution rather than confess that the English Wren had not a stronger wing than the Italian Angel." For he ends his description with some remarks rather depreciatory of the London Cathedral, which at that date—long before the coming of its new era, which began with Church and Lightfoot and Liddon and Stainer, and culminated, one may say, with the appearance within its walls of Sir W. Richmond—was, as he says, compared with its great prototype, "a very moth to a butterfly."

As to the present musical status of our *ci-devant* "Moth," the revived and developed St. Paul's of to-day, all know how high our best judges place it. These, however, may perhaps

¹ Browning, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day."

be suspected of donning even at home that singular helmet of insular ignorance and Protestant prejudice with which Lowell equips the British visitor to St. Peter's; so I would rather quote the saying of a most patriotic Frenchman and devoted Roman Catholic, as well as famous musician, Charles Gounod: "At St. Paul's one can hear the finest musical service in Christendom."

Of new friends made at Rome, the chief was Franz Liszt. "The first interview with him was of surpassing interest. After some musical talk, he kindly asked to see some of my work, and to our delight walked to the Erard piano and put my song "Happy Hours" before him. By way of prelude—the cigar was in his right hand—he took with his left hand the chord of D flat in arpeggios from the lowest bass to the highest treble, about as quickly as any other hand could be passed over the instrument without touching it. Then he played the song through as a *Lied ohne Worte*, at its second verse introducing the melody between his hands, with improvised arpeggios on both sides of it.

Various things which he could not have previously seen were on the desk, which he not only dashed off at sight, but also extemporised upon. Some Church music he played in a style which suggested that he was also an organ player; and one of his pupils afterwards mentioned having heard him play on an organ with pedal obligato Bach's difficult fugue in A flat, No. 17, Book 2, of 'the 48.'

"Some days later he gave a 'Recital' (word ~~then~~ originally invented by himself) at the house of a lady, whose clever bust of him was in our 1862 Exhibition. The audience was limited—only nine. The piano was in the middle of the room. The great artist, who has the manners of royalty, came round and spoke to each of us, and then sat down to play. Although I have heard, and written about, all the great pianists of our time, I seemed to myself never before that afternoon to have realised the possibilities of the pianoforte! Difficulties so mastered as to have become mere child's play; the most ethereal touch; fire, poetry, tenderness; the marvels, ten times multiplied, of

Thalberg; the cantabile of Henselt, the science of Moscheles, the grace of Chopin, the classical perfection of Clara Schumann, the chastened refinement of Hallé, the thundering onset of Rubinstein; imagine all these combined, with still something else beyond them—something that is Liszt, and Liszt alone. No wonder that whatever difference of opinion exists in Germany as to other eminent players, the great Hungarian is acknowledged always to be enthroned above them all. Among his selections were Chopin's A major Polonaise, his own exquisite D flat Etude, and, in a totally different style, his stupendous Fantasia on 'Ernani.' Then he persuaded our hostess to sing 'The Last' (but ever-recurring) 'Rose of Summer,' during each verse of which he improvised a gradually developed accompaniment. In the last verse there occurred a passage of sixes, *pianissimo e prestissimo*, where the wonderful hands went together up and down the keyboard with the most astonishing equality and rapidity, suggesting Briareus with his hundred hands; the player meanwhile looking anywhere

but at his fingers, and smiling at the astonishment of his audience at the alteration of harmony and improvement to the melody in its new and gorgeous attire, and at the surprise of the singer, who pluckily maintained her *canto fermo*, notwithstanding the total change of accompaniment and colour of her tune at every recurrence of the first phrase, which by the way comes no less than six times in each verse. The memory of that recital will never perish!"¹

Returning to London in March, he found the musical season in full career. Madame Clara Schumann was in the middle of her chivalrous attempt to popularise—*in partibus infidelium*—her husband's music: a work of no small difficulty when the professional guides of taste—or, at least, leaders of fashion—went on declaring that Schumann was "an unmelodious mystic" (*Athenæum*, 1865) "whose imagination and working power were both small—very small" (*Orchestra*), and whose works were "a remarkable example of the absence of intellectual power in art" (*Orchestra*, 1865);—the last egregious remark being an

¹ Letter of H. S. O. to Sir George Grove, Feb. 19, 1865.

attempt to correct the *Times* critic, who had been staggered in his unbelief by some recent splendid performances at the Crystal Palace under Herr A. Manns (backed up by George Grove) of Schumann's great symphonies, and was beginning manifestly to "hedge"; for he had actually admitted, to the dismay of his brother Philistines, that Schumann's music, though suffering from "various grave defects," yet possessed some "*intellectual* elements."

One of the writers of this trash liked to lurk in the artists' room at St. James's Hall, to avoid hearing his *bête noir*, the glorious Pianoforte Quintet. And indeed, perhaps—especially if the weather was wet—this was not the worst thing he could do; for when present he is said to have made a point of walking out into Piccadilly at the beginning of the second movement!

The clique actually ventured also profanely to disparage Clara Schumann's playing. Sir George Grove writes to Herbert Oakeley (May 11, 1865), "The second performance of the 9th Symphony at the Crystal Palace was honoured by the presence of Madame Schumann, who was

pleased to pay me a visit that day, to my great contentment and delight. On Monday she played to me Bach's organ Prelude in B minor, his Chromatic Fantasia, and a heap of things by Robert Schumann. I cannot conceive anything finer. It is absurd to talk—as Chorley does—of her 'decadence.'

Incompetent criticism of English composers was as rampant at this period as of foreign ones. Take as an example the reception accorded in London to perhaps the noblest achievement of English Anthem writers of the period, Wesley's "Wilderness." The *Athenæum* found it "a weak, tiresome, and pedantic exercise, not likely to be again heard of." The *Times* judged it "deficient in melody, confused in harmony, full of modulation run mad!"

At Her Majesty's Theatre, Mr. Santley and Mlle. Ilma di Murska sang with great success in Mozart's "Zauberflöte." Towards the end of the opera an alarm of fire was raised, and one of those terrible panics whose consequences have often proved so disastrous seemed on the point of occurring. A mad rush for the doors was just

beginning, when Mr. Santley, who was playing Papageno, interrupted the mellifluous Italian of his part to shout in the vernacular tongue, "All right—no fire at all!" His presence of mind, and clearness of enunciation, probably saved many lives that evening!

In 1865, the *Guardian* again insisted on the glories of Handel, as realised at the Handel Festival. Special mention was made of "the sublime modulations and extraordinary 'tone-painting' of the splendid chorus, 'Envy, eldest born of hell' on a ground bass"; and of the incomparable singing of Sims Reeves in "Sound an alarm," and of Santley in "O ruddier than the cherry."

At the Peterborough Festival of 1866, the critic finds an old enemy, the screen of 1780—"erected" (as an apologetic inscription on the Thing's own back coyly asserted) "by the admirers of ecclesiastical architecture"—still blocking up the Cathedral, and making the success of a choral gathering difficult to secure. "It would be satisfactory to learn that Mr. G. Scott and Mr. H. Willis had paid official visits hither."

Some specimens of technical criticisms may be given :—

“The ‘Venite’ was chanted to Crotch (single) in D, containing a point of imitation between alto and treble which necessitates a monotonous bass part, of two similar phrases. It would be better to dispense with the little contrapuntal device, and make the bass go in contrary motion ; the chant would then be a good one. The chant in G for the Psalm is ascribed (and rightly as to its treble and bass) to Purcell. But Purcell most certainly eschewed consecutive fifths, and it is hard on that eminent English composer that so detestable a sequence should be printed in a chant bearing his name. In the fifth bar the arranger, anxious perhaps to escape a sequence of fifths between tenor and bass, which the preceding bar might seem to him to threaten, has made the parts cross, and, desiring to avoid Scylla, has unfortunately fallen into Charybdis, by causing the alto and bass to move in fifths. We cannot but think from this and other weaknesses in this Service-book that the help of a musician has been wanting in its compilation.”

More than once he suggests that it would be better for these Choral Festival Service-books to be edited by the cathedral Precentor and Organist, instead of—as was often the case—by a committee of country clergy. Faulty harmonisation, especially of Gregorian chants, he often complains of. “Gregorians,” by the way, seldom pleased him, however harmonised. The “Te Deum” (at a Festival at Peterborough) was chanted to the “5th Tone, 1st ending,” the melody of which consists of eight notes, one of which, the dominant of the key, occurs four times over. This seemed a monotonous setting for the glorious hymn in question ; moreover, the “Gregorian heresy” of assigning two notes to one syllable was repeated twenty-three times—at the end of all the verses but six! Thus :—

“To Thee, Cherubim and Serāphim || continual|ly do | cŕy-ŕ.”

The “Benedictus,” also, was set to a Gregorian, “7th Tone, *no ending*” it might be called, “the last note being the supertonic, with dominant harmony.”

The predilection of many of the clergy at

that time for these old melodies—generally sung in unison and seldom in tune—he thought an unfortunate lapse into grievous heresy of a party generally sound enough in its æsthetics. In this he cordially agreed with Dr. Wesley, who stigmatised the craze as “a return to a period of absolute barbarism,” and with Sir George Macfarren, who thus summed up his amusing deliverance on the subject: “These well-meaning men, who wish to resuscitate the Gregorian chant in the Church of England, evince mistaken zeal, false antiquarianism, illogical deductiveness, artistic blindness, and ecclesiastical error.” Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley (like most musicians) agreed entirely with his brother Professors.

At the Doncaster Festival in 1866, Dr. Hook, Dean of Chichester, preached. Having, when Vicar of Leeds, had over him (speaking musically rather than ecclesiastically) Dr. S. S. Wesley as his Precentor, he was naturally not to be suspected of Gregorian heresies, and could with a good conscience utter in his sermon on this occasion the apophthegm: “It is better for people to come to church to hear *good* music, than not to come at

all: make your services attractive," and "disregard" (he might have added) "the cynic who wrote—

‘Some to Church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.’”

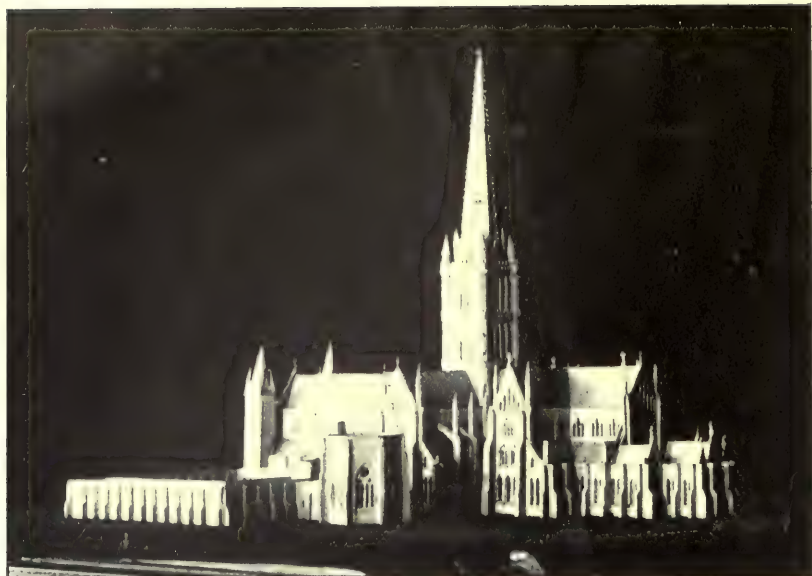
Writing to the *Guardian* at a later date from Lincoln, Mr. Oakeley takes occasion to rejoice that "the music sung at the first Choral Festival held in this masterpiece of English architecture was also English" (*i.e.* not Gregorian). As to the peculiarly Anglican character of the building, he quotes an interesting letter lately written to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in reference to the alleged influence of French workmen in its construction, by the great French architectural expert, M. Viollet le Duc, who wrote, "The construction is English; the ornaments are English; the profiles of the mouldings" (and even of the gargoyles?) "are English; the execution of the work belongs to the English school of workmen of the beginning of the thirteenth century."

Some general remarks on Wells, Salisbury, and Lichfield Cathedrals, from reports of Festivals held

there, shall close this summary of my brother's work for the *Guardian*.

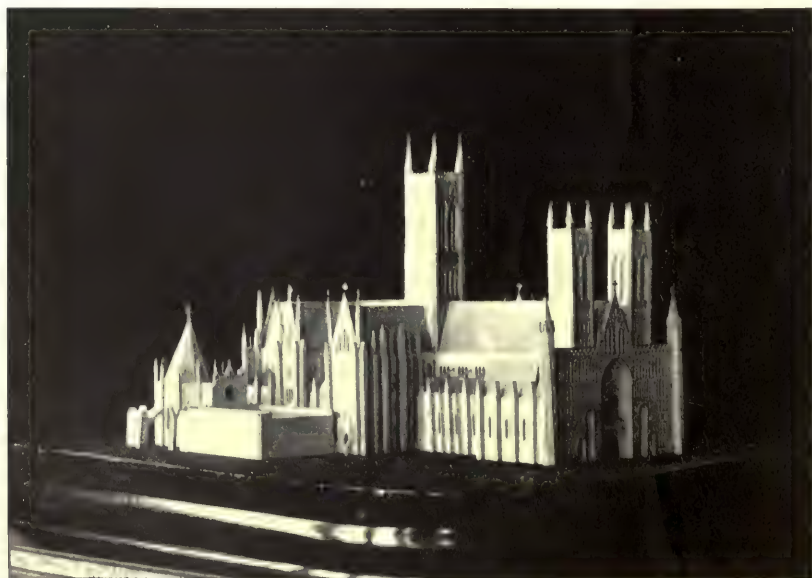
After noticing the picturesqueness of all the approaches to the little town of Wells—even the one by railway—he continues to the following effect :—

“The Cathedral is small, its whole length only slightly exceeding the breadth of the principal façade of St. Peter's. But it is one of the most interesting of the fair company of English minsters, and contains, as Mr. Street, the great architect, has remarked, all the adjuncts of a perfectly equipped Cathedral Church, namely, Lady Chapel, Chapter House, Vicars' Close, Cloisters, Crypt, Bishop's Throne, and Bishop's Palace—with moat and embattled walls—the finest in the kingdom. Besides this, it resembles Lichfield, Lincoln, and Peterborough in having a most remarkable and original west front. This architectural title-page faces an open space, and on turning the leaf and entering, the reader of the work is at once struck by the promise of interest, fulfilled throughout to the last page—the exquisite Lady Chapel, with its cloistered columns and richly carved



SALISBURY CATHEDRAL

From model made for H. S. O. by MR. GORRINGE



LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

From model made for H. S. O. by MR. GORRINGE

capitals; where, too, one of the windows, given by Principal the Rev. J. H. Pinder, reminds one that Wells Theological College completes the Cathedral equipment. Nor must the Deanery be forgotten, dating from about 1470, with its ancient gateway, courtyard, oak staircase, and oriel windows. With those at Durham and Winchester, it is perhaps the most interesting of Deaneries. The beauty of the surrounding country, with its rills and rivulets—whence the stone-built city's name—enhances the picturesqueness of the Cathedral, and forms a fair and soft English landscape, which artists delight to draw." . . .

“Salisbury is the most symmetrical and homogeneous of all our Cathedrals. Canterbury, for instance—speaking merely of its architecture—is an epitome of English history. Salisbury was *finished* in 1260, when that history was still in an early chapter. Its insulated and unencumbered situation—as compared with that of other (especially foreign) cathedrals—is another strong point, contributing to make this (with Wells) ‘the best specimen of the

Cathedral Close, that haven of religious calm amidst this bustling world.’¹ Seen from the velvet lawns of the Bishop’s garden, with its double transepts (a great possession, enjoyed elsewhere only by Canterbury, Lincoln, Worcester, and Beverley), and other roofs of various heights rising above the cedars—the matchless spire crowning all—the exterior is scarcely to be surpassed. It is true that the interior does not altogether fulfil the promise thus given. Its paucity of painted glass deprives it of the Rembrandt shadows and telling contrasts,

‘All the gloom and all the glory,’

which characterise churches like Westminster or Canterbury, though happily its walls are no longer in the forlorn condition so gleefully described in a letter from a Canon of the eighteenth century: ‘Come and see us; we are beautiful now, whitewashed from end to end!’” The admiration Salisbury claims from every one was characteristically expressed by Matthew Arnold on meeting G. D. Boyle at his club,

¹ Goldwin Smith.

and full of the feeling that the new Dean could hardly be congratulated enough on his just announced appointment. "Why," said Arnold, "if I were not Matthew Arnold, *I* should like to be Dean of Salisbury." Samuel Pepys, too, had *his* way of expressing his satisfaction with the place: "Came to the George Inn, where lay in a silk bed, and very good diet. The city great, I think greater than Hereford; the Minster most admirable, as big I think and handsomer than Westminster; and a most large close about it." . . .

"Strange that so large a diocese as that of Lichfield, with its Black Country and grimy Potteries District, should have to represent it as its mother church this small fairy-like Cathedral, with its 'Minster Pool,' on which the three spires—the so-called 'three ladies of the Vale'—and their quiet and peaceful precincts, are reflected; and where

'The swan on still St. Mary's lake
Floats double, swan and shadow.'

"Tinged with the mellow sunshine of St. Luke's summer, this lovely cathedral of St.

Mary looked its best. The long narrow choir lined with clergy and singers, and the throng of worshippers in nave and transepts, presented a thrilling sight, and the sound of many voices blending with Holdich's organ was even more memorable."

