

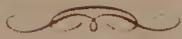
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# PURITY IN MUSIC



A. F. THIBAUT





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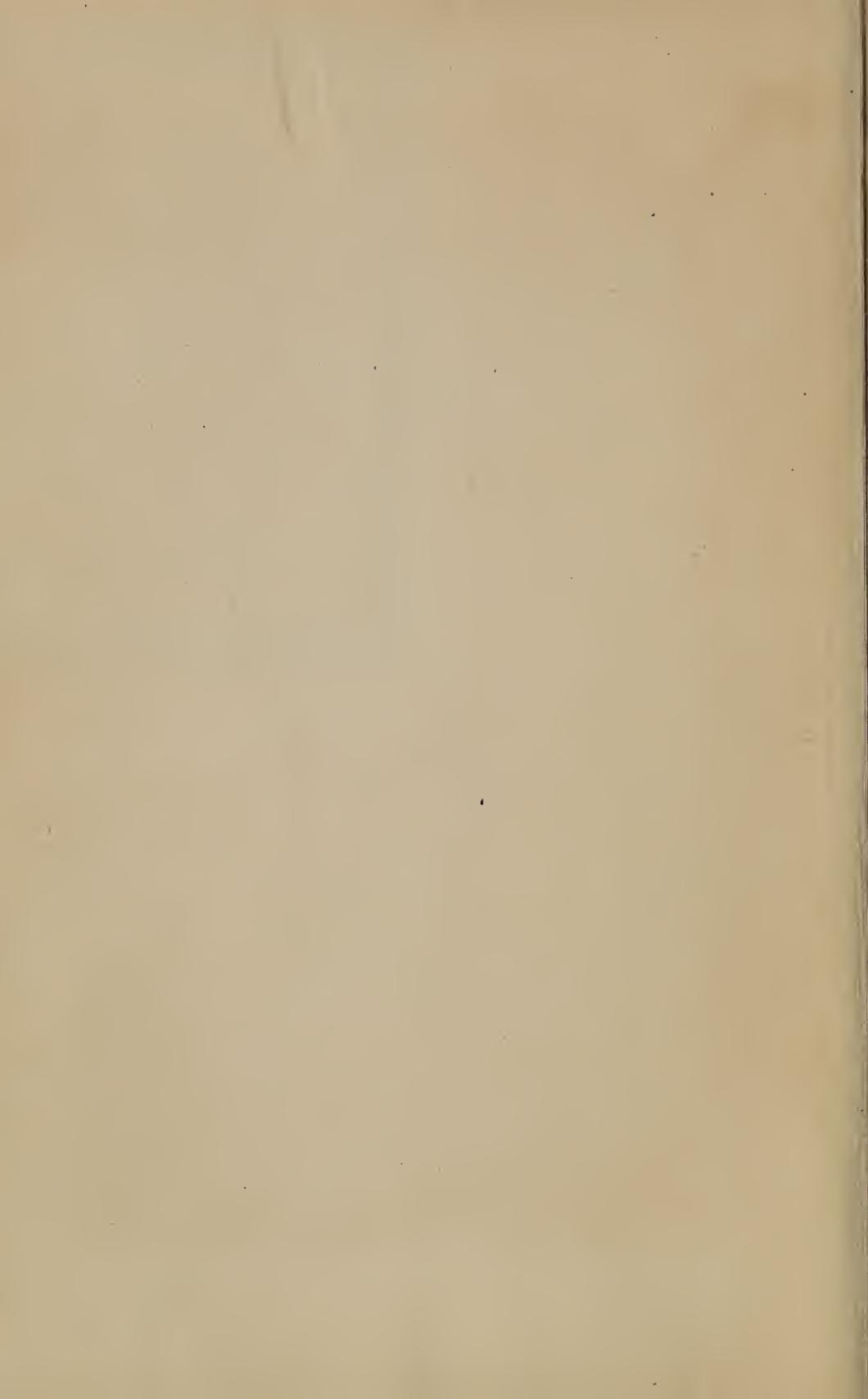
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# PURITY IN MUSIC.

BY

A. F. THIBAUT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

JOHN BROADHOUSE.

AUTHOR OF

"THE STUDENT'S HELMHOLTZ," "VIOLINS, OLD AND NEW," ETC.

LONDON:

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## P R E F A C E .

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ROBERT SCHUMANN said Thibaut's book was "a fine work on the Tone-art," and recommends his young friends to "read it frequently"; and no apology is therefore needed for giving English readers a cheap edition of a book which won the encomiums of that eminent composer and critic. Only one word is necessary as to the translation, which I have tried to put into language which will bring before English readers the ideas a German would receive on reading the original. The heading of Chapter VII., for instance, is "Ueber Vielseitigkeit," or, "On Manysidedness"; but the latter is an awkward word, and I think the heading I have adopted gives an equivalent idea.

Thibaut was a jurist first, and a musician afterwards, but his work on "Purity in Music" is that of a genuine lover of the best things in art. If

he was devoted to the old composers and neglected the new, his devotion was of the right sort, and in these later days (his book was first published in 1825) he may help somewhat to counteract the prevailing tendency to belaud the new at the expense of the old.

J. B.

*October, 1882.*

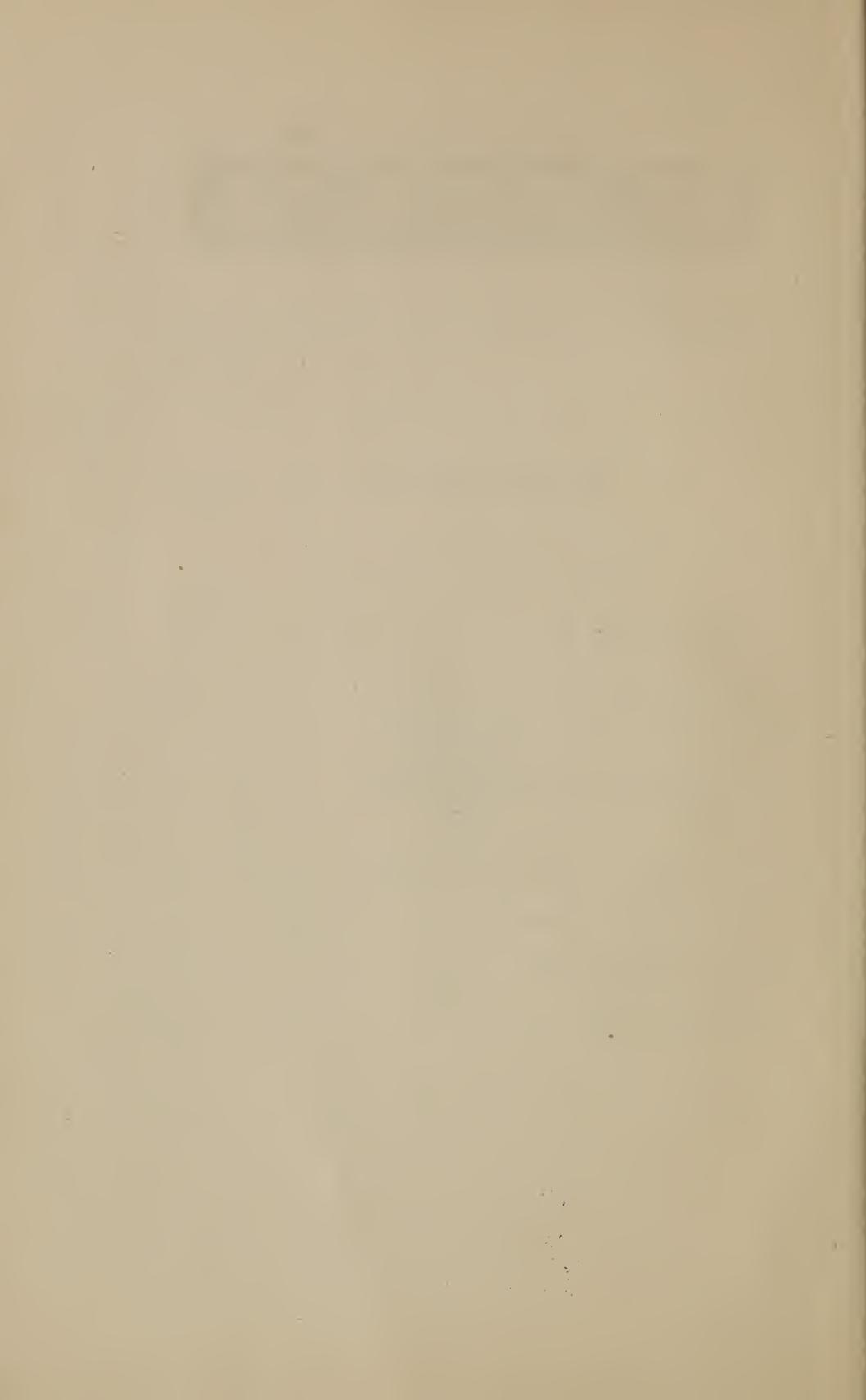




## CONTENTS.



	PAGE
I.—On the Chorale .. .. .	I
II.—Church Music other than the Chorale .. .. .	21
III.—Popular Melodies .. .. .	37
IV.—The Educating Influence of Good Models .. .. .	45
V.—Effect .. .. .	51
VI.—On Judging the Works of Great Masters .. .. .	67
VII.—As to a Liberal Judgment .. .. .	79
VIII.—On Perversions of Text .. .. .	83
IX.—Choral Societies .. .. .	89





# PURITY IN MUSIC.

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## I.

### ON THE CHORALE.

It was probably never so universally admitted as in the present day that the foundation of all true knowledge is, and must be, the study and acquaintance with the great classics which have been handed down to us by our ancestors. Only thus can such assured progress be made, when we so profit by the teachings of others as to gather new strength for the advancement of knowledge. The study of the works of the old masters has also this negative advantage—it convinces empty pretenders of their emptiness, and turns their attention to the calm enjoyment for themselves and the spreading a knowledge amongst others of the grand models we have inherited from bygone times. Real geniuses, such as Plato, Raphael, and Shakespeare, appear but seldom; but they have influenced many generations, and their power has been felt through the ages. Therefore is it a most sorry conceit for any man, through confidence in himself, to neglect the study of the great spirits of

former days, and thus to say in effect that he is able to produce what they produced. Amongst the younger race of educated men it is a point of honour to study the classics; and an aspiring painter would no more dare to deride the study of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Van Eyck, and Dürer, than would a young poet give to the world a new Iliad, or King Lear, without first studying the undying works of Homer and Shakespeare. Thus it is that in poetry, in painting, and in architecture, we see a freshness and vigour pleasant to behold, though frequently enough a want of power prevents the mightiest efforts of the will from achieving full success.

It is only in matters musical that pride, haughtily disdaining the Past, is the order of the day, although all the great masters who formed that Past set us a far better example. Handel, Hasse, and Graun ardently sought the opportunity of studying music in Italy. They did not do what most of our modern professors do, and by prodigious labour master a few show pieces under the miserable delusion that good taste is to be found, as a rule, in the concert room; but while they composed grand works and offered them to the world for approval, they themselves were diligent students of all the good music within their reach, and lost no opportunity of knowing what others had composed before them. Even John Sebastian Bach, who was hindered from going abroad for that purpose, was a most devout student of the works of others—the immortal Venetian, Caldara, attracting his particular attention. And Mozart, although his genius was of such a character as to make him well-nigh independent of extraneous aid, still regarded the celebrated works of the old masters, particularly those

of Handel and J. S. Bach, with feelings akin to reverence ; and we owe it chiefly to his edition of the "Messiah" that Handel's name has lived through an age of musical shallowness. But now all this has changed. There is almost a universal confidence in our own strength, an unlimited number of original manufactures, and for the most part a sneering disregard for so-called antiquated music. Masters like Antonio Lotti and Alessandro Scarlatti, at whose shrine Handel and Hasse were devout worshippers, are to-day to most people unknown, even by name ; and even the incomparable Handel himself is not, if we except a few places, regarded with the reverence due to his inexhaustible genius, which was in many ways unique. And this ignorance of the musical past, and still worse indifference, are not confined alone to what we call Church and Oratorio music ; for in operatic matters general knowledge does not go far behind to-day. Handel's operas are no longer heard ; and to speak well of those of Caldara and Lotti is to ensure certain laughter. So is it with the Fugue. Things which are so-called are produced in thousands year by year, having the form of the Fugue, but destitute of its life ; but the master-pieces of Scarlatti, which aroused the wonder of Hasse and Handel, are scarcely known by one in a thousand of the young composers, organists, and teachers of our day. In the same way, also, we are deluged daily with songs ; but the study of old national songs, which are often very charming, and furnish a close view of the characters of different peoples, has fallen entirely into disuse ; although, when we remember the force and vigour of ancient nations, a rich harvest might surely have been looked for in this field.

Plain enough is the reason of this sad state of affairs. To understand a Madonna by Raphael, to be impressed by such a cathedral as that of Cologne, or to become familiar with the great things of Shakespeare, requires only good eyes and unimpaired faculties, combined with intelligence to some extent cultivated: moreover, failures in architecture, painting, and poetry, cannot possibly be covered up. But the great masterpieces of music are like gold deeply buried, which few are able and willing to bring to the light of day. Many of the finest things lie in manuscript scores, scattered everywhere. A journey to Italy does not greatly mend matters without skilled study; for even there the best compositions (if we except a number performed in the Sistine Chapel) are hidden away out of sight; and you may journey from Milan to Naples and not hear a single word about Vittoria or Lotti. Who, however, has the wherewithal to buy these full scores, and how many are there of our everyday musicians—I ask it in all earnestness—who are able to decipher scores which are in themselves no child's play, and are withal written in an ancient notation? But when that notation is learnt, and the scores procured, the labour is only at its commencement. It is necessary, so to speak, to repaint the picture to give it its proper colours; a competent body of men must perform with ability and zeal a work produced by ability and zeal; and where shall we find the men who can worthily put on the harness of the giants of the olden time? Thus it is that our so-called *virtuosi*, as well as our directors and teachers, fight shy of the old music, and seek in every way to bring into contempt the innumerable musical treasures of which we can boast. And this they

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succeed in doing without difficulty; for the public, of whatever degree, has no musical principles of its own, and is compelled to take whatever is offered it. This being the case, musical professors dominate public taste by sheer force of finished mechanism. Furthermore, there is this dangerous element about music; if a limb is badly drawn in a picture, or anything grates on the moral sense, a healthy eye finds sufficient grounds for criticism, and turns away (at any rate if there are lookers-on) for very shame, but in musical composition there may possibly be hidden all sorts of impurities and unhealthy and immoral elements; and so it comes about that the unwary take in wholesale wretched stuff which would for honour's sake be rejected if it was the work of the pen or pencil; and the composers and performers of to-day have a good time of it, because, when they stoop to what is sensational, ill-formed, absurd, and vile, they find, alas! only too many willing hearers. Frequently the educated connoisseur, when the words, "Oh! how fine," fall upon his ear, says nothing, out of mere politeness; because, to speak the truth about such an exclamation would undoubtedly give great offence. The public, in its turn, when the professors have accustomed its ears to a common and vulgar style of music, has its depraved taste confirmed, and tyrannizes over the professors, just as the head corrupts the stomach and the stomach the head, the one aggravating the other until there is nothing left but to hope for speedy death. Plato, in his time, attacked pernicious music; but what would he have said had he witnessed the gymnastic displays of our time, in which, with six fingers more, so-called art would vanish in smoke—works utterly contrary to nature, feeble and full of

license and passion, and yet seldom rising to the height of true inspiration? As a matter of fact, it is with music as it is with the affairs of everyday life; for we do not either here or elsewhere refer to those exceptions which are happily not wanted; and we are hardly so well off as we should be with respect to the Drama, if it were subject to no better influences than the mere whim or fancy of actors.

But all this cannot be passed over quietly, as though it referred to concert rooms and theatres alone. If matters are too much for us there, we can, at any rate, stay away, and try to find consolation for ourselves in better things. Into the church, however, the vices of music ought not to be permitted to enter. Her children are connected with her by moral considerations; and, if instead of religious feelings being fostered to the utmost, grave scandals arise from the perversion of what is in itself most noble and most beautiful, the conduct which brings about such a condition of things is altogether without excuse. Yet this is done everywhere, alas! although in no place could the choicest of the old music be preserved so well as in our churches. For if we paid no attention to the foolish vagaries of fashion we might with confidence depend upon the public always of their own accord regarding the works of antiquity as such with the greatest respect, inasmuch as they clearly see that those works are well-nigh the only means by which strength and purity of thought can be retained. Besides this, there were the most urgent motives for preserving, pure and unchanged, the original Chorales of each church; for, although art may do a great deal in the way of addition or ornament, it will ever remain an indubitable fact that tunes which are,

so to speak, the clear, simple, and natural outcome of an impassioned and strongly moved spirit, have an indescribable charm of which we never grow weary ; and, as we see to be the case with many national songs, they live on always fresh and vigorous in the memory of a nation unless they be destroyed by influences from outside. All the churches had in their first days a period of glowing enthusiasm which they can never again experience ; and in those times of burning religious fervour each church strove its utmost to further the improvement of its choral music under the direction of men who were most intimately acquainted with the ancient church modes.

