

ENGEL CARL

MUSICAL MYTHS AND
FACTS, VOLUME 2 (OF 2)

Carl Engel
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MATTHESON ON HANDEL

The biographical notices of Handel's youth transmitted to us are but scanty and unsatisfactory. The same might, however, be said of most of our celebrated musicians, and the cause of the meagreness is, as we have seen in another place, easily explicable.¹ Of Handel's musical pursuits before his arrival in Hamburg, at the age of eighteen, we know scarcely more than that he was a pupil of Zachau, an organist at Halle, where Handel was born; that, as a boy, he paid a short visit to Berlin, where his talent attracted some attention; and that subsequently he studied Law, at the University of Halle. The latter fact indicates that the choice of music as a profession was not hastily determined in his childhood; and this surmise accords with the stated reluctance of his father, a medical practitioner in Halle, to have his son brought up as a musician.

Arrived in Hamburg, in the year 1703, Handel soon made the acquaintance of Mattheson, an intelligent and industrious

¹ Vol. I., p. 94.

young musician, who was competent to appreciate the genius of Handel, and faithfully to record the progress of the promising youth during his sojourn in Hamburg, which lasted about three years. Mattheson was four years older than Handel, – a difference which, between two lads of twenty-two and eighteen, is not without some weight in their mutual intercourse, especially if the elder is already enjoying a certain success, while the younger is a new comer, intent upon gaining a footing. Mattheson's observations about Handel, although occasionally tinged with jealousy of his talented brother artist, are therefore particularly noteworthy in the biography of the great composer.

Johann Mattheson, born in Hamburg, in the year 1681, was at the time of Handel's arrival tenor singer and musical composer at the theatre of the town, and teacher of singing, the harpsichord, and thorough-bass. When, in the year 1705, an increasing deafness compelled him to relinquish his engagement as singer and actor in operas at the theatre, his accomplishments, combined with commendable habits of industry and punctuality, induced the British Ambassador at Hamburg to engage him as tutor for his son, and afterwards to appoint him his secretary. During an active life of unusual duration, – he died in the year 1764, at the age of 83, – Mattheson published a great number of treatises on musical subjects, some of which still possess value as books of reference. His vanity, not unfrequently exhibited in his writings, may in some measure have been nourished by his many flatterers among his musical contemporaries, who

evidently feared his sarcastic pen all the more because they did not possess the literary ability to engage successfully in a controversy with him when they disagreed with his opinion.

As regards the musical compositions of Mattheson, we know from his own statement, in his autobiography, that his operas were greatly admired by the public; but this favourable opinion is hardly supported by such of his compositions as have appeared in print. A collection of twelve Suites for the harpsichord, the manuscript of which he sent to England, where it was published in two volumes, in the year 1714, bears the title: – 'Pièces de Clavecin, en deux Volumes, consistant des Ouvertures, Preludes, Fugues, Allemandes, Courentes, Sarabandes, Giges et Aires, composées par J. Mattheson, Secr. – London, printed for J. D. Fletcher.' The work is prefaced by an address to the musical public, written by the editor, J. D. Fletcher, in which he says: – "Britain may now hope to return those arts with interest, which she borrowed from other nations; and foreigners in time may learn of those whom their forefathers taught... As the harpsichord is an instrument yet capable of greater improvement, so the following pieces claim a precedence of all others of this nature; not only that they are composed by one of the greatest masters of the age, in a taste altogether pleasing and sublime; but, as they are peculiarly adapted to that instrument, and engraven with an exactness that cannot be equall'd by any of their nature yet extant." Sir John Hawkins, who probably had not seen these Suites, relates: "Mattheson had sent over to England, in order

to their being published here, two collections of lessons for the harpsichord, and they were accordingly engraved on copper, and printed for Richard Meares in St. Paul's Church-yard, and published in the year 1714. Handel was at that time in London, and in the afternoon was used to frequent St. Paul's Church for the sake of hearing the service, and of playing on the organ after it was over; from whence he and some gentlemen of the choir would frequently adjourn to the Queen's Arms tavern in St. Paul's Church-yard, where was a harpsichord. It happened one afternoon, when they were thus met together, Mr. Weely, a gentleman of the choir, came in and informed them that Mr. Mattheson's lessons were then to be had at Mr. Meares' shop; upon which Mr. Handel ordered them immediately to be sent for, and upon their being brought, played them all over without rising from the instrument." Still more odd appears Hawkins' statement that Handel "approved so highly of the compositions of Mattheson, particularly his lessons, that he was used to play them for his private amusement."²

If Handel really could amuse himself by playing these lessons, which are in no respect superior to the usual productions of the mediocre musicians of his time, it probably was only from feelings of curiosity and kindness towards a former friend. Mattheson composed a great deal, and made at last even his own Funeral Anthem, which after his death was performed to his honour, and which, if report speaks correctly, sounded

² Hawkins's 'History of Music,' Vol. V., p. 253.

truly miserable; and this may well be believed, considering that when he composed the music Mattheson had been deaf for nearly thirty years. Still, though he was but a poor composer, he possessed ample musical knowledge and practical skill to enable him to judge the works of his superior contemporaries. His jealous disposition, however, sometimes prevented him from forming a just opinion. His disparaging critique of an early work of Handel, in his '*Critica Musica*,' Hamburg, 1725, at a time when Handel had become a resident in London, was evidently influenced by jealousy, and the same is more or less observable in his other writings. Nevertheless, he took every opportunity to keep up a correspondence with Handel, and to boast of his former familiarity with the celebrated man. Mattheson, having solicited Handel's opinion upon a certain theoretical question on which he was in dispute with some German musicians, and having also expressed the hope that Handel might favour him with some biographical notices, Handel, at the conclusion of his letter in reply, excuses himself for not complying with the second point in question: —

"Pour ce qui est du second point, vous pouvez juger vous même qu'il demande beaucoup de recueillement, dont je ne suis pas le maître parmi les occupations pressantes, que j'ai par devers moi. Dès que j'en ferai un peu debarassé, je repasserai les Epoques principales que j'ai eues dans le cours de ma Profession, pour vous faire voir l'estime et la

considération particulière avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,
Monsieur,
Votre très humble et très
Obeissant Serviteur,
G. F. Handel.

A Londres, Fevr. 24, 1719."

In the year 1740, Mattheson published his *Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte* ('Foundation of a Triumphal Arch'), which contains a series of biographies of the celebrated musicians of his time, — Mattheson's included. During the preparation of this work, he addressed another request to Handel to supply him with materials for a correct biography. He also dedicated twelve fugues of his own composition to Handel, of which he sent him a copy to ensure prompt attention. Handel's reply was again evasive: —

"A Londres ce 29 de Juillet, 1735.

Monsieur,

Il y a quelque tems que j'ai reçu une de vos obligeantes lettres; mais à présent je vien de recevoir votre dernière avec votre ouvrage. Je vous en remercie, Monsieur, et je vous assure que j'ai toute l'estime pour votre mérite, je souhaiterois seulement que mes circonstances m'étaient plus favorables pour vous donner des marques de mon inclination à vous servir. L'ouvrage est digne de l'attention des connoisseurs, et quand à moi, je vous rends justice.

Au reste, pour ramasser quelque époque, il m'est impossible puisqu'une continuelle application au service de

cette cour et noblesse me détourne de toute autre affaire.
Je suis, avec une considération très parfaite, etc."

Handel was at this period in circumstances by no means flourishing, his operatic enterprises having failed. Mattheson's request came therefore at a very inopportune time, since it would have been only painful to Handel to occupy his mind with recollections of events of his earlier life, and with the record of expectations which he now found were not to be realized.