NOTE TO CHAPTER V

It was remarked a few pages back that Archbishop Benson, like Herbert Oakeley, was fond of using St. Peter's as a unit of measurement. In an Aristophanes lesson with him at Rugby, I remember the fact "emerging" (appositely enough no doubt, but I forget how) that the whole breadth of the then school chapel was only that of a certain pillar in the huge Basilica! In his study at Lambeth hung a large picture of St. Peter's, which was the subject of a very strange coincidence. Father Purbrick, the Provincial of the Jesuits in London, an old schoolfellow of the Archbishop, was visiting him. He was taken round the Palace. They went first to the study, where St. Peter's greatly interested Father Purbrick, especially as he had never—except in a theological sense—made the journey to Rome. Then he saw the rest of the house and its treasures, and amongst them the portrait (in the Guard Room) of Archbishop Laud. "This," said Archbishop Benson, "is the picture whose fall Laud records in his diary, adding that he hoped the accident was not a bad omen for King Charles or himself." The two returned to the study. Opening the door, they saw St. Peter's flat on the ground! They stared at one another and burst into laughter, and Mr. Purbrick cried out, "An omen! This comes of a Jesuit visiting the Archbishop of Canterbury!"

CHAPTER VI

THE REID PROFESSORSHIP ELECTION

As the first link of a chain is in a sense the most important, Professor Oakeley may be said to have owed his election to quite a casual remark made to the writer of these pages on the 20th of September 1865. "I hope," said some one, "that Mr. Hullah will get this Edinburgh Professorship." "*This*" Edinburgh Professorship! It was the first mention of it I had heard; and my brother's letter in reply to mine—for I wrote to him at once—showed him to have been, till then, equally uninformed. "It might indeed," he said, "have been the thing for me; but it is far too late in the day to do anything. Still, I wish you would let me know more—when the appointment is made, the qualifications, the salary. . . . What a mixed multitude to have contended against!"

It certainly did seem late in the day. The election was to be in little more than a month;

and one of the candidates, it was said, had—in Parliamentary phrase—nursed the constituency for years. The “mixed multitude” amounted to some two dozen, and included amongst several names then or afterwards distinguished those of three future University Professors—John Stainer, George Macfarren, Ebenezer Prout; and the then Dublin Professor, Robert Stewart, intended to stand, but was at the last moment dissuaded.

However, after some days of hesitation and after taking counsel with Dr. Wesley and others, Mr. Oakeley resolved to try his chance, though small. He hastily collected some strong testimonials. All that was possible in the time was done to make his claims known to the electors. And—to make a *short* story still shorter—on the 3rd of November, the chain was completed by the forging of its final link, and the *consequence* of my friend’s remark accomplished—but her hopes belied! I received at Cambridge a telegram from Edinburgh—“All right; unanimous election.”

The result was a surprise to most, and to

many a shock. The mass of disappointment most naturally felt by all the friends of all the defeated candidates was enough in itself to raise a kind of tidal wave of angry disapprobation. Moreover, the name of Mr. Gladstone, the Rector of the University, was then as ever a red rag of exasperation to many; especially as rumour alleged that his powers of persuasion had been used to resolve the at first somewhat discordant views of the University Court into the final concord of unanimous agreement. For though a clear majority had voted for Oakeley, including Lord Brougham, Sir David Brewster, Mr. Gladstone (respectively Chancellor, Principal, and Rector of the University), Dr. John Brown (author of "Rab and his Friends," &c.), and others, there was a minority in favour of Mr. Hullah. One of this minority, the well known and revered Professor (afterwards Sir Robert) Christison, wrote after the election a most chivalrous letter to the successful candidate, promising him his sympathy and support in the confessedly arduous enterprise that lay before him.

Far less chivalrous was the tone of some newspaper writers, whose only idea seemed to be to make the "arduous enterprise" still more arduous. Mr. Chorley in the *Athenæum* indited one of his most peevish tirades, in a (now) amusing article, beginning thus: "To a notorious story of ridicule and disgrace—the history of the Reid legacy at Edinburgh—a new chapter has just been added, for which even those the most experienced in the ways and the works of the men of Gotham could not have been prepared." On the other hand, Mr. J. W. Davison, his staunch ally against Schumann and Wagner, and other rising or risen genius of the time, showed no little impartiality on this occasion, actually allowing some of the half-dozen newspapers inspired (or rather possessed) by his often malign influence to admit correspondence on both sides of the question. Very wild criticisms and conjectures were hazarded by other journalists. One of these wondered "if Mr. Oakeley perchance owed his election to being sound on the Sabbath," while an Edinburgh writer of a different way of thinking

exclaimed quite tragically, "the High Church ladies this morning are in ecstasies, but the city mourns." It would be unkind at this date to dig up even a sample of the solemn joking of another formerly well known but now long buried Edinburgh journal, were it not a sample quite typical of the style of criticism then and later in favour with certain writers "of that ilk!" "We hear Mr. Oakeley has written some good Church music, sung in such and such Cathedrals. But there are no Cathedrals in Scotland, and the bulk of the people of Scotland do not want them . . . there is no room here for a disciple of the Ouseley—or what is frequently called the *Gooseley*—school!" Such were the humours of the contest. But meanwhile Oakeley's old friends—and some new ones, who were attracted to the right side by love of fair-play and hatred of calumny and intolerance—pleaded his cause stoutly in the London Press. The great Dr. Wesley, inspired partly by his love for the successful candidate, not a little too by his dislike of one of the rejected, intervened in the fray with effect.

But of all the articles written in his defence, perhaps the most telling and most valued was one in the *London Review* by Mr. H. J. Lincoln. The writer was almost the only London critic, except the reporter of the *Guardian*, who had not joined the absurd hue and cry already alluded to, led by the *Times* and *Athenæum*, against the music of Schumann. Feeling therefore some confidence in his fairness and ability, but knowing nothing else of him—not even his name—and seeing that he lacked information about the new Professor (“Of the gentleman elected, Mr. Herbert S. Oakeley, M.A. Oxon., we know nothing beyond the fact of his being the brother of Sir Charles Oakeley.”—*London Review*, November 12, 1865), I sent him forthwith a volume of my brother’s published compositions. He thereupon wrote an article (*London Review*, November 26, 1865), from which some extracts may be given.

“So much discussion has been raised, and such intemperate remarks have appeared in print, on the recent election of Mr. Herbert S. Oakeley, that we have been induced to examine

for ourselves into the qualifications of one who has been the subject of so much rancorous comment, and of whom we had no previous knowledge. . . . What is really required for a University Professor of Music is a thoroughly trained musician, conversant with the history of the art, and its canons, in its various forms, styles, and periods; and such an one Mr. Oakeley appears to us to be, as evidenced by his musical publications, which comprise songs with English, French, Italian, and German words, in all of which is more or less grace of melody, with a distinctive character proper to the respective styles; written not only with correctness, but with that neatness of touch which belongs only to the trained artist. The most important pieces, however, are some anthems and Church services, which prove that Mr. Oakeley has studied in the best and soundest schools of Church composition. The part-writing is pure and correct, showing a thorough acquaintance with the rules of counterpoint, which are observed with a freedom and facility in their application not always attained

by students in this school, while the fugal writing shows a special aptitude for that learned form of the art. In proof, we would point to the most important instance of the kind, the fugue 'The Lord that made heaven and earth' from the anthem 'Behold now, praise the Lord,' based on a clear and melodious subject, well developed and treated at some length in a masterly manner, with an effective *point d'orgue* near the close, as specified by scholastic rule. This movement alone would be enough to refute the depreciatory remarks which have been circulating to Mr. Oakeley's disadvantage, which must have originated either in ignorance or from envy in favour of a disappointed rival.

"Moreover, we are credibly informed that Mr. Oakeley possesses considerable executive power, both as pianist and organist, so that he is able to teach by example as well as precept. It is true he has not inflicted a bad opera on the public, nor has his name been ventilated by advertisement as a teacher; but although in this sense he is unknown, we doubt whether the Edinburgh University would have profited

by a different choice amongst the other candidates. At all events, we are convinced, for the reasons just given, that the new Professor is one thoroughly qualified not only by his general attainments, but by his special musical acquirements, worthily and honourably to fulfil the duties of his office, and we are led into these remarks solely by the abstract love of justice and truth, and a desire for fair-play—which Mr. Oakeley has certainly not received at the hands of certain journals.”

A defence creditable surely to its writer as well as to the subject of his eulogy, and even to an epoch of criticism sometimes only too prone to mere partisanship and “log rolling.” Enough, however, has been said of this “storm in a tea-cup.” But it would be ignoring the gist of the whole controversy, if one did not add that the head and front of Herbert Oakeley’s offending seems to have really been that he was “only an amateur.” And this, in the truest sense of that much abused word, he certainly was ; like his friend Ouseley, like Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and many other

great musicians, both of the past and of the present.

It remains to describe how far he justified the anticipations of his friends, and falsified those of his enemies, in his twenty-five years' work as Reid Professor of Music.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VI

Mr. W. E. Henley's brilliant venture, the *Scots Observer*,¹ contained in its issue of 8th November 1890 a lively account—founded on fact if not exactly accurate—of the controversy excited by the Reid Professor's election, from which an extract may be given.

“The air waxed feverish with the jargon of the schools, and men hurled in one another's faces ‘chromatic intervals’ and ‘illicit progressions’ of the most dreadful kind. Whispers went about of ‘consecutive sevenths’! An anthem of Professor Oakeley's was grimly, not to say viciously, analysed by an English professor, one of the disappointed candidates. Then ‘Musicus’ to the rescue! Then the din of battle and the *clamor ad astra!* The fight around the body of Patroclus was nothing to it. ‘Consecutive sevenths,’ quotha! Good gracious! But ‘Musicus’ proved that ‘consecutive sevenths’ grew like blackberries on the bushes of all Church composers from Bach downwards; and some one else discovered that the particular sevenths specified were not consecutive! Prodigious! But the hurly-burly soon cleared away: the Professor's inaugural lecture was most favourably received,” and so on.

¹ Afterwards the *National Observer*.



H. S. Dakeley
1866.

CHAPTER VII

THE REID FESTIVAL AND OTHER CONCERTS: 1866-1891

No sooner was Mr. Oakeley safely seated in his Chair of Music than he found himself confronted with the problem which had so sorely plagued his predecessors—the management of the Reid Concert.

The Founder's will prescribed merely that his Professors should "cause to be given" an annual concert on his birthday, so that the repeated performance of some of his compositions might keep his name in remembrance. From one cause or another endless bickerings arose over these concerts between the Senatus, the Professor, the students, and the general public, culminating at the concert in February 1865, the last before Oakeley's appearance on the scene of contention, in something very like a riot. Dr. Donaldson, the last Professor, making the concert a matter solely of invitation,

gave free admission to the fourth year students, the University Court, the Senatus, and a few persons besides; and this seems to have created, or perpetuated, the delusion that the whole body of students possessed a right of entry, of which the uninvited were being unjustly deprived.

Professor Oakeley was strongly advised to abolish *all* free admissions; he thought it best, however, to make a compromise, retaining Donaldson's free list, but sending a number of tickets to the music shops for sale. The proceeds of these, supplementing the usual grant from the funds of the Chair, enabled him to make the concert—and later the three concerts—the best to be heard in Scotland; so that it could be said without exaggeration (in Grove's *Dictionary*, art. "Reid Concerts") that "The Reid Festival is one which would do honour to any city in Great Britain, or even Germany." "To have achieved so splendid a result," continues the writer, "in the teeth of so many difficulties, does honour to the tact, ability, and devotion of Sir Herbert Oakeley, and is

sufficient, even without his popularisation of the organ, to perpetuate his name in Scotland."

Up to this time the Reid Concert had been "a mere performance of so-called 'ballads' and operatic excerpts by a 'starring' party." Under Professor Oakeley's régime, in seventy-two Orchestral Festival Concerts,¹ Edinburgh heard, mostly for the first time (or, at any rate, for the first time properly rendered), the following symphonies: All Beethoven's, most of them three or four times over; all Mendelssohn's; all Schumann's; Mozart's three greatest; and Haydn, Spohr, Schubert, Gade, Raff, Brahms, Goldmark, and Dvorak were all well represented in the Symphony list.

Statistics soon become wearisome, so I shall take the rest of the voluminous list "as read." It may be thus summarised: Overtures, eighty ("Euryanthe," eight times over); Concertos and miscellaneous orchestral pieces, ninety-three; violin with orchestra, twenty-seven. Of instrumental soloists and singers may be mentioned

¹ From 1866 to 1891.

Clara Schumann, Charles Hallé, Ernst Pauer, Marie Krebs ; Norman Neruda, Piatti, Sainton, Carrodus ; Tietjens, Sinico, Enequist, Lemmens-Sherrington, Edith Wynne, Louise Kapp, Alversleben, Henschel (*née* Bailey), Nordica ; Gaetano, Thursby, Friedländer, Breidenstein, Davies, Williams, Trebelli, Sherwin, Enriquez, Zandrino, Sainton-Dolby, Stirling ; Kling, Löwe ; Franklein, Barbi ; Sims Reeves, W. H. Cummings, Edward Lloyd, Joseph Maas, Stagno ; Nelson Varley, W. Castle, Henry Piercy, Bossi, Stockhausen, Frederick King, Watkin Mills, Foli, Henschel, W. H. Brereton. Conductors—Signor Arditi, Herr A. Manns, and Sir Charles Hallé. In 1867 (when the Crystal Palace band was engaged), Mr. A. C. Mackenzie (afterwards Principal of the Royal Academy of Music), led the second violins.

Thus the educational value of the Reid Festival must have been enormous. And some Press comments seem to indicate that its most fruitful “lessons” were to many hearers not so much the “first time performances” as the “first time properly rendered” ones. After the

1869 concert, for instance—the first of the Manchester band's visits to Edinburgh¹—a writer thus records the effect of the first Overture (“Euryanthe”):² “The audience could not fail to realise the great superiority of the playing to anything ever heard in Edinburgh. . . . The new beauties revealed must have made many of those who fancied themselves acquainted with every note of the Overture feel *as if they had never truly heard it till now.*” And again, “The public owe a deep debt of gratitude for this concert, which may be said to have for the first time shown Edinburgh what really good orchestral music is.”

Still more significant than the comments of the musical critics is the testimony of private letters, written many of them long afterwards and from distant lands, describing the writers' delight in the Reid Concerts.

¹ Sir Charles Hallé, with his famous orchestra, appeared at these concerts every year from 1869 to 1891.

² Of which the *Guardian* (on the 1858 Birmingham Festival) wrote: “The first and last movements seem to sparkle like crystalline spars flashing back the rising sun, while in the middle section a soft zephyr murmurs through the orchestra, as if Weber had caught the wild whispers of the Æolian harp, and taught them to obey the laws of music.”

The critics, indeed, were sometimes not a little off the point. One amusing instance will be enough to mention. Ambitious of saying something original, a writer in an Edinburgh journal remarked after a Reid Concert that he felt obliged to "repeat the opinion he had before expressed," that in Beethoven's "Emperor" pianoforte Concerto in "E flat" the treatment shows throughout a poverty of thought, the opening movement especially is arid and diffuse and full of meaningless arpeggios and scale passages,¹ and the work can in no way be placed among the composer's "masterpieces"; an opinion publicly characterised by Sir Charles Hallé in a speech next day (with no exaggeration!) as "horrible nonsense." It was, I think, the same too adventurous writer who also remarked that Hallé's reading of Chopin "is foreign to the intention of the composer, whose ideas Sir Charles claims to represent faithfully"; and that in the finale of

¹ Of these very same scale passages Schumann remarks: "There is a difference when Beethoven writes chromatic scales and when Herz does it."

Chopin's concerto "Hallé deliberately neglected the opportunity of *displaying his heavier touch*—a sin which the audience, however, readily forgave him"! In the same speech just referred to, Sir Charles went on to say that as his rendering of Chopin had been criticised, "he might say that he had for twelve years had the inexpressible honour of being a very intimate friend of Chopin, seeing him almost every day; and there was not a note of his compositions which he did not hear him play, and which was not indelibly impressed on his mind."

In a letter written a little after this to an Edinburgh friend, Sir Charles Hallé says: "I cannot regret that I pounced upon the critics. They deserved it richly, and one cannot *always* let them have the last word." . . . "The only reason I refused to come again to Edinburgh was the bad attendance at the concerts." . . . "I now know that during the last few years the Professor contributed towards the expenses."

In this last statement Sir Charles was quite correct, though some ignorant or spiteful critics—who had no idea of the cost of a good

concert—were fond of surmising that Professor Oakeley made money by the Festivals! In point of fact, the accounts of all the Reid Concerts from 1866 to 1890—which now lie before me—show a total loss amounting to some hundreds of pounds.

“Ignorant or spiteful”—but more exactly described as *both* ignorant *and* spiteful, for the two characteristics are often found in close company—was some of the comment bestowed at times on Professor Oakeley and his affairs by journalists of the calibre of the writer so justly chastised by Sir Charles Hallé. Of the ignorance an amusing cento of instances might be gathered from the musical criticisms of a leading Edinburgh journal of the period. The spite is dreary enough reading now, and its disinterment would repay no one, least of all its authors. It may be remarked that experts of the Edinburgh situation had been from the beginning well aware that such phenomena must occasionally present themselves. The plain-spoken author of “Rab and his Friends” did not mince matters, nor scruple to have

recourse to the homeliest figure by which the ever unequal friendship between genius and mediocrity can be described. He wrote, soon after Mr. Oakeley's appointment, "I fear me ye may be casting your pearls before swine!" And Dean Ramsay apprehended that "Our friend, who will wear a polished rapier, will scarcely use the weapon best suited for the Edinburgh public, which wants a guid stick about their backs"; while Sir Charles Hallé, with equal frankness, remarked to an Edinburgh friend, "A fighting man and not a gentleman is wanted for the Reid Professorship." But though at times it looked as if these forecasts were quite within the mark, the Professor could count upon the friendship, sympathy, and admiration of all who were brought into contact with him, and of his colleagues and students with scarcely an exception. True, and sad to say, the gospel of Classical Music—that modern incarnation of the Hellenic spirit—encountered an obstinate misbeliever in the person of the most perfervid of Greek Professors! But Professor Blackie was nothing if not eccentric, nor

did he see anything inconsistent in accepting, in that scene of revelry, his own classroom, the educational assistance of Homer and Sophocles, Vergil and Horace, and yet anathematising a brother Professor for using the services, to him equally indispensable, of "*foreigners*" like Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. Even the beautiful Scottish songs of the latter composer he would have none of. They were mere "foreign ariettes," and the taste for them only a new and disgusting manifestation of "West-end flunkeyism." Incited by the comparative absence of Scottish songs from Reid Festival programmes, he wrote a delightful letter to the *Scotsman*, likening himself to St. Paul at Athens, "filled with indignation when he saw the whole city given to idolatry." The correspondence that ensued was equally amusing. One writer considered that Scotch airs were as "the carol of the lark," but Schubert's lyrics no better than "the chattering of the magpie"; and another explained that the Symphony "is to be recommended as a vigorous exercise of the *throat* (!), but cannot be called music in the highest sense of the term." The

question whether or no national melodies were musical Art "in the highest sense of the term" actually occupied the correspondence columns of the paper for weeks!