How is it possible, then, to account for the pride of modern times, so cold, so weak, and so thoroughly worldly in the things of religion, seeing that it exhibits (even in the Church) nothing but its own works, and carelessly casts aside everything that would impart joy and delight to the souls of genuine Christians ? And yet this has been done to the greatest extent where we should have looked for it least, and to the least extent where we might have expected it the most. This applies particularly to the Russo-Greek Church. She alone has remained faithful to the past with rigid tenacity as far as was possible in a world of constant change, and has preserved a great deal which would in all probability carry us back to the second or third century. The grandeur of her old tunes has invariably aroused the admiration of those best able to judge ; and an anecdote was recently current in St. Petersburg to the effect, that a celebrated French composer, who visited the imperial chapel there cried out bitterly on leaving the chapel, " Must I then come to St. Petersburg to hear for the

first time proper church music?" It is naturally presumed that after the twelfth century, and particularly since the time of Catherine II., much that is new has been introduced; although with regard to the liturgy and the congregational part of the service, the music continues practically unaltered; and it is therefore the more to be lamented that no one has endeavoured to bring it as a whole to the light, for the study of it would, as I well know from my own experience, undoubtedly throw much light upon the ancient Greek modes. The Church of Rome, from its very nature, was more than all others urged by the most powerful motives to retain those grand original tunes known as Ambrosian or Gregorian; those (so far as I know them) truly sublime and heavenly songs and intonations which, originated by genius and improved by art in the youngest and grandest days of the Church, impress the soul more deeply than many of our modern compositions which are specially designed for effect. And yet the Sistine Chapel, though wonderfully faithful to the masterpieces of mediæval times, does not seem to pay the same regard to these earlier melodies. In any event it is certain that nowhere in Italy can information be obtained respecting the Ambrosian and Gregorian tunes. In Germany the most that could be got would be a few quotations from the work of Forkel: and as for the rest, it appears to be considered the proper thing to know scarcely anything about them. It could not, indeed, be otherwise so long as these tunes are repudiated by those who are in authority. The cathedral of Cologne would have been a fitting receptacle in which this magnificent inheritance of the olden time should have found its home; yet what

do we see? In the year 1741 appeared at Cologne, duly sanctioned by the Elector, and belauded by the censors, that Tune Book which has since been so extensively used, namely, "The New Hymn Book for Church and Home, sacred to God and the Lamb, for the Daughter of Sion travelling on the threefold way of perfection to the heavenly Jerusalem;"\* and yet even this Hymn Book is full of light and trivial tunes—a statement which would be altogether incredible if we were not told in the Preface that, in order to obtain variety, the Editor had secured the services of many different hands, "as most of the tunes in the old Hymn Book in common use have *become corrupt*, or are not of an edifying character." It may be said without exaggeration that "The Mock Nightingale," a half-sacred half-romantic book of devotion and amusement, published with music by a Jesuit at Cologne in 1649, is with all its romancing a more spiritual book than this only too renowned Chorale Book.

Going next to the Hymns of the Hussites, the one thing we find about them to cheer us is, that Luther used and highly esteemed them, and that they are even now used to a certain extent—though no doubt modernised in many ways—by the Moravian Churches. Yet these are the tunes which of all others least deserve oblivion; for springing from a stock which has up to the present time distinguished itself everywhere by great musical powers—the outpourings of an intensely fervent spirit under tyranny and persecution the chorales of the Hussites carry the marks of

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\* "Neues Gott und dem Lamm geheiligtes Kirchen-und Haus-Gesang der auf dreifachen Wege der Volkommenheit nach dem himmlischen Jerusalem wandernden Tochter Sion."

spiritual power, humble resignation, and moral nobility, that can hardly be equalled elsewhere. And yet the Protestants have entirely forgotten them; and their forgetfulness and neglect are the more unpardonable, seeing that this very Hussite Hymn Book was, according to tradition, considered so dangerous by the Jesuits that they bought and burnt the whole edition except a few copies, one of which has fortunately come into my own hands. This would have furnished an excellent motive for encouraging the proscribed book, by the issue of a new and large edition. But no one thought of so doing till just lately, while in the interval, the most trashy things were being published as though they were treasures which it was a necessity that every one should possess.

What Luther did for the chorale—how, so to speak, his ardour for sacred music consumed him like a fire, how he sang with his choir-boys far into the night, how, as Walter, who was an eye-witness, describes, it seemed impossible that we could tire or grow weary of singing, and how the fire appeared to be kindled ever more and more in his soul—all this everybody knows. Many excellent remarks of Luther's are matter of common conversation. Notwithstanding all this, the music in the churches founded by him rapidly deteriorated.

In 1628 appeared the Chorale Book of the eminent Heinrich Schütz; a book which was in many ways suited to the newly-acquired taste. The Preface to that book states that it was necessary to make allowances for the spirit of the age, but Schütz adds with some compunction, "I must confess, however, that I think some of the old tunes were the creation of

celestial seraphims rather than of men." Every one who is acquainted with music knows how these melodies have latterly been translated into modern scales, and overloaded with sudden changes and modulations. John Sebastian Bach, before whose grandeur, we are all willing to bow when he shows himself to us in perfect simplicity, might, without doubt, have proved a true saviour. He, however, was more inclined to bring his art to perfection by the cultivation of florid part-writing, and of soaring to its greatest heights without any reference to the requirements of ordinary people, as, indeed, many great masters since him have done. His four-part chorales therefore, incomparable as they are in themselves, must be regarded as unprofitable with respect to most organists and the general public. Indeed, so long as the people were contented to remain in utter ignorance of the old Church tones, no real remedy for the evil was possible, for the theoretical works on the subject then in existence threw but little light on the matter. It may indeed be stated that a thorough search ought to have been made for old authorities which might have conveyed to intelligent men the needed information; but difficult labours of this kind were not by any means acceptable suggestions. And yet what depths there were to be explored! Palestrina, the most celebrated composer of the Church school, following reliable traditions, with endless ingenuity set the Magnificat eight different times to the eight Church tones for four voices. Any person might have obtained these treasures for himself, but they had been allowed to remain buried in utter oblivion; and Busby, in his "History of Music," has placed another large stone upon the tomb which contains them, by telling the

world that "Palestrina composed a Magnificat for eight voices."

Further, if we look at Calvinistic tunes we shall see that they also have suffered their share of alterations. Calvin had the Psalms translated into French verse, and the melodies to them arranged in entire consistence with the old Church tones by Bourgeois and the great composer Goudimel, who was afterwards murdered by religious fanaticism in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The text of this magnificently executed work was latter on translated into German by Ambroise Lobwasser, who at once revised the music, brought in secular modes, and altered the old plain song into four-part harmony, at the same time frequently assigning the melody to the tenor. The secular tendency of this book is to be seen in its very first edition (Herborn 1666), and even more so in the second edition (Frankfort, 1711), in the preface to which Lobwasser says with great significance, "we have left out what appeared to be devoid of any special edification, and altered each psalm to its natural and proper melody." Degglar, in his edition of the book (Schaffhausen, 1761), left the text as he found it. In spite of all these changes the excellence of the book appeared on every page.

In the course of time the real chorale has by those and similar means been continually ill-treated and overlooked, and always with less and less excuse. But still another evil happened. Our old organists knew scarcely anything except sacred music and the fugues and canons with which it has been associated; but they were, with few exceptions, well grounded in thorough bass, and if they went wrong at all it was in appropriating ornaments to spiritual and not frivolous

uses. But what do we see now? Thorough bass entirely neglected, and the use of common opera and other secular music almost entirely to the exclusion of anything else. Whatever gets into the organist's head during the week from these sources he must perforce play in church on Sunday, and thus we are so often compelled to hear so much that is secular and unfitted for divine service that it would be no matter for surprise if some day indignation manifested itself in the Church itself. In Italy, too, utter disorder prevails in this matter everywhere, except in the Sistine Chapel, the history of which has lately been given to us in a very interesting fashion by Siever in the "*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*." Even in the noble cathedral at Milan waltzes and operatic airs are often played as preludes to the hymns; and this in the very city in which Gregory the Great founded his magnificent singing schools, and where fifteen centuries since an entire troop of heathen soldiers, entering a church in pursuit of fugitive Christians, were so strongly moved by the glorious hymn which ascended from those devout hearts that they were converted on the spot!

In their turn, however, these great abuses had a salutary effect in begetting a universal desire among the congregations that the chorale and its accompaniment might be improved. Well-known writers of the present time also have openly avowed themselves to be greatly in favour of recalling our churches to their ancient dignity and simplicity in this respect; Franz, in his book on the Old Church Chorales, 1818; Mortimer, in his "*Choral Song of the Reformation*," 1821; and Kocsler in his splendid essay on Church Music, 1823, as well as by the part he took with

others in editing the Hymns for Four Voices in 1825.

It being of the first importance that a matter of such gravity should be fully explained, I take leave to offer some further remarks upon it, restricting them nevertheless to the Lutheran Church, of which I am a member.

The Reformers of Church music have lately, in several instances, contended for no more than adherence to those melodies that have gained popularity in particular localities, as having obtained once for all a sure footing, and only needing to be clipped, so to speak, of their wild shoots. But this would in truth seem to be too timid. If our congregations are capable of using inferior modern melodies instead of fine old tunes, they are also capable of retracing their steps, if only organists are taught where good music is to be found, and how to revive it. There is not much difficulty in doing this, for the fine old melodies are easily caught, and produce upon educated persons, as I know from experience, so great an impression, that it is only necessary to offer them to bespeak their acceptance.

With the return to ancient music, the Protestant communities must dismiss all sectarian spirit, and must each be forward to adopt from the other such melodies as are undoubtedly good. What reason can there be to prevent a Lutheran singing a fine Calvinistic hymn, or a Calvinist an unexceptionable Lutheran chorale? Or why should Hussite chorales, some of which cannot be approached, be left to the Moravians? At this very time the task of collating the best chorales employed in various churches has become absolutely necessary, by reason of a common

form of worship having in many places been decided upon by the Lutherans and Calvinists. If, as the effect of such timely forbearance, one might imagine the possibility of a free choice, then even Protestant Churches ought to return to the Ambrosian and Gregorian tunes, and appropriate the best. For these melodies sprang from the holiest inspirations, and are among the choicest gifts left us by the ancient Churches; and they should be preserved even by Protestants as holy relics, inasmuch as they form a link with a venerable antiquity, and would so confer in the eyes of the people an enhanced value upon Protestant churches. Luther himself publicly declares for the grand Catholic hymns, and caused several of them to be printed, saying that it would be a matter for regret if such precious tunes should be lost. There is no doubt but that such a retention of old Catholic music might be a cause of offence to some of our conceited churchwardens. But if we yield to them, our intercourse with the Muses would be narrowed indeed, and at this rate all the old masterpieces of Gothic architecture, and of painting, would come under the Protestant ban as being the works of Catholics.

Sincere Protestants will see more plainly every day that their church would be in utmost danger if to favour the ideas of certain dissentients all old associations were blotted out, and that people who cannot exist without ill-feeling towards those whose opinions differ from their own, are merely playing into the hands of Superstition and Mysticism, and by the bigotry they preach, and by their animus against all the time-honoured traditions which we have inherited from the past, are bringing us near to open warfare. As regards the Ambrosian and Gregorian chant however, there

would appear to exist difficulties which I have hitherto been unable to explain, and as to which I would willingly receive instruction from those better informed than myself. And the principal question is this—Where are the real Ambrosian and Gregorian chants to be found? The musical histories we possess do not throw much light on the point, the history of Forkel in particular, where bare quotations send us as usual from pillar to post. There can be no doubt but that the “*Antiphonarium Romanum*” contains some of the most ancient hymns and antiphons, but as it has ever been the habit of musicians to alter and interpolate, that work cannot, it is to be regretted, be considered quite genuine. I have taken all conceivable trouble, in Germany as also in Strasburg, to obtain a satisfactory account of the Ambrosian and Gregorian chants, but there was no one who could help me. I induced several friends to institute inquiries in Italy on the subject, and particularly of the Papal choir-master; but their exertions were of no avail, notwithstanding that in Rome I was helped by a German gentleman of high station and a man of influence as a scholar. This friend, however, afterwards discovered at St. Gall a document that was likely to prove of great importance. For there is in the Library a MS. of the ninth century containing the whole Gregorian song, and constituting perhaps the most authentic and genuine document of this description now in existence. As my business engagements render it impossible for me to devote my time to the deciphering of this MS., I now bring it to the notice of musicians, hoping that some one at least will create for himself the honour of reviving a great work of the past. If the only object were to satisfy ambition it would be

quite within the truth to say that the accomplishment of such a task would bring greater renown than any quantity of tedious composition, which is generally as much likely to confer immortality as writing on sand.

One other point of importance, now much discussed, refers to the question whether chorales should be set in four parts and sung by the congregation. The arguments on both sides have been set forth in print so frequently that the dispute may be regarded as ripe for judgment. And here I wish to make a correction of an error. In reviewing Kocher's essays on Church music in the "Theological Annals" for December, 1824, I understood its esteemed author to contend that the congregation should sing chorales in florid four-part harmony. My chief remarks were directed against this, and were they founded on a correct supposition I still hold to them. However, Herr Kocher has himself informed me differently; and his subsequent edition of these chorales shows plainly that his intention, as well as that of his friends, was simply to the effect that the congregation should sing the most easy tunes harmonized as much as possible in the common chord. This, doubtless, quite alters the matter; and here it appears to me that all depends upon existing circumstances, namely:—if a community be intelligent and religious, observant of the sacredness of the Sabbath, and with average musical powers, if there be a sufficient number of devout ergymen interested in the improvement of church music, if they be helped by the counsel and assistance of good musicians, and if great care be taken with the teaching of music in the public schools—all which at present exist in a very satisfactory degree in the

kingdom of Wurtemberg—then good four-part congregational singing is possible, and the achievement of such a result would greatly promote musical concord and develop the powers of individuals of the congregation. But circumstances are not so favourable everywhere. How many states and towns there are where spiritual authority is powerless from sheer indifference; how many churches where the priest will permit no voice to be heard but his own; how many places where literally nothing is done in earnest for musical education! Wherever this is so, I would not advise that four-part singing be attempted, at any rate not till the first steps have been made. And here I would make a suggestion that people should restrict themselves to a few of the best chorales to be sung in unison with ample organ accompaniment; and, secondly, that they should make every effort to bring the tunes within such a range that singing in octaves would be within the compass of all ordinary voices, and thus obviate what has hitherto so often happened—that the basses and altos or the tenors and sopranos are half forced to be silent or else obliged to scream.

In concluding, I have one more observation to make, which is not intended for any individual, but which, as a rebuke of incompetence in general, will not be objected to by those to whom it will apply.

It is to the effect that a robust condition of church music is impossible unless organists are under control, at any rate as long as we can point to only a few such organists as Apel, Ett, Rink, and Umbreit. For to what state have the organists brought us? To nothing less than this—that any one with the slightest acquaintance with music too frequently leaves the church in disgust with the lightness and

insipidity of the service.) The prelude unfits him for the chorale, and the intricate interlude goes a great way to distract his attention, and the sole aim of the concluding voluntary seems to be to obliterate the sermon and everything else.) Some allowance must of course be made for these faults. Our organists have frequently no chance of getting a sound musical training; they have, as a class, no more than the mechanical skill of ordinary workmen; and, lastly, if the salary attached to their post is but small, they are forced to get a living by mechanical teaching, in which the wants and wishes of the pupil are obstacles to the practice of art. [But these should be the very reasons why a congregation should say, "We want none of your vaunted originality, all we require of you is not to disturb us at our devotions, and not to scandalise us by making use of the church as a place for the performance of tricks."] Really it is above comprehension how the clergy have quietly borne the delinquencies of organists.\* It is of the utmost importance that this subject should be taken in hand; and the few talented organists cannot and ought not to demand that in deference to them the whole service should lie at the mercy of the many players who discomfort and annoy the intelligent part of the worshippers. An organist who thinks highly of his playing can always exhibit himself at recitals, or any other way he chooses. Only let Divine service be conducted as it should be, plainly and in regular order, and not be a recognised opportunity for every inferior player to experiment, and in showing his own conceit trample heedlessly

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\* It is to us quite incomprehensible how educated musicians have so meekly put up with the insolence of unmusical and bigoted clergymen.—J. B.

upon all that is sacred. If I now briefly express my own desires, I would say—Make a collection of the best hymns, cheerful, vigorous, and fervent, make choice of the grandest tunes that the ancient Church has left to us, including all that master-minds of modern times have added to them ; and finally furnish organists with a tune-book in which everything shall be placed in full (for many cannot play from a figured bass), and put in their hands, as well, a collection of approved voluntaries, so that they can never wander from the path. But this should not be done in a mean or narrow spirit under the advice of inferior musicians. Treat the matter rather as a serious ecclesiastical question, requiring the help of the best advisers ; and spend on it, at any rate, not less than the Government does upon a third-rate theatre. Thus will a noble work have been done that will defy time. Such reformations are more needed by Lutherans than by others, if they would be saved from making the House of God a place where, under the cover of human reason and art, is often to be heard but little more than the poor crotchets of the clergy and their helpers.

Finally, I would appeal to our Protestant congregations as a whole. Decide upon a reformed chorale-book for all German Protestants, and so upon a work which, as it would be done with the help of the best talent, would ever more and more give to our society a happy bond of unity.

But I know it is the very essence of German spirit that every man should, heedless of his neighbours, reign supreme upon his own little plot of land ; and thus my appeal might as well be resolved at once into a sigh !

## II.

## CHURCH MUSIC OTHER THAN THE CHORALE.

When the popular mind is left to itself, it has a natural preference for music that really and truly reflects the genuine emotions of the human heart, and there is no better way of working upon it than by music of a suitable nature. For as an average congregation can only learn as a rule to sing hymn tunes, the rendering of sacred compositions of higher development should be left to trained vocalists, and so it may seem as if angels were singing in the House of God; and the people may reverently listen to that for the execution of which their numbers and want of training unfit them. Gregory the Great first carried this grand plan into execution, by founding numerous singing schools; and for a thousand years and more afterwards the most advanced Christian States did everything possible towards this end. In course of time, however, people became indifferent, and Church music (in which I do not include the chorale) entirely vanished or became merged in secular compositions, which instead of conducing to piety made room in the House of God for secularism pure and simple, the very sense of propriety as to what becomes a Church being quite lost sight of. Nor is it hard to understand this, because religious fervour is apt to grow cooler as mechanical skill predominates. No good thing could come from the majority of our musicians, as if we speak the truth they are quite devoid of higher education, poetical, philosophical, and historical, and

because their ambition mounts no higher than to have the chance of giving us in Church those pieces they have chanced to practise, or have themselves composed. And the assenting ear of flippant Church-goers has everywhere encouraged the greatest outrages.