It is singular that almost all Handel's letters to Germans which have been preserved, including those to his brother-in-law in Halle, are written in French. Besides, they are so extremely formal and ceremonious, even those to his nearest relations! This may be in great measure accounted for by the usages of his time, and by the circumstance of his coming frequently into contact with persons of a higher position in society than himself. But, however reserved he may appear in his letters, evidences are not wanting testifying to his kindheartedness and generosity.

When Mattheson found that it was useless to endeavour to elicit information direct from Handel for his 'Ehrenpforte,' he compiled a biography interspersed with recollections of their mutual experiences during the years of their intercourse in Hamburg. The following extracts from Mattheson's gossip are translated as literally as possible: —

"In the summer of the year 1703 he came to Hamburg, rich in abilities and good intentions. I was almost the first acquaintance he made, and I took him to the organs and choirs of the town,

and to operas and concerts. I also introduced him to a certain family where all were extremely devoted to music."

In another place Mattheson records that he made Handel's acquaintance accidentally at the organ of the church of St. Mary Magdalen, and that he took him at once with him to his father's house, and paid him every possible attention. Mattheson further relates: —

"At first he played the second violin in the orchestra of the opera, and seemed as if he could not count above five; in fact, he was naturally much inclined to dry humour. But, one day, when a harpsichord player was wanted, he allowed himself to be persuaded to take his place, and showed himself a man, when no one but I expected it. I am sure if he reads this he will laugh in his sleeve, for outwardly he seldom laughs. Especially will he laugh if he recollects the pigeon-dealer who once travelled post with us to Lübeck; likewise, the son of the pastry-cook who had to blow the bellows while we were playing the organ in the church of St. Mary Magdalen of this place. This was on the thirtieth of July, 1703, after our having been out on the water on the fifteenth."

"He composed at that time very long, long airs, and almost endless cantatas, which, although the harmonious treatment was perfect, nevertheless had not the requisite fitness; nor did they exhibit the proper taste. However, the high school of the opera soon put him on the right track."

"He was great upon the organ, greater than Kuhnau in fugues and counterpoint, especially in extemporizing. However, he

knew but very little of melody before he had to do with the operas in Hamburg. On the other hand, Kuhnau's pieces were all exceedingly melodious, and suited for the voice, even those arranged for playing. In the preceding century scarcely any one thought of melody; all aimed merely at harmony."

"At that time he dined almost daily by invitation with my father, and in return opened to me some particular manœuvres in counter point. On the other hand, in dramatic style I have been of no little service to him; so that one hand washed the other."

"On the seventeenth of August, in the year 1703, we travelled together to Lübeck, and in the carriage composed many double-fugues, *da mente non da penna*. I had been invited there by the President of the Privy Council, Magnus von Wedderkopp, in order to choose a successor for the excellent organist, Dieterich Buxtehude. I took Handel there with me. We tried almost all the organs and harpsichords in Lübeck; and, with regard to our playing, we arranged between ourselves that he should play exclusively on the organ, and I on the harpsichord. We also heard with due attention the above-mentioned artist in his St. Mary's Church. But when we found that a certain marriage, for which neither of us had the slightest inclination, was a stipulated condition with the appointment, [the successful candidate had to marry the daughter of Buxtehude] we departed thence, after having received much honour, and having enjoyed many entertainments. Johann Christian Schieferdecker subsequently accommodated himself to the requirements, conducted the bride

home, and obtained the fine appointment."

"In the year 1704, when I was in Holland, intending to proceed to England, I received in Amsterdam, on the twenty-first of March, a letter from Handel in Hamburg, so obliging and pressing, that it at once induced me to return home. The letter, which is dated March 18th, 1704, contains, among others, these expressions: —

'I much desire your highly agreeable conversation, the privation of which will soon be repaired, as the time approaches in which it will be impossible to undertake anything in the way of operas without your presence. I therefore pray you obediently to inform me of your departure, that I may have the opportunity of showing my obligation by meeting you with Miss Sbülens,' etc., etc."

These extracts from Mattheson's 'Ehrenpforte' are quoted here because they throw light upon some occurrences alluded to in the remarks with which Mattheson has interspersed his German translation of Mainwaring's 'Memoirs of the Life of the late George Frederick Handel; to which is added a Catalogue of his works, and observations upon them; London, 1760.'

Mainwaring was a young clergyman, whose admiration of Handel induced him to collect as much material for the compilation of a biography as he was able to obtain. His work, published anonymously a year after Handel's death, much as it has been disparaged on account of its chronological inaccuracies and its want of musical erudition, is certainly valuable as

containing the fullest account of Handel's life in England written by a contemporary of the great musician. Mattheson's German translation, with annotations, is entitled *Georg Friderich Händel's Lebensbeschreibung, nebst einem Verzeichnisse seiner Ausübungswerke und deren Beurtheilung; übersetzt, auch mit einigen Anmerkungen, absonderlich über den hamburgischen Artikel, versehen von Legations-Rath Mattheson. Hamburg. Auf Kosten des Uebersetzers, 1761.* ('George Frederick Handel's Biography, with a list of his Compositions, and a critical examination of them; translated, and annotated with some remarks, especially upon the part relating to Hamburg, by Mattheson, Councillor of Legation. Hamburg. Published at the expense of the translator, 1761.') The book is now scarce. Victor Schœlcher, in his 'Life of Handel,' London, 1857, notices it only with the remark: "My endeavours have hitherto been in vain to obtain a copy of this in Germany, and it is not to be found in the British Museum." At any rate, it is not likely to be known to many English musicians. A translation of Mattheson's annotations is therefore offered here.

As regards the Introduction with which Mattheson has prefaced his translation, it is so diffuse, and contains so little about Handel, that few musicians now would care to read it entirely. It is headed by a quotation in English, from the *Tatler* (No. 92): – "*Panegyrics are frequently ridiculous, let them be addressed where they will.*"

Mattheson aims more at impressing the reader with his own

merits than with those of Handel. He says, for instance: "In describing an artist's life, it is not sufficient to represent the man only as an artist; the artist must rather be considered also as a man; for thus only can his merits be properly understood. However, no one is able to know or to do everything in his vocation. Thus, in music, one performer excels on the organ-pedals, while another surpasses him on the harpsichord. The first may be called coarse; the second, delicate. The first may be only appreciated by connoisseurs; the second, by everyone. A company of artists – if any such exists – is like a bunch of different keys. No one of these is to be extolled before the other but only in so far as it opens an important lock which encloses a treasure. One musician is not only a player, but also a singer; another never opens his mouth to sing – nay, not even to laugh. The former, besides being able to compose, to sing, to play, and to dance, acts a principal character on the stage; the latter, with his quantity of musical scores, has taken care not to appear upon the boards of the theatre. Indeed, he would have cut a funny figure had he done so. Here, some one who occupies himself with music, and also with various sciences, in a superior manner, works at the same time for kings and princes; there some one employs his gifts principally in the service and for the amusement of the subjects. From this it is clear that each in his particular line may deserve honour and laudation; not properly on account of his person, but on account of his achievements... No mere *Musicus practicus ecclesiastico-dramaticus*, who took a

high rank as a director of the orchestra, and a still higher rank as an organist, but who was neither a singer nor an actor, and least of all a mathematician – has ever, before Handel, attained to this, that without his help a special book of a considerable size on his life has been written, and supplied with instructive observations – still more, that his biography has been translated into another language by a brother-artist by no means of the common class. Competing successors do not feel hurt by these stimulating spurs!"