Of kind and intimate friends amongst his colleagues may be here "freshly remembered"—Chancellor Lord President Inglis; Principals Sir Alexander Grant and Sir William Muir; and Professors (Sir Robert) Christison, (Sir Douglas) Maclagan, Muirhead, Rutherford, Lorimer, Piazzzi Smyth, Kirkpatrick, Crum-Brown, Annandale, Grainger-Stewart, Butcher. Nor can I here omit mention—though casual and far from adequate—of the invaluable coign of vantage afforded him, from the first day of his Edinburgh life till the last, by the ever-helpful friendship of his cousins at Southbank, Lady Oswald and her daughter.

As to the students, Herbert Oakeley's University and Public School training was in itself almost a guarantee of good relations between him and them;—only once was there anything like a breach of friendship, due to the unauthorised publication by a mischievous newspaper

writer of a private letter from the Professor to Madame Marie Roze Mapleson, whom he had induced to gratify the students by singing at one of his recitals. In the letter he thanked the singer for giving so great a treat to many who had little opportunity or means of hearing good music. With a plentiful lack both of humour and good-humour, the letter was misrepresented as an insult to the students, and a slight upon the plain-living and high-thinking of a Scottish University! Nor did protestations the most sincere of a diametrically opposite attitude of mind at first suffice to reconcile the offended ones. At last, however, good sense prevailed, and the old friendly feeling was restored.

My brother always keenly enjoyed the concerts of the Edinburgh University Musical Society, founded by him in his first year at Edinburgh. "The students gave the chief interest to the occasion, and acquitted themselves very creditably," he writes of one of these; and of another, "the intelligence of the chorus of University students, and their evident determination to do their best before an Edinburgh audience, made

their conductor feel proud of them.¹ A. C. Mackenzie led the first violins, and F. Niecks the violas"; the latter of whom succeeded him as Professor; and the former, now Sir Alexander, is President of the Royal Academy of Music.

Of one of these concerts, Principal Sir Alexander Grant thus wrote to him: "I must express to you the delightful remembrance I have of last night's concert, and the great pleasure which it afforded to Lady Grant and myself. My own deep feeling—besides that of enjoyment of so varied and thrilling an entertainment—was that it did honour to the University, and showed to the public a most humanising and refining influence at work among us. Pray accept best thanks and congratulations. I am glad to see that one of our chief journals is decently appreciative; while another produces an article full of mistakes, and characterised by a very negative and ill-conditioned feeling. But we may (according to the elegant proverb of this country!), 'let that flea stick on the wall.'"

¹ The *Scotsman* remarked of this same concert: "The mode of training adopted by the Professor of Music has had the effect of developing the musical capacity of the students."

A quartet of Professors often did good service at these concerts. The programmes from 1868 to 1890 contained a mass of good music: symphonies of Beethoven, Haydn, and Mozart; overtures; glees and madrigals; piano-forte solos by the Professor, who burnt many a midnight lamp in various kinds of work for the beloved "E.U.M.S."

NOTE TO CHAPTER VII

I may give here some extracts from a letter from an old student in illustration of preceding pages.

"Sir Herbert brought our Musical Society into being, and kept up a warm interest in us. It was as a member of it that I came into contact with him. He took endless trouble in composing and arranging suitable music for male voices in four parts. And I do not remember him ever missing one of our practices. It was rough material he had to deal with, for many of the men did not know one note from another when they first came. As the session went on, we gradually got 'into shape' with our glees and choruses; and in March we always gave a concert, which was well patronised. And Sir Herbert always arranged to have two orchestral pieces performed by a fairly good band, which he strengthened by bringing some of Hallé's players from Manchester. This gave us singers some rest, and added variety to the entertainment. In those days we had very little orchestral music in Edinburgh, so that musical people were very glad to take a good opportunity of hearing some.

“Now that I know what running a concert means, I see what a great amount of disinterested labour Sir Herbert must have put into the work he did for us. He arranged practically everything.

“Looking back now, and considering what has been done since his day by the University Commission in developing, or trying to develop, a Music School in our University, one sees how handicapped the Professor of Music was in all his endeavours, and how well, in spite of all difficulties, Sir Herbert did his duty to the cause of good music in the City of Edinburgh.”¹

¹ From Mr. C. G. Knott, Lecturer on Applied Mathematics, Edinburgh University.

CHAPTER VIII

LECTURES AND ADDRESSES: 1866-1890

PROFESSOR OAKELEY delivered his Inaugural Address on December 11, 1866. It was attentively heard and warmly applauded, and was highly praised by the Edinburgh and London Press. The *London Review*, whose romantic conversion has been mentioned above,¹ was "happy to be confirmed in the conviction that no fitter man could have been found for the post he holds. . . . The address is all that an academic oration should be, and nothing that it should not be. . . . Whether we regard the elegance or the recondite character of the scholarship which has contributed so much that is valuable and delightful to the exercitation, we are bound to acknowledge that the composition is thoroughly up to the level of University excellence on such an occasion."

¹ Page 114.

The editor of the *Guardian* "would be much disappointed if the highly cultivated taste and discriminating criticism displayed in the address does not commend itself" to the University. "The eulogy of music as a divine Art, and the eloquent description of Beethoven's Symphonies, are very striking passages."

Sir Julius Benedict (friend and pupil of Weber) wrote :—

"DEAR SIR,—Though personally unknown to you, I hope you will not consider me rude if I offer you my sincere congratulations on your Inaugural Address delivered at the University of Edinburgh. I am sure the whole profession is indebted to you for advocating so eloquently and admirably the cause of our divine Art, and I beg you will accept my individual best thanks.
—Yours truly, JULIUS BENEDICT."

The terse opening sentences of the Address run thus: "The object of an Inaugural Address is, as I conceive, not so much to teach, as to suggest and remind; to awaken interest by discussing those features of the subject which

are extensively known, at least in their general outline, rather than to treat on scientific principles, and in technical language, the truths contained within it. The latter of these objects belongs to the process of development. Development is concerned with details which, in their aggregate, are too numerous for a comprehensive view, and in their several forms too narrow and too professional for an address directed rather to the keen intelligence of the many than to the specially trained instincts of the few. An Inaugural Address may be said to bear to the course of teaching by which it is followed the same relation which a vestibule bears to the complex structure of which it forms the entrance; and, like its architectural counterpart, ought rather to partake of the general plan of the whole work than too minutely to anticipate the special character of those several portions of that work with which the eye is to be subsequently familiarised. On the other hand, such an address must not be so general as to be simply vague and indefinite. It only remains for me to act

up, as best I may, to the form of my own ideal."

Mindful that all (educational) roads leads to Athens, he next made passing allusion (suggested by the word "music") to Greece and her "musicians" (*μουσικοί*) who were servants of *all* the Muses—men, in fact, of general culture; and, leaving this part of his subject with a playful reference to a supposed inscription over the door of a classroom in *ancient* Athens, warning the "unmusical" not to enter in too overwhelming numbers, he proceeds to enlarge on the mysterious powers and sweet influences of the divine Art, and to remind his hearers how the marvels connected with "a musical ear" found a climax in the strange paradox, that a *deaf* musical ear first planned and heard the Eroica Symphony! "Music is not the only Art," he goes on to say, "which inspires its believers with enthusiasm." But it is the only Art which inspires its "infidels" with loathing; as shown in an amusing outbreak of that usually gentle unbeliever, Charles Lamb: "Words are something; but to be

exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a-dying; to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, in an interminable, tedious sweetness; to gaze on empty frames, and to be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies in answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty instrumental music.”

Then he comes to a description of the Pastoral and Eroica Symphonies—a description which, judging from letters now before me—moved many of his hearers to admiration (of the description, if not of the things described). This suggests to him, as to John Henry Newman, “out of what poor elements some great master creates his new world. There are seven notes in the scale; make them fourteen; yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise,”

or as Browning put it, in lines as poetical—
and that is saying much—as Newman's prose:—

“Painter and Poet are proud in the artist-list enrolled ;
But here is the finger of God, a flash of the Will that can,
 Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
 That out of three sounds he frame a fourth, not a sound,
 but a star,¹
Consider it well ; each tone of our scale in itself is nought ;
 It is everywhere in the world,—loud, soft, and all is said :
Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought ;
 And there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and bow
 the head !”

These lines, however, he does not quote ; indeed they were then only lately written.

A passage follows on “that most suggestive solecism, the narrow usage and connotation of the word ‘Art’ in Britain, as meaning only Painting, or perhaps Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture—excluding Music, the Queen of Arts.” It is a curious fact that John Stuart Mill's Inaugural Address, delivered at St. Andrews only a few weeks later, February 1, 1867, contains an eloquent passage to exactly the same effect, beginning, “It is only of late, and

¹ So Frederick Myers used to read the line, to its vast improvement.

chiefly by a superficial imitation of foreigners, that we have begun to use the word Art by itself, and to speak of Art as we speak of Science or Government or Religion. We used to talk of the Arts, and more specifically of the Fine Arts; and even by them were vulgarly meant only two forms of Art, Painting and Sculpture, the two which as a people we cared least about." It would seem, by the way, that we are still in much the same case now, judging by the following extract from an article in the *Times* of December 9, 1903, on English "Technical" Schools: "These lists generally include art, commercial subjects, 'science,' and 'technology,' as well as particular industries. Some of them, not included in the list—notably the London 'Polytechnics'—teach also such things as *music and cookery*."

The next topic of the Address is the uniqueness of Music, "'in which,' says Goethe,¹ 'we see most clearly the worth of Art; it requires

¹ Goethe's exact words are: "Die Würde der Kunst erscheint bei der Musik vielleicht am eminentesten, weil sie keinen Stoff hat, der abgerechnet werden musste. Sie ist ganz Form und Gehalt."
—(Copied from an unpublished MS. of Robert Schumann's.)

no subject-matter; it is simply Form and Power.’¹ In order to understand this, let us contrast Music—I mean ‘absolute’ music—such as orchestral symphonies and other instrumental compositions—with the Art I love best after my own—Painting. Give the musician the seven sounds of the scale; upon these he builds his creations. ‘What a slender outfit,’ indeed, ‘for so vast an enterprise,’ and especially when we consider that the Painter, though similarly equipped at starting with *his* quiver of seven bolts, the seven notes of the prismatic spectrum, has still to put on other and more cumbrous armour to fit him for the fray. He must go

¹ “So has this first axiom of musicians found utterance—as have many thoughts hitherto inarticulate—in the words of one of whom pre-eminently it may be said that his genius was not only a mine yielding abundantly, but also a mint which stamped with its own royal image and superscription whatever unshaped intellectual material came to it; uttered instincts common to the race, and made into intellectual capital rough ore of thought or experience hitherto deemed trite and valueless in the common mart of ideas, until transformed by the subtle alchemy of the poet’s touch.

“Naturally enough, many thoughts about *music* thus made current coin owe their body—for language is not merely the garment, but the flesh-garment of thought—to him, the greatest of *German* poets.”—*Guardian*, August 29, 1866.

forth and find a 'subject' to be reproduced or idealised.¹ But the symphony has only its own musical 'subjects.' These may indeed be, as Newman says, 'the voices of angels, or the Magnificat of saints, or the living laws of Divine governance, or the Divine attributes'; but earthly prototype they have none. I will not now pursue this subject farther. In truth, in speculations on Art, but a few steps suffice us to cross the narrow field of our knowledge and reach the edge of the abyss of the unknowable, to which all speculations bring us sooner or later; where modern science, for all its 'ample strides,' stops short, like Polyphemus,² confused and foiled; which the plummet of human philosophy seems to deepen but cannot sound; where childlike wonder returns to us again, the crowning emotion, as also the original germ, of all intellectual labour."

¹ Of course this is very far from saying—what some too eager champions of their Art have supposed to be implied—that the Art of Painting is "nothing but Imitation." But "Nothing if not imitative" would be within the mark perhaps, even when said of pictures into which the element of The Ideal most largely enters—even, for instance, the Madonna di San Sisto.

² Handel's "Polyphemus," in "Acis and Galatea."

He then pleads for "Thorough" in musical study, quoting the high-sounding motto inscribed on the Leipzig music-room: "*Res severa verum gaudium*," as a prescription against waste of time and foolish conceit, and that dangerous thing "a little knowledge" of music, which so often digs pitfalls for careless writers, and even for some very careful ones:—"Surely," writes George Eliot—"surely the only courtship unshaken by doubts or fears must be that in which the lovers" (like Lucy Deane and Stephen) "can sing together, and realise the sense of mutual fitness which springs from the perfect accord of descending thirds *and fifths*, and from the loving preconcerted chase of a fugue."¹

Of which remarkable passage one can but say that even the supposed fugue—a vocal fugue, mind, for two voices, treble and bass—must have been less irritating to the musical friends of the enamoured pair, than their sinful enjoyment of the succulent passages of consecutive fifths!

¹ "Mill on the Floss," vol. iii. p. 10.

On the other hand, ignorance of the German language sometimes leads even good musicians into strange errors. Thus in a well-known collection of organ voluntaries, Schumann's "Gruss an Gade" (Greeting to Gade) figures as "Praise to God"; on the strength of which well-meant misnomer the little piece often makes its appearance in church at moments far from suitable!

Examining the terms of his commission, he finds that in General Reid's will the "Annual Concert" paragraph seems to balance the "Theory of Music" paragraph, and to foreshadow an institution the purpose of which is to advance the study of Music *both as an Art and as a Science*. (Some metaphysically-minded hearers would doubtless have welcomed a different interpretation, and would have heard with joy a Professor of Theory giving lectures on mere Acoustics, uninterrupted by the profane "kist fu' o' whistles," or any other instrument of music whatever.)

He closed with a sketch of the "practical working of this Chair," which the *Scotsman*

long afterwards described as "a complete armoury of weapons for musical reformers," and incidentally mentioned the possible use of the organ in the services of the Church; but this, says a reporter, "elicited loud cheers *and hisses*, again and again renewed," reminding us that the great and finally successful movement for the use of organs in the Scottish Kirk, led by Dr. Robert Lee and others, and owing so much indirectly to Professor Oakeley himself, was in 1866 only just beginning.

Then, after some sanguine forecasts not yet (1904) realised, of permanent town orchestras instead of German bands, and garden symphony concerts instead of "piano organs," and with a hope which he *did* live to see fulfilled, of graduation in Music at Edinburgh, he ends his first address with earnest devotion of himself to his new vocation, and to the purposes he reads in — or into — the Founder's will. That long desired object, graduation in Music, in regard to which he made urgent appeals to the Scottish Universities Commissioners both in 1877 and in 1890, was virtually accomplished

in 1891, as an extract from a Minute of the Senatus, referring to his retirement, will show :—
 “His repeated attempts to make his Chair the centre of an academical curriculum in Music, so often baffled, have at length begun to yield rich promise for the future ; for the University Commissioners have now wisely resolved to institute a Faculty and Curriculum in Music in the University of Edinburgh. This triumph of Sir Herbert’s most cherished aspirations forms a fitting memorial of the distinguished career of a colleague and friend whom the Senatus will ever remember with affection and esteem.”¹

The *Edinburgh Courant*, which had not been previously favourable to the new Professor, bore the following impartial testimony to this his first success : “The lecture, which was distinctly heard, was very warmly applauded ; and at its close several of the students expressed a strong desire to hear the organ. Professor Oakeley accordingly played General Reid’s “In the Garb of Old Gaul,” with specimens of varied

¹ Minute dated July 31, 1891.

harmony, followed by an extempore fugue on the opening subject of the march, in which he introduced inversion of the subject and other contrapuntal devices. In one of the variations the melody was taken on the pedal organ. We need scarcely say that the audience greatly enjoyed hearing the magnificent instrument, which was admirably handled by the learned Professor."

Though the chief part of his Professorial teaching was done, one may say, at the Reid Concerts and those of the University Musical Society, and above all by the mouth of the Class-room organ, he delivered many courses of oral lectures each year after his Inaugural Address, on Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Mediæval Music; on Music in different countries; Madrigalian Music, &c. &c.; also on Harmony to a Class formed by the Association for the Education of Women. The Inaugural Address of this course contains some interesting passages exalting the office of the composer—in no spirit of ignorantly undervaluing Nature's laws or their investigators—though directed, perhaps, against the contrary

error, the low appreciation of Art, as compared with the high appreciation in Britain of Science, especially "practical science" so-called. "The laws of vibrations of sound have as much and as little to do with musical Art as those of luminous vibrations and optics have to do with pictorial Art. Sound and Light have their laws; but these, till dominated by a Law still higher, the creative genius of the Composer or Painter, avail not to reveal the beatific vision of the Soul of Art."