Fortunately there are still many who appreciate genuine Church music, or who could easily be taught to do so. I shall therefore continue in a cheerful rather than a desponding temper humbly to give my little towards such a worthy end. (The Church is not the place where all that is charming ought to be presented and enjoyed. It is nothing less than the place of man's audience before God, to invigorate and nerve him for his work as a man, and where in His presence he pours forth his soul in grief, in repentance, in joy, and in prayer. Now, as in the presence of God all boasting self-confidence, all abject despair, are out of place, so neither in the House of God should there be any excess of joy or of abandonment to sorrow. The man, therefore, who desires to thank and praise God in all fulness of heart will express his emotions, not with unbounded exultation, but with humble intensity of feeling; and he who is oppressed with grief, and who out of the Church would give way to melancholy and despair, must inside it and in the presence of God take comfort to himself; not wringing his hands and running here and there with cries and groans, but, finding comfort by faith in a present God, he ought with patience and meekness to call on Him to behold and compassionate all his afflictions.) What is best becoming in a Church may be proved by thinking for a moment on the office of a preacher. In the theatre it is sufficient if an actor of good carriage place himself in all manner of postures, and according

to the demand of the occasion bluster and rage, cringe and fawn, and blaze and burn in a frenzy of passion; and, in brief, to figure in the  *rôles*  of all countries and all times. But what do we expect of a priest if we do not want the Church made a play-house, but seek there for sustenance by God's word from the mouth of His ambassador? We should certainly expect a steady, refined, and earnest address, spoken with manly energy, calmness, and feeling, but without excitement, show, or trickery; an address that shall lead us to forget the trivialities of this life, and associate our thoughts with a better, where levity, hurtful passion, and devouring sorrow shall exist no more. ✓ On these grounds, a priest in the pulpit should not bawl like a town-crier who would intoxicate the people with joy at the news of a great triumph; should not abuse vice with the fierceness of one who resents a personal insult; should not be all butter and treacle in his style; should not whine and shed tears like one deserted by God and man; should not rave and bluster nor gesticulate to show his emotions; should not wring his hands in despair; should not, even if he is master of himself, shed a single tear, however deep the guilt he may have to deplore. This, and only this, is behaviour befitting the Church. For it is her province not to excite what is of the earth, not to fight with worldly weapons, but by the suggestion of a Heaven where all storm ceases, to soften and elevate those under its influence.

✓ This guiding rule which ought always to be present to the mind of a clergyman should also be held in mind by all good musicians who would help in the Church's object, and not employ the sacred building merely as a place wherein all kinds of sounds that

tickle the ear can be heard. The question as to what form of music belongs to the Church is no more worthy of attention than to ask whether a clergyman is at liberty to declaim, to show emotion, and to emphasise declamation by gestures. All kinds of music are suitable for sacred use that do not raise secular associations, such as a waltz or a gay Sicilian dance tune.

[A Largo, an Adagio, a Grave, an Andante, an Allegro, a fugal or non-fugal composition, can all be performed in the Church, but should one and all be of a staid and dignified character throughout, elevated and sober, and of such a nature that any preacher of note could say, "This splendid music is a fitting introduction to my discourse," or, "coming after my sermon it has awakened the people to a sense of its import;" or again, as sometimes might be well said, "After such singing my lips had better be closed, and the spirit left to its own silent worship."] ]

These statements will easily approve themselves to all unbiassed minds, and will also be found to be just; but I am quite aware of the objection frequently made by unthinking people, to the effect that this species of Church music would become wearisome, and that genius will not be shackled. But the reply to this objection is one that cannot be too often mentioned; namely, that real genius no more disdains strict laws than it does hard labour; and to pretend a supercilious freedom from law is merely a ridiculous vanity which has not the ability requisite for necessary obedience and proper submission to law. Only what is Church-like belongs of right to the Church, and if this be promoted skilfully, all objects of devotion are fully attained. It must not be lost sight of that men are called upon to fulfil numerous onerous duties in every-

day life, and that the office of the Church is not to minister to indolence, but to encourage energy. It will therefore be its duty to keep within its own proper boundaries, and not endeavour to extend them beyond what the Creator himself intended. It is hypocrisy to regard the feelings and ambitions which in the House of God elevate the human soul, as belonging to the aims of worldly life. Whilst it is distasteful and unnatural for Puritanism, self-immolation, and monasticism, to try and smother all things in existence that God has given to man for worldly enjoyment, it is none the less distasteful and unnatural when meddlers, because of the existence of wrongs, vilify all that is heavenly, and from hatred of hypocrisy are led to separate religion from the Church in order to save the world from clerical excesses.

A man of strong mind who has found edification within the Church, will go on that account into the the business of the world with all his heart, and if he seek spiritual delight, he will endeavour to either fit himself for great and grand contemplations by a close study of poetry and philosophy, or else to find the requisite nourishment in mere gaiety and enjoyment of life. On these grounds, therefore, there are three styles of music : the Church style, which is alone appropriate to purposes of worship ; the oratorio style, illustrating great and solemn themes under human images ; and the opera, representing sense and emotion in a poetical form. As regards a fourth style combining all these elements, and in which passion overreaches itself, and every possible eccentricity is attempted in music, this has no more place than cramp will have in a healthy body. Therefore let us leave to the Church all that properly belongs to it, and let us enrich it with

all the resources of Art, but not on that account neglect the other styles of music ; rather let us attend to these more perseveringly than to Church music, for men's minds cannot long rest in the region of the sublime, and in this life the claims of a busy world are of more power than the worship of the Almighty. But the boundaries must not be confounded. Let those who pray do so at Church but not in the ball-room. As the charms of the ballet have no place among the mysteries of religion, I should deem it unpardonable for a single bar of a sacred work of Palestrina's to be introduced into an Opera ; but it would be more offensive to find in a Mass the slightest trace of the rich and clever fancy so essentially characteristic of the *Figaro* of Mozart. The public judgment can indeed always be imposed on if an abuse be disguised by a specious title. The blind devotees of fashion are quite satisfied that the music set to the " *Liber scriptus proferetur,*" in Mozart's *Requiem*, should be exactly the counterpart of that to the words of the morose female jester " *Little Needle*" in the *Figaro* of the same composer. But what person of education and taste in listening to the " *Last Judgment*" would care to have the song of the *Little Needle* dinned into his ears, or to be reminded by the joke about the " *Little Needle*" of the terrors of the hell which might be his lot ?

Going now to the history of Church music, a very brief consideration of the subject will prove that the most modern tunes are the least deserving of praise ; and that as with painting and architecture, so with Church music, the laurels are due pre-eminently to the grand old masters. As early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the fine Church composers of the old Teutonic and Flemish school show such force and

depth of sympathy, joined with such skill in the wonderful interlacing of voices, that we cannot adequately deplore their utter neglect at the present time. As an example, if we compare Josquin's *Stabat Mater* (died 1475) in five parts with the restless *Stabat Mater* of Pergolesi, or Senffel's (Luther's contemporary) Seven Words of Christ, with those by Joseph Haydn, whose harmony passes and re-passes from one style to another, there can be no doubt on which side lies the weight of evidence of religious power. The last great composer of the Flemish schools, Orlando di Lasso (Roland Lass, born 1520), in the many works which have reached us, and which perhaps sixty folios would not hold, appears to us a giant than whom the Church could not desire a tenderer or more tranquil and sympathetic. By his side comes the Italian Palestrina (Prænestinus) none the less fertile of invention, and perhaps deeper in conception. Such a complete master was he of the Church tones and of the use of the common chord, that there is perchance more repose and inward satisfaction to be derived from his compositions than from those of any other. These being published long ago can now indeed scarcely be obtained in their original form, and it is difficult to obtain true copies of them in manuscript. I should like, however, to direct the attention of those who may at present be totally ignorant of him, to the work, which can easily be procured, which was published in Paris some years ago, unfortunately with a good many misprints—“Collection des pièces de musique religieuse qui s'exécutent tous les ans à Rome durant la semaine sainte,” par A. Choron. This collection contains amongst others, Palestrina's “Responsoria” which cannot receive too much praise, though the lovers of perpetual

frivolity and folly many perhaps see no good in it. It must indeed be realised first of all what it is that these Dirges on Christ's Passion sung on Good Friday night are intended to convey; and if afterwards they be sung over by practised singers the rest will speedily unfold itself, allowing of course the voices to be good and pure, the requisite expression attended to, and time duly kept; without haste on the one hand, or on the other starting with the notion, common to Germany, that the sustained notes of Italian composers of necessity exhaust the breath. Special regard should be had to those parts of the Responsoria which are for three voices; their beauty on the whole is never so patent as when performed by first-rate female voices, one to each part. If they are stiffly played, and the singing be harsh, unsympathetic, and screechy, then the mirror will certainly be dimmed, just as it is easy to spoil Goethe's "Iphigenia" by a bare recitation at any speed, a thousand times easier than such a play as "Misanthropy and Remorse."

Although Palestrina, who may fitly in every way be compared with Hemer himself, be in his way unequalled, and thus has given his name to the most perfect style of Church music, yet it is wrong to regard him as at once the beginning and the end of the grand Church style. To the earlier German and Flemish musicians—and among the last must be mentioned Palestrina's teacher, Goudimel—belongs undoubtedly the title of Inventor. Thus there rank with Palestrina those in many instances comparable to him, viz., the Spaniard Morales, whose "Lamentabatur Jacobus," was declared by the earliest musical historian, Father Martini, to be the most perfect work known. Close upon Palestrina also follow two great Church

composers, who cannot be said to be influenced by his writings: the German Hünei or Handl (Jacobus Gallus, born 1550) and the Spanish Tomaso Ludovico Vittoria (born 1560), the latter of whom combined most opportunely a reverent spirit with Spanish fire. Following these must be placed many Italian authors who composed, if not in all cases, yet generally with success, in the strict style, in chief Allegri; Alessandro Scarlatti, who wrote nearly two hundred Masses, and was thought a good deal of by Handel and Hasse; Bai, Lotti (the favourite of Hasse), Durante Bernabei, Father Martini, and the frequently admirable yet uneven Jomelli, as also many others, whose works I have seen, and many more whom I know as yet only by report. After Palestrina, meanwhile, a tendency soon arose towards what I have before called the Oratorio style, which was introduced everywhere in the Churches, except the Sistine Chapel, which has never entirely lost the strict ecclesiastical spirit, and has been as regards music like a rock in the sea. The spread of this tendency is not at all mysterious, for it is the sublime that soonest loses its effect on the general public; and as the old musicians had to do without concert-rooms and theatres, it was not unnatural that they should make the Church the scene of their inventive powers; an explanation which also puts the growth of sacred plays in earlier days within the cloister's pale. A very large number of lively composers now arose; and among them as deserving of special mention are Caldara (born 1668), Marcello (born 1680), Durante (born 1693), Leonardo Leo (born 1694), Baletti (born 1705), and Pergolesi (born 1707); and it is to their credit that even in the liveliest of their works there are numerous indications of their regard for the strict

style ; that they seldom or never are led into the frivolities of opera, and that they always sought in one way or the other to reconcile the severe and the beautiful, and thus to satisfy at once the sacred and the inventive spirit. To show this it is only necessary to take Leo's celebrated *Miserere* for eight voices, which is not certainly to be compared in every respect with similar compositions of Lasso, Allegri, Bai, or Lotti ; but how grand is it as a whole in style, how tenderly suggestive of religious feeling the use of the Gregorian melodies ! And if the "Cor mundum crea in me" be sung with exactness, our thoughts cannot but turn to the sweet angels of Heaven, and not to the syrens of the Opera. In these vigorous works of the great Italian sacred composers, all faults are generally compensated for by the fact that all flows from a real inspiration, and is written in a spirit of freedom and purity of taste that can well make one glad to forget for a minute the sacredness of the spot he is standing on. This style is the one to which the first German composers of the last generation—Handel, Sebastian Bach, Hasse, and Graun—have, in their happiest efforts, well nigh entirely devoted their talents ; in part from the conditions of German churches, and in part, as cannot be gainsaid, because genius has far more liberty when unfettered and free from ecclesiastical chains. But these men have never allowed their oratorios to wander into opera ; and, in fact, Handel's strict adherence to the combination of sacred and spirited elements, while at the same time he was doing, and was forced to do, such a great deal for opera, commands our sincerest admiration.

Then there are the works which during the past fifty years have appeared in the sacred and oratorio

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styles. But what shall I say of these? I once more record as my conviction that the Church style is well nigh totally lost; the oratorio style has almost entirely been merged in the operatic, and this again has degenerated into a mad and ridiculous extravagance: such is the medley that it is often attempted to introduce into the Church. I cannot stay here to name exceptions which ought to be made. Many composers now living know perfectly well, from my estimate of their works, that I do not belong to those who are blind to all that is not old, and who throw aside unnoticed every modern work because it is new. If I were to ask those who appreciate real merit and possess an adequate knowledge of modern music, speaking conscientiously, if all the numerous works which become fashionable through the personal influence of their composers or publishers, or from local considerations, show taken all together as much power of genius and intensity of feeling as Handel's *Messiah* alone, I cannot conceive that any sober-minded and educated person would regard my question as out of place. Prove it by good and practised vocalists, and you will find it difficult to bring forward any modern work after the *Messiah* which does not suffer by comparison. But the best works of Palestrina, Lasso, Vittoria, Caldara, Marcello, Lotti, and Durante, will never lose their attractiveness, preceded though they be by all the grandest compositions of Handel and Bach. Advocates of the modern school consider themselves much injured by inferences of this kind, and it is particularly held an atrocious mis-statement if no exception be made in favour of the Masses of Haydn and Mozart; but it is generally known that

neither of these composers considered their sacred works of much importance. In fact, Mozart laughed at the Masses which circumstances compelled him to write, and Joseph Haydn unreservedly yielded the palm in this respect to his brother Michael. I readily grant that these Masses are of a pleasing nature, being possessed of much ease and elegance; but I submit that their dominant character is sensual, worldly, and in short entirely unfit on the best of grounds for the use of the Church, and that within the sacred edifice they can give no delight to an earnest mind conversant with the grand old works in the true Church style, or even with the better specimens of oratorio. It is the same as with the building of the church itself. We erect nowadays numerous gaudy buildings, variously painted and ornamented, but not one that produces the overwhelming sensations of awe and reverence inspired by the portico of Strasburg Cathedral.

I must here call attention to the retort, sometimes made in lofty tones by many who call themselves musicians, about the glory of moving with the times, and about the enormous strides that art has lately made. This sort of talk has already brought us to this state of things—that the glorious symphonies of our countryman, Joseph Haydn, are put on one side as out of date or obsolete; and even Mozart's pieces are played in much faster time than he himself intended; as if the unrest which standing armies, expresses, and steamships have brought upon Europe need invade the artistic kingdom of music!

Admitting, just here, the superiority of the modern school, I would ask, why should music of all other arts be cramped with poverty and meanness of spirit?

It is an admitted necessity not only to keep up with the times, but to make use of the works of all past time, as being the best means of obtaining knowledge, and for the reason that as a rule every age has its own distinguishing merits. Then why should music, perforce, be an exception? It is a strange characteristic of our age that, as regards pleasure, not merely of the mind but also of the table, we cannot adequately digest our food, speedily become sated with each dish, and yet are never tired of sweetmeats. You may call this the spirit of progress; yet should we, after all, be ashamed of retracing our steps to our great ancestors, and borrowing from them somewhat of their calmness, their stability, their strength, and so gain somewhat of the beautiful and loving spirit that has given us so many peaceful, refreshing, and lively melodies?

It is certain that the art has made gigantic strides of late, especially in instrumentation; the science of picturing by music merely sensible objects and extravagant fancies; the science of painting tone-pictures and the representation of the forces of nature; the art of performing a shake with an expiring breath; and above all, the art of binding music to all that is opposed to it. Justice, on the other hand, demands of us that we thankfully confess that in the march of Art much has been accomplished for sound styles of music. As an instance, I should deem it childish to think for a moment of comparing Palestrina's "Missa ad Fugam," just published at Paris, with one of the great fugues of Handel or J. S. Bach. Yet let us not for that reason lose sight of the infinite amount of rubbish and ugliness that modern fancy has at the same time brought to light; how the fugue formed by certain easily learnt rules has become a refuge for the

incapacity of hundreds, and how numerous new theories about consecutive fifths, have been invented by modern harmonists which have even now been protested against on the authority of ancient models. Any man of intelligence and impartiality must acknowledge that the old masters were as well acquainted with the principles of music as modern ones, and were acquainted with melody (as is best shown by their beautiful chorales) as well as harmony; and this last was explored by them, the founders of all the principal rules now used, more deeply and earnestly than is done now, as many old theoretical treatises will prove. The divisions of music to which all their attention was devoted were, in consequence, brought to the greatest perfection; and, indeed, it would be a matter of surprise had the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which teemed with men of genius, produced nothing noteworthy in music alone. We read of Correggio that in his last sleep before his death he dreamed with rapture that he had met Palestrina in Heaven; and we may therefore imagine that the great works of Palestrina inspired the talented painter while below with reverence for their composer. Let our musical egotists, who have often to assume a pitiable disdain to hide their own emptiness, gladly avow what no seeing eye can help observing. We condemn what we have never seen; we decline to be introduced to what we can hardly understand and perform, and both money and energy are lacking to find and study but half a score of the many thousands of old works which have descended to us. A composition to be classical must, as is universally acknowledged, be the outcome of a great spirit, evincing the unfettered action of a great mind; and

by such right it is the property of all time as long as genius is honoured. Plato can never cease to please from lapse of time, any more than Shakespeare ; and Mozart as a real genius would have been a splendid example of any style, whether he had lived earlier or later, among Alpine goatherds, in a convent, or in kingly magnificence.