In order to render the following annotations by Mattheson properly intelligible, the statements of Mainwaring to which they refer are inserted with them. The latter are copied exactly as they were originally written; while Mattheson's annotations are translated from the German.

Mainwaring (P. 1). "George Frederick Handel was born at Halle,³ a city in the circle of Upper-Saxony, the 24th February, 1684,⁴ by a second wife of his father, who was an eminent surgeon and physician of the same place, and above sixty when his son was born."

Mattheson. "The author is wrong in calling Halle a town of Upper-Saxony. It lies in the Dukedom of Magdeburg, which belongs to Lower-Saxony. Handel was, therefore, no Upper-Saxon, but rather a Lower-Saxon."

Mainwaring (P. 6). "It may not be unpleasant to the reader

³ Halle.

⁴ Should be 1685.

just now to remind him of the minute and surprising resemblance between the early periods of Handel's life and some which are recorded in that of the celebrated M. Pascal, written by his sister. Nothing could equal the bias of the one to Mathematics but the bias of the other to Music; both in their very childhood out-did the efforts of maturer age; they pursued their respective studies not only without any assistance, but against the consent of their parents, and in spite of all the opposition they contrived to give them."

Mattheson. "Almost the same was the case with Tycho Brahe, and with the translator of this biography, each in his vocation."

Mainwaring (P. 15). "Zackaw [Zachau] was proud of a pupil who already began to attract the attention of all persons who lived near Hall [Halle], or resorted thither from distant quarters. And he was glad of an assistant who, by his uncommon talents, was capable of supplying his place whenever he had an inclination to be absent, as he often was, from his love of company and a cheerful glass."

Mattheson. "Could not the life of Handel have been written without aspersing the brave tone-artist Zachau forty years after his death on account of a glass of wine?"

Mainwaring (P. 15). "It may seem strange to talk of an assistant of seven years of age, for he could not be more, if indeed he was quite so much, when first he was committed to the care of this person."

Mattheson. "The author appears to have not the least scruple

in committing the most palpable anachronism by making his hero the younger the taller he grows. This will presently appear evident."

Mainwaring (P. 16). "We have already hinted at some striking coincidences of life and character which are found in him and the famous Pascal. In this place we may just observe that the latter at the age of twelve compos'd a treatise on the propagation of sounds, and at sixteen another upon conic sections."

Mattheson. "But it must be remembered that afterwards he entirely gave up mathematics. *See* Bayle."

Mainwaring (P. 18). "It was in the year 1698 that he went to Berlin. The opera there was in a flourishing condition under the direction of the King of Prussia (grandfather of the present), who, by the encouragement which he gave to singers and composers, drew thither some of the most eminent from Italy and other parts."

Mattheson. "Anno 1698 there was no King in Prussia; the first dated from 1701. Handel has, therefore, seen no king in Berlin. That the author is as bad a genealogist and politician as he is a chronologist, is proved by his mistaking the grandfather of the present king for the father, and by his always mentioning the then reigning Elector as the King."

Mainwaring (P. 20). "Attilio's fondness for Handel commenced at his first coming to Berlin, and continued to the time of his leaving it. He would often take him on his knee, and make him play on his harpsichord for an hour together, equally

pleased and surprised with the extraordinary proficiency of so young a person; for at this time he could not exceed thirteen, as may easily be seen by comparing dates."

Mattheson. "He was born anno 1684.⁵ He arrived in Berlin anno 1698. Even if the various occurrences with Buononcini and Attilio, with the Elector and his court, took only a few hours – nay, even if they are not taken into account at all, there are still at least fourteen years. One should think that he was much above seven years when Ariosti (Attilio) took him on his lap."⁶

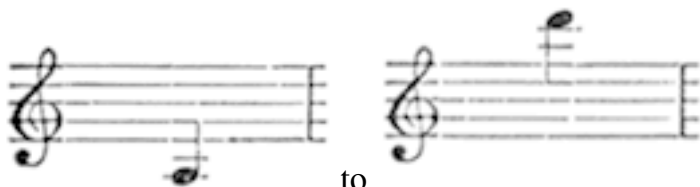
Mainwaring (P. 31). "Before we advance any farther in his history, it is necessary some account should be given of the opera at Hamburg, as well as some character of the composer and singers. The principal singers were Conratini and Mathyson. The latter was secretary to Sir Cyril Wych, who was resident for the English court, had Handel for his music-master, and was himself a fine player on the harpsichord. Mathyson was no great

⁵ That Handel was born on the 23rd of February, 1685, and not on the 24th of February, 1684, is correctly stated in J. J. Walther's 'Musicalisches Lexicon,' Leipzig, 1732. To settle the uncertainty about the date, which appears to have arisen chiefly through Mainwaring's mis-statement, J. J. Eschenburg consulted the Baptismal Register of the Frauenkirche in Halle, where he found the year 1685 given. (See 'Dr. Karl Burney's Nachricht von Georg Friedrich Handel's Lebens umständen, und der ihm zu London im May und Juny, 1784, angestellten Gedächtnissfeyer, aus den Englischen übersetzt von J. J. Eschenburg; Berlin, 1785'). – Förstemann ('Händel's Stammbaum,' Leipzig, 1844), and others, have subsequently convinced themselves that Eschenburg's date is correct. The year 1684, given on Handel's Monument in Westminster Abbey, therefore, requires rectifying.

⁶ Chrysander ('G. F. Handel,' Leipzig, 1858, Vol. I., p. 52) surmises that Handel was not in Berlin in 1698, but in 1696, when he was eleven years old.

singer, for which reason he sung only occasionally; but he was a good actor, a good composer of lessons, and a good player on the harpsichord. He wrote and translated several treatises. One that he wrote was on composition. He had thoughts of writing the life of Handel many years before his death. Had he pursued this design, he would have had advantages beyond what we can pretend to, *i. e.*, ampler and fresher materials; at least, for so much of the life as had then elapsed. All that is here intended, is to give a plain, artless account of such particulars as we have been able to learn, and such only as we have reason to believe authentic."

Mattheson. "This whole story, with everything subsequently recorded about the operas in Hamburg, is so full of errors that one can scarcely rectify them. The Conradin (not Conratini) possessed almost perfect beauty, and had withal an extraordinary splendid voice, which extended in equal power



from to . This gave her claim to be the principal singer. Mattheson (not Mathyson) instructed her for several years; *i. e.*, he sung everything to her daily until she could retain it in her memory. At that time no gentleman was called a great singer unless he had a soprano voice, and such a gentleman we did not possess. An inferior teacher would certainly have been of no use to

the Conradin. It is ridiculous to say of Mattheson that he sang only occasionally, considering that he was fifteen years at the theatre, that he acted almost always the principal character, exciting his audience by means of his unaffected singing as well as by his mimic art, which is of the utmost importance in opera, sometimes fear and terror, sometimes tears, sometimes merriment and delight. On the 9th of June, 1703, he made Handel's acquaintance at an organ, when Handel was $19\frac{1}{4}$ years old, and Mattheson $21\frac{3}{4}$, so that the difference in age amounted only to two years and a half.⁷ On the 17th of August, in the same year, they travelled together to Lübeck, and played in that town, as well as in Hamburg, on the organ and harpsichord, so to say in emulation, in which Handel proved himself the most successful on the former instrument, but acknowledged himself obliged to yield the palm to his rival on the latter instrument; so that they made a compact together never to encroach upon each other's ground. This they have also faithfully kept during five or six years. On the 20th of October, Mattheson brought out his fifth, or sixth opera, called Cleopatra, on which occasion Handel played the harpsichord under the direction of the former. Soon afterwards, on the 7th of November in the same year, Sir John Wich,⁸ Knight, Royal Ambassador of Great Britain, engaged Mattheson as teacher and tutor for his son Cyril Wich, nine years

⁷ This is a mis-statement. Handel, born in 1685, was 18 years old; and Mattheson, born in 1681, was 22 years old.