In the same Address he expresses some doubt as to the genuineness of the transports of certain concert-goers. Does mere fashion sometimes cause feigned appreciation of music so complicated as really to need a trained and disciplined taste to enjoy—or it may be to condemn? Or do some even come for other purposes, as Ovid long ago guessed?—

"Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsae."¹

But "far be it from me to deny that many, here as elsewhere, are deeply moved by good

¹ "They come to see the show, and come to *be* the show."

music; who with ears really attuned, and with hearts full of devotion, hear the works of classical masters as if indeed a revelation from Heaven," and who are safely out of range of Dr. Johnson's smashing retort: "I told him" (writes poor Boswell), "that Music affected me to such a degree as often to excite my nerves painfully, producing alternate sensations of pathetic dejection, so that I was ready to shed tears, and of daring resolution, so that I was inclined to rush into the thickest part of the battle." "Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "I should never hear it if it made me such a Fool."

He also lectured to various Musical Societies, and at Aberdeen University and elsewhere.

CHAPTER IX

ORGAN RECITALS: 1866-1891

As has been said, Herbert Oakeley was an organ player almost from childhood. By the time he was twenty he had acquired a command of the instrument most unusual at that time in England, where organ pedals were still often called "German pedals," and Bach's organ works "the pedal fugues."

But what was—and is—far more unusual even than faultless pedal playing, was the wonderful power of extemporising he possessed. The word is an unsatisfactory one, and must needs cover the feeble meanderings one often hears at uncomfortable gaps in the Church service, even from organists of repute, as well as the astonishing feats of the true "improvisatore." A misunderstanding often tiresome was this, that when he extemporised, listeners *would* miss the point, and conclude he was merely remembering.

The extemporiser must, indeed, always be subject to this kind of misunderstanding, which Mr. Oakeley always regarded as merely amusing. Dr. Wesley used to be somewhat ruffled by it. After finishing the afternoon service at Winchester with one of his splendid extemporisations, he was leaving the Cathedral with my brother, when a very "gushing" acquaintance accosted them, and began, "Oh, Dr. Wesley, what was that beautiful piece? I know it *so* well." "That, Madam," said Dr. Wesley rather tartly, "is much more than I do."

Once when my brother was extemporising—to a somewhat inappreciative audience—in order to enlighten and interest them, some one proposed that we should each in turn give him a subject, and began himself by asking for "something in the style of Henselt." Whereupon he started off with the piece in the Henseltian key of six sharps, afterwards published as the Romance, Op. 30; a piece much admired by Von Bulow, who played it by heart at a recital in Edinburgh, *having read it over for the first time* on his journey from London—played it

too with absolute fidelity to the text, except one single chord!

By way of examining his friends in music, he used to play — but without any direct plagiarisms—things in the style of particular composers or compositions, asking the listener to identify the (supposed) author, which his accurate mimicry generally made easy enough.

But the climax of it all was his extempore fugue-playing on the organ. And when it came to extempore fugues, not only country-house amateurs, but even professionals of some experience were apt to be mystified. I was once with him on an organ-playing expedition, when a cathedral organist—no bad musician, though his *floruit* was before the days of the College of Organists and its twelve thousand musical missionaries up and down the land—came up at the end of an extemporised fugue, and inquired tentatively, “Let me see—which one of them is that?” He had concluded it was Bach!

All kinds of casual noises would supply him with his “subjects.” I remember a prelude to

the afternoon service at the Temple Church¹ being suggested, on our way thither through the Strand, by the *Allegretto con moto* of the good cab horse. In the train, too, he often realised the experience so ingeniously versified by Robert Browning:

“ A tune was born in my head last week
Out of the thump-thump and shriek-shriek
Of the train, as I came by it up from Manchester ;
And, when, next week, I take it back again,
My head will sing to the engine's clack again,
While it only makes my neighbour's haunches stir,
Finding no dormant musical sprout,
In him, as in me, to be jolted out.”

The first organ recital on the splendid Classroom instrument was given March 28, 1866, to a crowd of most enthusiastic students, many of whom had probably never heard an organ, great or small, before. It was the first of exactly two hundred. Sometimes oral or printed descriptions of the programmes were given; sometimes students played, or vocal music gave variety. Once Madame Marie Roze Mapleson sang, and occasionally Miss

¹ Where Dr. E. J. Hopkins often asked him to play the closing Voluntary.

K. Hibbert Ware, Miss Wakefield, Mr. Richard Drummond, Mr. J. Sneddon, and other friends. But, with or without these aids, the organ recitals were always most genuinely enjoyed, and their only drawback was the somewhat limited space available for the audience.

“There is no doubt,” writes a student of that time, “that his organ recitals, held fortnightly throughout the Winter Session, were a great feature of our University life. All undergraduates who had any appreciation of music made a point of being present: for all students were admitted on showing their matriculation card. It was a great discovery which every musical freshman made when he realised that he could hear the finest organ music once every fortnight. I remember another custom of Sir Herbert’s which deserves mention. It was brought to my memory by an old friend who was a member of the Edinburgh Choral Society, of which Sir Herbert was Honorary President for many years. Once every year he invited the members of the Society to a special organ recital, held in the evening to suit the members, who were mostly

BACH'S B MINOR PRELUDE FOR ORGAN;
FAC-SIMILE (HALF-SIZE) OF FIRST PAGE OF AUTOGRAPH

Praeludium in Organo pleno, pedali. et Solo. J. S. Bach

The image displays a facsimile of the first page of J.S. Bach's B minor Prelude for Organ. The title is written in a cursive hand at the top. The music is arranged in two staves, with the upper staff in treble clef and the lower staff in bass clef. The key signature is two flats (B minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is densely written with various musical notations, including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The handwriting is clear and consistent throughout the page.

"Here Bach strikes a chord of deep elegiac feeling, such as we find nowhere else in his organ works. The Prelude with its firm and close texture leads us into a labyrinth of romantic harmony, such as has never been constructed by any more modern composer."

(P. SITTA.)

in business. This old 'Choral' member told me how they looked forward to this treat year after year, and how thoroughly they enjoyed it."

The organ, especially after the additions he made to it, was a glorious one, and his management of it—even after his accident—an art in itself. The most frankly unmusical visitors would say—and I believe feel—that his playing was "a wonderful thing." The effect on those who had ears to hear was deep and ineffaceable, as is attested by letters from many lands, some written years afterwards.

His own delight in the recitals was great; pathetic is the pencilled addition made much later in his Diary of March 30, 1872, after mention of an open recital given to the Edinburgh Choral Union, at which he had played amongst other pieces Bach's B minor Prelude and Fugue, the autograph of which was one of his most dearly prized treasures:—"It was little imagined that this was the last time the beloved Classroom organ—or indeed any organ—would be played by me without discomfort."

Still, though pedal passages like the one at

the end of the great A minor Fugue become impossible to him after his accident, it is the literal truth that few hearers missed anything in his playing. He began the recitals again on the 13th of January 1873—after six months of invalid life—and almost his first piece was the chorus of Handel's, "Then round about the starry Throne," according to Sir Frederick Ouseley, "pre-eminent for its union of the graceful and the sublime," and certainly no trifle for a practically one-legged player.

"The programme," says a reporter, "was excellently rendered, and occasionally with a degree of delicacy we have seldom heard equalled. The Professor was greatly moved by the hearty welcome his students gave him on this his first appearance after his accident."

The 200th and last recital was given March 20, 1891. As being the 200th, and the last of the Session, it was greeted with even more than usual enthusiasm, though the students were not aware (as the Professor was) that they were hearing him for the last time. He was much affected by their applause, and put up a notice



THE ORGAN IN THE MUSIC CLASS-ROOM, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
(PROFESSOR OAKELEY sitting in front)

on the College gates expressing his gratification, and assuring them that their "manifestation of satisfaction yesterday and on many other occasions during the past years will never be forgotten by their friend, Herbert Oakeley."

Erected by Hill in 1861, "the beloved Classroom organ" now has 66 stops (19 added by Professor Oakeley), or 3600 pipes, of all sizes, from the Piccolo's highest "penny whistle" note to the 32-foot giants which hold the field in front of their great "House of the Sounds." (Their dimensions compelled an undignified entrance to their home, through the windows, and in pieces.) Twelve stops, including mellow Diapasons and a unique 14-rank Mixture,—inserted by Professor Donaldson for merely acoustic purposes,—belong to the Great Organ, 31 to those homes of angelic voices, the Swell, Choir, and Solo Organs; 10 of great depth and grandeur to the Pedals. Twenty-two couplers, &c. (9 added by Oakeley), complete the "kist fu'."

The Organ and Class-room were under the care of the skilful Mr. Wellby, whose services Professor Oakeley found invaluable.

CHAPTER X

ST. ANDREWS, ABERDEEN, GLASGOW

THE musical awakening that was stirring the Edinburgh students presently reached the other Scottish Universities.

Thus Principal Shairp writes from St. Andrews in June 1880: "DEAR SIR HERBERT,—Stimulated by your letter, our students have revived their musical doings, and are preparing everything for vigorous action next session, when they hope to be ready to give a concert. Meanwhile they wish me to ask you kindly to suggest what pieces they had better practise. Any suggestion of this kind from you would be a great assistance."

And a little later: "Your very kind letter has given me the greatest pleasure. For there is some musical talent here, though in an undeveloped form. . . . I have seen a student who is to call a meeting to communicate the kind encouragement you offer to give to the

efforts of our students who work to cultivate their musical taste. . . . I cannot say how keenly alive I am to the educative power of music. We all require it. The Scottish nature especially requires it, to soften its native granitic quality. And Scottish students often come from a class which most of all needs the refining influence of music and poetry and every æsthetic emollient.—Thanking you for your most gratifying proffer of aid, I remain, yours truly,
J. C. SHAIRP.”

The aid was given: Sir Herbert conducted a students' concert at St. Andrews, and gave an Organ recital in the Church. Subjoined is Principal Shairp's speech at the end of the concert:—

“It is my pleasing duty to offer to Sir Herbert Oakeley, to the students of the Musical Society, and to all the members of the orchestra, our warmest thanks for the pleasure they have to-night given us. It is rare indeed—I may say never before—that have we in this place been allowed to listen to a musical performance in which so many and so various elements have

been harmoniously combined—the voices of students in solo and in chorus, upborne by so powerful and splendid an orchestra, and the whole directed and animated by the inspiring presence of a master of his Art. Our University Musical Society had fallen into a somewhat languid condition—if not into a state of actual hibernation. From this torpor the kind offer of Sir Herbert to visit us, and his coming here, has, like the touch of spring, revived it, and the first-fruits of his visit are what you have listened to to-night. For years he has been engaged in this great work of trying to bring the higher and more cultivated music into contact with the heart of Scotland, awakening the musical sense within us, expanding our conception of its range, and elevating its tone. The somewhat too stern stuff we Scots are made of needs this benign influence to soften, sweeten, and refine us. After years of labour in the central seat of Scotland, Sir Herbert has during this session visited the Universities of Glasgow and of Aberdeen, and has now reached the seclusion of St. Andrews. Who can say how widely the

movement he has inaugurated in our Universities may yet reach, and what it may yet do for our country? We are not altogether an unmusical people, as our national melodies prove. But bad and adverse circumstances and stiff prejudices have hitherto repressed our musical powers into very narrow limits. One of the highest forms of music, that connected with religious devotion, has hitherto been non-existent among us. For three centuries and more we have been content in our churches to snivel discordant sounds through our noses. In St. Andrews and throughout Scotland this is the only Church music we have had since the day when we chose to tear down and desecrate our grand Metropolitan Cathedral, and to trample under foot the mediæval chaunts and hallowed harmonies, with their awful beauty. Of that ignorant violence we are beginning to repent, and what we have heard to-night may be but the first thrill of a movement which shall reach back across three centuries, and revive whatever is sublime and soul-subduing in that religious music which we so ruthlessly cast out. Those

who this morning had the privilege of listening to the recital on the organ in the English Church will appreciate what I mean. 'One heart-ennobling hour!' As we listened we were lifted above the cobwebs of commonplace and the meanness of the world, and were for a time at least conscious of 'those mysterious stirrings of heart' which the great preacher speaks of, 'those strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence,' which the touch of the master's hand then elicited. I could not but wish that this hall had contained an organ, so that Sir Herbert might himself have closed this concert with some such harmony as we this morning heard on his special instrument. That, too, may yet come. Meanwhile, let us be thankful for all that we have now enjoyed, and express our hope that this may be but the first of many visits to our ancient city, in which he may carry on to perfection the work he has now so auspiciously begun. Allow me, Sir, once more in the name of this large assembly to tender you our warmest thanks for all your

exertions to-night, and for the enjoyment you have given us."

Some years later, another distinguished St. Andrews Professor made a very "Festive" "Carmen Seclare" for his students, and Sir Herbert set it to music. "Both words and music," writes a St. Andrews newspaper, "are admirable. Professor Lewis Campbell has shown himself an adept in the art of writing rhyming Latin, and the neatness with which he weds modern colloquialisms to the tongue of the Cæsars is wonderfully taking. To introduce into such a composition 'Kate Kennedy,' the students' red gowns, golf, football, volunteer corps, is a task which any one who has tried to write Latin verses, especially in the form of the mediæval students' chorus, must fully appreciate. It is high praise to the writer and his Latinity to say that he has done this excellently.

"Sir Herbert Oakeley has wedded the words to capital music, equal to his setting of Professor Maclagan's 'Alma Mater,' and, especially if sung to Sir Herbert's playing (as it was our

good fortune to hear 'Alma Mater'), it will be magnificent and inspiring."

Some extracts from Professor Oakeley's Diary will suffice to indicate the same influence at work at the other Northern Universities:—

"*ABERDEEN, March 9, 1878.*—Last night, the annual concert of Aberdeen University Musical Society took place. This Association has done well in following the example of Edinburgh in organising a Students' chorus, and to assist in so gratifying a consummation, which is a novel feature at Scottish Universities, was a special pleasure to me. The dearth of tenors in this part of the country is less marked than at Edinburgh, and thus the chorus though smaller than ours is better balanced, and Herr Meid, the trainer, has secured creditable results.

"The selection of pieces seemed modelled on our programmes. The two *Studentenlieder* 'Alma Mater' and 'Gaudeamus' were sung to my arrangement and organ accompaniment, and the latter was encored. Such sentiments as 'Vivant Professores,' 'vivant omnes virgines faciles,' and 'Pereat diabolus'—a personality

apparently here specially unpopular—were received with rounds of applause. The warm-hearted students were very enthusiastic after the ‘Edinburgh March,’ and rose in a body to cheer the organist, whose visit was said by Professor Struthers to have had a stimulating effect, and ‘he hoped that it would be repeated.’”

On the following evening a lecture on Madrigals was given to the Musical Association, and under able direction of Herr Reiter six illustrations were sung. Professor Black said that great impetus to Aberdonian music would be given by the Edinburgh Professor’s visit.

“*March* 5, 1881. — Now that Glasgow has formed her Students’ Musical Society, that useful if not indispensable institution exists at our four Universities, and thus a cherished wish of mine is realised.”

Accordingly, Mr. W. J. Somerville, the Secretary of the Glasgow University Musical Society, thus writes to him on August 27, 1881:—

“Last week we had a committee meeting of Glasgow University Musical Society, at which I was directed to express to you the warmest

thanks for your great kindness in coming to Glasgow for our first annual concert, and especially for the pleasure you afforded us in taking part on that occasion. The fact that you were going to play an organ solo was, we know, the means of bringing a large number of people to our concert, who had, with us, the great gratification of hearing one who is so well known as composer and conductor. I may add that without your 'Troubadour' song and your arrangements of the two Scottish National songs our concert would not have been such a success; we have heard from so many that these were the things particularly enjoyed by the audience. As members of a Students' Musical Society, we were delighted to have with us one who so well knew what a University Choral Society should be, and we feel encouraged by the knowledge that you were on the whole pleased with our first performance. We trust that as you have so kindly assisted us at the commencement of our existence, you will continue to favour us with your goodwill and help. Again thanking you in the name of the Society, I remain, &c."

CHAPTER XI

MUSIC AT HOME AND ABROAD: 1867-1872

(SOME FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF MUSICAL
FESTIVALS, ETC.)

THE Hereford Festival of 1867 was distinguished by the gratuitous assistance of Madame Lind-Goldschmidt, "who sang the glorious songs in the 'Messiah' as if she had composed them. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the week's music was her sublime conception of 'I *know* that my Redeemer liveth,' 'In my flesh shall I see God,' 'For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep'—especially the wonderful *crescendo* up to G sharp at 'risen' and the contrasted *pianissimo* at 'them that sleep.' Although silence was profound, it could not be told when the whispered *sotto voce* ceased!" "Madame Goldschmidt's voice rang through the Cathedral in the double quartet 'For He shall give His angels' (of which she afterwards sent the writer the first few bars 'from a faithful

friend'); and 'My son reviveth,' &c., 'Shall the dead arise and praise Thee?' and 'O blessed are they who fear Him'—all written *for her* by Mendelssohn, were all sung with matchless perfection. She used to tell how the great composer (referring especially to 'Hear ye, Israel') said to her, with his characteristic slight lisp, 'Ich habe fur Sie *Fith*' ('Fis' = F sharp) 'sehr oft geschrieben.' It is maintained, and will always be maintained by the writer, that her vocal, and, it may be said, her histrionic genius in Oratorio has never in our time been equalled. One could not but be saddened by the fear that after this Festival opportunity of hearing her again in Oratorio might not occur."

The performance of Mr. Goldschmidt's new oratorio of "Ruth" was rather marred by impolite as well as impolitic refusal at Hereford to allow more than one rehearsal. A full account of the clever work appeared in the *Guardian* of August 28, 1867.

At the Handel Festival in 1868 "was given a selection from 'Theodora' (which the *Guardian* had suggested in 1865), including 'He saw the

lovely youth death's early prey,' an exquisite chorus in the unusual key of B flat minor, leading to the wonderfully ingenious and descriptive sequel in the major, 'Rise, youth, he said.' The sublime counterpoint on the two subjects, 'Lowly the matron bowed' and 'bore away the prize,' is developed with masterly freedom and ingenuity, the music here expressing the words with all the force of the most mighty of painters in sounds. This item was second to none in interest at the Festival, and it is easy to believe the tradition that Handel held this composition in the highest estimation."