An increased cultivation may certainly produce great improvement in the matter of finish ; but strength and energy must ever spring from the well of genius ; and this energy, from the very circumstance of its deficiency of finish, generally shows a quality and sprightliness that a fully cultivated state of art cannot give but very easily destroys. In this respect I cheerfully grant that if those who are always making trifling objections obstinately persist in keeping their eyes shut and decline to tear themselves away from the hysterical and excitable style of the present time, they must leave the compositions of the grand old masters in the Church and Oratorio style alone.

Muddy water reflects no image, and Raphael's Angels are not appreciated by dazed eyes ; but if they would only nerve themselves in earnest for those works, choose a time when they feel calm, serene, and capable of being impressed by other than sensational things, and do their best to obtain a first-rate rendering, they would soon enough discover in them a spring of divine satisfaction, and would see that they who now act the part of censors have naught to condemn but their own thick-headedness and bigotry. There certainly have been composers of inferior note in former times, in Italy as well as in Germany ; and it must be admitted that the old opera suffers frequently from a degree of stiffness which the empty and frivolous

style now in vogue has quite submerged. The fact is that just as in early days the old Church music—being the oldest class of music—often exerted an influence on the stage, so now in its turn the sensuality of the modern stage is in fair way to re-act upon the Church; and I leave it to our high and mighty critics to endeavour to answer the question, whether it be as distasteful to behold the awkward display of a nun who has abandoned the convent for the stage, as to see the part of the Virgin Mary taken by a thoughtless actress in a church. But it may be asked, what would be a fair estimate of the old opera? Finished in a certain way, and complete in itself like the modern specimen, it certainly was not. But if, by way of comparison, we were to search out and enumerate all that is praiseworthy and striking in the early operas, how much is there from the modern collection that could weigh in the other scale, and how many of the favourite pieces would have to retire ashamed into the rear! It is only needful to look into Handel's operas to find the most admirable passages. The remark has been made by Forkel—quite in keeping with his views on the subject—that it is not easy to find any air of Handel's fit for presentation at the present day, and this has been repeated by others who knew even less of Handel than did Forkel. A more rash statement could scarcely be made. Having a tolerable knowledge of Handel's works, I am convinced that I could extract from them a long list of airs, chiefly for soprano, alto, and bass, that would not fail to delight any one susceptible of the charms of music, showing as they do a purity, a tenderness, and a sympathy not often to be found in modern composers.

## III.

## POPULAR MELODIES.

A MAN of culture will be chiefly inclined to seek instruction and amusement from intercourse with those noted for their education, yet he ought not to lose all taste for the charm of innocence; for refinement, as seen in the world, is not always the true growth of nature, and it is in this sense quite possible for a learned man to rank below a child. It has been said of children under the Gospel, that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven, and in this lies an important truth. Complete openness, truth, and sincerity are the best features of human character. But culture and the accidents of life generally make a man more or less cunning, calculating, and deceitful; while a child is seen by us with his virtues and his failings fresh from the hands of nature. So he who understands not the child will not know the man; and Rousseau rightly says that the time of youth's free intercourse is the time a wise man should observe.

This will also apply to music. Without doubt the greatest pleasure any man of intellect can find in music is a complete work of art. But how apt is art to become constrained, how easy it is to overdo it, and how often is not music composed by mere ingenuity, and therefore exciting emotions of admiration, rather than love! It is no exaggeration to say that one half of our music is unnatural—a sort of mathematical exercise without any life; a mere means of showing off to the greatest advantage the

cunning of nimble fingers, and such a mixture of unhealthy components that it may soberly be questioned whether it does not exert more influence for evil than for good. On the other hand, all the melodies that spring from the people, or are retained by them as favourites, are generally chaste and simple in nature like a child's. Songs like these almost always represent the emotions of strong natural minds, and have in consequence, in a variety of ways, an intrinsic value from their association with great national events; and coming from times of national innocence and vigour, they lay hold with irresistible grip upon minds which, however perverted, are still susceptible of real and healthy emotions. Considering this, I hold the study of national melodies, —in which I do not include street tunes, but those songs which live and flourish in the hearts of the people—to be of the greatest interest. But in order to be of real assistance to art in respect to them, it is requisite to glance around, and not restrict ourselves to those songs popular in our own land, but embrace the world in our survey, and try to judge a nation's character by its songs. To gain an idea of each country we travel and read travellers' accounts; and why should music often so peculiar and characteristic be left unstudied? Had Goethe, when he had written his "Goetz," done nothing beyond portraying old German character, he would have been entitled to all praise, but he has earned the distinction of prince of our poets from the fact that in his "Iphigenia" he has given us glimpses of the brightest periods of Grecian history, as he has shown us Persia and India in his "East and West Divan," and in "Faust" he belongs to the universe of genius.

A man who in spare hours seeks refuge and recreation in the pleasant and bright Kingdom of Art from professional toil, is apt to do so more heartily than the professional artist who gets his living thereby. In other words, sauce is more pleasant in small quantities than in large; and so I have taken great pains to find materials to satisfy my curiosity in connection with this subject; and though I have in a large measure succeeded, I am yet far from the goal. It is the misfortune of those who make historical investigation in music to find themselves at a disadvantage.

As a rule musicians will not listen to history. Much, indeed, could be obtained from the few well-read musicians, but here the outlook is not very bright. Collectors are generally far readier to receive than to give; they are wonderfully close and forgetful, and are only too prone to leave inquirers to shift for themselves with what is equivalent to saying, "Physician, heal thyself." Others say they are ready to do anything, but often only go as far as good wishes. Gradually, however, and by the help of some liberal friends, I have collected a variety of popular airs which I regard as valuable. Others perhaps possess or know of many more, but I am certain there are many acquainted with less. I may, therefore, openly specify those I have and know, trusting that those richer than myself will supply my shortcoming out of their abundance, or may at least put me right if I go astray; and in return I shall place at their disposal any duplicates I may have. Our search after national songs will naturally lead us to look out for those preserved from the remotest eras. We are without satisfactory specimens of the era before Christ, al-

though some theoretical treatises have reached us. Old Hebrew melodies would possess for us the utmost interest, as they most likely exerted a great influence upon the early Christian Churches. On the supposition that Judaism obstinately retains ancient usages, I made many inquiries in German Synagogues, but without avail. The only piece to which my attention was called, and which I was able to trace with certainty, I found to be a recitative from an opera of Mozart! Like searches have been made by Marcello; and several of the intonations used by German and Spanish Jews which he gives in his great collection of Psalms have a suspiciously Eastern character; nor is there any firmer foundation for a very interesting work, lately translated from the English:—"Collection of National Hebrew Melodies, with Accompanying Words by Lord Byron," published by G. K. R. Kretschmer, at the *Depôt for Art, Geography, and Music*, at Berlin. No one can deny that of the examples given much can be traced to modern sources, especially in the accompaniments. Genuine ancient Greek songs would undoubtedly prove as interesting as Pindar, yet they have been lost. Burney, in his treatise on ancient music, has indeed inserted some songs copied from a Parisian MS., which really seem to belong to ancient Greece, which have been several times quoted, as for example in Forkel's history. They are evidently very original, for which reason our celebrated philologist, Wolf, was highly pleased with them, but the ideas obtainable from these as to the general character of Grecian music are very scanty indeed. It is probable enough that some remnants of old days may still exist among the modern Greeks, but I can call to mind no one

who has directed his attention to this point except Sulzer in his *History of Transalpine Dacia* (Vienna, 1781-1782, 2 vols 8vo.), to which some popular modern Greek songs are appended. They are equally interesting as clearly recalling some of the tunes of the Russo-Greek Church.

Coming to the era after Christ, we find the songs of the Troubadours and Minnesingers, as well as of those called Meistersingers, to be of the greatest value. But just where everything ought to have been clear, had there always been students of the history of music, all is as yet in complete darkness. The examples given by Busby, particularly the splendid song of Ganlem on the death of Richard I. of England, prompted me to resume my search; but I found nothing but such dry quotations as are generally given by Forkel. It was a mere accident that I got hold of some first-rate melodies from an old Nuremburg MS., and also from "Elips Von Zesen's Dramatic Vale of Roses and Lilies" (Hamburg, 1670, 8vo), in which are some very original things, and lastly from the following publications:—"A Pocket Manual of Choice and Lovely Popular Songs" (Berlin 1777), and "Melodies to a Collection of German, Flemish, and French Popular Songs," arranged by Büsching, and Von der Hagen, and published in Berlin by Braun. But they do not contain many attractions; and, as with many poems that pass as old, one can never be certain that unprincipled editors have not inserted their own productions. The most original material, and of true German origin, is to be found in the work called "Popular Songs of Austria, with their Airs, collected and edited by Ziska and Schottky, Pesth, 1819. Numerous editions of Swiss

songs should also be noted. They are known to all musicsellers, and in Switzerland are to be viewed opened in the windows of the booksellers. It is very likely that some fresh light may be thrown on the troubadour songs. On the credit of the well known story that the Swedish Queen Christina made a collection of them, and that they were in the Vatican Library, I induced a learned friend to make an examination, but I was much disappointed by the information that the MS. consisted of words only without notes. I then applied through the agency of a friend to Raynouard, editor of the "Choix des Poesies des Troubadours." He gave me a song with accompanying notes, saying that he had many, and would let me have all if I could decipher this one. But, alas! I was not skilful enough to do this, and so passed the treasure on to a friend more versed than myself. He lost it almost as soon as he had it, and afterwards I never had the time or chance of adverting to the matter. I merely give a hint to all real musicians to make Paris the scene of further search. It is not too much to say that true lovers of good music would willingly part with a thousand variations, sonatas, and other productions of the day, if the ancient works of art could be procured in place of them.

The English have paid the greatest attention to their national songs; yet in the recent editions the words are quite modernised, and new words often allotted to the tunes. The best notice of the subject is found in the preface to the following work, which contains the old Scottish songs without accompaniments, "Scotch Songs" in two vols 8vo, published by Johnson, London, 1794. Subsequently there came out, but without date, in London, excellently printed in four-

teen folio books, and prettily illustrated, a complete collection of Scotch, Irish, and Welsh popular songs, with several modern additions, and a pianoforte accompaniment, containing preludes, postludes, and interludes, in the composing of which Pleyel, Joseph Haydn, Kotzeluch, and Beethoven assisted. The titles of these works, which, I regret to say, are expensive, are "A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice," &c., London, printed by Preston, four vols. folio; "A Selection of Irish Melodies," *ibid*, eight vols. folio; "A Selection of Welsh Melodies," two vols. folio. These works, and especially the two latter, comprise, as might be expected, with much that is trivial, an extensive series of most touching, hearty, and lively pieces, which captivated no less a personage than Joseph Haydn. Russian national songs are very remarkable, and some of them have a decidedly Oriental cast. My information in regard to these is derived from the following works, which contain a pianoforte accompaniment. The titles I give in Russian, with Roman letters:—"Pjesennik' ulu polroe sobranie starüch' u nobüch' Rossiisküch' narodnüch" (Petersburg, without date, 8vo); "Sobranie Russküch' narodnüch, pjesen' s' üch golosami, poloschennüch na musüku Ivanom' Pratschem" (Petersburg, 1806, two vols, 4to).

Many fine old Danish airs are contained without accompaniment in the fifth volume of "Danske's Melodies from the Middle Ages," by Nierup and Rahbek (Copenhagen, 1814, 8vo.).

Very interesting old Swedish and Finnish songs are to be found with a few accompaniments added in Geyer and Afzelius's "Swedish Popular Melodies,"

Stockholm, 1814-1816, 3 vols 8vo.; and also in Schötter's "Finnish Runes," Upsala, 1819, 8vo.

I am acquainted with no printed edition of the popular songs of Italy, but I have a goodly number in MS. Every one knows how pleasing some of them are. My only knowledge of the National Songs of Spain is derived from Spanish female singers. All my attempts to obtain the best specimens in print, or MS., from Madrid have been without avail. It can hardly be doubted that any person who had the time and inclination to search for the Popular Melodies of Spain, would be sure to find some remarkable things, considering the talents and fire of the Spanish people, calling to mind only their Morales and Vittoria, and seeing that formerly nearly all the best singers of the Papal Chapel were Spaniards. The Popular Songs of Brazil, and the Songs and Dances of the American Indians, appeared some years ago in an Appendix to Spix's and Martius's "Travels in Brazil," but the Brazilian songs appear to have sprung from recent Portuguese operas. Opera has now such an influence that any one who does not regard the landmarks of history is almost sure to be deceived. In the summer of 1824 I brought together the best female singers in the Bernese Alps, in order to hear the old melodies, but, alas! the first selection was a new operatic air! In his work on Indian music, Sir William Jones has given us Indian, Persian, and Moorish songs, sometimes without words, and always without accompaniments, of which F. H. von Dalberg published a German translation (Erfurt, 1802, 4to). A number of these, selected at random with much subsidiary matter, appeared in London, very showily, but occasionally very badly set, under the title,

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“Indian Melodies, arranged for the Voice and Pianoforte in Songs, Duets, and Gleees, by C. E. Horn,” 1 vol., folio. The narratives of various travellers deserve attention, but care must always be taken to find the spirit of each piece, and this it is not easy to do, particularly when the key is uncertain, for which reason it is not uncommon to this day for the best pieces to be utterly ruined by false harmony, and especially from not knowing the forbidden thirds and fifths.

I have often wished that I were qualified, as a musical theorist and complete linguist, to give my whole time for only a year to collecting the best songs of all climes. I should soon collect that which would give pleasure both to the learned and unlearned. I leave it, however, to those who have more knowledge, talent, leisure, and opportunity to consider seriously a compilation of this kind. A return to simplicity and naturalness is daily becoming more necessary in all respects; and Music certainly can boast but little of having had no share in the extreme tendencies of the present day.

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#### IV.

##### THE EDUCATING INFLUENCE OF GOOD MODELS.

KANT in one place remarks concerning Mathematics that they are but a meagre science, because an unfit subject for philosophy; and the same remark might almost be made of music as regards its present influence upon education. Execution and flourishes abound, mountains of wonderful difficulty, a plethora of notes instead of completeness and perspicuity, but

except the satisfying of vanity or professional fancies there is small profit or pleasure, so that our sensible maidens when they get a home for themselves and can settle down there willingly fling away all the so-called art they have acquired. Art is not art if it possess not a living spirit; and this can be easily proved of music by going back to its point of origin, and where it became a necessity. Music, to put it in other words, is essentially nothing but as it were the outflow of emotion—of mental ecstasy in tone; and when a composition answers this purpose, it will always stir and enrapture all unprejudiced minds, excepting of course that peculiar class that have “no ear,” and to whom music is a sealed book, like a statue to a blind man. Music needs a code of rules as much as poetry requires a system of metre; and yet real excellence in a musical work can no more be acquired by adherence to rule than in a poem from the order of its metre. A composition that appeals not to the heart, or which clashes with the feelings, can never be anything beyond a piece for practice, however much it may be extolled by the admirers of bluster. A Dutch preacher succeeded, after thirty years’ labour, in engraving a whole regiment of soldiers upon a small coin with a pin, but I should not hang up the coin as a worthy companion to a Madonna by Raphael.

I readily grant that music can be adorned by artifice just as a pretty girl by dress, but the decoration must not be confounded with the essence. The divinity of music is only perceived when it lifts us into an ideal condition of existence; and the composer who does not do this much, is, as far as we are concerned, a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water.

If in judging musical compositions we see a common standard of comparison in men's ideas and instincts (such, that is, as are worthy of art, and so may serve as a guide), we find a great difficulty in endeavouring to bring all classes of people to one common measure. For, as concerns instincts, every one sets up his own standard, often so mixed with the whole individual nature that no human power can make way against it. First take the wild savage, who embodies in his songs and dress his highest ideal of brute force, and then go through innumerable gradations down to the sickly heroine of romance, who recoils from all that is hearty and true—how amid these is the talent of the musician to find proper ground-work for his erections? Consider, too, the fanciful meanings, and the half philosophical, half poetical solutions for ever attributed to simple things at the present time, and that precious idleness which will not pursue or obtain anything solid, and so tries to subdue us by mere noise.

I know those who have studied, or pretended to do so, some twenty or thirty modern pieces, and who think they have therefore rendered themselves such complete masters of music that they turn a deaf ear to all else, talk the most blatant nonsense, and cannot help a smile of pity if any hint is dropped of Lasso, Palestrina, Morales, Lotti, and Durante, not to speak of the favourite of Luther, Senffel, whose name even will not be liked by their captious fancies.

When I received my first impressions of these grand compositions, which for me will ever have a charm, I used to be hasty if others would not understand them, and could attend to nought but the fragments they had in their heads; but now that I have learned

by experience, although I still have some feelings of the kind, yet I still sit calmly and politely, and call to mind the story of a Minister of State who came to Frederick the Great, and depreciating Homer, Virgil, Plato, and others, of a like character, praised to the skies the first catcher of herrings. To which the King merely said, "I suppose you are very fond of herrings." Indeed, there can hardly be a more mistaken idea than that music can make a man; for it can do nothing but respond to the good that is in him, or else revive something that lies asleep in him. A cold, haughty man will never understand a grand piece of music; and if there be joined to this a quarrelsome disposition, or the usual professional conceit, as offensive as it is unproductive, or if, worst of all, when he goes to a concert, his little soul has no place for more than the two or three pieces he has at some previous period acquired, or has heard in his own beloved city, then certainly are all efforts at conversation useless.