⁸ Wych?

old; and soon afterwards he made him his Secretary, with a salary of three hundred Reichsthaler, and two hundred *ditto* perquisites *per annum*. This gave occasion for jealous looks, especially as he now bid farewell to the theatre. Thus, after a secure foundation had been laid, the progress was very perceptible. True, the young master Wich had already had a few very unimportant lessons from Handel; they did not give satisfaction; the tutor was therefore appealed to, and under his guidance the young gentleman attained, in the course of time, a high degree of perfection. He succeeded his father, after the death of the latter, and obtained in 1729 the hereditary dignity of a Baronet. Mattheson always remained in royal service, was twelve or thirteen times 'Chargé des Affaires,' was employed on important missions, etc., – as has already been circumstantially recorded in the 'Ehrenpforte,' published in 1740. At last, after the lapse of fifty years, the highly-meritorious Baronet departed to a better world on the 18th of August, when he had just returned from an embassy to Russia. If the author of the present biography had consulted Mattheson's books, especially the above-mentioned 'Ehrenpforte,' and the 'Critica Musica,' which are *publici juris*, he would not have been devoid of authentic materials. Under those favourable conditions the though not *great* yet formerly *principal* singer and actor composed, notwithstanding all diplomatic and pressing dispatches in the whole district of Lower-Saxony, not only a great number of sacred pieces for the Church, but oratorios, operas, and music for the harpsichord and other

instruments, which cannot be unknown in England. Besides he was occupied as Kapellmeister of the Duke of Holstein, as Canonici et Cantor Cathedralis Hamburgensis, and as director of several grand concerts; he wrote not *one*, but *eighty-six* books, most of which treat profoundly of the theory of music and the art of singing. Furthermore, when the St. Michael's Church was burnt down, he contributed some forty thousand marks for a new organ, paid the money in advance, and intends to do more *per codicillum* in different ways. His life, led in the fear of God, extends now to the eightieth year, in cheerfulness and useful works. For the sake of truth this is here inserted."

Mainwaring (P. 32). "Conratini excelled greatly, both as an actress and as a singer. Keysar⁹ did the same as a composer; but, being a man of gaiety and expence, involved himself in debts, which forced him to abscond. His operas for some time continued to be performed during his absence. On his disappearing, the person who before had played the second harpsichord demanded the first. This occasioned a dispute between him and Handel, the particulars of which, partly for the sake of their singularity, and partly on account of their importance, may deserve to be mentioned. On what reasons Handel grounded his claim to the first harpsichord I do not understand. He had played a violin in the orchestra, he had a good command on this instrument, and was known to have a better on

⁹ Keiser.

the other. But the older candidate¹⁰ was not unfit for the office, and insisted on the right of succession. Handel seemed to have no plea but that of natural superiority, of which he was conscious, and from which he would not recede. This dispute occasioned parties in the Opera-house. On the one side it was said, with great appearance of reason, that to set such a boy as Handel over a person so much his senior, was both unjust and unprecedented. On the other, it was urged with some plausibility, that the opera was not to be ruined for punctilios; that it was easy to foresee, from the difficulties Keysar was under, that a composer would soon be wanted, but not so easy to find a person capable of succeeding him, unless it were Handel. In short, matters, they said, were now at that pass that the question, if fairly stated, was not who should conduct the opera, but whether there should be any opera at all. These arguments prevailed; and he to whom the first place seemed of course to be due, was constrained to yield it to his stripling competitor. But, how much he felt the indignity may be guessed from the nature and degree of his resentment, more suited to the glowing temper of an Italian, than to the phlegmatic constitution of a German."

Mattheson. "He calls the Germans phlegmatic, and a *querelle allemande* does not occur to him."

Mainwaring (P. 35). "For, determined to make Handel pay dear for his priority, he stifled his rage for the present, only to wait an opportunity to give it full vent. As they were coming out

¹⁰ Mattheson.

of the orchestra, he made a push at him with a sword, which, being aimed full at his heart, would for ever have removed him from the office he had usurped, but for the friendly *Score* which he accidentally carried in his bosom; and through which to have forced it, would have demanded all the might of Ajax himself. Had this happened in the early ages, not a mortal but would have been persuaded that Apollo himself had interposed to preserve him, in the form of a music-book. From the circumstances which are related of this affair, it has more the appearance of an assassination than of a rencounter; if the latter, one of Handel's years might well be wanting the courage, or the skill, to defend himself; if the former, supposing him capable of making a defence, he could not be prepared for it. How many great men, in the very dawning of their glory have been planted, like him, on the very verge of destruction! as if Fortune, jealous of Nature, made a show of sacrificing her noblest productions only to remind her of that supremacy to which she aspires. Whatever might be the merits of the quarrel at first," —

Mattheson. "Here I must again interrupt the subtle reasoner, in order to show him his confusion, which is even greater and ruder than the preceding one, since that contained only above a dozen falsehoods, while we have here double the number. The cause of the quarrel was, indeed, quite different from what is here related. It was already mentioned long since, with all possible modesty, in the 'Ehrenpforte,' p. 94 and 193; but there was then no occasion, as there is now, to remind the reader that a cool box on the ear

is no assassination, but rather a necessary warning to prepare for defence. This settles the first statement. The incorrectly-informed author relates a fable rather than a true event. Never, so long as can be remembered, have two harpsichords been played together in the orchestra of the opera in Hamburg at the same time; and as there has always been but one, a dispute about it, as narrated, could not possibly have occurred. Now, as to this dispute is attributed the origin of the fight, the remainder of the invention falls with it to the ground. There we have the second blunder. Subsequently erroneous statements are so frequent that it is scarcely possible to count them. Handel, in the beginning, played only the second violin in the orchestra; and he was, as may easily be conceived, not a more accomplished performer on that instrument than any other member of the orchestra. There we have the third falsehood, which is besides a boasting untruth. The fray occurred on the 5th of December, 1704. Handel, whom the biographer insists, as much as is in his power, on making younger the older he grows, was nearly twenty-one years of age,¹¹ tall, strong, broad, and vigorous in body; he was, consequently, man enough to defend himself, and to make use of the sword which he had hanging at his side. That is the fourth point, and a strong one too, which a writer very sensitive of his reputation should especially bear in mind when he, instead of recording real facts, indulges in high-flown laudations, and occasions the translator much unnecessary trouble."

¹¹ He was not quite twenty years old.

Mainwaring (P. 37). "Whatever might be the merits of the quarrel at first, Handel seemed now to have purchased his title to precedence by the dangers he had incurred to support it. What he and his friends expected, soon happened. From conducting the performance, he became composer of the opera. Keiser, from his unhappy situation, could no longer supply the manager, who therefore applied to Handel, and furnished him with a drama to set. The name of it was *Almira*, and this was the first opera which he made. The success of it was so great that it ran for thirty nights without interruption. He was at this time not much above fourteen; before he was fifteen he made a second, entitled *Florinda*; and soon after, a third, called *Nerone*; which were heard with the same applause."