At the Chichester Festival, the *Guardian* critic expressed much condemnation of some persons, "who, ignorant of music, persisted in singing, or trying to sing, the melody of the chants and hymns an octave or sometimes two octaves below the treble part, to the distraction of their neighbours." This is a malpractice we all suffer from to this day—one of the things that for some of us make church-going into a penance instead of a pleasure.

At Gloucester Dr. Wesley conducted, and at

the early services the anthems were, 'Thou O God art praised in Zion' (Wesley, senior), "This is the day" (H. S. Oakeley), and "Turn Thee unto Me" (Boyce). Great organ music was played by Dr. Wesley's clever pupil Mr. J. K. Pyne, especially Bach's Fugues in E flat, B minor, A minor, and G minor.

The Lower Rhine Festival took place in 1869 at Düsseldorf, where the incident most interesting to Professor Oakeley was a concert given by young Julius Röntgen, son of the Röntgen who played the first violin at the Festival. "This talented boy played on the pianoforte three preludes and fugues for organ by himself, each of which exhibits a rare knowledge of counterpoint, and acquaintance with the best models of ancient and modern art. He also performed some variations on an original theme of remarkable excellence." But the most astonishing effort of "this childlike and unsophisticated young genius" was a Duo for violin and viola, which was performed by Joachim and Röntgen, senior; while the boy, whose head did not reach the top of the desks, stood by

these two great artists, and turned over for them, in entire disregard of the audience, and evidently absorbed heart and soul in his new work. The young seër's rapt look—inspired, yet docile, as of one “not disobedient unto the heavenly vision”—could not easily be forgotten by those who looked on at this performance. “The chorus was as good as the band. ‘Never,’ said Klingemann, writing long ago of another Düsseldorf Festival, ‘did I hear such chorus singing. All the singers, with the exception of the soloists, were amateurs, as also the greater number of the instrumental performers. It is this circumstance which gives to this Festival its peculiar excellence and beauty. From all the neighbouring towns and the whole country round the *dilettanti* were gathering, arriving in steamboats or carriages—not to toil at an irksome, ill-paid task, but for a great musical field-day, full of soul and song, all ranks and ages uniting for the one harmonious end. . . . Add to this their love of the Art, good training, well-cultivated taste, and general knowledge of music, and it is explained how they produce

such an effect. You felt the life, the pulsation, of this music, for their hearts and understandings were in it. It was here, in this chorus, and in this band, that public opinion resided; the audience listened and enjoyed, but the amateur performers really constituted the festival.' These remarks by Mendelssohn's intimate friend concerning the meeting of 1836 apply with no less force to that of 1869."

In June 1869 Lincoln held its first Choral Festival; which leads him to remark that "not only is the exterior of this Cathedral unrivalled in grandeur of situation, built as it is upon almost the only hill in the generally flat county, and visible, for instance, at Belvoir Castle, forty miles away—but it is also the only minster with three towers *worthy of each other*. At York, the central tower is not proportionate to the two others, while at Canterbury the western towers are no adequate match for the peerless central 'Bell Harry' or 'Angel Steeple.' At Lincoln the interior looks¹ too low for its length; but what a feast of architectural details is provided!"

¹ But this is an optical illusion.

His remarks on the specially English character of this Cathedral have been already quoted at page 103.

Soon after the Lincoln Festival he went to open the organ in the new Cathedral at Inverness, an occasion, as the *Times* said, of special interest: "From a purely æsthetic point of view, all cultured folk—quicquid est hominum venustiorum—will be eager or even sceptical about the new building and its services. To these we have to report that this modest little cathedral stands nearly completed. When we remember that this is the first cathedral built in Great Britain since Salisbury, the deeper significance of this Inverness gathering as a pregnant religious fact of the time suggests itself." The erection of a Cathedral, to shape and vitalise diocesan work, is said to have been a project of the Bishop of Moray and Ross ever since 1851. At the opening service, for the *Te Deum* the "Quadruple Chant" was used, Professor Oakeley also contributing the anthem, "O praise the Lord," and the hymn "Edina." Another anthem was "O give thanks," by

Dr. G. J. Elvey. A magnificent sermon was preached by the Bishop (Wilberforce) of Oxford.

The effect of a full Cathedral Service so far North was most marked. "You might have heard a pin *falling*," said a Scottish paper, "when the first sounds of the processional hymn fell on the ear outside the Church." An account from a Scottish point of view in the *Elgin Courant* is so remarkable as to seem worthy of abridged quotation: "Even plain Presbyterians, if possessed of any emotion in their nature, and with eyes for the picturesque and beautiful, could not fail to be moved. The pealing of the organ, the thousand voices united in praise, the lofty and richly painted nave, all combined to impress the soul with deep reverence, and make it feel itself in the presence of God."

In 1870 he opened an organ at St. Andrew's Church, Kelso, playing as finale Bach's G minor fugue; and the choir of St. Paul's Church, Edinburgh, sang with great effect his anthem, "Praise the Lord." He was for some years Honorary Director of the music at St. Paul's, and often

took the organ; and aided by Dean Montgomery and Mr. Douglas, the incumbents, and Mr. Jamieson the organist, greatly improved the services. The Edinburgh Diocesan Choral Society held there several successful Festivals, for which Professor Oakeley arranged the music, and compiled the service books.

The third York Choral Festival was held in 1870. "Goss's anthem, 'The glory of the Lord shall endure,' was sung well at the one afternoon service. As at the last Triennial Festival at York, the organ erected a few years ago in the nave for the special services was used to accompany the choral music on Thursday last, Dr. Monk presiding at the instrument with his accustomed ability and tact. At the conclusion of the service, the great organ over the screen uplifted its voice in a Prelude and Fugue by Sebastian Bach, played, at Dr. Monk's request, by the Edinburgh Professor of Music."

In May 1872 we find him, after another pilgrimage to the Beethoven shrines at Vienna, again at Leipzig, where he accompanied Julius

Röntgen to a Gewandhaus Concert, now conducted by Reinecke; he then visited Weimar, Erfurt, Gotha, Eisenach, and Cassel, where he "did homage to the statue of Spohr," and called on Henry Hugo Pierson, who had been for a short time (the third) Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh; a brother, though he spelt his name differently, of Stanley's friend, the well known and beloved "H. P."

The young Röntgen accompanied Professor Oakeley up the Rhine, and through the "Niederwald" from the vine-clad slopes of Assmanshausen to those of Rüdesheim—"a memorable expedition to the elder of the two companions, for it was his last good walk before permanent lameness, some ten days later, became his sad lot!"

CHAPTER XII

S. NIKLAUS, GENEVA, BRIGHTON : 1872

THE accident which curtailed his powers and so nearly cost him his life happened in June 1872.

He was being driven in an "Einspanner" down the Zermatt Valley, and had nearly reached St. Niklaus, when he saw in front a dangerously sloping bit of road, which he remembered noticing in a recent journey on foot; he said to his servant "Here we will get out and walk," at the same time reaching his cloak from the opposite seat. But it was just too late! The die was cast, and the issue past changing by mortal agency. As he spoke the words, the horse's feet were heard to stumble on the sloping rock; in a moment more the carriage slipped over the edge, and fell with its occupants some fifteen feet into the torrent bed. Professor Oakeley came first to the ground, starring his knee-cap on the sharp rocks and

dislocating his thigh, but retaining presence of mind to "*play*" the descending carriage from him, with hand and wrist well trained by tennis and pianoforte practice for *this* emergency!

He was carried to the little St. Niklaus Inn, where he lay in much suffering, from injuries whose gravity it took a long time to discover, for several weeks. He was brought to Geneva in August, and thence in October to Brighton. "At each place," he writes, "the force of the verse 'Aegrotavi et invisistis me' was brought home to me by the sympathy of many friends." Among these was Madame Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt, whose first words to her crippled friend—"Oh, Mr. Oakeley, we are fearfully and wonderfully made"—were singularly characteristic of her naïve originality and simple seriousness. She delighted the invalid with her deeply interesting reminiscences of Felix Mendelssohn, Robert and Clara Schumann, and other great musicians whose intimacy and admiration she had enjoyed. And—still more potent anodyne—she also sang; and one who was casually present remembers "how the chimney-piece ornaments rattled."

In truth, in her singing the mere "timbre" and power of voice was in itself a wonder, though but the beginning of wonders. She sang once in my hearing in the School House drawing-room at Rugby; and in the hearing also, it soon appeared, of boys playing at cricket nets on the other side of the School Close, a quarter of a mile away; for they stopped playing, and stood listening: a notable tribute of Athletics to Art!

From this time he made, up to a certain point, slow recovery; but could never again sit with comfort at the organ (or even at the piano-forte); and though the marvellous dexterity of his *left* foot on the pedals masked beyond all expectation the incapacity of the maimed right, he could no longer play to *his own* satisfaction; and the A minor and many of the other great organ fugues were now become for him—as far as playing went—a sealed book! The metaphor, however, is inadequate, since, given the free use of his limbs, all the seals on all the books could not have robbed his memory of the treasures of music it held in safe keeping.

Mark Pattison claimed to be able, were every copy of "Paradise Lost" destroyed, to restore the text of the entire poem. So Herbert Oakeley could, one may be sure, have reproduced correctly all or almost all Bach's organ Preludes and Fugues; and that, be it added, in as beautiful a handwriting as their Composer's.

On the 1st of January 1873 it was decided by Sir James Paget and Professor Lister of Edinburgh that Mr. Oakeley might venture to take up his duties again; and a few days afterwards he went North, in the hope that though thus terribly incapacitated he might still be able to work for his Art, and, especially, advance the objects dearest to him—the development of taste in Scotland for orchestral and choral music; the reconciliation of the Scottish Church to the use of the organ in her services; the establishment of musical graduation in the University.

His first organ recital after his accident was given January 13, 1873, as mentioned already in chapter ix. (p. 156).

CHAPTER XIII

SOME HONOURS; THREE COMMEMORATIONS:

1871-1890

ON the morning of August 16, 1876, the guns of the Castle announced the arrival of Queen Victoria in her Scottish capital for the inauguration of the late Prince Consort's statue in Charlotte Square.

Next day, at 6 A.M. (to avoid interruption), Professor Oakeley and his corps of singers, together with the band of the 79th Highlanders, held a rehearsal of the music to be performed at the function. On arriving, he found the chorus somewhat discontented at being—as they fancied—ill treated in being posted behind the Queen. “Tact was necessary to avoid the danger of some of them withdrawing their services; but concord was restored by my explaining that no other position than the one assigned by authority was attainable; that the music had been ‘commanded,’ and could not be omitted without

disrespect ; that the honour of assisting on such an occasion should banish paltry and selfish ideas, and ought not to stand in the way of general convenience ; that when the Queen left the daïs and walked round the unveiled memorial an opportunity would occur of seeing their Sovereign, who would also see her faithful choral lieges ; and that, at all events, their conductor was in worse plight than his chorus, being compelled, for the first time in his life, to turn his back on Her Gracious Majesty. This episode having been amicably arranged, the rehearsal commenced, and almost at the same moment at every window appeared the heads of citizens roused from their slumbers by the unwonted serenade ; which certainly sounded very well in the clear air of the roofless square, whose four sides hemmed in the waves of sound."

The ceremony of the unveiling included three pieces of music—the Prince Consort's own beautiful chorale ("Gotha"), the Coburg March, and Professor Oakeley's "Evening and Morning" ("Comes at Times," &c.), written by Canon Gregory Smith.

The Queen's own touching account of the function and her kindly reference to Professor Oakeley and his music will be remembered by readers of "More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands."¹

"Her Majesty," says the *Daily Review*, "during the singing of Professor Oakeley's 'Comes at Times,' evidently followed it with interest and a nice appreciation of its music and time. When the drapery dropped away, and amid much cheering the figure of the Prince on horseback was disclosed, the Queen for some moments stood silently looking at the bronze likeness of her late consort, her eyes quickly filling with tears. Nobody spoke nor moved till Her Majesty turned and made some observation to Princess Beatrice and to Prince Leopold. At a signal, the Duke of Buccleuch advanced, and in animated manner and emphatic terms she expressed to His Grace her satisfaction. The emotion which had overcome the Queen had now passed away, and her graciousness of manner was more strongly marked than

¹ Page 326.

I ever saw it in the many royal ceremonies at which I have been present in other parts of the island. She chatted cheerfully with the Duke of Buccleuch and with Mr. Steell, the Sculptor, and instead of hurrying away, Her Majesty walked all round the statue, and thus gave the crowds on the farther sides" (and the choir) "opportunity of seeing her; and stopping her promenade, sent the Duke for Professor Oakeley, with whom she pleasantly conversed for some moments."

When the ceremony was over, Mr. Steell and Professor Oakeley were summoned to Holyrood and knighted by the Queen. This mark of Royal favour to the Professor of Music was widely appreciated as an honour, not only to himself, but also to his Art and to Edinburgh University. The *Choir* expressed itself thus: "Musicians have every reason to be gratified at the honour conferred on the foremost representative of their Art in Scotland"; and the *Orchestra* said that the recipient of the honour himself, "In his *modus operandi*, has displayed ability, industry, and consummate tact, and his

friends may point triumphantly to the results achieved." The *Times* and other papers took the same view.

Her Majesty, in a letter written soon afterwards to one of her ladies, expressed her appreciation of "Comes at Times." "The effect of the music was excellent; and that led by Professor Oakeley, and his own composition, I greatly admired." "The Queen," remarked the recipient of the letter, "is a good judge of music, and never writes what she does not mean; so these words are valuable."

The hymn has often been sung at Sandringham Church. Canon F. A. J. Hervey wrote to Sir Herbert (7th January 1884) as follows: "The Prince of Wales" (now King Edward VII.) "desires me to write and tell you that your 'Evening and Morning' was performed in church here yesterday morning, when His Royal Highness listened to it with great pleasure, and was much struck with the beauty of the music."

It was sung by command at the Mausoleum Service in memory of the Prince Consort and

the Princess Alice, in 1877 and 1880. It is now one of the best known of its author's works, and has often moved hearers even to tears. Of the many testimonies of competent witnesses to its effect, I will quote one other, a letter to the composer from Canon Duckworth, the late Precentor of Westminster :—

“I must not let this day close without telling you of the deep impression made by your exquisite hymn, ‘Comes at Times,’ when sung in the Abbey at the Memorial Service on this the first anniversary of dear Stanley's death. I do not think I have ever witnessed a profounder sensation made by any music in the Abbey, and it is only due to you that I should gratefully express my own feelings, and tell you of the warm admiration which your composition received.”

Her Majesty visited Edinburgh again in 1886 to open the Exhibition. As she entered the Grand Hall, the National Anthem was sung by the Choral Union, and was immediately followed by a “commanded” setting, by Sir Herbert Oakeley (now “Composer of Music to the

Queen in Scotland"),¹ of the hymn "Lord of Heaven, of earth, of ocean." Next day the Duke of Connaught congratulated Sir Herbert on the composition; who then took the opportunity of presenting Mr. T. H. Collinson, the conductor of the Choral Union; him also the Duke complimented on the success of the arrangements.

Sir Herbert Oakeley had taken much interest in the appointment of Mr. Collinson as Organist of St. Mary's Cathedral (and much appreciated his playing of Bach's G minor fugue and other great works); and much interest also in the erection of the Cathedral organ, and its inauguration by Mr. Collinson in October 1879.

His first Mus. Doc. Degree—the "Canterbury" degree—was given him by Archbishop Tait in 1871. "The Fiat of the Archbishop," wrote the editor of the *Guardian*, "was in this instance especially graceful, since Mr. Oakeley as Professor at Edinburgh could not of course have become a candidate at another University for this degree in the usual way; and—as

¹ This appointment was made October 1881.

Edinburgh University does not confer an honorary degree on its own Professors except at their retirement—he was thus *ex officio* excluded from, rather than entitled to, a degree in the subject of which he is University Professor.”

His own University gave him the same honour—in very good company—eight years later ; on 20th June 1879 the newspapers announced that “the degree of Mus. Doc. *honoris causa*” was yesterday conferred at Oxford on Sir Herbert Oakeley, M.A., Ch. Ch. ; George Alexander Macfarren, Mus. Doc. ; and Arthur Sullivan, Esq.”

Edinburgh University kept its Tercentenary in April 1884, and did real honour to itself in honouring an almost unprecedented gathering of Europe’s men of Light and Leading. The following were the most distinguished: Helmholtz, Virchow, Pasteur, de Lesseps, Browning,¹ Lowell, Stafford Northcote, Lightfoot, Playfair, Tulloch, Paget, Saffi, and lastly Sir Herbert’s two special guests, Sir Frederick Ouseley and

¹ Tennyson also was invited, but could not come.

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Sir Charles Hallé, whom he had nominated—graduation in Music at Edinburgh being to his sorrow still a dream of the future—for the LL.D. Hon. Degree.

Merely to catch a glimpse of Helmholtz, then perhaps Germany's—if not Europe's—greatest living genius, was an experience memorable for a lifetime to students of a University so deeply interested as Edinburgh in all the vast provinces of human knowledge illuminated by his researches: Philosophy, Physiology, Optics, Acoustics, Music. Even Lesseps, who by a stroke of genius joined Asia to Europe—Glasgow to Bombay—could seem hardly as interesting as Helmholtz, the contriver of a passage over the untrodden wild between Acoustics and Music, “that Serbonian bog where whole armies of scientific musicians and musical scientists have sunk without filling it up.”¹ No, nor even Virchow, though second only to Edinburgh's own Lister in his influence on modern medicine; nor Pasteur himself, exterminator of hydrophobia, *one* of whose

¹ Clerk Maxwell.

inventions was worth to his nation in hard cash (hear it, ye Philistine sticklers for "practical" Science!) more than the whole war indemnity paid to Germany after 1870! "Vergilium vidi tantum,"¹ says to this day many an enthusiast, treasuring from the Tercentenary his one glimpse of his own particular hero. And excluding the brightest stars in this galaxy of great names, there was still left more than enough of distinction amongst the remaining guests to have furnished forth any Commemoration festival in Europe.