Arguments and theories can no more enlighten on the subject of music than can the mere principles of painting make a correct judge of colours. Those who boast of musical theories are much attached to explanations, but are blind to the small effect they produce. The human body permits of description more easily than an unseen note, and yet none have ever found it on inspection exactly the same as they had imagined. There is, however, one great resource at the option of the lover of real music, which must always be considered the best means of controlling taste and feeling, and this is the instruction and improvement conveyed by classical models. No matter how far false culture may twist and narrow

men's minds, it is quite certain that if the taste has not been artificially ruined or hopelessly depraved, the better feeling is not utterly quenched, and at the worst but sleeps; and it will be seen as a rule that the study of great works leads ultimately to a just appreciation of their merits. I have known enthusiastic admirers of Kotzebue, who quite altered their opinions after reading Shakespeare; and I, myself, fifteen years ago, admired musical compositions which now with more knowledge I can scarcely look at; and such has been the case with others. It can hardly be credited how swiftly the influence of good works is felt. I have more than once found biassed people who from certain mixed pieces had contracted a great reverence for certain modern musicians. These I caused to be sung, having before selected some pieces by Lasso, Palestrina, Lotti, and Sebastian Bach, hardly of a deep but of a pure and dignified description. The question was answered in an instant, and never did I find such an experiment to fail. An event which actually took place, to my great satisfaction, was as follows:—A young man came to me full of wrong ideas; and after listening to a Mass by Lotti, said, excitedly:—"To-night I can bear ill-will to none." Results like this could often be observed if people desired them, and would not cling with such pitiful obstinacy to the fashion of the day. Mediocre works have their place if only they be healthy and unaffected. We are not inclined to read the Psalms or Homer at all times of the day. Men want variety to entertain them, and help to pass the time without mental effort. A large proportion of the public have neither taste nor understanding for anything above mediocrity. So I should not be

disposed to criticise so harshly certain songs now fashionable, as some have done. I simply ask those who can only understand and appreciate indifferent music to abstain from judging works of genius, and not to expect masterpieces like the "Merry Wives of Windsor" and "Don Quixote" from the same pen as that which wrote "The Provincials," and "The Bard with the Iron Helm." By all this I desire to warn against a certain narrow prejudice which is seen on every hand. For example, if a student has mastered certain pieces and derives pleasure from them, he is apt, for that very reason, to think them more beautiful than all others, and is very likely to be offended if it is hinted that others are more beautiful. Such bigotry is destructive in the highest degree. Music is really a matter of taste, but taste is formed slowly. Test it by Painting and Poetry. That which delighted the child, fails to please the young man; what pleased the young man, the grown man often considers poor and faulty. By such trials and comparisons we shall ultimately find the truly classical, and obtain a happy repose, because its properties are such that it can be heard over and over again, and rather gains than loses by the process. So if there has been hitherto a person of but little culture, it is impossible to say where an educated taste may eventually guide him; and it is mere idleness, or faintheartedness, to presume on the unknown from what is known, and obstinately refuse to step further. No wisdom can lie in such conduct when one possessed of full knowledge places in your hands that which is of the highest importance, and in this way excludes everything mediocre and valueless—a great educational boon. However, in the case of Music, it is not often

that such a teacher is handy, and many trials must be made before the object is accomplished. Ambition is not inclined to confess its mistakes; but what weakness can there be in the assertion, "What a booby I was, up to such and such a year!" if happily you can add, "But how much better I am now?"

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## V.

## EFFECT.

ENTHUSIASTIC admirers of modern art pride themselves particularly on their attempts to produce what they call effect, as a special feature in modern music; but it is just here that the lover of true art discovers most ground of criticism, because this favourite effect either shows an unskilful workman, or else a panderer who tries to serve and please all. Nature does not work by fits and starts, nor do our emotions in their natural condition shift irregularly, or go beyond their appointed limits. So your favourite symphonies, fantasias, pot-pourris, &c., are often the most ridiculous things in the world. First a doubtful introduction, then a tremendous crash, an abrupt silence, some unlooked-for dance movement, then, to sustain the excitement by an equally happy idea, swift modulation to the deep and sorrowful. Then comes a tempest from amid which we shift after a tantalising rest to a merry strain, and then at the end a noisy burst of applause in which every one congratulates every one else with tremendous warmth. All this is liked, it is true, but why? The truth is just this:—Few are capable of giving serious and steady

attention to anything great, even though Love himself wooed them. When a mixed programme is placed in the hands of a mixed audience, each finds something to suit him, and as he gets the needed rest during the intervals, he will willingly allow his fellow-auditors to enjoy the objects of their regard. If a glance is taken at the operas and concerts, one generally finds the ladies criticising the dresses, and the men ogling the young ladies, while the piece they wish for is being approached, and then the minute that love and dancing begin every pleasure-seeking eye is bent on the performers. In Milan, where people are not used to place so much restraint on their feelings as in Germany, it has long been a custom for people of culture to beguile the time, without ceremony, with card-playing, but directly any phrase of the music, or any feat of vocal gymnastics attracts their notice, to applaud vehemently. A great German player, whom I told plainly, after a concert, that he had performed an indifferent piece inimitably well, confessed with laughter that the compositions he had written for the public were not worth a charge of powder.

The principal cause of such unnatural combinations is clearly this, that so very few musicians possess the intellect and the parts necessary to a complete inspiration in their art. When Handel soars aloft, it is as the eagle on the wing for his heavenward flight; but many of our popular favourites who rise with difficulty to the mountain heights turn dizzy, and retreat home on foot. Where Handel, knowing no limit to his power, has just made a beginning to a splendid chorus, there modern invention usually finds a limit, and tries to eke itself out by repeating a

phrase, perhaps a couple of tones higher, or to hide its barrenness by recitatives, metrical passages, and other expedients; while again Handel, with a few masterly strokes, finishes his passages of grief or heroism, modern mediocrity is obliged to whine and whimper on. The worst is that under the specious name of effect, most deadly poison is offered in the shape of spasmodic and strained music—this roaring and tumultuous confusion of tones—rousing all that is ignoble in man, and threatening ultimately to efface all true taste for music. How is it possible to have patience, when it is announced with much pride that a *Te Deum* is to be rendered in Church, assisted by eighty drums, or when, as recently in one of the first cities of Germany, the banging, drumming, and screaming, at an Opera House was so great, that an excellent critic of classical music, on coming out just as forty drummers passed beating the Tattoo, could not help saying, “Thank Heaven we have soft music once again!” If this kind of thing lasts the inevitable results will be that at our musical entertainments we shall never be able to eat our melon without cayenne pepper, and like the Russians, will have to give up brandy for aquafortis. Nothing can be done but to place these senseless musical gormandizers and inebriates on fast, in order to restore their shattered nerves, and rescue from annihilation a taste for pure music and those fine sensibilities which music elevates, but which cannot be dragged into and yoked with vulgar extravagance. I would not have it supposed in saying this that I confine my affection to soft music entirely. Music should mirror all conditions of sense, feeling, and emotion, but it should do so poetically, and not show their deformity, but their freedom and vigour.

Show your temper if you wili, but do not foam at the mouth ; let love burn as it can with fierce consuming fire, but not so that the lover should, as recently acted, expire in the midst of her passionate pleading with an agile skip. What the German people have borne of this kind of foolery is incredible. Most of our virtuous maidens, if they knew what they often listen to, or themselves play and sing, and for what purposes one of the most popular composers with unique and great skill wrote several pieces, would be filled with shame and indignation. The only laymen who have as yet checked these abuses are certain peasants in South Germany, who more than once complained strongly to the priest of their having to listen to the organist's playing of some low song among his light and flashy selections. But however great the lamentations of lovers of healthy, ennobling music may be over its unnatural perversions, they will hardly do any good as regards oratorio and opera, because fashionable society is in a high state of ferment, because noisy and exciting music often suits well with poetry and philosophy itself, and also because the people look with favour upon the license that is taken for a certain amount of freedom and looseness when it is done under the name of genius. Yet in the case of Church music, properly so called, this passion for effect can still be checked ; for, as before stated, the Church has nothing to say to the promptings of passion and its concomitants. Besides, we may be sure that those who are warmly attached to the Church will joyfully welcome a fit style of Church music, for the sense of what is fitting for the Church is by no means extinct, and it will be found that those

pastors who are not satisfied with the poetry of the Psalms of David, but use verses from modern poems, or merely announce from the pulpit the name of a modern poet, always cause great annoyance.

It happens unfortunately, however, that musicians themselves are almost without exception opposed to advancement in this direction ; for it frequently happens that they can only play or compose forms of music of a profane or light character, and laymen who are disposed to object, are bluntly told that they understand nothing about it. Just as we Germans have a habit of referring all solecisms to an invariable rule, so our musicians are always prepared with arguments to show that black is white. Thus things have come to this—that the very compositions which are the peculiar property of the Church are dismissed haughtily in the name of self-styled science. The whole mass of Ancient Church Music is now infested by these ill-grounded and unwarrantable fears on the part of theorists—amongst other pieces, the Misereres of Allegri and Bai, which are the stock performances of Holy Week in the Sistine Chapel, and which never fail to make the profoundest impression on the hearers. And it was for this latter reason that Mozart journeyed to Rome for the purpose of possessing the music which had never before been intrusted to anybody. The fact that, having been secretly sent to the Emperor Joseph II., they were not liked in Vienna, is to be accounted for by both singers and audience being prejudiced against them. That persons professing to have knowledge of music could so superciliously reject these beautiful compositions, after they had been called attention to by Burney—at any rate in their main features, as is seen from other copies—and

could actually throw them away for their want of rhythm, or because their harmony is restricted to the common chord, is one of those inexplicable things to be bemoaned by lovers of true Church music, as much as the recently threatened extinction of the chorale itself. I can only express myself as I have done elsewhere, and again I say:—Can it be explained why grand compositions founded upon such a profound ideal should be thus coldly rejected? Their ideal is this, that the satisfaction of a soul, with a sense of resignation and blessedness, must rest in what is smooth and free, oft and oft recurring to it, and staying with it. Never did any man of good feeling, who in earnest thought gazed on the setting sun, or to whose soul the song of the nightingale, or a spring evening, or the sighing of the wind through the trees, called up sadder thoughts and fancies—never did such a man complain of monotony and advocate the ornamentation of nature. It is strictly in accordance with this grand conception that those Misereres were composed, perfectly according with the prayer, “Lord, have mercy upon us,” spoken in all honesty and humility. There is in them, consequently, no striving after novel effect from mere love of such, but the subject of the piece is worked out in frequently recurring plain song: and it is the modest beauty of these alternations, with the same guiding principle running throughout, that appeals to those prayerful conditions of mind which are moved but not flurried. Why is it that people will not now have more of that which never tires? I have in my possession twenty “*Cantus Populi in Processione Palmarum*” by Lasso, from the Library at Paris, written throughout in this very style, which, when correctly rendered by a

devotional choir, must produce the deepest impression, written as they are in the common chord, showing in every part the tenderest feeling, and last, but not least, always following the same leading ideal.

The same may be traced in hundreds of pieces of the old Church style, and thus there still remains to the lover of good music, the comforting thought that the principles, uniformly followed by so many classical composers, must have a solid basis, and at any rate deserve more attention than the confusing follies whereby people would now-a-days feign the possession of genius.

I have frequently seen musicians shrug their shoulders if a piece possesses no instrumental score, and I have heard none the less frequently an immense deal about the necessity of altering this and that orchestral part, and heard heaven thanked that the instrumentation of our day is as it is; and that the science of it had never been mastered till now. But I do not remember having heard that this instrumentation has done much for the lawful objects of proper music; on the contrary, my old friend Luther says,—“Singing is the best art and employment. It has nought to do with the world, and is subject to no tribunals or lawsuits. Singers are never sorrowful, but are merry and smile their troubles in song.” So, later on, he says,—“Music is, so to speak, a disciplinarian as well as a mistress, making people kinder, gentler, more staid and reasonable. Bad fiddlers and violinists show us what a fine art music really is; for white shows plainer in contrast with black.” We will then examine the subject closer, especially in regard to the true Church music. No sensible man will deny but that instruments have

a great and peculiar advantage, as they can be more easily manipulated than the human voice, possess a greater range, and thus help us to increase indefinitely the variety of music; but there is a time and place for all things, and musicians as well as others must obey this rule. Our chief churches are high and ample edifices, which can only be adequately filled by tones having fulness, power, and resonance. This is just the common failing of all but a few wind instruments, with the noteworthy exception of the trombone, which imitates the voice in the sonorous tone it produces, and therefore has always been a church instrument. Strings are a great deal too thin for a church, and so are flutes. A dozen good voices could drown fifty such instruments in a church; and when voices have a clear and correct intonation, it is well nigh offensive to the ear to add instruments. It was very likely from this that Pythagoras compared the ring of metal to the cry of an imprisoned spirit. If we are to amuse ourselves with playing pranks, and as is often done now, importune the Almighty with drums and fifes as though we could be happy without Him, the less said about art the better; but as far as concerns worship, humility, and that sober joy and satisfaction of the inner man which alone become the House of God, then it should be by the tongue only that the feelings of the heart should be conveyed. Allow for a moment that a pianissimo can best be performed by instruments, which point has been made much of; but for devotional purposes we no more require sickly sentimentality than we do the fashionable death-scenes and glaring eyeballs. The tone of the Jew's harp more than any other instrument fades away into nothing; but I would much sooner hear it

in a musical box than in a church. It has often been remarked, and rightly so, that the vocal performances of concert-singers are out of place in church. On the other hand I willingly confess that the Papal choir would be incompetent to take part in a military march, a tattoo, parade music, or even in the last popular song, which starts with muffled drums, and then goes, when the third bar is reached, not to forte or double forte but to fortissimo. A circumstance very much to the purpose occurred in Paris not long ago, which should be instructive. At Napoleon's coronation the Parisians desired to distinguish themselves by unique music, and the church was filled with an orchestra of eighty harps—far outnumbering David. The performance made an enormous sensation. Directly afterwards the Pope entered the church, and was received with Scarlatti's grand "Thou art Peter!" from about thirty voices brought from Rome, to the complete annihilation of the previous effect. I was informed by an eye-witness that if any one alluded to their eighty harps, the Parisians regarded it as an insult. If no satisfactory reason had existed for excluding instruments from the Church, the grand old masters who worked so heartily for the Church would have used them; but as a rule they do not so at all. Accompaniments and interludes only began to be thought of when the vocal music of the Church became merged in the oratorio style, and then the practice spread rapidly, especially as ultimately even the oratorio style was pressed into the service. Fortunately there are two churches where the grandeur of pure vocal music is retained in its inherent purity—the Sistine Chapel is one, and the Imperial Church at St. Petersburg the other. These have always been,

and now are, the admiration as well of those who understand music as those who do not, simply through the music performed there; and only very recently a German musician who had been to Rome, and had no bias towards the Romish Church, but quite the contrary, told me that he had for the first time found out what the perfection of sacred music was from the service of the Sistine Chapel.

I do not for an instant deny the peculiar charm of instruments in certain cases. I do not deny, for example, that gracefulness and celerity, romping, bustling, noise, and dancing may be a more suitable subject—a thousand times so if you choose—for instruments than for the voice. Let us put all things in their place. Brilliant red and yellow are very pretty colours: but we could not endure a picture of Christ clothed in a bright yellow robe with a rose-coloured girdle. Any one in church who devoutly listens to well-known instrumental pieces will always find that as soon as ever the instruments set to work the world fills his thoughts. And why? Because people are only too glad to be reminded in church of things which please them outside of it. But the worst of it is that instruments have lately been employed in church to point a climax, suggestive of orgies; that an Amen or a Hallelujah or a Gloria have been accompanied by the thunder of drums and the roar of trumpets; and even with all this, resort has often been had to guns and cannon fired in the neighbourhood of the church. When we praise God there should be no space for aught beside the thought that we are standing before God's Throne. How is it possible to figure a congregation entering Heaven with notes of praise, employing first their timbrels and trumpets,

after them a train of noisy artillery, and then drawing near to God's Throne, bounding forward with profane plaudits?

It is indeed remarkable how apt we are to overlook the good we possess and to pursue what is wrong; for within the church there is the united voice of the people, at once the simplest and grandest of all aids for attaining a climax fit for the divine service. If Hallelujah, Amen, be chanted by the choir from the organ loft or chancel, and then if the entire congregation repeat the words after them, one might imagine oneself transported to Heaven, and realise that such is the mode of the worship of God in Heaven. St. Chrysostom, in his discourse on the 41st Psalm, has said much that is good bearing upon this subject; but he proceeds to speak of a purified mind and self-mortification, and so, alas! of virtues to which our unsteady bewildered amateurs are strangers. In consequence of this it is not fit to say to them as Chrysostom did to his well-trained singers, "When you are in God's choir you may regard yourselves as at David's side. There no zithers or strings are wanted." Yet it must be confessed that with our present choirs but little can be attained. Utterly ignoring the example and instructions of Gregory in the Roman Church, and Luther in the Protestant, we have scarcely done anything lately in Germany for a supply of good voices; and even the singers whom we could have commanded have been allowed to disperse, partly, as I know for a fact, because the music is said to clash with the sermon, although it is clear that sermons containing any merit could only gain if hearts were assisted to devotion by good and truly religious music. We shall have, however, to

consider the subject of instrumentation more explicitly without regard to time or place.