Mattheson. "The fifth brag, as to a certain opera having been performed in Hamburg, with every advantage and good result, thirty times without intermission, is surely not worth mentioning. The sixth, however, is even still finer. Let us just analyze it a little. '*Almira*' was performed the first time on the 8th of January, anno 1705. Now, our chronologist counts from the 24th of February, 1684, when Handel was born, until the 8th of January, 1705, as a little more than fourteen years, while the period really is nearly twenty-one years.¹² But he is not particular about seven years. A fine arithmetician, to be sure! Mistake No. 7. '*Nero*' was not the third of Handel's operas, as our author erroneously states (mistake No. 8), but the second; and it was performed

¹² See the note above, page [11](#).

for the first time on the 25th of February, in 1705. Thus, there were only forty-eight days between the two performances; at the utmost, seven weeks. In the seven weeks there were seven Sundays, seven Saturdays, fourteen post-days, not to count the St. Mary-days and the holydays. How is it then possible that the 'Almira' could have been represented thirty times without interruption? Whoever believes only half of what this historicus here writes, believes too much. That was mistake No. 9. The tenth concerns the Florindo as a man, not the Florinda as a female. Handel's opera called 'Florindo' was not his second, but his third; and it was performed in 1708, three years after 'Nero.' Meanwhile, Keiser had not only composed a new 'Almira,' as well as the operas 'Octavia,' 'Lucretia,' 'Fedelta coronata,' 'Masagnello furioso,' 'Sueno,' 'Genio di Holsatia,' 'Carnival of Venice;' but also Schieferdecker had brought out his 'Justin'; Grünwald, his 'Germanicum;' and Graupner his 'Dido.' In the year 1708, Handel produced another opera, called 'Daphne,' which was the fourth of those he wrote for Hamburg, and which appears to be unknown to his biographer, as he omits it entirely. Has the man not had trustworthy sources for information?¹³ Howbeit, the dozen mistakes is complete, and we merely remark in addition, that in 1708 Handel was not 15 years of age, but quite 24. This *error calculi* may be regarded as a master stroke. Did we not know with certainty that George Frederick

¹³ Mainwaring had probably obtained some of his information from Handel himself; but he may have forgotten the dates, or Handel may not have remembered them exactly.

Handel died anno 1759, on the fourteenth of April, at the age of 76,¹⁴ and we had to rely upon this blundering prosaic Homer for information respecting our musical Achilles, he would have remained constantly fifteen years, perhaps even *imberbis* until he came to the grave, and our barber in Hamburg, who every alternate day attended him, during five or six years, would have gained his money wrongfully. If an Englishman thinks that he can entertain us with his dreams in his mixture-language, he must be prepared for an answer from us in our heroic language. We understand him well, and have learnt his tongue; if he does not understand us, he may still learn this too... Having observed Handel during his sojourn in Hamburg, we leave the celebrated man to the Italians and the English; but we do not believe that the moon is made of green cheese."

Mainwaring (P. 42). "Four or five years had elapsed from the time of his coming to Hamburg to that of his leaving it."

Mattheson. "Should say five or six."

Mainwaring (P. 42). "Instead of being chargeable to his mother he began to be serviceable to her before he was well settled in his new situation. Though he had continued to send her remittances from time to time, yet, clear of his own expenses, he had made up a purse of 200 ducats. On the strength of this fund he resolved to set out for Italy."

Mattheson. "Anno 1709 he was still in Hamburg, but did

¹⁴ Handel was 74 years old when he died.

nothing.¹⁵ Then there occurred the opportunity of his travelling with Herr von Binitz to Italy, free of expense; and in 1710 he had his 'Agrippina' performed at Venice."

Mainwaring (P. 44). "The very first answer of the fugue in the overture for 'Mucius Scævola' [an opera by Handel] affords an instance of this kind [viz., a musical licence]. Geminiani, the strictest observer of rule, was so charmed with this direct transgression of it that, on hearing its effect, he cried out *Quel semitono* (meaning the F-sharp) *vale un mondo!*"

Mattheson. "What does that prove? Nothing!"

Mainwaring (P. 50). "At the age of eighteen he made [at Florence] the opera of Rodrigo, for which he was presented with 100 sequins and a service of plate."

Mattheson. "Actually an intentional miscalculation of eight years!"

Mainwaring (P. 52). "In three weeks he finished [at Venice] his 'Agrippina,' which was performed twenty-seven nights successively."

Mattheson. "In the year 1709, at his departure from Hamburg, Handel was 25 years old. He resided a year in Florence before he went to Venice, where he had his 'Agrippina' performed at the theatre of St. Gio Crisostomo, during the Carnival in 1710. Now, let him calculate who can, and convince himself whether

¹⁵ Mattheson is mistaken here. It has been satisfactorily ascertained that Handel left Hamburg for Italy in the year 1706. (See G. F. Händel, von F. Chrysander, Leipzig, 1858, Vol. I., p. 139.)

this makes, from February 24th, 1684, eighteen years, as our biographer says, or whether it amounts to twenty-six."

Mainwaring (P. 74). "It was in the winter of the year 1710 when he arrived at London."

Mattheson. "In this year he performed his 'Agrippina' at Venice, and in 1709 he was still in Hamburg."¹⁶

Mainwaring (P. 74). "During this period scarce a mail arrived from Holland which did not bring some fresh accounts of victories or advantages gained by the English hero [Marlborough] over the armies of a monarch but lately the terror of Europe, though now the scorn of every Dutch burgomaster."

Mattheson. "What a Frenchman may say to this is his own concern. In Handel's biography it is lugged in; and such scurrilities reveal an ignoble heart."

Mainwaring (P. 88). "Our business is not to play the panegyrist but the historian."

Mattheson. "If you know that, blessed are you if you act upon it."

Mainwaring (P. 110). "Having one day some words with Cuzzoni on her refusing to sing *Falsa imagine* in 'Ottone': 'Oh! Madame,' Handel said, 'je sçais bien que vous êtes une véritable diablesse; mais je vous ferai scavoir, moi, que je suis Beelzebub, le *chef* des diables!' With this he took her up by the waist, and

¹⁶ The following well-authenticated data may serve to correct the "corrections" of Mattheson: – Handel was born in 1685; went to Hamburg in 1703; thence to Italy in 1706; from Italy to Hanover in 1710; thence to London in 1710; back to Hanover in 1711; returned to England in 1712, where he died in 1759.

swore that if she made any more words he would fling her out of the window. It is to be noted that this was formerly one of the methods of executing criminals in some parts of Germany, a process not unlike that of the Tarpeian rock, and probably derived from it."

Mattheson. "This heroic deed was undoubtedly accomplished unawares. Who could face such a woman with her claws? The Quixotic story with its ingenious reference to the Tarpeian rock, and to criminal processes, testify to the author's extensive reading in law and history. Whoever can read it without a smile is commendable, especially if he is a German, better informed and phlegmatic."

Mainwaring (P. 115). "The little taste he [Handel] had already had of adversity lessened that self-confidence which success is apt to inspire. He found that it was not the necessary consequence of great abilities, and that without prudence the greatest may be almost annihilated in the opinions of men."

Mattheson. "To this the British proverb applies: 'Give a man luck and throw him into the Thames.'"

Mainwaring (P. 116). "He now removed to Covent-garden, and entered into partnership with Rich, the master of that house. Hasse and Porpora were the composers at the Haymarket. When the former was invited over, it is remarkable that the first question he asked was whether Handel was dead. Being answered in the negative he refused to come, from a persuasion that where his countryman was – for they were both Saxons by birth –

no other person of the same profession was likely to make any figure."