After this gathering of the clans of genius Sir Frederick Ouseley wrote as follows to Principal Sir Alexander Grant:—

"Now that your grand and most interesting Festival has come to a successful termination, I cannot refrain from writing not only to congratulate you thereupon, which I do most heartily, but also to express my deep sense of the great privilege accorded me in being allowed a place among the number of distinguished and representative guests upon whom

¹ "Of Vergil I had but a glimpse."

your University has conferred the honour of a Degree. Among the many great successes of your Festival, I feel bound to refer to one which had special interest for me—the Students' concert. It so happens that I have never before had an opportunity of seeing my old friend, Sir Herbert Oakeley, conduct a concert, and I was astonished to find in him such a complete mastery of the difficult art of judiciously and efficiently wielding the *bâton*—an art not given to every musician. The zeal displayed by the students, and the accuracy and heartiness of their performance, were also most delightful to witness, and contributed not a little to the success of the concert."

In June 1887 he went to Dublin, whither the University Choral Society had invited the three Professors of Music from Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh, to grace with their presence the final concert of the Society's Jubilee season, and each conduct selections from his own works.

The idea was a happy one, and met with the success it deserved. The two Professors—Sir George Macfarren was prevented by

illness from leaving Cambridge—were enthusiastically received, cheered to the echo by the students, banqueted by the Lord-Lieutenant and the University, presented with illuminated addresses, and (at the request of the genial Dublin Professor, Sir Robert Stewart) with Honorary Mus. Doc. Degrees. Their works were well performed under the *bâton* of each; Sir Herbert Oakeley was represented by an anthem, "Who is This?" a march, "The Edinburgh," and a song, "Ad Amore."

In 1888 he went as a delegate from Edinburgh, with Sir William Muir and Professor Kirkpatrick as his colleagues, to yet another brilliant and unique University Commemoration, the "Jubilee" fêtes at Bologna; the *eighth* centenary of that mother of Universities, recalling in the magnificence of its celebration the pageants of its centenaries of much earlier date; and not merely a University gathering, but "a truly national festival, presided over by the beloved King and Queen, by their Ministers, and by the nation itself. The University they proudly revere as the foundress

of all Universities, and as a nursing mother of the great Italian Renaissance; the city they love as one of the most famous cradles of Italian independence, and one of the stoutest bulwarks *contra il Vaticano*; and their present visitors, teachers and taught, they regard with pardonable pride, as to a great extent their own intellectual offspring,"¹ bearing in mind, in fact, the proud motto of the University, "Bononia docet."

"Besides the University functions, a Reception was held by the King and Queen of Italy, when some of the guests had the honour of being presented to their Majesties. The Queen was present at the concert given in the fine Music Hall of the Exhibition under the admirable direction of Signor Martucci, and an excellent programme was excellently performed by the Bolognese orchestra of about seventy-five executants. This concert agreeably surprised some of the German and British visitors, who were scarcely prepared to hear finished orchestral playing on the south side of the Alps. The

¹ "Bologna Octocentenary Festival," by Professor Kirkpatrick.

performance was chiefly remarkable for the grace and refinement characteristic of Italians, and in these respects the 'wind' was immaculate. The purity of intonation and delicacy of the four horns at the commencement of the first Overture at once riveted attention, and the family of 'wood-wind' appeared equal in excellence to that, for instance, of the Paris Conservatoire of twenty-five years earlier. The unison of violas and violoncellos in the divine melody in A flat, with which the second movement of Beethoven's C minor Symphony begins, never seemed more exquisite. An Overture by Rossini, perfectly played, was an interesting selection at a concert in the city where the 'Swan of Pesaro' passed so much of his time, and the three last items, by Brahms, Berlioz, and Wagner, whose names and music must sound strange enough to un-Teutonic Southern ears, were rapturously received. In fact, the close attention of the whole audience, which contained a large number of University students, who appeared absorbed only in the music, and the unanimous burst of applause after each selection, seemed to show

the deep-rooted love and devotion to our divine Art which still possesses the Italians.

“Specially interesting features of the occasion were the congratulatory addresses, chiefly in Italian or Latin, by a University delegate from each nation. With respect to the address from England (in Latin), which was read by the accomplished Professor Jebb (who also contributed two masterly Odes, Greek and Italian, in celebration of the Octocentenary), an unconsciously severe satire on the British pronunciation of Latin was noticed in a Bologna journal of the following day. After mentioning the language in which each congratulatory address had been delivered, the Italian reporter stated that the English representative spoke in English—‘*parlò il rappresentante dell’ Inghilterra in Inglese.*’

“The Musical Exhibition contained some priceless manuscripts and autographs, which had been lent by various continental libraries or by private collectors. Besides a probably unequalled collection of old ecclesiastical MSS., most of which are splendidly illuminated, contributed chiefly by the Bologna ‘*Liceo Filarmonica,*’

and by other Italian musical societies or libraries, the following autographs of the greatest masters were noticed:—Full scores by Haydn and Mozart, and the famous ‘Exercise’ in Counterpoint, written by the latter when only fourteen years of age for the diploma which he received from the Bologna Philharmonic Society or ‘Liceo Filarmonica’; the scores of Beethoven’s opera ‘Fidelio,’ Ninth Symphony, Septuor, &c.; scores by Bach, Cherubini; pianoforte music by Clementi, Mendelssohn (including the Gondola ‘Lied ohne Worte’); and by Schumann, &c. Near the autographs are some superb violins by Straduarius and other famed Cremona makers, and also a case containing stringed instruments lent by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh.”

The Philharmonic Society of Bologna (which and the St. Cecilia Society of Rome are probably the most ancient musical Societies in existence) conferred on Sir Herbert Oakeley the honour of its membership.

Three years later (acting under medical advice) he retired from his Professorship. In presenting

him for the Honorary Degree of LL.D., April 17, 1891, Professor Kirkpatrick, Dean of the Faculty of Law, pronounced the University's recognition of his long and brilliant services. His panegyric ended thus: "Conspicuous among his services to musical science and art has been his annual organisation of the great Reid Concerts during the last twenty-five years, thus making the masterpieces of orchestral music known in Scotland almost for the first time, while his frequent Organ Recitals, given gratuitously in the Music Class-room throughout each Winter Session, have delighted and instructed many a large audience. Among his compositions, vocal and instrumental, may be mentioned many beautiful anthems, hymns, and songs, his Service in E flat, his Edinburgh Students' Song, and Festal March, his St. Andrews Carmen Seculare, and his Suite for the Orchestra in the Olden Style. This University owes him cordial gratitude, and she grieves to be about to part from a most distinguished member and a beloved friend."

He attained the last, and one of the most

dearly prized, of his honours in 1899, when he was given the Edinburgh Honorary Mus. Doc. Degree—graduation in music being now at last an accomplished fact at the University—making him, as he said with his characteristic chuckle, “ten doctors”!

CHAPTER XIV

MUSIC AT HOME AND ABROAD: 1873-1890

(IN this chapter some further extracts are given from musical reports.)

At the fiftieth Lower Rhine Festival, held in 1873 at Aachen, he writes of Bach's Great B Minor Mass that "no words can do justice to that stupendous work." But its key suggests some interesting remarks. "Most Masters have favourite keys: Bach loves B minor, Handel D, Haydn G and B flat, Mozart C, Beethoven E flat, Mendelssohn E and E minor, Chopin A flat and D flat." But Major and Minor have no prescriptive rights of joy and grief; they owe their mood obediently to the Composer's bidding. "Thus Handel chooses C major—the *modus lascivus* of old—for his solemn 'Dead March in Saul,' and E flat major for the sad 'He was despised.' Mozart revels in G minor in his Symphony; Beethoven, in the greatest of Scherzos,

jokes in B minor, and weeps (or makes Florestan weep) in A flat major; Mendelssohn employs the minor for elves and fairies in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream'; and Schumann writes his sad and plaintive Romance for Piano-forte in F sharp major, while his vigorous and exciting Scherzo in the 4th Symphony tears along mainly in D minor. Seas and storms the Composers (and Nature also) generally set in minor keys, as Handel in 'The Waters overwhelmed them,' and Beethoven in the Pastoral Symphony Storm. So Rossini, too, in 'Tell,' blusters in E minor, and Mendelssohn in his 'Fingal's Cave' overture gives us B minor waves,

'Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.'

Thus the objection of negroes and others to the minor key seems hardly warranted, though shared by some amateurs in our own country. Sir Charles Hallé used to tell of a young lady who came to him for pianoforte lessons soon after his arrival in England in 1848. She volunteered to play a Sonata of Mozart. She played it well, but with many omissions, the rationale of which

he did not comprehend. "Why then, Miss," he asked, "do you leave out all those passages?" On which she replied, "Oh, my father does not allow me to play in the minor key!" This story I began telling to Madame Schumann, and one of her daughters remarked before I got far, "Yes, but it happened to my mother——" "Yes," said Madame Schumann, "it was in London, and the piece was my husband's 'Arabeske'!"

Was it the same young lady, or can there have been two papas of the self-same sect?

"Among the numerous records of the Schumann Festival at Bonn," writes the *Choir* of August 20, 1873, "none will possess more permanent interest or more immediate attractions for the genuine musical reader than the able description given by Dr. Oakeley in the *Guardian* of Wednesday."

Accepting this opinion, I shall venture to quote several extracts from "Dr. Oakeley's" report—at the writing of which I was present—of a Festival certainly one of the most interesting ever held.

In 1873 Germany had recently been filled anew with the feeling that she too was a great historic nation, of "titles manifold"—glorious exploits of arms as well as in Art; she was indeed, as Professor Sir John Seeley puts it, "almost drunk with the sense of national greatness."

Their appreciation of this new temper in the nation they came to see gave the visitors to the Bonn Festival an additional interest in it; especially some of the English visitors, who recalled that at home in the Albert Memorial made in 1869—the year before Wörth and Sedan—Germany was symbolised as a woman reading a philosophical treatise, while in the next compartment France brandished the insignia of the first military nation of Europe!

So Professor Oakeley begins his letter to the *Guardian* by remarking that these Festivals—and the study in general of the ways of this "nation of armed minstrels to whom Von Moltke is dear, but Beethoven dearer still"—have interest for the political student, not merely for the musician. And he asks if the future

historian will regard as a mere *lusus naturæ* the growth of "this most delicate and perfumed blossom of modern music on the sturdy, gnarled, gigantic oak of German character"; or will he, like the historians of the past, think this Art also like those of old somehow essentially connected with national greatness in other fields?

He goes on to say that Schumann was a typical German, and had been recognised fully now for twenty years at least in his own land as a great composer; though in England (as the author of "Fo'c'sle Yarns" writes) "the middle class drawing-room, that last fortress of error, is much where it was. Time-honoured shrine of die-away, sigh-away adolescence, it still re-sounds to the strains of the royalty ballad or 'comic' song. But the Teutonic invasion has told; Mendelssohn has almost obtained the Britannic *civitas*, and even Schumann stands—uncertain it is true—upon the threshold."

"It is only in the last five years," says Professor Oakeley, "that, owing mainly to the devoted labour of 'die Deutsche Künstlerin,' his widow, the English public has begun to accept

the German verdict." . . . That a general audience should listen without sign of tedium, but rather with the utmost enthusiasm from the first note to the last, to twenty successive works of this single composer, is a curious comment on a not long ago frequent, but happily now nearly obsolete, British notion of Schumann's "monotony."

Two pieces in the Bonn programmes may be mentioned here as great and characteristic works of Schumann which even now, in 1904, have hardly ever been performed in England—the exquisite "Nachtlied," "depicting the stillness and mystery of a summer night," of which its composer wrote in 1854, "I have always been attached to this piece with special affection," and the "Faust" music. Rare too, though less so, is performance here of the C major, perhaps his greatest symphony; hardly known in England, except by an organ arrangement of the Adagio. (Which Adagio, if the Bonn book of words is to be believed, "expresses the deepest emotion of gratitude and hope resting on the basis of conquered sufferings.")

Clara Schumann was of course rapturously received, and a scene never to be forgotten was her accompaniment of Madame Joachim in that loveliest of songs, "Frühlingsnacht." Contrary to German habit, the little masterpiece was encored; and not only encored, but actually demanded a third time; the performers came back to comply, but Madame Schumann's emotion was such that she could not get beyond the first line, and burst into tears.

She also played the Pianoforte Concerto (and was received with *fanfares* of trumpets and drums, the whole audience standing up):—"One of the composer's best works—a remarkable instance of the difficult art of combining and contrasting the pale colour of the pianoforte with the rich hues of the modern orchestra."¹

"From Bonn to Birmingham is indeed a change of scene, climate, and manners, and, it may be added, of programmes." . . . "What would be thought in Germany of eight festival

¹ Most of the article in the *Guardian* here summarised was quoted in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* soon afterwards.

concerts in which only one symphony was given, although the finest attainable orchestra was engaged. It is scarcely possible, notwithstanding the boasting now more than ever in vogue, that this country can be really 'musical,' so long as the masses have so little opportunity of hearing the symphonies of the great composers."¹

Speaking of the exorbitant price of tickets at English Festivals, he ventures to ask the bold question, "Would it not be possible—sometimes at least—to hold Musical Festivals in England,

¹ He suggests, too, some works which might at Provincial Festivals with advantage take the place occasionally of the Messiah and Elijah, "and the rest of the twelve regulation works": "Handel's Ode to St. Cecilia's Day, Joshua, Deborah, Belshazzar, Theodora, Saul, and anthems; Bach's Christmas oratorio, Magnificat, O Ewiges Feuer, B minor Mass (Credo), and Cantatas generally, or the glorious Motetts; Haydn's Seasons and Seven Last Words; Mozart's Davidde Penitente, and fine Motetts; Graun's Tod Jesu and Te Deum; Schneider's Deluge; Beethoven's great Mass, Choral Symphony, Egmont music, &c.; Schubert's Masses, and Miriam's Siegergesang; Cherubini's Missa Solemnis, Requiem, &c.; Spohr's Calvary, Fall of Babylon; Weber's E Flat Mass; Mendelssohn's 114th Psalm, and all his delicious Midsummer Night's Dream music—so seldom given in its entirety; Moliqne's Abraham; Schumann's Paradise and Mass; Lachner's and Brahm's Requiems; Palestrina, Pergolesi, Purcell, and lastly the music of the two Wesleys and other English Church Musicians."

as in Germany, unhampered by any ulterior motive, even charitable, except the advancement of Art?" The question has often occurred to other champions of the ideal, but has remained hitherto unanswered!

He mentions — not for the first time — as drawbacks of the Birmingham and other British Musical meetings, insufficient rehearsals, high pitch, and silence of the grand organ (as a solo instrument). "That so noble an organ, on which Mendelssohn played in 1837, and Wesley in 1849, should be doomed to inaction, seems a strange slight at once to organ composers, organ players, and organ builders."

"Tears, idle tears," by Professor Oakeley, was sung at this Festival by Titiens. On being encored shortly after at the Hereford Festival, she volunteered to sing, to the delight of the audience, "nor" (said the *Times*) "was gratification lessened by the fact that the song chosen was the thoughtful and expressive setting of "Tears, idle tears," which had been heard with so much pleasure at the Birmingham Festival." Mlle. Titiens stipulated at first that Mr. Oakeley

should accompany her, but Dr. Wesley claimed the office as properly belonging to the conductor. "Well, I think I could play it, you know," said he, and both points were conceded without difficulty.

Mlle. Titiens much enjoyed singing this song, though completely mystified by parts of the beautiful poem. She once asked her accompanist if "the glimmering square" was "a Square in London"!

At the early service, Wesley's great anthem "The Wilderness" was heard with special interest. For here it was composed, thirty years before; and the composer was on this occasion at the organ, and signalled his presence there by extemporising as his concluding voluntary a Prelude and Fugue in E minor.

At the Bristol Festival of 1873—the first held there—the one novelty was "John the Baptist," by Macfarren, "who—I cannot refrain here from adding—under saddest affliction of loss of sight, has shown such indomitable courage and sublime resignation as to claim universal sympathy and admiration; not only by

his energy and labour in the composition of this Oratorio, but by his heroic patience and perseverance in various other arduous labours."

He applauds the zeal of the old city and its love for old English vocal music, and mentions as three "wonders" of Bristol the newly erected Colston Hall, with its splendid Willis organ, and Mr. George Riseley to play it; the graceful Clifton Suspension Bridge; and Clifton College, "the still young Public School which already rears its Balliol scholars, and sends Elevens to Lord's capable of beating the M.C.C. in one innings!"¹

But he regrets (as often at Birmingham Festivals) the silence of the great organ, except in accompaniment. The organist—a true master of his Art—was not heard as a soloist till the day after the Festival, when "his very interesting programme contained many things well worthy of a place in the previous concerts. It is strange that the excellent example set by Birmingham, at the Festival at which 'Elijah' was first given, when Mendelssohn played Bach's

¹ Referring to the Clifton College match at Lord's in 1873.

E flat ('St. Anne's') Prelude and Fugue, should not have been oftener followed."

In 1874 Liverpool, musically an abstemious place, allowed itself its first Festival since 1836. (The 1836 Festival was memorable for the first production in England of "St. Paul.") Professor Oakeley conducted his "Edinburgh March," which the *Times* said "was well played and well received:—it is spirited and well scored." The President of the Festival, the Duke of Edinburgh, sent for the composer to express his satisfaction, and this was all the more appropriate, as the work was written for H.R.H.'s wedding.