The favourite method seems to be to keep the instruments continually at work. It is quite natural that a timid composer, who cannot stand the frowns of players obliged to be silent for a time, should be governed by this consideration, and this is probably the secret of the origin of a French opera, which during the last ten years has been performed in Germany times without number, in the overture to which all the singers strike up together. Yet although even a lover of art can occasionally in an hour of leisure heartily enjoy this kind of thing, seeing that its mere absurdity renders it innocuous, it is necessary to protest most firmly against its becoming a precedent. As with the voice, each class has its own qualities—heavy passages being suited for a bass; finished, feeling, or fanciful ones for a tenor or soprano; and sad, pathetic ones for a contralto—so, likewise, each instrument has its own special use. The trombone may perhaps sound in Heaven, but on earth never, to a soft amorous air: and the light flute must keep silence when a heavier toned instrument speaks, and may fitly be linked with the viola. For example I would give Handel's wonderful "Dead March in Saul," the composition of one who worked with the power of a giant, and allotted with true instinct to each voice its fitting melody, who knew and often used all the instruments of the present time, and who, it may consequently be assumed, had good reasons when he did not employ one of the usual instruments. In the first bars of this march the flutes are quite silent; then they are heard, then they break off, but soon re-enter and assert themselves

until the end. The reason is plain that Handel, with his great and hearty soul, treats sorrow with tender respect, but does not leave us in unmanly despondency; and therefore, as a friend comforting and sustaining, he weeps with those that weep, but at last shows us the sunlight; and thus it is that, after listening to one of his funeral choruses, we often feel more self-composed and happy than after the most lively effusions of modern sentimentality. Thus the march commences with the utter dejection of grief which the entry of the flutes endeavours to enliven; and after a relapse, which is quite in accord with human nature, the flutes accompany the mourners to the end. This is as clear as the day. In spite of this I have heard a performance of this piece, specially arranged for effect, where the flutes from the first were forced into inevitable collision with the heavier wind instruments, and by sheer sweetness spoilt the whole thing. As regards this, however, it may be said that Handel's works are beyond being utterly spoilt, and so on the occasion in question the audience were very well pleased. Assuming that modern instrumentation deserves particular praise, it should be proved that the providing of suitable accompaniments has been undertaken with energy and success; but the evidence on this point is very shaky. The way in which rocking, rolling, jerking, and noisy accompaniments are associated with the gentlest and most pensive melodies, proves plainly the total want of taste. Song accompaniments are often actually distressing—what would be effective elsewhere being often clumsily set in the wrong place. For example take a Continuo, as it is called, where the bass acts independently with a marked and rapid movement. Under some circum-

stances this has a fine effect, its result in a grand passage being to inspire the singers and help them in their flights. It has been thus used by Durante in his Magnificat, by Caldara in a "Lauda Sion Salvatore," and by Handel in "But the waters." Beguiled by this device, a modern composer has in an oratorio given us a Continuo by way of help to a supplicatory duet by tenors, which rushes like a storm-wind, and can only be appreciated by omitting the voice parts. Even Mozart, with his wonderfully fine taste, has in this respect quite forgotten himself, as only his blind worshippers fail to see. This is specially so in his edition of the "Messiah" where, more than anywhere, he should have had the greatest caution. Every page exhibits such overloading and interpolating as would without doubt have been judged misplaced by the "Messiah's" immortal author. I shall only speak, by way of example, of the fine bass air, "The people that walked in darkness." This inimitable piece is serious throughout, and requires corresponding solidity in the accompaniment. Hence, Handel uses violins and basses only, by which he assuredly does not intend a pair of thin violins and one bass player, but as much support as the vocalist can bear,—a hundred instruments, if you like, if the singer has the lungs of a giant. Yet Mozart has called to his aid flutes, clarionets and bassoons. They enter at the fourth bar as if some one had to be roused from sleep, and then again at the words, "A great light," and are then silent, again return, and so on. It may be said that this is but a new illustration of Mozart's genius; but he has murdered Handel in this passage, and destroyed the whole conception of the solo. The soul-stirring bass air, "For this mortal," has suffered

in like manner by Schwenck's pianoforte setting. Mozart has for some unknown reason left it out; Schwenck restored it, with a peculiar and restless accompaniment which may tax the skill of a good pianist, but is out of all keeping with the serious nature of the piece. The practice of filling up now followed has been alleged to be necessary in the case of Handel's oratorio scores, on the ground that he assisted the performance of his works so well by his masterly organ play. Then why do we not endeavour to attain the same masterly rendering under those very circumstances which gave to his oratorios their original fulness and dignity? Can we suppose that Handel, when playing the organ, showed himself off and spoilt his own work? This I do believe, that at the parts where in the vocal score we see the short direction, "full organ," a power of tone was to be heard when Handel played—such a volume of sound as a thousand fiddlers or flautists could not now reproduce. To sum up the whole matter, who would ever think of decking out a Homer, or a Dante, or a Shakespeare in a modern costume? Finally, I say to all lovers of truth:—"If it be insisted on that no good can come without instrumental aids, let us at any rate have something better than is usually offered. Let us not have, I say, a row of players half like stocks incapable of grasping the spirit of a piece, giving no attention to the voices, careful only to make themselves heard, and regardless of the quality of tone they produce. Better to have only three choristers in church than charlatans who bring discredit on music. For this reason I firmly believe that Handel's oratorios, if not given in a church, nor on the other hand in a theatre, but in a good hall

with not too many singers and an efficient pianoforte accompaniment, would sound far more impressive than if supported by a bad orchestra. Yet I freely confess that a clear and ample instrumental accompaniment, such as Handel himself used, must increase twofold the effectiveness of his works. But in mentioning a pianoforte accompaniment, I am assuming the player to be no blunderer, that he does not strum through his part, or lose sight of the voices, or endeavour to create a sensation by rapid fingering, but has, as it were, all the voices in his ten fingers, helps them wherever they hesitate, and occupies his right hand with the full tones of the middle octaves as much as possible, always striving by playing the chords fully to make it easily felt what key a particular passage is in. For this reason I much condemn the pianoforte arrangements which are now in such favour; for the high notes, which are full and melodious when string and wind instruments are used, become in the same octave on the key-board a wretched jingle, in addition to which these arrangements prevent a close attention to the score, without which no good can be done. If Handel had foreseen the possibility of his "Messiah" being performed without full organ and orchestral accompaniment, and merely with the pianoforte, and had he written an accompaniment for this special purpose, it would certainly have been something quite different from Schwenck's plethoric arrangement, much as we may praise his exemplary truthfulness.

Highly as we may value and laud the orchestra, we must never proceed to such lengths as to wink at the offence lately so frequent of utterly ignoring the voices in church music, and allowing an unnecessary and meddlesome predominance to the instruments. **I**

shall not name living German composers, as that might be regarded as personal, but shall only mention a foreigner of the present day—a man of much genius, and whom these thoughts are not likely to reach, namely, Cherubini. Peruse his sacred productions, and a little thought will at once show that his accompaniments clash with his vocal parts. Yet his fame as a writer of operas has hitherto blinded his admirers to his failings in church music; although he himself would scarcely set much value on these compositions, but would most likely complain of having been the victim of the wretched Parisian taste, as he is the very man who promoted the recent issue of old Italian works, and particularly of Marcello's great Psalm-book; and I am told he always has Palestrina by his side. Following the example of the great old masters he has set the Creed for eight voices, a work which fills a whole folio, and contains some inimitable pieces, but never in the printer's hands, because the gay Parisians could not appreciate it, and were unworthy of it; and the whole of this excellent composition is planned for voices only.

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## VI.

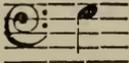
### ON JUDGING THE WORKS OF GREAT MASTERS.

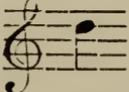
It cannot be denied that in one manner an immense work is being accomplished in Germany for music at this time—more so than in Italy, the home of some immortal composers; in other words, we are working very zealously to acquire execution, and those who are complete adepts in crossing the hands and intertwining the fingers, sacrifice even physical and mental

health in attempting the impossible. It is from this cause that those who attain to a certain excellence of execution are frequently very peevish and capricious, enthusiastically lauding the merits of their favourite works, but utterly incapable of forming an intelligent opinion of the real worth of a composer. This is always the case when the essence of a thing is lost sight of; and yet how easy is it to find the true road! It can be of no use to us to stand gaping at a player's fingers or to see worthless pieces marvellously complicated, but it is the ear that ought to be interested, regardless of any mechanical obstacles in the way.

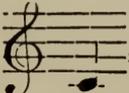
It is possibly excusable in wandering performers to play the safest game in their tours, and to parade the utmost of which they are capable, and nothing less; because as a rule the public would sooner see a rope-dancer stand on his head than set patterns of form by graceful and easy motions; but it grieves one exceedingly that on every hand time, wealth, and health should be cast aside for the acquisition of that which is meaningless and void of value; and that from the continued strife after startling effects the art of performing simple pieces with feeling, delicacy, and good phrasing should well nigh be utterly lost. The music now fashionable possesses no sort of moral influence whatever except the encouragement of vanity and of devotion to pleasure and the dance. There is but this consolation, that when the time of childhood and pleasure-seeking is past, these *tours de force* are cast aside, and those who were so happy as to learn in youth soothing, beautiful, and elevating melodies, retain for them even to extreme old age the happiest recollections. This present state of things may help us to understand the regrets of the Greek writers as to

the prejudicial effect of their later music ; and one might well wish to return to the school referred to by Aristophanes in his "Clouds," where the boys were taught to sing the songs of their ancestors slowly and carefully, and got some hard raps if they attempted to ornament them. The error of overdoing things is far more common in our day than it was in that of our forefathers, for we have a greater variety of instruments, and each one possesses properties peculiar to itself. Yet nothing is regarded as beyond the power of an instrument ; and performers seem to prefer being heard when their instruments outgo their respective provinces or exhibit their weakest points. The Jews'-harp and French horn must be made to perform rapid runs like a violin, the violin imitates the poverty of the pianoforte, the trumpet must needs be tender as the flute, and even the ancient cumbersome double bass has recently tried to imitate the graceful points of every kind of instrument. This audacious excess has even invaded the region of the voice, and it is evident many composers care not a straw where mortal basses, tenors, altos and sopranos have their limit. For example, it is certain that the normal alto

which goes down to  cannot easily rise

above  and yet E flat, E natural, F, and

yet more are often demanded of them, even by C. P. E. Bach in his "Holy, Holy, Holy!" yet in such a manner as to allow of remedy, for he does not take the

altos below , so that this part can be sung by the second soprano. Choirmasters even, who were all

in favour of the modern style, have more than once expressed their regret to me at such license; but from whence is the abuse? It has never been countenanced by our great old writers. How well fitted to each voice is Handel's score, and how particular in this respect were even the most brilliant Italian composers, like Caldara, Marcello, and Durante, although as a rule Italian voices are higher, deeper, and clearer than are German. Durante was moderate in everything, even when writing for practice; and sought, like a very Mephistopheles, to lay all manner of pitfalls for his female singers; namely, in his twelve duets for soprano and alto, eighteen duets for sol-faing for soprano and bass, in his "Lezione del Venerdì Santo" for soprano, and in the seven Cantate Morali for contralto. Seeing that our composers have not the plea, as had Hasse, that their Faustinas can reach anything; and as they compose for those whose name is legion, such extravagances must be utterly condemned, whatever excuses are made, for pedantry is one of our distinguishing characteristics and leads us to confuse causes and results. So what is really only a part of training must needs be shown in public, and thus, of course, arises the evil in question. Anyone who desires to sing a high note perfectly ought to be able to sing a few notes higher. These extreme notes must certainly be practised; but afterwards they can have no legitimate place in a performance that must be without blemish; just as the dancing-masters of Paris place leaden soles on the feet of the children some hours before they dance, and then at the time of performance remove the weight and so secure the utmost facility for the performance; but our musicians are only too apt to let their leaden soles

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remain on as parts of the costume, and so bravura exercises, which might have fitted a performer to render works of simplicity and of genuine feeling, are made as a rule to usurp their place. The real foundation of musical knowledge—simple thorough-bass—is, despite all good theoretical works, often most unwarrantably neglected, not only by amateurs but even by music masters, preceptors, and organists, though there is no doubt that a keen sense of harmony can only be adequately formed by thorough-bass, and even that perfect ease and sureness of execution are impossible without it. Our musicians, unfortunately engrossed in their artificial manipulations, frequently lose sight of the essence of music and the dignity of their art, and think by display to pretend to the possession of talent. This pretension is now the curse of every craft, for it estranges us from labour; and without labour, trouble, and pain nothing can succeed. To find the real essence of music a man must examine full scores carefully; must with vocal passages sing them over himself, going from part to part, in order to see where the gist of the music lies; and he must try to render himself familiar with the great masters in their entirety. It is the peculiarity of great geniuses that they do not, as do mediocre composers, keep a uniform level, but tire at times when the soul requires rest to recover from a grand creative effort. Hume in one place compares Frenchmen to cucumbers, which are a good fruit, but all much alike; Englishmen, he says, are like melons, five out of ten may be cast aside as good for nothing, but the rest are all the more delightful; and so it is frequently with the works of great composers. Young musicians will be led astray if they make their estimate from any

one piece, and do not trouble to make themselves acquainted with the entirety of their author. I look upon Palestrina as a very angel among composers, but I possess six of his Masses which contain nothing worthy of special attention ; yet I consider his *Missa Papæ Marcelli* a grand work of art, and many other compositions of his as quite unique and unsurpassed. This may be said of Caldara, Lotti, Durante, and others, and even of Handel himself, as he wrote rapidly, and often under pressure, was frequently mentally worried, and was the victim of gout for some years ; so that with some exceptions his operas and oratorios may be compared to boxes of jewels wrapped in wool ; and I can only pity those who impose on themselves the task of giving an entire opera of Handel's as if they were thus doing something wonderful. It is a notorious fact that our performers, composers, and music masters are, as a rule, totally ignorant of every work above fifty years of age. While in every other pursuit—poetry, painting, and architecture, and the rest—we work diligently to bring to light the united productions of the great past to make them plain and restore them to life, and the masterpieces of the greatest musical composers are doomed the while to lie buried, and it might be said a laughing-stock to narrow minded ignorant praters ; our musicians are not even moved by any worldly curiosity and ambition. Luther, a man of the highest, most natural spirit, was devoted heart and soul to music. His chief favourite was Senffel. An old story is told of him that one evening, after having had a motett of Senffel's sung, he cried in ecstasy, " If I died for it I could not compose a motett like that !" and yet antiquarians of Lutheran bias take not the least pains

to get an idea of the style and method of this great musician. It is even more unpardonable that, with the exception of some attempts at Munich, literally nothing has been done for Orlando di Lasso, the change in whose name from the Flemish Roland Lass into the soft Italian has not robbed him of German energy; for in his time (he was born 1520, and died 1594) he was regarded—not in Germany alone, but in other countries—as almost one of the world's wonders. Called to Munich, he presided over a choir of which Germany never had the like before, and is hardly likely to see again. Most of his numerous works were published and distributed over all Europe, and were highly esteemed. By the kindness of a member of the Papal choir I possess a Mass of his for four voices, upon the title-page of which the old Roman copyists have written: "Hic est Lassus, qui lassum recreat orbem" (this is the weary one who refreshes the weary world). Charles IX., in order to obtain rest for his soul after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, caused Lassus to set the Penitential Psalms to music. This great work still exists in the Library of Munich, adorned with gold and jewels, and portraits of the composers of that age. Where, I would ask, is the young musician who has journeyed thither to study this and other works of this incomparable composer there to be seen? I should add that the authorities of St. Mark of Venice might easily inscribe on their little finger nails the names of German virtuosi who during the past thirty years have inquired there for the works of Lotti. But what is totally inexcusable is the general neglect of Handel, whose works can be obtained without trouble in English editions in full score, and in exact and easily

readable type, forming a most valuable treasury of the most real and masterly music of nearly every style. Handel is the Shakespeare of music, and is fittingly laid near the great poet in Westminster Abbey. At his ease in every kind of musical contrivance to a degree rarely found, he stands up in all kinds of musical form as an immortal example for imitation—fresh, lively, skilful, as though all were play to him. In all styles, from the fond and playful to the sublime, he has provided us with unexcelled specimens of inspiration and culture. In the sober music of the great church style alone he has achieved little, because his associations and encouragement were not such as to lead him thereto; but of his genius and skill in that sphere there is no doubt, as is proved (not to mention more) by the first chorus in “Susanna,” and the chorus, “The earth swallowed them,” in “Israel.” In Germany we generally hear enumerated, first, the “Messiah,” next, possibly, “Judas Maccabæus,” “Samson,” “Alexander’s Feast,” and quite lately, now that other pieces have been arranged for the pianoforte to suit the unskilled, certain other compositions; but nothing is surer than that Handel’s works, if we refuse to single out for censure some special part that is defective or indifferent, deserve to be described as a very ocean of splendour. I shall not refer to his pianoforte works, nor to his more important instrumental pieces, which together fill more than eighty folios; nor to his forty or fifty operas, some of which were received with rapture even in Italy, but merely to those works which were most congenial to his soaring spirit when circumstances allowed it free play—I refer to his oratorios in the widest sense. His chamber duets

and cantatas, composed as early as 1710 to 1721, his Grand Jubilate (Hundredth Psalm), Dettingen Te Deum, Utrecht Te Deum, and the twelve anthems written for the Duke of Chandos, betray the giant power and rare gifts of this mighty master. After the production of these works he was caused by force of circumstances to devote his attention well nigh entirely to the theatre; but after the appearance of "Esther" in 1731, his genius became more and more prone to high flights. Now appear, prior to the "Messiah," and containing without exception incomparable passages, "Deborah," "Athalia," "Acis and Galatea," "Alexander's Feast," "Ode to St. Cecilia," "Israel in Egypt" (a work of infinite majesty), "Allegro and Penseroso," "Saul," and other short pieces of a like calibre. In 1741 and 1742 follow the wonderful and transcendent "Messiah" and "Samson;" yet is the compact strength of the master in no way lessened by all this, but only just in motion; for there come now in swift succession and set with brilliant gems, "Semele," "Belshazzar," "Susanna," "Hercules," "Choice of Hercules," "Time and Truth," "The Occasional," "Joseph," "Judas Maccabæus," "Joshua," "Alexander," "Balus," "Solomon," "Theodora," and, lastly, "Jephtha," so fast and animated as if his advancing years were still inspired with the full strength of youth and manhood. Thus I give on the whole a hearty assent to all that the English writer, Busby, has recently said of Handel in his "History of Music," as follows:— "As a man, Handel may justly be ranked among the moral and pious; as a scholar, with the general class of the well educated; but, as a musician, he is above all ranks, for no one ranks with him. His ideas had never any alliance with tameness or inanity; his

invention appears to have been always ready, rich, and wonderfully accommodating to the subject he had in hand, whether gay or serious, cheerful or solemn, light or grand. He wrote quickly; but the motion of his pen could rarely keep pace with the rapidity of his imagination; and most of his finest thoughts were the birth of a moment. For the most part he is very original, and where he shines the brightest the lustre is uniformly his own; yet whatever he appropriates he improves. It has been said of him as of Cicero, that whatever he touched he turned to gold; but it might with more correctness be affirmed that his judgment rejected what was not originally gold, and that the gold he borrowed he refined. In some composers we find sweetness, in others grace; in these tenderness, in those dignity; here we feel the sentiment and force of character proper to the theatre, there we are struck with the grandeur and solemnity claimed by the service of the Church; but in Handel we discover all these properties, and what indisputably entitles him to pre-eminence over all other musicians, ancient and modern, is the truth that, while he equals all others in every way but one, in that one he transcends them all: his mellifluous softness and dignified mirth, fire, energy and purity of pathos, have been approached by various masters; but to his sublimity no one has been able to soar. While I listen to his Hallelujah Chorus in the 'Messiah,' his 'Horse and Rider' in 'Israel in Egypt,' or the nobler portions of his Dettingen Te Deum, the massy grandeur appeals not only to my ear but to my soul; it seems even to excite another sense: I *see* the glory that is celebrated, and am profane enough to extend its mirage to the composer."