Mattheson. "This agrees with a remark of mine before made. Hasse was born in Bergedorf, a small town belonging to Hamburg and Lübeck in common; he is, therefore, a Lower-Saxon of the highest type... However, the reason why these two Saxons did not wish to encroach upon each other's precincts was a very different one from that indicated by our biographer."

Mainwaring (P. 132). "Dublin has always been famous for the gaiety and splendour of its court, the opulence and spirit of its principal inhabitants, the valour of its military, and the genius of its learned men. Where such things were held in esteem he [Handel] rightly reckoned that he could not better pave the way to his success than by setting out with a striking instance and public act of generosity and benevolence. The first step that he made was to perform his Messiah for the benefit of the city-prison."

Mattheson. "On a beau être généreux et liberal, quand il n'en coute que des chansons, et que d'autres payent les violons; c'est en bon allemand: *Mit der Wurst nach dem Schinken werfen* ('To throw the sausage at the ham')."

Mainwaring (P. 135). "The Foundling Hospital [in London] originally rested on the slender foundation of private benefactions. At a time when this institution was yet in its infancy; when all men seemed to be convinced of its utility; when nothing was at all problematical but the possibility of supporting it; – Handel formed the noble resolution to lend his assistance,

and perform his Messiah annually for its benefit. The sums raised by each performance were very considerable, and certainly of great consequence in such a crisis of affairs. But, what was of much greater, was the magic of his name and the universal character of his sacred drama."

Mattheson. "Notes were his magic, or his black-art."

Mainwaring (P. 137). "So that it may truly be affirmed that one of the noblest and most extensive charities that ever was planned by the wisdom, or projected by the piety of men, in some degree owes its continuance as well as prosperity to the patronage of Handel."

Mattheson. "By this he was not out of pocket; it rather brought him credit, which is better than money."

Mainwaring (P. 138). "In the year 1751 a gutta serena deprived him of his sight. This misfortune sunk him for a time into the deepest despondency. He could not rest until he had undergone some operations as fruitless as they were painful. Finding it no longer possible for him to manage alone, he sent to Mr. Smith to desire that he should play for him, and assist him in conducting the oratorios."

Mattheson. "He remained blind until his death, – a period of eight years. Nothing is said here of a so-called monumental column, and of an amazingly large property left by Handel, although it has been a subject of much gossip."

Mainwaring (P. 141). "His incessant and intense application to the studies of his profession, rendered constant and large supplies

of nourishment the more necessary to recruit his exhausted spirits."

Mattheson. "J. Sirach, chap. xxxviii., v. 34; Phil., chap. iii., v. 19."

Mainwaring (P. 142). "The design of the foregoing sheets is only to give the reader those parts of his character as a Man, that any way tend to open and explain his character as an Artist."

Mattheson. "If this were done, the arts and the manners would exhibit not unfrequently striking contrasts."

Mainwaring (P. 143). "The author has nothing to add but his sincere wishes that every artist who is truly deserving in his profession may meet with a person equally desirous of doing justice to his memory."

Mattheson. "This wish is as kind as it is reasonable. It proves the belief of the author that there must be other people, unknown to him, who, on account of their arts, deserve quite as much honour as Handel. Alas! how much pains has the 'Great-Thorough-Bass School' taken to show this, not to mention the 'Triumphal Arch.'¹⁷ ... Bach, Fux, Graun, Graupner, Grünewald, Heinichen, Keiser, etc., have died without experiencing it; perhaps the same will happen with Hasse, and with several others."

Mainwaring (P. 149). "A great quantity of music, not mentioned in the Catalogue, was made [by Handel] in Italy and Germany. How much of it is yet in being, is not known. Two

¹⁷ Two works by Mattheson.

chests-full were left at Hamburg, besides some at Hanover, and some at Halle."

Mattheson. "We Hamburgians have hitherto heard nothing of those two chests. In Wich's music-book of the year 1704 are two minuets and half an air, that is all."

Mainwaring (P. 164). "The generality of mankind have not enough of delicacy to be much affected with minute instances of beauty, but yet are so formed as to be transported with every the least mark of grandeur and sublimity."

Mattheson. "That is true."

Mainwaring (P. 165). "The taste in music, both of the Germans and Italians, is suited to the different characters of the two nations. That of the first is rough and martial; and their music consists of strong effects produced, without much delicacy, by the rattle of a number of instruments."

Mattheson. "Surely this is not phlegmatic, as before said."

Mainwaring (P. 174). "However well some of the Italians may have succeeded in the management of the instrumental parts in their song-music, there is one point in which Handel stands alone, and in which he may possibly never be equalled; I mean in the instrumental parts of his choruses and full church-music."

Mattheson. "This is true enough; but it was all derived from Zachau and his organ-playing. Germany is the fatherland of all powerful harmony, elaborate compositions for the organ, fugues and chorales, used in Divine Service. Italy has melody for her daughter, with songstresses, singers, and very delicate solo-

players on violin-instruments to touch the heart. France produces its magnificent choruses, instrumental pieces, dance-music, to cheer the heart; and to England we leave the honour of admiring and recompensing these rarities."

Mainwaring (P. 179). "But how shall we excuse for those instances of coarseness and indelicacy which occur so frequently in the airs of his oratorios? For, as the melody is a fundamental and essential part in vocal music, it should seem that nothing can atone for the neglect of it. The best painter would be blamed should he draw off the attention too much from the principal figure in his piece, however perfect, by the very high and exquisite finishing of some inferior object; but, much more would he deserve to be blamed if he left that figure the least finished which all the rules of his art required to be the most so. Now, in music, though there may sometimes be occasion for giving the instruments the ascendancy over the voices, yet never should the song-parts be unmeaning or inexpressive, much less coarse or ordinary."

Mattheson. "Golden words! All this, however, is owing to the circumstance that Handel was neither a singer nor an actor. During a period of five or six years, when we had daily intercourse with each other, I never heard a singing tone from his mouth. When Earl Granville (at that time Lord Carteret) was here in Hamburg, and heard me sing and also play, he said: 'Handel plays also thus, but he does not sing thus.' In my opinion singing and acting are of great assistance to a composer

of dramatic music. Hasse knows this well, and has cultivated both earnestly, *me teste*. Keiser, likewise, sang very admirably. Both have, therefore, extraordinarily charming melodies."

Mainwaring (P. 202). "In his fugues and overtures, Handel is quite original. The style of them is peculiar to himself, and in no way like that of any master before him. In the formation of these pieces, knowledge and invention seem to have contended for the mastery."

Mattheson. "A certain philosopher recently made himself conspicuous by maintaining that the Fine Arts ought not to be regarded as Sciences, because their systems are sensuous. Nevertheless, the old adage always stands firm: *Nihil esse in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*. Our biographer belongs perhaps to that sect, for he scarcely uses the word science, even when he refers to the science of music, as on the present occasion. He always uses only the word *knowledge* or *skill*. Perhaps this is unintentional. Thus much, however, is certain: musicians are in need of literary works, and he who can only write notes, his honour and reputation are only *vox, practeraque nihil*. On the second of March, this year [1761,] we had here, in Hamburg, a sale of a large number of scarce and valuable books on all sciences; but the science of music was not represented by a single work in the comprehensive catalogue. That is surely neglect of a science! If any one can show me that I am mistaken, I shall be happy."

Mainwaring (P. 208). "Little, indeed, are the hopes of ever

equalling, much less of excelling, so vast a proficient in his own way; however, as there are so many avenues to excellence still open, so many paths to glory still untrod, it is hoped that the example of this illustrious foreigner will rather prove an incentive than a discouragement to the industry and genius of our own countrymen."