An Overture composed for the Festival by Macfarren was much liked, as also a fresh and charming orchestral work, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," by J. F. Barnett. Sullivan's "Light of the World," too, was given, and conducted by its composer. Sir Herbert highly praises some of its points. "Perhaps the finest thing in the work is the grand instrumental prelude before the second part, and, next, other passages for orchestra, where the composer is freed from the

trammels of a terribly exacting libretto. The last chorus is finely conceived, despite a somewhat clumsy theme of reiterated tonic and dominant, and it leads up to a splendid burst of adoration closing the Oratorio."

He criticises the low standard of taste at "abstemious" Liverpool, where the least interesting music given was the most applauded. That this may have been partly due to the fact that the songs in question were sung by consummate artists, leads him to regret that "two of our greatest vocalists should use their power to degrade rather than advance the popular taste, by introducing a style of composition which occupies about the same relation to the Art of Music as that of a roadside Inn sign-board to the Art of Painting. Such trash would be simply impossible at any of the great German festivals often reported in the *Guardian*. Its admission into our programmes, and the vehement applause that greets it, is a proof of the remarkable difference in musical discrimination which, notwithstanding continual boasting

to the contrary, still exists between the two publics, English and German."

In 1877 Rubinstein played at Edinburgh and Glasgow, with his usual power and originality. At the former place, he characteristically declined with thanks an enormous wreath presented by a too "perfervid" Scottish admirer. At Glasgow occurred an amusing instance of his talent for silence. A smoking-room acquaintance, becoming impatient after half-an-hour, asked if he liked Wagner, and received for reply, "He is not good." Another quiet half-hour passed. Then the friend said, "How about Beethoven?" "He *is* good." At last at a late hour another remark was ventured, "I must now be going to bed." Then said Rubinstein, "Don't go, I have so enjoyed your *Gompany*." This reminds one of the delightful story of another master of music—and of silence—Robert Schumann, and especially of his two hours' silent *tête-à-tête* with his friend, Henrietta Voigt, whom he left with a pressure of the hand and the words, "*To-day* we have perfectly understood one another."

Rubinstein had no taste for the beauties of

Nature. After his last recital in London (in 1888) he invited a party of musical friends to Richmond for Sunday. It was a lovely, sunny summer day, and Richmond must have looked its very best. But nothing would please Rubinstein but a rubber of whist! The landlord, a strict Sabbatarian, remonstrated, and at last the musicians had to ascend to a viewless attic, where they played (cards!) from two till eight!¹

In this respect Rubinstein resembled Liszt. But Mendelssohn in his letters and sketches has given proof enough and to spare that a defective appreciation of the joys of sight is no *defaut de ses qualités* of the creators of the joys of sound. And Beethoven's devotion to Nature, says Grove, "was one of his especial characteristics." His servant indeed might have said like Wordsworth's, in showing strangers his room, "this is where he keeps his books, but his *study* is out of doors." In declining a lodging which enjoyed a prospect only of blank walls, he remarked grimly that he "loved a tree better than

¹ "Life of Sir George Grove," by C. L. Graves, page 335.

a man.”¹ And if the Pastoral Symphony portrays the soft vale near Vienna where it was composed, so perchance Switzerland’s snowy summits are reflected in the depths of the music of Brahms and Wagner, as in the still lakes of Thun and Lucerne, where the diverse genius of the two great modern masters found a common source of inspiration.

Herbert Oakeley certainly owed much of his interest in life to his passion for romantic scenery. He asserted that seeing a beautiful landscape gave him as much delight as listening to fine music. In his later life he even had recourse to Poetry—to him a less complaisant Muse than his own—and strove to express in verse “those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence,” which lakes and mountains, like symphonies and oratorios, can prompt in minds attuned. Browning tells how

“Rafael made a century of sonnets,
Made and wrote them in a certain volume,

¹ Grove’s “Beethoven and his Nine Symphonies,” page 186.

Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil,
Else he only used to draw Madonnas,"

and how

"Dante once prepared to paint an angel."

And Mendelssohn's sketches filled several volumes. So in thus at times "foregoing his proper dowry," the subject of this Memoir did not lack the authority of great examples.

On April 27, 1877, he went to Windsor, and at the request of Her Majesty Queen Victoria played the organ in St. George's Hall to her, the Duchess of Edinburgh, Princess Christian, Princess Beatrice, and Prince Leopold.

In May 1880 he visited Vienna to be present at the unveiling of the Beethoven monument, for which "the King-Emperor headed the list of subscribers, and next comes Liszt, who gave £1000, the proceeds of a recital; and Germany, Italy, and the United States are represented, but not England. The great Master's 'die Ehre Gottes' was sung as a chorus. The statue stands at a spot he must often have traversed, when, deep in thought, with hat drawn down over a wild,

uncombed head, looking neither to the right nor left, he would hurry through the crowd which made way for him, whilst some whispered, 'Das ist der Beethoven.' The memorial is greatly admired. The composer sits high on a throne of rocks, his lion-like head slightly turned on one side; the figure is in dignified repose. The statue is in bronze, the pedestal in fine Tyrolese porphyry. The latter is artistically adorned with emblems reminiscent of the composer's works. In front, the Cupid tuning his lyre suggests 'Adelaïde.' The four pairs of children, so exquisitely modelled as to be a daily delight to all the nurses and mothers in Vienna, are: (1) A young hero with sword and helmet, and a girl in dejection with reversed torch—in evident allusion to the 'Eroica' Symphony, with its heroic commencement and incomparable funeral march. (2) Matching this pair is a youth of threatening mien, with 'the lightnings of Jove' in one hand, while his other hand holds that of a comrade, who, in utter contrast, is dancing to the sound of his flute, looking the personification of joy and fun.

Here the Ninth Symphony, with its sublime first movement and *Adagio* of unequalled pathos, its marvellous *Scherzo* and its choral *Finale*, is indicated. (3) On the back of the pedestal is a lovely 'duet'—a little maiden sitting by a brook twining a garland, listening to the merry tunes which a chubby-faced youth plays to her on the pan-pipes. This, the finest group, illustrates the 'Scene am Bach' and the shepherd's song in the Pastoral Symphony. Lastly, the fourth pair of children, one of them with the tragic mask in his hand, evidently refers to 'Fidelio,' and other dramatic works and overtures. These statuettes belong to the best sculptors' work in Vienna, and though allegorical, are no cold symbols of antiquated mythology, but are full of life, conveying animated expression of salient and characteristic conceptions of the great tone poet, around whose figure they are so artistically grouped."

Professor Hanslick, in his address at the unveiling, said: "Only large cities can foster and mature artists. Living always at Bonn, Beethoven would not have become the Beethoven

who with Glück, Haydn, Mozart, and Schubert, has rendered the Austrian capital the musical capital of Europe. Here our Master lived and worked for thirty-three years. Manifold and precious are the links Vienna possesses with his personality—all the theatres and gardens where he conducted or listened. He loved Austria and Austrians, and did not revisit the land of his birth.”

At the Gloucester Festival in 1883, Dr. C. H. Hubert Parry conducted his new chorus, “Death’s final conquest,” and “though his work was far above the comprehension of his audience, he was received with the enthusiasm due to him.” Dr. C. H. Lloyd conducted his setting of some lines in Scott’s “Rokeby,” “which, though badly placed at the end of the programme, had the effect of sending the audience home pleased with the composer, themselves, and all concerned.”

“Dr. Stainer, too, conducted his new work, ‘St. Mary Magdalen,’ containing excellent choral writing, and a conclusion original and highly effective. And Dr. C. Villiers Stanford

conducted his fine 'Elegiac Symphony.' " "And by no means the least interesting music heard at this Festival were the great works of Bach, performed by Mr. Brewer and Mr. Sinclair, pupils of Dr. C. H. Lloyd."

At the Lower Rhenish Festival at Düsseldorf in 1884, "the enthusiasm of some seven hundred choral amateurs, giving their unremunerated services from devotion to Art, cannot but reflect itself on audiences of high musical discrimination. As with us, soloists and orchestra are professional musicians."

Schumann's splendid "Overture Scherzo and Finale" was given. Bach's "Magnificat," badly placed at the end of a long and exacting programme, made less than its proper effect. Brahms conducted his "Song of Destiny" and Third Symphony, and some of his lovely songs were sung by Madame Joachim; and Rheinberger's charming work, "Christophorus," was produced. ("The poem by Hoffmann, to which it is set, has an English translation by Lord Wilton, and may be warmly commended to the notice of choral societies in Britain, where

this most interesting composer is hardly known except to organists.") His rather early death in November 1901, though deplored by all musicians, happily did not occur till he had triumphantly finished his twenty organ Sonatas, perhaps the richest treasure-trove for players of the king of instruments since Bach. I possess a precious letter from him dated January 2, 1901, in which he expresses the hope of soon taking in hand No. 20; which appeared, I think, in September.

No prettier story exists of child musicians—and of town councillors—than that of Joseph Rheinberger, appointed organist of Vaduz, his native place, at seven years old:—his small legs were found too short to reach the pedals; so the kindly and discerning city fathers decreed—not that the appointment should be cancelled, but—that a second pedal board of convenient height for the little player should be added to the instrument!

In the summer and autumn of 1887 Sir Herbert Oakeley's "Jubilee Lyric" was performed at the Rugby Speeches, at the Huddersfield Festival, at Mr. J. A. Matthews' Cheltenham

Festival, and elsewhere. At Huddersfield, Hallé's band was engaged, and Albani and Edward Lloyd sang. He had composed this work in response to the following characteristic invitation from his old schoolfellow at Brighton :—

“MY DEAR HERBERT,—I have, by command of the Queen, published a Lyric in celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee. The Queen has written me *two* autograph letters, thanking me and praising the verses. It occurs to me that it would please the Queen very much if you would wed them to immortal music; and our happy friendship of nearly half a century would find an appropriate Jubilee in the conjunction.

“I have sold the copyright to Blackwood, who cordially approves of this suggestion, and the lines appear in his Magazine on 1st March.—
Yours affectionately, ROSSLYN.”

“In November ‘Fidelio’ was given at Edinburgh with the greatest living representative of the chief character, namely, Titiens. Alas! this was the last time, at least in Scotland, that she played that rôle! As an example of

the sort of crass stupidity which sometimes confronts and embarrasses great tragedians, it may be mentioned that the substitute (who knew as much of the story as the babe unborn) for a missing tenor had to take the part of Florestan; and Titiens told me that in the dungeon scene, when Leonora gives her starving husband the piece of bread, 'the man laughed at me!' 'my eyes,' she added, 'were full of tears!'"

At the Chester Festival in 1888, Sir Herbert reported in the *Times* that Sir Arthur Sullivan conducted his "Golden Legend," and both composer and composition ("which shows the hand of a master in his Art") were enthusiastically received.

CHAPTER XV

DOVER, ETC. : 1891-1903

A FEW words will suffice to describe these years, which, in spite of Sir Herbert's bravely borne failing health and growing deafness, saw good work accomplished, as well as well-deserved rest enjoyed.

The deafness was indeed a crowning affliction. The top notes of the piano—of which, by the way, to some people his playing first revealed the use—became quite inaudible to him as music, long before he became unable to hear the impact of the wood in striking them. A much worse loss ensued—the derangement of the “upper partials” of certain instruments and organ stops, bassoons, for instance, and hautboys, which made them sound quite false. Thus when he went with me to hear his own Gavotte played (excellently) by the Dover Borough organist, Mr. H. J. Taylor, on the splendid organ just presented

to the town by Dr. E. F. Astley, the soft part of it he could not hear at all, and the loud parts sounded hopelessly out of tune!

Always keen about Acoustics, he more than half enjoyed a visit to an eminent Aurist whom he wished to consult. But the more interesting to the patient, the less valuable, it would seem, was the conversation. For it happened that to the Aurist, for all his experience, my brother's sense of pitch was a novel phenomenon. Annoyed at first by the irrelevancy of his answer—"That's A Flat"—when asked to state exactly *where* he heard the sound of the tuning fork held near him, he afterwards grew more and more interested in trying all the other forks on him, and in asking "How long he had been able to do that," "How he had learnt to do it," and so on.

Composition, however, in spite of the failure of hearing, still went on. The inner (or innermost) ear remained independent of the organ of hearing, as it had always been. To compose (like most, but not all, composers), he required no instrument to consult or appeal to; nothing but music paper and pencil; often it

was by others than himself that he first heard his things actually played.

His last seven anthems, commented on by Dr. Richardson in the next chapter, were almost all composed at Dover, and one of his greatest joys was (however imperfectly) hearing them, especially at Canterbury, Exeter, and Southwark Cathedrals, the choirs of which were always ready to attack his new works and give them adequate performance.

Another of his "joys," foreign travel, never failed him. When at Rome in 1893, he opened the organ (designed by him) in the English Church, and had the satisfaction of hearing a performance, asked for by the Queen of Italy, who was much interested in his compositions, of his *Orchestral Suite*, at a concert of the Roman Philharmonic Society.

He had the honour the same year, and again in 1899, of playing the pianoforte to Queen Margherita; and when in the Riviera, in the latter year, he played, by gracious invitation of Queen Victoria, at the *Excelsior Regina Hotel* at Cimiez.

CHAPTER XVI

NOTES ON SOME COMPOSITIONS

CASUAL mention has already been made of many of Sir Herbert's compositions. A few notes on some others may be added here; a full list of all his published works is given at the end of this volume.

The testimony of friends, like the gifts of enemies, is apt to be suspected, though often it is the logic of the suspicion, and not that of the friendship, that is at fault. However, I shall say little in this chapter which is not fortified by the opinions of impartial as well as competent critics.

He published an "Album" of his collected songs in 1887 (enlarged in 1890). Many of them have been highly valued and sung with delight by great artists: Titiens, Sims Reeves, Edward Lloyd, Santley, Joseph Maas, Signor Gardoni, Marie Brema, and many others. Professor Moscheles wrote (from Leipzig, May 28, 1860):

“ . . . I am glad to renew my acquaintance with ‘Happy Hours’; I find it a happy association of true expression with German harmonisation. ‘Farewell’ is beautiful. . . . I like also your song ‘O du Mein Mond’ for its lovely melody.” And Madame Lind-Goldschmidt (from Cannes, March 9, 1887): “Mr. Goldschmidt has brought me your beautiful ‘Album of Songs.’ . . . I like much several of your songs; they are warm in feeling, and fine in form. I have not been able to sing them, much as I had wished to do so—for indeed I am under doctor’s treatment, and far more ill than I should like to say.” The mysterious laws which govern the taste in vocal music of the British public have hitherto prevented his songs from attaining wide popularity; and will doubtless continue to do so as long as even “Schumann still stands uncertain on the threshold,” and Brahms and Franz are (in our drawing-rooms) practically unknown; nay, Schubert himself, the greatest of song-writers, though he offers us music not only for Goethe and Heine, but also for Shakespeare and Scott, makes small way

in winning the public ear against "Dulciana" with her milk-and-water ditties, fit to mate with the Muse of some "Proverbial Philosopher," so-called, of the period.

His Anthems, Services, Hymn tunes, and Chants are much better known, thanks to the Cathedrals and Churches, whose standard of vocal music—at the worst—is so far in advance of the drawing-room, and even concert room. Unfortunately it is to be feared our Church-goers still return home but little shaken in their musical misbeliefs, and more than content to exchange the arduous sublime¹ of Bach and Handel, Purcell and Wesley, for the ridiculous drawing-room ballad, or even the pseudo-ridiculous music-hall "comic" song. And "what people like to hear at home," says Sir Hubert Parry, "is the true test of their standard of refinement."

Many of his earlier anthems have been often given at important functions. "This is the day" has been sung at many Episcopal "enthronements," an occasion to which the words are throughout appropriate. But under a favourable

¹ "Divitias operosiores"!

review of that effective anthem, he himself wrote in pencil, "but I shall do better." And it is to the fulfilment of the words I now shall call attention.

The Anthem or "Motett," "Who is this?" (1884) is the first example of his new departure in English anthem-writing:—namely, the introduction of a hymn tune—in this case the composer's own "Edina"—after the manner of Bach, as a direct appeal to congregations, (generally hymn-lovers even if sometimes fugue-haters,) not only to admire, but also to join in. Should the challenge ever be accepted, a grand effect will be secured. Even pending the fulfilment of the hope, the effect *is* very fine.

"This plan," says Dr. A. Madeley Richardson of Southwark Cathedral, "has in my experience proved eminently successful." "'Who is this?'" he goes on to say,¹ "is a very fine anthem, ending with a developed fugue; it has orchestral accompaniment. 'Edina,' at first soft in A flat, then a semitone lower in loudest unison, rivets the attention of all."

¹ In a review of "Seven Anthems by Sir Herbert Oakeley," in the *London Musical Courier*, May 9 and 16, 1903.

No. 2, "The Glory of Lebanon," was composed for the eighth centenary of the consecration of Winchester Cathedral, and was on that occasion highly appreciated. The tune introduced is 'Abends' (Sun of my soul)."

No. 3, "Orion," would be a splendid choice for a Service before a meeting of the British Association. To continue Dr. Richardson's criticism:—

"Beginning with the words, 'Seek Him that maketh the Seven Stars and Orion,' it has reference throughout to the glorious works of the Creator. A striking and unusual effect is obtained in the opening choral recitative, where the four registers of voices—basses, tenors, altos, and trebles—enter separately, and after starting in unison are heard in their own three- or four-part harmony. A chorale ('Victoria'), 'He alone the heavens hath outspread,' is introduced in four and subsequently in five parts; and the anthem, which contains beautiful and uncommon modulations, concludes with some of the verses of the 'Song of the Three Children,' set to the composer's popular

Quadruple chant, the theme of which is afterwards worked up to a grand climax; and the 'Dresden Amen,' contrapuntally treated, ends a work which has already made its mark at some of our cathedrals and great churches."