Any one who is acquainted with the principal works of Lasso, Palestrina, Lotti, and Sebastian Bach, must certainly pronounce this last dictum, as far as it excludes all other composers, an exaggeration; but an exaggeration may easily be pardoned where the object of admiration is not itself over praised, and when it comes from such a right appreciation of the great and true. In concluding I beg leave to offer to my fellow-countrymen a few remarks on the arrangements of the oratorios of Handel.

In all these arrangements one of two objects must be had in view; either to choose pieces for those who cannot compass complete works (and this is generally the case with choral societies); or else to have a faithful representation of the original as written by its author. To take an intermediate course by a method of dismemberment and rearrangement is barefaced presumption, which may perhaps be excused for once in a Mozart, but in no one else. Who may stand beside Handel, or should I not say, above Handel? And why should we obscure the original text and supplant the free judgment of those whose taste differs from ours? These musical transformations are as condemnable as Wieland's arbitrary version of Shakespeare; and let us hope for the honour of musicians that such abuses will no longer have apologists. I am aware indeed that my countrymen will dare anything, but it is time we had done with these perversions, for we have had enough of them. Mozart treated the "Messiah" with the greatest freedom; not merely re-scoring it, but also omitting several airs, a whole chorus, and one of the best recitatives, and also transposing for a bass an entire passage which Handel had divided between bass and

soprano. So also in editions of the Hundredth Psalm the fine alto lead has been cut about with unsparing hand. Finally in the edition of "Samson" issued by Marchetti in Vienna, Mosel has capped the run of license. It is indeed difficult to believe that this editor would have allowed himself the slightest alteration of such a piece, inasmuch as Handel himself was in doubt whether he ought not to place "Samson" even above the "Messiah," so that it ought to have been the primary obligation to avoid the slightest falsification of the text. Yet what do we see in this edition? Good choruses are left out, the most beautiful airs, duets, and recitatives are left out, a poor translation is affixed, one of the finest bass passages is reconstructed in order to fit the one that follows, intermediate parts having been cut away, and in the second chorus an interpolated Presto has been forced into the thirty-first bar without rhyme or reason. As a consequence, one can only connect this Samson with the hero himself by figuring him with his eyes put out and his hair cut off. If then selections are used, they may be chosen according to your taste, after previous counsel from some competent musician, but be careful to choose the very best specimens from the whole range of Handel's works. They will form a sufficient supply for years for a choral society that has only one evening free in the week. If the requirements of connoisseurs are to be suited, give everything without exception in its original condition, particularly as all persons have moments of abstraction and fail to catch on one day what they will appreciate the next. This is especially true of works of real genius, for the authors do not usually employ a uniform standard. In addition, knowledge of a composer's

whose nature, his faults as well as his virtues, is an indispensable condition to a just estimate of him. Shakespeare and Cervantes show paradoxes, as do Durante and Handel ; but no man of understanding would desire them away, as they give matters for thought, and because the mere petulance of genius is well calculated to show its commanding power.

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## VI

## ON A LIBERAL JUDGMENT.

A comprehensive study of individual composers is indispensable, although it may prove exceedingly dangerous, because men seldom possess comprehensiveness of judgment, patience, and largeness of mind. Thus they are much too anxious to be great in a small circle, and affect an immense importance for their own little ideas. This is an evil that exists unhappily to a great extent in music. Followers of Handel decline acquaintance with Mozart ; those of Mozart do the same with Handel ; disciples of Bach ignore Marcello, and so the foibles of each come to be considered as paragons, blind worship causing less trouble than thoughtful criticism. Even style is not out of reach of this folly. It would be every whit as wise to argue the respective beauties of crimson and purple, or blue and green, as upon the question whether a love ditty is more beautiful than bravado, or a soft plaintive melody than a wild and vigorous one. Notwithstanding it always happens after a mixed performance that instead of thanking God for

giving all forms of beauty, people worry themselves to death as to which piece after all when properly regarded, minutely examined, and probed to its bottom is really the best, and then most likely are much offended if others see no point in their obstinacy. It is impossible to give too strong a warning against such wretched narrowness. Why when we find ourselves in a country abounding in flowers of all kinds should we be dazed by the beauty of one only, and in place of seeking variety in our nosegay overlook all others for the sake of one, or why at a well-provided banquet should we refuse all manner of good things from preference for one favourite dish? We deny ourselves the highest enjoyment in music if we aim at annihilating every composer and every style but one. As a rule each composer has his own particular beauty; and in this consists the infinite power of perfect music that it can move, purify, and elevate the heart and soul in all manner of ways. Graun (and as well Rolle and Homilius) had not the genius of Handel, yet the devotional and simple spirit of his "Death of Jesus" will and must render it immortal like Handel's "Messiah." And again Gluck most surely has not the exquisite refinement and that frail and ethereal fragrance that characterises Mozart; but who would say that Mozart's works were animated by the same fresh and sturdy instinct of romance that is so plain in every line of Gluck's great writings? I have before recorded in more than one place my unbounded admiration for Palestrina, yet I maintain he never could have created a Mozart's "Don Juan," any more than Homer could have written Hamlet. On the other hand, I also assert that Mozart could not have written the "Missa Papæ

Marcelli," the "Song of Solomon," the eight part Magnificat and the Responsorialia. As to what Mozart might have produced under different circumstances I cannot of course decide; and it must be understood that I only speak of the prevailing bias of his genius as constantly shown in his works—the very same ground on which rests my estimate of Palestrina. Now and then the most splendid passages rest side by side with deplorable failures. The tawdry weakness of Marcello's Cantatas and his large collection of Psalms is something alarming; yet where is a bolder composer, and where the style that shows the spirit of the learned and stately Greek modes so well as Marcello's? We may rest assured that his countrymen, with a better average musical instinct than the Germans, had good reasons for styling him their Pindar of Musicians.

But there is still another mischievous habit to fight against in our conflict with one-sidedness, namely; national and even local exclusiveness, which has always been an obstacle in the way, not of catching a bad style and habit from foreign countries, but of correctly judging their great works. In late years, now that all that is German has become an object of native admiration, this evil has largely multiplied, and there are certain estimable young men I know who will hear of no pictures or compositions but such as are of German birth. Such well-intentioned obstinacy may be all very well where arms are in question; but in the realms of art and of science, and above all of music, it is folly.

German music has many splendid and inimitable productions to show of the first order of beauty, but Italian music is so infinitely rich, of such peculiar

genius, and so fully a reflection of the azure Italian sky which gives all their works a characteristic charm, that to neglect their masterpieces, and as it were refuse a journey to Naples and Sicily because we have beautiful pine forests, can only be styled the most thorough national pedantry. Have we arrived at this, that in order to be consistent every one according as he may have been born is to have his own special favourite in music, and as he may have been born in Vienna or Berlin, to ignore Sebastian Bach, Handel, Hasse, and Graun on the one hand, and Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven on the other? We frequently hear ignorant and ridiculous statements as to German music being masculine and robust, and Italian merely effeminate, but what if it were thus? We always bless Heaven for having given Adam a good-tempered wife, and should we not smile if it were seriously asked whether a perfectly beautiful and educated youth were a greater acquisition than a perfectly beautiful and educated maiden? But the charge rests upon a pure figment. It is quite the fact that Italian music has frequently greater softness, delicacy, grace, and heavenly purity than German music; but there are Italian composers who in vigour are not behind the Germans. Durante is often more delicate than Handel, yet we may safely place his "Dixit Dominus" beside Handel's Hundredth Psalm. Nor again would Handel have allowed for a moment that Alessandro Scarlatti was an effeminate composer; on the contrary, in that very Hundredth Psalm he has quoted from that great composer, even as Graun in his "Death of Jesus" has borrowed from several of Durante's pieces, heretofore unknown in Germany. Then let us, as did our own great composers in the

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past, apply ourselves energetically to learn from Italians not music alone, but liberality. Handel was almost adored in Italy, and one of his operas was performed at Florence twenty-seven times running. Hasse acquired in Rome, and holds till this day, the title of "the divine Saxon," and was in many things imitated by Italians, and that they have never ceased to honour Mozart is a well-known fact; so then should we for our part put aside all egotism and say with Hasse "the divine Lotti," and with Sebastian Bach "the glorious Caldara."

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## VIII.

### ON PERVERSIONS OF TEXT.

The false ideas of music prevailing at the present time are the principal causes of the increasing evil of texts that are lacking in taste and often void of meaning. Music can have no better partner than fitting words. A well-chosen text points the soul to objects which it is the calling of music to further embellish; and to choose an incongruous text would be as much folly as to adorn a maiden's head with a dish in place of a wreath. Is it not from the text that Cherubini's beautiful "Water-carrier" derives a portion of its charm; and are not the grand words of Handel's "Messiah" quite unapproachable as a help to and enhancement of the music? In Zumsteg's "Colma," his most successful work, it is apparent that the declamatory worth of the text had a particular influence on the music.

I have nothing else to say of Opera. It is no better than a feather in a whirlwind; and all we can do is to speculate as to when its extravagance will cease. Serious music, however, is not so dependent on the whims of blind fashion, and there is more hope of its improvement as the taste for ancient verse, and so for robust simplicity, increases.

It must be acknowledged that our esteemed countryman Klopstock has set a bad example in the way of text-spoiling. We have no more solemn, or, I may say, stupendous hymn than the "Stabat Mater." Every word is as weighty as refined gold. Klopstock adapted the German text to Pergolesi's music, but how? "Stabat Mater dolorosa juxta crucem lacrimosa dum pendebat Filius" are thus given, "Jesus Christ hung on the cross, downwards sank his bleeding head, bleeding to the shades of death." The following words, "Cujus animam gementem, contristantem, pertransivit gladius," are thus ornamented: "By the Mediator's Cross stood distressfully Mary and John, His Mother and His friend. Through the Mother's sad soul, yea through her very soul, pierced the sword." And in the whining and mincing manner runs the whole passage. Only the "Amen" is faithfully rendered by another Amen. It may certainly be remarked that if the first "grave" is accepted, the translation on the whole agrees with the music, but on the point I must pronounce against both one and another what has been very eloquently said by Chateaubriand of the latter (*Genius of Christianity*, vol. ii. pp. 5, 6.): "Pergolesi has shown in his Stabat Mater all the resources of art, but has he surpassed the Plain-song of the Church? He has varied the music at every verse notwithstanding that the essential

character of sorrow lies in the repetition of the same sentiment, and, so to speak, in the monotony of grief. Tears may come from various causes, but they all possess a common bitterness; besides it is rarely that people weep for a multitude of evils in the aggregate, and when wounds are many there is always one more poignant than the others which ultimately absorbs the lesser pains. Such is the secret of the charm of the old French Romances. The same melody, repeated at each couplet to different words, is a perfect counterpart of nature. One who is distressed in mind allows his thoughts to wander over a variety of subjects, while the foundation of his sorrow is always one and the same. Now Pergolesi has failed to recognise this truth which flows from the theory of the passions; for according to his treatment no one mental sigh resembles the one that precedes it. Wherever variety is found there is always distraction, and wherever there is distraction sorrow comes to an end."

Pitiable indeed is it to see so renowned a sacred poet as Klopstock holding up to others so bad an example; but yet more sad, that many living composers should connive at the same thing, including even Beethoven, who with his great and original genius should have been the last to employ anything of inferior quality. Yet how cramped, how theatrical, how light, is the text of his oratorio, "The Mount of Olives." But I pass this over, because by the rules of modern fashion it has become an almost unfailing rule that the materials of oratorios and operas should come from a common stock; of which practice the work in question, I fear, shows considerable evidence. But what has

Beethoven been content to do in his purely ecclesiastical works, or at any rate what have others unworthily put upon him? A reference to his Mass in C for four voices (Op 86) will testify. The opening words are quite simple but elevated in sentiment when sung with unaffected fervour; and because they are so sung the singer dwells with satisfaction upon a single idea. In place of the old "Kyrie eleison, Christe Eleison," we find in this Mass the following prosy poetry, and in which Christ is quite left out. "Low in the dust we adore Thee, Eternal Ruler of the world, the Almighty one. Who can name Thee, who understand Thee? Thou Infinite! Yea immeasurable, unspeakable in Thy might! Like children lisp we the name of God." The remarkable "Gloria in excelsis Deo," is again mixed with honey in the same way: "Praise, love, and thanks be to Thee," and the simple "Et in terra pax, hominibus bonæ voluntatis," is represented by "In silent awe we behold thy wonders, for by Thee and through Thee, we exist, live, and breathe," and and so it goes on; so that we may picture to ourselves the great composer as being like Demosthenes, who studied the art of speaking while beside a great waterfall with his mouth full of stones. It were better to have a text of pure prose unfettered by rhyme or rhythm, yet plain and weighty—if indeed there must be a translation—than this bombastic flowery diction, quite unsuited for the Church. But the worst trick is that played with Mozart's "Misericordias Domini," a very methodical work, composed on a set plan. The text consists, if I may so say, of two short sentences "Misericordias Domini" (the loving-kindness of the Lord), and "Cantabo in æternum,"

(*I* will sing for ever) but really of one only, for either "*Misericordias Domini*" or "*Cantabo in æternum*" must be considered the chief idea. If the former, then the "*Cantabo*" must be subjected to it; but if the latter, then a singer whose soul is in the music must temper his joy with the idea of mercy. Who could help laughing at a preacher who began softly with "the mercy of the Lord," and then immediately continued stentoriously "I sing for ever?" Yet for the sake of producing an artist's favourite contrast of colour—to which even Handel sacrificed much—Mozart has contrived that the "*Misericordias Domini*" should be sung softly as a "grave," and the "*Cantabo in æternum*" loudly, as a lively fugal subject. When this is fully worked out, the "grave" returns, and then again the fugue. In the German edition commonly used, we find given us to sing such pretty phrases as the following:—In place of "*Misericordias Domini*," "My praise ever ascends to the Lord" and such like. Thus praise is changed to prayer, and humility into exultation. Thousands of similar cases might be mentioned; and on the other hand, perhaps just as many cases where good words are coupled to totally unsuitable music. In offering these observations I am by no means asserting that with the old Church music the text always breathes the spirit of poetry, or that the great old composers always paid due attention to prose.

I am quite as well aware that the early hymns contain many unnecessary words as that musicians of those times did not pay sufficient regard to metre; but I have a right to ask that the case should be fairly judged as a whole; and I would, therefore, inquire what sacred poems of our day approach the ancient

hymns in depth, in spirit, and fervour, or what modern musicians of talent prove themselves masters of prosody? In addition this must be considered—The words must by their leading ideas directly influence the music, but an exact quantity of each syllable cannot frequently be observed owing the exigences of music: nay, beyond a certain point it becomes actually pedantic as it would in speech. A schoolmaster who made his boys scan might make them read the Lord's Prayer in so correct a manner as to bring the long and short syllables into marked contrast, but an earnest preacher will be compelled in the heat of his declamation to soften down much of this, just as in a recitation of a poem we should expect as a matter of taste the structure of the verse not to be brought too prominently into view. Therefore the strictures passed upon the old composers entirely vanish when we regard their truly inspired, sustained, and regular music, and when they render with such refined feeling that the text goes hand in hand with the music, yet not as if it were the only object to impress on the notes the length of each long and short syllable. The true theory of music should aim, therefore, at selecting with discretion such rules as shall reconcile dry prose with emotional feeling. Such rules, I fear, have not been as yet evolved in our day, though perhaps when a composition is most strictly constructed by rule, we sometimes see regularly moulded pieces with notes accurately dotted and tailed, which no more show a musical spirit than if a whole school were to pronounce their syllables to a given musical beat. Possibly, however, in this last I am saying too much, and I shall content myself with asking this question for my own information, Which of our modern theorists has

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written exhaustively on the point—whether the prosody of each word is to govern the music, and are our compositions to be such that a punctilious teacher of grammar could set their periods?

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## IX.