Mattheson. "Whoever intends to describe accurately the life of Handel, can hardly do it without a reference to the following books: 'Musica Critica,' Hamburg, 1722; 'The Musical Patriot,' Hamburg, 1728; 'Ehrenpforte,' Hamburg, 1740."

Mattheson now quotes an extract from a letter of Handel's, dated February 24th, 1719, which has already been given above;¹⁸ and he remarks: "To promise, and to fulfil a promise, are two things." He quotes once more Handel's complimentary letter, also given above,¹⁹ which evidently afforded him great satisfaction; and he adds: "Even the most insignificant letters in some degree depict the writer, in reference to the time and place in which they were written. Horace is quite right: *Coelum non animus mutant qui trans mare currunt.*"

Some writers have blamed Mattheson very much on account of his vanity and his jealousy of Handel. Still, it remains a debatable question whether the conceit of his detractors does not perhaps surpass his own. It is a common practice with inferior musical authors to assume an air of superiority, and to endeavour

¹⁸ Page [4](#).

¹⁹ Page [7](#).

to make themselves important by finding fault with others who have distinguished themselves in the same field in which they are labouring, and to whom they ought to be grateful.

Mattheson had not only a better scientific education than most musicians of his time, but his literary productions are also more readable than those of his modern commentators who censure him.

DIABOLIC MUSIC

It is a suggestive fact that those spirits of the mountains, rivers, and of lonely places, which delight in music and dancing, are, according to popular tradition, generally well-intentioned and harmless creatures. Sometimes, however, a very evil-disposed spirit resorts to these arts for the purpose of accomplishing some wicked design. A few stories from different countries which illustrate the superstitious notions on the subject will be given here. Although the stories are still in the mouth of the people, it can hardly be said that they are still really believed, at least not in European countries. But there are always ignorant persons who half believe whatever appeals forcibly to their imagination.

THE AWFUL DECEPTION

At Arfeld, a small village in Germany, a number of young lads and lasses were assembled one winter evening in a warm and comfortable room, the girls spinning and singing, as they usually do on these occasions.

One of the lads, in silly playfulness, said to the girls he should like them to try whether they could hang him on a single thread of their spinning. The novel idea found ready approval. They made him stand on a chair, and bound a thin thread around his neck, fastening it on a nail under the ceiling.

At this moment all were greatly surprised by hearing strains of exquisitely fine music penetrating into the house. They directly hastened outside the door to ascertain whence it came; but there they neither heard nor saw anything.

On returning to the room, they found, to their great astonishment and dismay, that the chair had been drawn from under the lad, and that the poor fellow was hanging on the thread and was dead.²⁰

²⁰ 'Sagen, Gebräuche, und Märchen aus Westfalen, gesammelt von A. Kuhn. Leipzig, 1859.' Vol. I., p. 175.

THE INDEFATIGABLE FIDDLER

The following strange event happened in the parish of Börne, two miles south of Ripen, in Denmark, and is still known to the people in all its details.

One Sunday evening, a company of young men and girls of the village had assembled in a farm-house, and were indulging in all kinds of frolic and flirting. After they had enjoyed their nonsense for some time they thought they should like to have a little dancing. In the midst of much noisy and useless debating how to procure a musician to play to them, one of the youths – the wildest of the party – cut the matter short by saying boastingly: "Now, my lads, leave that to me! I will bring you a musician, even if it should be the devil himself!" With these words the wicked youth placed his cap knowingly on one side of his head, and marched out of the room.

He had not advanced many steps along the road when he met with an old beggarly-looking man, who carried a fiddle under his arm. The lad lost no time in striking a bargain with the man, and triumphantly introduced him into the house. In a few minutes all the young folks were wildly dancing up and down the room to the old crowder's fascinating music; and soon the perspiration actually streamed down their faces. They now desired to stop for a moment to rest themselves a little. But this they found impossible so long as the old crowder continued playing; and

they could not induce him to leave off, however earnestly they implored him. It was really an awful affair!

Soon they would have been all dead from sheer exhaustion, had it not so happened, fortunately for them, that there resided in the lower part of the house an old deaf woman, the housekeeper of the farmer, who accidentally becoming aware of the desperate condition of the dancers, ran as fast as she could to fetch the parish priest. The holy man was already in bed, and it took some time to arouse him; and then he had to dress himself. But at last he was quite prepared; and when he arrived at the farm-house and saw the fearful scene, he at once took out of his pocket a little book, from which he read something in Latin or Hebrew. Scarcely had he read a verse, when the indefatigable fiddler let his arm sink, and drawing himself gradually up until he stood merely on the tips of his toes, he suddenly vanished through the ceiling, leaving no traces behind. Some people say, however, that there was a sulphurous odour about the house shortly after this miraculous event.

THE EFFECTUAL EXPEDIENT

The next story, told by the Manx people, is almost literally transcribed from Waldron's 'History and Description of the Isle of Man,' London, 1744.

"A fiddler having agreed with a person, who was a stranger, for so much money, to play to some company he should bring him to, all the twelve days of Christmas, and having received an earnest for it, saw his new master vanish into the earth the moment he had made the bargain. Nothing could exceed the terror of the poor fiddler. He found he had engaged himself in the devil's service, and he looked on himself as already doomed; but, having recourse to a clergyman he received some hope. The clergyman desired him, as he had taken an earnest, to go when he should be summoned; but, whatever tunes should be called for, to play none but psalm-tunes.

"On the day appointed the same person appeared, with whom he went, but with what inward reluctance it is easy to guess. He punctually obeying the minister's directions, the company to whom he played were so angry that they all vanished at once, leaving him at the top of a high hill, and so bruised and hurt, though he was not sensible when or from what hand he received the blows, that it was with the utmost difficulty he got home."

THE OLD CHORALE

The following is recorded from Oldenburg, North Germany.

The sexton at Esenshammer, one day on entering the church alone, heard the organ playing most charmingly. He looked up and saw to his great surprise that there was no player; it played by itself. He lost no time in running to the Pastor, to tell him what was going on in the church.

The Pastor quickly put on his gown and hastened with his sexton to witness the phenomenon. Sure enough; the organ was playing wonderfully all kinds of profane airs; they both heard it distinctly. But, look where they would, they could not see any performer.

After having recovered a little from his astonishment, the Pastor in a solemn tone of voice called out towards the organ: —

"If thou up there canst play everything, just play to me our old Chorale *Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten.*"

In a moment the organ was silent.

THE HAUNTED MANSION

Diabolic musical performances have often been heard at midnight in a certain mansion in Schleswig-Holstein. Years ago, the young and gay daughter of the then lord of the manor, at a family festivity and grand ball, proved herself so insatiable in dancing, that, after having danced all the evening, she flippantly exclaimed: "And if the devil himself appeared and invited me to dance, I should not decline!"

Scarcely had she said these words, when the door of the ball-room flew open, and an unknown cavalier entered, went up to her, and led her to dance. Round and round they whirled, unceasingly, incessantly faster and faster, until – O, horror! suddenly she fell down dead.

A long time has elapsed since this occurred; but the lady still haunts the mansion. Every year on the day when the frightful event took place, precisely at midnight, the mansion resounds with the most diabolic music. The lady arises from her grave and repairs to the ball-room, where she anxiously waits for a partner; for, if any good Christian should come and dance with her, she afterwards will have rest. Hitherto no one has had the courage to stay in the house during the awful hour. A daring young adventurer once had nearly succeeded. In that case, the mansion would have come into his possession, according to an old deed found in the house. But as soon as the diabolic music

began, his courage forsook him, and he made off as fast as he could. It terrified him so much, that even now when he hears violins he trembles all over, and imagines the diabolic noise is recommencing.