Sir George Grove, Principal of the Royal College of Music, wrote of this anthem: "Thank you for 'Orion,' which looks splendid to me, especially page 14, &c. Splendid transitions (though difficult to sing in tune?); what lots of good counterpoint there is, too. I am going to ask our organist here to play it to me shortly."

No. 4 brings in the composer's tune, "Clifton College," "and ends with a fugue, which, in technical language, contains 'inversion' of both theme and counter-theme, and also has the 'stretto' designated by the old Italian contrapuntists 'maestrale' — the employment of a device by which each voice is made to sing an interrupted sentence in stretto. In the instance under notice, both of the principal themes conform to law, the 'Duces' taking and finishing the passage 'Who shall show forth all Thy praise,'

while the 'Comites' carry out the same rule in the whole of the phrase, 'He maketh wars to cease.'"

No. 5 "commences in very different style, with a quintet of delicate beauty to words from the Song of Solomon, 'Behold the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.' A metrical version of 'Day is Thine, and Night is Thine' (Psalm lxxiv.), is adapted to one of Sir Herbert's fine tunes in the last edition of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern,' and a Fugue 'Be Thou exalted' concludes the work, in which a stretto on similar lines to those in the 'Peace' anthem above alluded to occurs. 'This anthem,' says a recent musical paper, 'may be classed as one of the most effective and valuable additions to the sacred works of living composers. It is full of rich harmonies, beautiful melodies, and scholarly writing.'"

"No. 6, numbered Op. 40, has as its most striking feature a setting of that magnificent passage in Habakkuk, which includes 'The eternal mountains were scattered: the everlasting hills did bow'; 'Thou didst walk through

the sea with Thy horses, through the surge of mighty waters.' This might almost be described as an organ solo with vocal accompaniment, the voices having allotted to them fragmentary passages of a vigorous character, partly in unison, which at intervals break in upon the continuous 'Storm' movement of the instrument; which latter, it may be noticed, makes considerable demands upon the skill of the executant. It ends with the composer's Chorale 'Evelyn.'"

"' *Finis coronat opus* ' may, we think, be said of the last of these remarkable anthems, Op. 42. As if to compensate for the 'darkness' and storm and stress portrayed in the previous work, the final number is permeated throughout with 'Light,' its commencement being 'The Lord is my Light' (Psalm xxvii.), and its motto, 'Lead, kindly Light.' In the first chorus the passages, 'Whom then shall I fear, of whom shall I be afraid?' supply the chief interest to the hearers, the question being given alternately to the Decani and Cantoris sides of choirs, or to semi-chorus if sung by choral societies. Towards the end of this movement some very

unusual modulations occur of a nature much in vogue with this composer, which cannot fail to attract attention. The quartet which follows, repeated in chorus, 'Thy word is a lantern unto my feet,' and the next movement, 'O send out Thy light and Thy truth,' partly for men's voices only, are among the best specimens of concerted vocal music which the Composer has written, and seem to have been greatly admired in the recent production of the new work at Canterbury, and at Southwark. A choral recitative, 'In the daytime He led them with a cloud, and all the night through with a light of fire,' leads to 'Lux Alma,' probably the earliest setting of Cardinal Newman's exquisite lines, which, by the way, he entitled 'The Pillar of the Cloud.' The first verse of the now almost sacred text is set in harmony, in E flat, and at the second verse a neat modulation takes us to E natural, when unison is employed with florid organ accompaniment, calling the pedals into active requisition. Another enharmonic change leads to A flat major, and after a return, 'O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent,' to the original key of

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the anthem, 'Lux Alma' ends *pianissimo*, with the touching words:

'Till the night is gone,
And, with the morn, those angel faces smile,
Which we have loved long since, and lost awhile,'

thus beautifully translated by Canon Kynaston:

'Dum nox fugerit,
Et ora mane caelitem diu
Dilecta, vix amissa, arrideant.'

"From the above remarks, it will be understood that the music under review evinces highest aim;—nor does the composer lower his standard. His works no doubt present difficulties, but none, as results have proved, which efficient choirs may not master. It is known that Oakeley received exceptional encouragement from S. S. Wesley, who frequently asked the then young organist to extemporise the concluding voluntary at Winchester; to his protégé some consider that the mantle of our great Church musician has descended."

The Funeral March was published in 1875. The *Musical Record* called it "a funeral dirge which in addition is decidedly heroic in character.

The trio, which is especially charming, is full of consolation, and the concluding strains of the work, in which the major mode is happily reached, seem indicative of faith in the future."

The *Musical Times* observed on the same piece: "Considering the many eminent men who have left us undying specimens of this class of composition, a Funeral March is a somewhat hazardous work to attempt; but the composer's ambition rarely leads him to overtask his powers, and his latest contribution is in every way worthy of his reputation as an earnest and conscientious artist. The introduction, with muffled drums, effectively leads to the subject of the March with creeping crotchet accompaniment for the basses; and the theme of the Trio, in the Tonic major, comes in with much freshness, the first bassoon and oboe strengthening the melody given forth by the violin. We hope and believe that we may shortly hear this composition in the Metropolis."

A word should be added about the "Bible Psalter" and "Prayer Book Psalter." The grand aim of these works was the reconciliation

of the congregational ideal of Church music with the artistic ideal. The congregation gets its desire, and sings its unison—*but only in its apportioned verses*. In the rest of the Psalm, Cerberus having got his sop is content to keep silence, and no longer, as of old, hangs upon the flanks of an embarrassed choir with his inopportune melody in octaves, and other hindrances to harmony. The consequence is that the pure four-part harmony of the choir is able, for the first time in the history of English Psalm chanting, to make its proper effect. This judicious use of the principle of contrast was first tried in the Quadruple chant for the 78th Psalm, written long ago for Canterbury Cathedral. Who that has heard it can forget the effect of the congregational unison coming in at the verse “Marvellous things did He in Egypt,” or at “Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep,” or again of the choir’s unaccompanied harmony in “As for His people, He led them forth like sheep”?

Some letters written from Clifton and Cheltenham Colleges (at both of which Schools the

book was introduced about the same time, 1886) will serve to explain the principles of the "Prayer Book Psalter."

Archdeacon Wilson, Headmaster of Clifton, writes, July 28, 1886:—

"We have now had your Psalter in use for one term, and I think it will be of interest to you to hear about the effect of the introduction of the book. It is not too much to say that it has made the whole school attend to the Psalms, chant them with delight, and look forward to that part of the service with special interest. The choir sing better because they are conscious that they are being listened to in the verses sung in harmony, and are in a sort of competition with the school. The school sing—I cannot say better, because they did not sing at all before—but now they sing with real feeling as well as enthusiasm. I do not think that any one who heard congregational chanting on the lines of your Psalter would hesitate for a moment in saying that this is the right method of bringing out the full beauty and meaning of the Psalms. As to the selection of

chants, I do not yet know the book thoroughly. I can say, however, that we have greatly enjoyed them. It may seem a small thing to mention, but it is characteristic, and school-masters at least would appreciate the testimony, when I say that as I was going into chapel on the last morning of term to our shortened final service, in which there are no Psalms, one of the elder boys, not high in the school, not musical, who scarcely ever spoke to me before, came up and said, 'Sir, you know I am leaving—might we have the 122nd and 133rd Psalms this morning—the school like them so much!' So we had them. In a word, nothing that I have ever done at Clifton has been more certainly a success than the introduction of your book. It has thrown new life into our chapel services. You have heard how striking and impressive our service now is. Every one who attends it feels a new emotion, gets a new conception of what a Psalm is when chanted on your method."

The Rev. T. E. Brown, Assistant Master at Clifton College, wrote:—

“We have had some good and close work with your Psalter, and it has, I assure you, been a labour of love. . . . You might well be ‘thinking’ of us on the 28th evening: the refrain, “For His mercy endureth for ever,” went gloriously. . . . We may look forward to your Psalter becoming a bond of union among all Public Schools. . . . Here we had the school in successive blocks to sing with the choir; then practisings with the whole school. By the headmaster's desire, I opened these practisings with a few words. The boys were admirable for docility; I could scarcely have believed that six hundred lads would so well bear an hour's practice of that kind, the majority being uninstructed in music. But I felt sure they liked being taught. Boys like good teaching, and Mr. Trimnell taught them well. Some of them, I dare say, were a little surprised to hear me talk of the ‘Recitation,’ and so forth, as *preciosa* to be regarded and handled as the daintiest of jewels or the most sacred of *arcana*; but their attention was complete. Our difficulty at commencing was with the choir, to many of

which the usual jerky method fostered by accents and asterisks is quite inevitable. The most charming phenomenon is the mighty *acclaim*, or 'conclaim,' if you will, of the whole school. There is in your book much to interest the boys. They cannot go to sleep over it; they like 'to watch where we are to come in, and then wait for another burst' of unison. . . . The contrasts afforded by the singing of the choir and by that of the whole school, including the choir, are most interesting. The school are on the *qui vive* for their 'coming in,' and they do come in to a purpose. . . . The 'acclaim' of the school seems to take up the strain from the choir with a sort of *Nos quoque*. Beside the ordinary and recognised notions which affect congregational singing, we seem to gain something of that vigour, heartiness, *esprit de corps*, or whatever it be, that is associated with our work, as with our play, here."

And another Clifton Master, the Rev. H. J. Wiseman, wrote:—

"We owe you a deep debt of gratitude for your Psalter. Our efforts to do justice to your

book have from the first been a labour of love, and the result has been little less than a revolution in our chanting. We 'sing unto the Lord a new song.' The Psalms and Canticles have become far more attractive and interesting than ever before, and I do not think it too much to say that they are thoroughly enjoyed by us all. The frequent alternations of unison and harmony have proved a most happy idea: they are always striking and effective, often infinitely moving, where, as is so frequently the case, the chant is in most subtle sympathy with the words. We now sing with hearts as well as voices."

The Rev. Herbert Kynaston, D.D., Principal of Cheltenham College, said—

". . . Your system is just that which I have always thought best—especially for congregations such as ours, where, the choir being expected to do all the musical work, the rest are shy of joining in, and so stand silent. But with your Psalter in their hands they watch for their turn with attention and eagerness, and take it up with spirit and energy enough to rouse the

‘sons of Korah.’ One of the interpretations of the mysterious word ‘Selah’ is *vocem tolle*, or *voces tollite*, and this may have been a sign for a burst of congregational melody, according to your system; the Hebrew *tutti*. I hope you will hear us some day when we are improved in intonation and steadiness on reciting note. . . .”

Some of the Assistant Masters of Cheltenham College, including the organist, Dr. Dyer, also testified to the same effect:—

“Our choral service, from being dull and lifeless, has become hearty and bright. The effect of the new system is striking and impressive in the extreme; and we are convinced that (especially for such a service as ours) your Psalter is vastly superior to any other in existence.”

To these testimonies must be added one—not without its bit of ‘local colour’—from a Scottish clergyman in distant Shetland:—

“I have known your ‘Te Deum’ chant since I was a boy, and have used it oftener

than any other setting to that great Hymn; and we use it regularly to the 78th Psalm. The single chant for parts of Psalm 80 in your 'Prayer Book Psalter' is most lovely, *and at once recalls the bagpipes!*"

CONCLUSION

HERBERT OAKELEY'S religious views remained throughout his life true to the impress received in his boyhood and youth. For two paramount influences, those of his mother and his University, chiefly moulded him, as they have moulded other characters like his tender but not weak.

His mother died when he was under fourteen, but

“ diu dilecta, vix amissa,”

she was never far from his thoughts, as his frequent references to her showed quite to the end of his life. He hardly ever omitted to write to his sister on the anniversaries of their mother's death, January 26th.

And what Cardinal Newman said of his uncle, Frederick Oakeley, might nearly as aptly have been said of him—“he was almost a typical Oxford man.”

A third influence might be added: Canterbury Cathedral; in the North East Transept

of which—at a spot daily passed and repassed by the choir—his friends, mindful of his cherished wish and last injunction, will place a tablet recording his debt of nurture.

His mental and especially his musical pre-occupations shielded him securely from even overhearing the discords of controversy which in his life-time so largely occupied ears in this sense more receptive than his.

Some who admired without fully appreciating the “tender grace” of his character were perhaps hardly prepared for the patient heroism under misfortune evoked by his accident and its consequences. Those consequences, direct and indirect, were many and grievous; and were eventually aggravated, as already described, by that worst of ills to a musician, deafness, which made him hear discordant strains in musical instruments,

“Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh,”

not to speak of total insensibility to all strains but loud ones: but this was the lesser evil!

His Anthems, Services, Hymn tunes, and

even Chants, expressing so exactly and so worthily the spirit of English Cathedral worship, are a most true index of his deepest beliefs and tastes.

And thus, his Church's last tribute to him—the singing of two of his (and her) most characteristic hymns at his funeral¹—was justly said in the *Guardian* to be “due to one of her most loyal sons.”

¹ “Edina” (Saviour, blessed Saviour) and “Abends” (Sun of my soul).

APPENDIX

PUBLISHED COMPOSITIONS OF SIR HERBERT OAKELEY

- A. Anthems:—Three anthems, Op. 5:¹—“Whatsoever is born” (for Trinity-tide), “Behold now, praise the Lord,” “O God who hast prepared.” Six anthems, Op. 14:—“O praise the Lord,” “O God our Refuge,” “This is the day,” “O Everlasting God,” “Come unto Me,” “Now unto the King.” Four anthems, Op. 21:²—“Evening and Morning,” “Past and Future,” “Shadow and Light,” “Death and Life” (from “In Memoriam”). Seven anthems, Op. 26, 32, 34, and 39–42:—“Who is this,” “The Glory of Lebanon,” “Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion,” “Sing, O daughter of Zion,” “Though there be darkness,” “Spring and Summer tide,” “The Lord is my Light.”—“Magnificate Dominum” (Bach’s E major Fugue, arranged as an Anthem with English and Latin words).
- B. Other Church Music:—Full Morning and Evening Service in E flat, Op. 9; Prayer Book Psalter;³

¹ Novello.

² Forsyth.

³ Nisbet. (All the rest, Schott, 159 Regent Street.)

Bible Psalter;¹ Hymns for mixed and for men's voices; Six hymns for orchestra, Op. 31; Two Chorales; Hymns and Chants in various collections.

- C. Songs and Choruses:—Album of 26 Songs (most to be had separately; many with orchestral accompaniment). Three duets, Op. 8. Songs for male voices, Op. 25:—"Troubadour," "Omnia vincit Amor," "Home they brought," "Shall I tell you whom I love." Six Part Songs for men's voices, Op. 17. Scottish National Melodies for men's voices in chorus (18 numbers), Op. 38, dedicated to Scottish Univ. Mus. Societies. Two Students' Songs (for Edinburgh and St. Andrews). Three Choruses, Op. 16. Jubilee Lyric (short Cantata), Op. 29. "A Golden Reign," Op. 36. Dawn and Eventide, Op. 37.
- D. Pianoforte Music:—Rugby Waltzes, Op. 1; Mazurka Brillante, Op. 3; Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 19; Sonata in A ma, Op. 20; three Romances, Op. 33 (No. 1 played by Hallé, Bulow, &c.); two Marches² (arranged from score, see below); Suite (arranged from score).
- E. Organ Music:—Andante from "Organists' Journal"; two Marches arranged from score;¹ many arrangements from Bach, &c.
- F. For Orchestra:—Funeral March, Op. 23; "Edinburgh" March, Op. 22; Suite in Olden Style, Op. 27; Hymn Tunes (under B, above).

¹ Nisbet.

² Forsyth. (All the rest, Schott, 159 Regent Street.)

NOTE ON SIR HERBERT OAKELEY'S
PIANOFORTE PLAYING

[A fascinating subject, on which I have said but little, and may here make some amends by transcribing *verbatim* an account once duly rendered in print of the musical proceeds of three productive afternoons. The mere list seems but a poor thing to offer. Yet mere lists, especially of music, can possess a euphony of their own; and this one may still convey—at least to musicians—some faint aroma, as of old *pot-pourri*.]

“A reminder of hours in any case not easy to forget; being a record of some of the music played by Sir Herbert Oakeley during three afternoon visits at Pembroke Lodge, Clifton, in July 1890:—

BACH.—Preludes and Fugues (Organ), G ma, G mi (two), A mi, E mi, B mi. (“48,” Part I.), C sharp mi, B mi, D flat, E flat, B flat, and (of Part 2) D mi, E mi, A flat, B flat minor.

HANDEL.—Choruses, “Then round about,” “The horse and his rider,” “He led them through the deep,” and some other “Israel” choruses.

BEETHOVEN.—Egmont Overture; last movement of D mi Pf. Sonata.

MOZART.—Minuet, G mi Symphony; Minuet, &c. “Don Giovanni.”

MENDELSSOHN.—Several songs without words, including A ma (Clara Schumann's), G mi (arpeggio), A flat (duet), and “Auf Flügeln des Gesanges.”

SCHUMANN.—Kreisleriana, Finale; Variations, last movement.

CHOPIN.—Polonaises, Nos. 1 and 2; some Études.

HELLER.—Nuits Blanches, several; Tarantella; fantasia on Schubert's "Forelle."

SCHUBERT.—"Ständchen," "Ungeduld."

H. S. OAKELEY. — Mazurka, Rondo Capriccioso, Gavotte, "Troubadour" song, other MS. songs; and several extempore fantasias.

TESTE E. M. O."

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¹ (First so used at his performance at the Hanover Square Rooms, June 9, 1840.)

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THE END

ADDENDUM

The *Musical Times* of June 1904 quotes an announcement in the London newspapers of June 1844 which aptly illustrates page 150 of this book:—

“The organ in the Hanover Square Rooms being found by Dr. Mendelssohn not to have *German Pedals*, he is prevented giving the Organ Performance, as previously announced.”



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