### ORAL SOCIETIES.

Our public musical performances are subject to so many potent influences, that no single individual can make much progress in the removal of their defects. Nothing less than actual unanimity will one day bring it about that, ashamed of the rubbish they should have at first rejected, people will for the sake of change once again have recourse to lost treasures. The materials commanded by individuals are frequently insufficient for the forming of more than a private musical society; and it is heartily to be desired that such societies were established universally. They will bring their own reward along with them, because a faithful miniature copy has almost the same value as the full-sized original, and the working talent and sympathetic feeling of a small body may possibly compensate for the absence of performances on a large scale. Besides there is good vocal part-music that is heard to best advantage when sung by skilled performers in single parts. Latrobe, in the preface to the third volume of his selection of sacred music (London 1806), speaks rapturously of a musical family in England, and remarks, "I have heard the best vocal pieces of Handel and other great Masters

rendered with greater precision and genuine feeling in this family circle than one usually hears from professed singers at a public performance." Private societies may be formed for the performance of either vocal or instrumental music. When the two are united it is delightful in the highest degree, but at the same time it is not easy to unite them in a joint performance, and it can well be afforded that they should be independent of each other, for there is an immense number of the most delightful pieces for instruments alone, and a still larger number for the voice. Vocal works which cannot confessedly be performed without instrumental assistance, such as Haydn's "Creation," may be left to such localities as rejoice in an abundance of varied musical talent; but this will still leave a large stock as the peculiar property of good private societies, music which must be considered as almost extinct, namely, genuine old chorales, old church music of the strict style, and national songs, as well as the greater part of compositions of the oratorio class, principally Italian. If the object be to elevate and direct the mind by music, choral societies are certainly entitled to rank as the principal means of attaining that object. Had composers been inspired by beautiful words, their inspiration must have impressed itself distinctly upon the music they wrote; and what can be compared to the human voice when grand ideas fill the singer's soul?

For many years I have taken an active part in a choral society which can pride itself on having with the greatest zeal and upon a large historical plan made a high standard its aim and object. So, regarding what occurred around me, and taking note of the proceedings of others, I have had much material for

reflection in respect of these societies ; whence it may not improbably be of general utility if I offer the following remarks upon them, especially as attention is better obtained by print than word of mouth. In doing so I do not pretend to dictate to masters of the art. To lecture men like Zelter as to their duties in any way whatever would be worse than presumption ; but seeing that the best men (those acquainted with the history of the matter) are just the most reserved, an amateur who has reflected upon it may perhaps be allowed to say a word, and at any rate to give a helping hand to a good cause. If we regard choral societies as a whole it is impossible to say authoritatively what is the best manner of conducting them. For instance, if their object be light entertainment, they are as praiseworthy as any social assembly ; but of course the way in which to conduct them will be altogether different from what it would be if the society met for the enjoyment of classical music, for edification and elevation of the mind and its diversion from the things of everyday life. I shall only here speak of the latter class, for it is by them only that some sort of relief can be afforded to the urgent musical wants of our day, so far, that is, as these societies steadily pursue the acquaintance of the purest and completest specimens of all types, and use works of mediocrity not of choice, but merely as a convenience now and then, and as tending to a better knowledge of the highest and best.

The primary and most essential requisite of a choral society is that its members be judiciously chosen from genuine lovers of art, that pains are taken to cherish to the utmost the love and enjoyment of real art, and that an equal distribution of voices is secured. Conse-

quently an evening set apart for singing must come before all mere eating and drinking engagements, and all the members must be agreed that an association which needs their united efforts to make and maintain it must not be at the mercy of ordinary pleasures, particularly because while in other assemblies the absence of one is not much missed, here the omission of one voice may cause a total deadlock, and this may occur even in choruses where a single trained voice may be an indispensable aid to the others. The conductor of the society will therefore have to bestir himself to the utmost to prevent the interference, to the society's detriment, of the frivolity and idleness allowed and allowable in respect to other amusements. If this course of action be steadily pursued from the beginning, and if the members of the society can rely upon having classical works of all kinds placed in their hands, the love of it will very soon awaken the needful interest without further trouble. If the society have members who may be supposed to have a high moral aim they will soon perceive that there is a brighter sun in a trained and willing choir than in all the dazzling circles of fashion, and there will then be no occasion for fault-finding with any who declare they are unable to give themselves heart and soul to so heavenly an art for three hours in a week out of one hundred and sixty-eight. When the society consists of a mixture of good and bad members some indulgence must be made, because an even distribution of the voices is impossible; and the better members must put up with the annoyance of having to endure a general effect, as it is called—in other words, a bawling that penetrates doors and windows.

A second great requirement of a good choral society

is an extensive musical library, for the best of music is liable to pall from the absence of variety; and hence it often happens that the oftener some most delightful pieces are practised the worse they are sung. And again, instrumentalists find that the piece they have practised is often played best when resumed after a temporary placing aside. A small library is very likely to cause people to acquire bad likings for want of better material, and to enjoy grain and husk equally well. A point should therefore be made of giving side by side a variety of masters from the earliest down to the present times. Absolute predominance should be allowed to no one style or composer, or the composers of any one country, nor on any account should an entire evening be given to the heavy and measured music of the old church style, which, shorn of the imposing effect of a church, is apt to tire and overstrain the attention, while even in church it is hard to bear a long and continuous musical performance. But above all things else, care should be taken to have not only four-part pieces, but also in one, two and three parts, for all the different voices, and especially pieces in eight parts or more, the distinctive beauty of which lies in their rising to a climax not by increased effect of voice but by accession of parts. It often happens that there are only a few voices of real excellence, and this makes it very necessary to have the resources of an ample library, in order to make full use of individual talent. There are many difficulties, however, in the way of acquiring a good library, and which are of course insurmountable if the members are of the same disposition as those who spend any amount on finery, trinkets, balls and dinners, but decline good music unless it come gra-

tuitously. Nothing good can come where such a paltry spirit prevails; but if there be due liberality good results may be hoped for. The best compositions of our countrymen, Handel and Sebastian Bach, are in great part in print, as are Handel's almost without an exception in England, and partially in Germany, which editions, although considerably mutilated, always contain a great amount of good material. It is easy to obtain the original Hussite, Lutheran, and Calvinistic chorales.

A choral society might even content itself with the specimens given in Mortimer's "Choral Music of the Reformation Period." (Berlin: 1821, 4 vols.) I have already pointed out the national songs that are in print. The works of the old Flemish and Dutch school are certainly difficult to meet with. To find Italian music one is generally obliged to make an extended search not only in Rome (where certainly much can be obtained from Signor Fortunato Santini) but in other places as well, because in Italy, as in Spain, a bad habit has prevailed of each locality keeping its own productions to itself, or considering them better than any others. There are extant, however, in print several important Italian works, sacred or otherwise, of interest to choral societies, of which I can specially mention L. Leo's "Miserere" for eight voices, Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater"—which is completely spoiled in Hiller's German edition—a Litany and Mass by Durante for four voices, and the Collection previously referred to, comprising Allegri and Bai's "Misereres," and Palestrina's "Lamentationes," "Responsoria," "Popule meus," "Stabat Mater," and "Fratres ego enim." To these I should add some duets and a Magnificat of Durante, recently

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published at Leipzig and Berlin, and as well Marcello's magnificent edition of the Psalms, lately issued in Florence, and edited by Cherubini in twelve folio volumes. I do not name other minor pieces published in periodicals, miscellaneous collections, or elsewhere in addition. I have perhaps overlooked a great many that are printed because it has always been my aim to obtain from Italy itself the most reliable MSS.

Another duty devolving upon the leader of a society devoted to classical music is to attend carefully to the practising of the several parts. Thus before the execution of a piece all the sopranos should be rehearsed together so far as they require assistance, then the altos and the others each separately, and this too under the conductor's personal superintendence, so that when he comes to conduct the final performance he may have no ground for complaining of the others. It is only thus that the necessary steadiness and delicacy can be obtained. Numerous points too can thus be detected which in united singing would remain unsettled, one part easily drowning another, and politeness and consideration preventing corrections being made as freely as in private practice. For accomplished singers, indeed, such trials may be unnecessary, but generally they cannot be dispensed with. As a rule, it is seen that those who possess a real taste for art have the reverse of dislike for practice, as long as works of good quality in their various kinds are tendered to them; for the more pains spent in the pursuit of the beautiful the greater the appreciation of it. Accomplished singers have also the satisfaction of tending by their example to encourage and instruct those not so proficient; and how easy it is to spare a couple of leisure

hours, provided one knows in other respects how to make the most of his time! As yet I have not referred to public performances, of which many are fond, either from vanity, or because from good nature they would have every one join in their pleasure. If societies aim at comprehensive historical information, and give their best talents to those masterpieces that take us aside from worldly things, a frequent appearance in public would be as paradoxical as to invite educated and ignorant alike, without distinction, to listen to the rendering of a sublimely conceived poem. It is natural enough that certain pieces should be heard in public, and occasionally must be so in order to convey pleasure to others. But I become more convinced every year that privacy, except as regards a few intimate friends, is of the utmost importance to choral societies; for thus, and only thus, can be engendered that calm and even temper necessary to an earnest passion for music. It secures you, moreover, from constrained attempts; for in a public performance the minutest errors must be avoided, and this generally requires excessive pains from unpretending amateurs. It is always best to quietly pass over small defects, and to atone for them by abundant excellence; just as in literature it is far better to have a general knowledge of classical authors, and to risk misunderstanding a word here and there than to exhaust all one's energies over a particular volume. Yet while the society shuts its doors to the outside world in order to practise at leisure the rendering of first-rate musical works, it is always necessary to the conductor of a well-ordered society to exercise an unflagging patience and kindly indulgence, because from the education, or rather

mis-education, of our people, their minds are generally not as fresh and virgin soil, but pre-occupied with certain ideas which debar the appreciation of art at first, though afterwards it shows its overwhelming charms, as I can testify from experience. It must be borne in mind, too, that classical music must always have its special foes, whose censure is really its highest praise, and also that we have in this lower world of ours a tolerably large number who can readily see swiftly enough a great deal in what is gay and lively, but cannot without much effort grasp the profound intention and angelic purity of a different style. This, indeed, is more to be expected now than ever, as a youthful taste for music of the latter description is scarcely fostered by one of our churches; whereas it is of infinite importance that a taste for the highest art should be fostered in youth. We have only to read Zelter's most interesting memoir of his friend Fasth (Berlin, 1801), to understand the obstacles high art has to contend with. To the want of preparatory training and capability of apprehension must be added the dearth of full deep altos and basses, which are greatly needed for numbers of the older masterpieces, especially those of Josquin, Senffel, Lassa, and Palestrina. For such works as these I have to content myself as well as I can with a wood-cut instead of a picture, and draw upon my imagination to supply the deficiency. There are many who are not disposed to tax their imagination for such friendly assistance, and so it may often be requisite to leave some most admirable composition unessayed. But in every instance the principal thing is the choice of a good conductor; one versed in classical music, able to grasp the score, and inexorable towards the self-

conceit or the vanity of others. Yet this, alas! is just the point where with all musical societies the least trouble is taken. It too frequently occurs that there are found invested with arbitrary authority either amateurs who know little or nothing of what they should do, and, like the cook in Lichtenberg's Short Stories, can at the best boast of capital appetites, or else pretentious professionals who consider their own compositions and laboured handiwork better than anything else. Deplorable in both cases, but the latter decidedly more so than the former. I mean that ignorance is at all events usually inclined to profit with good temper by the superiority of others, whilst a musical autocrat of the ordinary kind is the most offensive creature on earth. He has such a high opinion of himself, and is so constantly engaged in composing, that he never pays attention to classical music, and his self-esteem generally causes him to fall foul of those who come into contact with him, so that he himself may be seen conspicuously on the ground he has cleared. Our never-resting prolific composers often remind me of a learned old friend who was constantly writing himself but never read the writings of others; and when a plain allusion was made to the subject before his wife, the good woman haughtily answered, "My husband has no need to buy books, he writes his own." This applies to thousands at the present day who pride themselves on their own writings and would like to suppress all classical music. For this reason certain concerts, held far too often, can only be described as pitiful exhibitions, where bald and soulless exercises are to be heard. It would be well to impress on the conductors of most choral societies, as well as most of

our young poets, "Do as you like, but spare us your own compositions." This stringent rule may, no doubt, often crush a healthy germ; but it will be consoling to know that the conductor is thus at liberty to select the choicest productions of acknowledged classical authors for practice.

So it is that nature allows many a tiny bird to perish that eagles may be fed. At the same time there may well be exceptions where the conductor may really take precedence as a great composer; but it would be a good precaution, the society being first provided with standard works and having practised them thoroughly, not to allow a conductor addicted to composing to put forward his own works unless asked to do so. Yet care should be taken that he does not show beforehand that he desires to be asked to do so, and that he does not give himself out as a great composer. In the case of a society not possessing a good library, want of matter may indeed force it back upon its conductor's own productions or upon perpetual repetitions of the same pieces. But the proverb that "Necessity knows no law" can never prove an agreeable lesson except for the truth lying in it.

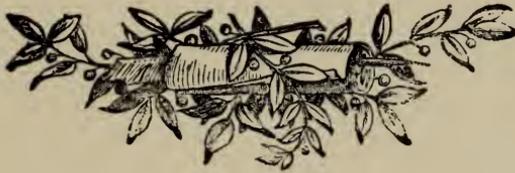
Next I decidedly recommend the entire exclusion of operas—at all events the popular modern operas, much talent though there may be in some of them. The range of classical works other than opera is unlimited, and demands an even balance of mind, particularly now when the music one hears from one's earliest days has a wanton and worldly influence, which causes everything outside opera to look strange from want of familiarity with it; and this can only be got rid of by setting aside certain hours in which the

whole attention may be concentrated on other styles than the operatic. In addition, one really hears the modern opera music everywhere. Germany is now flooded with theatres; the music played in them is studiously reproduced at concerts, and social assemblies always draw their musical pleasure from opera. All the time too that remains out of the 168 hours of the week, after taking therefrom the short harmonic evening, can be given if need be to a diligent practice of opera at home. Anybody then, who in the face of all this trivial enjoyment, would still demand that a choral society should practise modern opera, and thereby lay itself open to the charge of frivolity, is like the smoker, who at the confessional took his lighted pipe out of his mouth, and holding it behind his back began his confession with the request to be allowed to continue smoking. Several other things, often considered as of secondary importance, deserve the most careful thought. First among them I regard this:—that the conductor should make the expression accurately understood; to do which he should with every possible precaution go through those parts in which expression is left, as is often the case in old scores, to the individual taste. It is well nigh incredible how much a piece gains by the simultaneous observance of its fortes, pianos, crescendos, and diminuendos. If these are not plainly marked in the copies of the parts two evils inevitably follow, both equally bad; either the singing will be devoid of feeling, and so spiritless all through, or else each singer will be influenced by his own feelings, and the unity of effect be entirely destroyed. There are great difficulties indeed in full expressive marks, and in attempting them it will be found hard to reconcile

different tastes ; yet a fixed rule is always to be preferred to untutored liberty, which either keeps inactive from timidity, or else puts the whole choir into disorder. In the next place it is very important for the society to employ a competent translator ; for while I consider it quite necessary on account of the charm of the words to sing the Latin and Italian text in the original, the meaning must always be made clear to the singers. However in other languages this does not hold good, and there German words must be substituted in the place of the original, because otherwise it is impossible to reckon upon its being even properly pronounced. This substitution is often, it must be confessed, a very difficult task ; but who that cares for the object in view will shrink from the trouble ? Finally I would direct attention to a matter on which, small as it may seem, a great deal depends, and that is the advisability of indicating by figures the bars in the score of every piece and separate vocal parts, and of continuing them, as far as possible, without a break throughout. This is the only means for specifying quickly and surely the places where a slip occurs, and to which consequently it will be necessary to refer. To be always counting with the finger is very tiresome, and easily causes confusion, as miscalculation on some one's part is generally certain. Those who have performed a part in sonatas for two players will at once see how it would lighten the labour of practising if the bars were numbered. I would also recommend that in copying the parts the same clef should always be used for each respective part. For instance, the alto part should always be written in the alto clef, or always in the violin clef, for few singers of either sex are equally

familiar with different clefs, and no benefit can come from using at one time one clef and at another time a different one, simply because scores are so marked. Copyists readily acquire the necessary facility of transposing if properly overlooked at first. Many may not like my plea for a strict attention to rule in what may seem trifles as much as in all others. I, on the other hand, have still less fancy for a choral society being turned into a Babel. There can be no perfection without regard to details; and regularity is, as Kant used to say, quite as easy to one used to it as, and even easier than, irregularity. Once again: if classical music has to contest the prejudice of being thought too serious and exacting, such opposition can only come from levity or ignorance. In the case of well-ordered choral societies it can be only senseless prejudice; because if such societies will employ themselves with the four kinds of music commended in the previous pages—namely, genuine old chorales of various churches, compositions in the strict church style, compositions in the oratorio style, and lastly, select national songs of all lands—they will then have at command such a complete store of grave and gay, of the passionate and tender, of the devotional and racy, of the sublime and the romantic, that it would not be exaggeration to express the thought that has often come to me, and is not mere fancy, that I could never grow old in heart if a kind destiny were to preserve to me all my life an unimpaired enjoyment of good music. This has also been the feeling of the many talented amateurs who have been associated with me for many years; and I can say that nothing has confirmed me in and helped me to the contemplation of the noble and great so much as th-

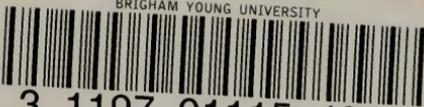
enthusiasm and lively appreciation of which I have seen so many cheering proofs during almost the whole of my connection with them. And so to me, engaged as I am in the pursuit of stringent professional duties, fine music cherishing a bright flame in my soul has become as valuable as the noonday sun. Often have I said from my very soul with Luther—and will here say once again—“Music is a fair and glorious gift of God. I would not for the world forego my humble share of music.”







Don L. Paul  
Bern, Schweiz  
Nov. 26, 1938



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### DATE DUE

NOV 19 1983	APR 04 1995		
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