THE MODE ASBEIN

A modern writer on Arabic music, as it is practised in Algiers and Tunis, mentions among the various Modes used at the present day a peculiarly impressive one, called Asbein, which the Mohammedans believe to have been especially appropriated by Satan for the purpose of tempting man. They have a long story respecting its origin and demoniac effects. The writer alluded to, a Frenchman, had the gratification of hearing a piece or two played in this Mode by a musician, who had the reputation of being one of the best performers in Tunis, and who used to entertain the frequenters of a certain coffee-house in a suburb. To this place the Frenchman repaired, and induced the musician to play in the Mode Asbein. To surmise from his description of the performance, there must have been something really frightful in the degree of ecstasy which the player exhibited. But there is something funny in the Frenchman's mode of reasoning, which deserves to be noticed, because it shows how opinions like the above are sometimes adopted readily enough even by professed sceptics. The Frenchman was a sceptic, and had made up his mind before he proceeded to examine the matter, that the impression of the Arabs respecting the Mode Asbein was due entirely to their religious enthusiasm. They are, of course, Mohammedans. Now, after the performance, the Frenchman accidentally learnt that the musician was a Jew. Then he no longer

doubted the demoniac power of the Mode Asbein.

WITCHES

Respecting the music of witches, a few short remarks may suffice. Every one knows that witches, at their meetings, amuse themselves especially with music and dancing. In Germany, the largest assemblages of these objectionable beings take place in the night of the first of May (Walpurgis), and the most favourite resort for their festivities is the summit of the Harz mountain, called Brocken, or Blocksberg. The musicians sit on old stumps of trees, or on projecting rocks, and fiddle upon skulls of horses.

Whoever desires to witness these ghastly scenes must provide himself with the upper board of an old coffin in which a knot has been forced out, and must peep through the hole.

THE CHANGELING

According to an old superstition, which was widely spread during the Middle Ages, the elves sometimes steal a handsome, new-born child from its cradle, and substitute an ill-formed, ugly child of their own. The little Irish prodigy who is the hero of an event which happened in the county of Tipperary, was such a Changeling. The story told of him, it will be seen, is stamped with the peculiar wildness of fancy which generally characterizes Irish fairy-tales.

Mick Flanigan and his wife, Judy, were a poor couple, blessed with nothing but four little boys. Three of the children were as healthy and rosy-cheeked as any thriving Irish boy you can meet with; but the fourth was a little urchin, more ugly than it is possible to imagine; and, even worse, he was as mischievous as he was ugly. Innumerable were the tricks which he played upon his brothers, and even upon his parents. Although before he was a twelve-month old he had already grown a formidable set of teeth, and ate like a glutton, he would nevertheless lie constantly in his cradle near the fire, even after he had reached the age of five years. Resting on his back, and half closing his little eyes, he would observe everything which was going on in the room, watching for opportunities to annoy the people.

Now, one afternoon it came to pass that Tim Carrol, the blind bagpiper, an old friend of the family, called in and sat down near

the fire to have a bit of chat. As he had brought his bagpipe with him, they soon asked him to treat them with a tune. So blind Tim Carrol buckled on his bagpipe, and began to play.

Presently the little urchin raised himself in the cradle, moved his ugly head to and fro, and evidently manifested excessive delight at the nasal sounds. When the affectionate mother saw how eagerly the child stretched out both its hands for the bagpipe, she begged old blind Tim Carrol just to humour her little darling for a moment; and as blind Tim was not the man to say "No," he mildly laid the bagpipe upon the cradle. But how great was their astonishment when the urchin took up the instrument, and, handling it like a practised bagpiper, played without the least effort a lively jig, then another, even more lively, and several others, in rapid succession.

The first thing the father did was to sell his pig and to buy a bagpipe for his prodigy. It soon turned out that the rogue had a peculiar tune of his own, which made people dance however little they might feel disposed for dancing. Even his poor mother happening to come into the room one day with a pailfull of milk, and hearing that bewitching tune, must needs let the pail drop, spill all the milk, and spin round like a very top.

About the time when the boy was six years old, the farmer of the village, by whom Mick Flanigan was employed as day labourer, had various mischances with his cattle. Two of his cows lost their appetite, and gave little or no milk. A very promising calf stumbled, and broke both its hind legs. And

shortly afterwards one of his best horses suddenly got the colic and died in no time. The people in the village had long since settled among themselves that there was something not right in Mick Flanigan's family; so it naturally occurred to the farmer that the imp with the bagpipe must be the cause of all his misfortunes. He therefore thought it wise to give warning at once to Mick Flanigan, and to advise him to look out for work elsewhere. Fortunately, poor Mick Flanigan soon succeeded in getting employment at a farmer's, a few miles off, who was in want of a ploughman.

On the appointed day the new master sent a cart to fetch the few articles of furniture which Mick Flanigan could call his own. Having placed the cradle with the boy and his bagpipe at the top, the whole family drove off to their new home. When they had got about half the way, they had to cross a river. Slowly they drove upon the rickety bridge, little anticipating the exciting scene which now occurred. The boy had hitherto remained very quiet in the cradle, apparently half asleep as usual. But, just when the cart had reached the middle of the bridge, he raised his head, looked wistfully at the water, and then suddenly grasping his bagpipe he jumped down into the river.

His terrified parents set up a cry of distress, and made some efforts to save him, when, to their unspeakable astonishment, they saw him swimming, diving and gamboling about in the water like a very otter. Nay, he actually began to play on his bagpipe, shouting lustily all the while and exhibiting other signs

which clearly showed that he was now in his right element. Soon he disappeared entirely. Then the poor people became fully convinced that the boy was a Changeling, and had now gone home to his own kinsfolk.²¹

²¹ 'Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland, by T. Crofton Croker; London, 1862,' p. 22. – Compare also 'Hans mein Igel,' in Grimm's *Kinder und Hausmärchen*.

THE VENDISH SORCERER

The Vends are a Slavonic race inhabiting some districts in Lusatia, Germany. Although living amidst Germans, they still preserve their own language, as well as a considerable number of national songs and legends of their own, some of which are very beautiful.

The Vendish Sorcerer, whose name was Draho, lived in a mountain, near the town of Teichnitz, at the time when the Christian religion was just beginning to take root in Lusatia. He was, of course, a pagan; and every scheme he could devise to hurt the defenceless Christians living scattered about the neighbourhood, he did not fail remorselessly to put into action. Moreover, his great power he derived from a magic whistle, by means of which he made certain mischievous spirits subservient to his will.

This sorcerer had a disciple, who, becoming acquainted with the blessings of Christianity, forsook his wicked master, and seizing a favourable opportunity when the old rogue was taking a nap, possessed himself of the magic whistle, and flew from the mountain into the valley to his friends the Christians.

Now, when the people learnt that the sorcerer had been deprived of his whistle, they knew that his power was gone, and that they might venture to approach him without incurring much danger. So they went up to the top of the mountain, provided

with all kinds of arms, and soon succeeded in capturing the old pagan. Having securely bound him, they made a large fire of wood, upon which they placed him, and solemnly burnt him to death. Meanwhile, the disciple, who had already received Holy Baptism, stepped forward and threw the magic whistle into the flame, that it might be consumed without leaving a trace.

Nevertheless, every year in the spring, on the eve of Oculi Sunday, the old sorcerer appears on the top of the mountain, and in the night blows a most frightful shriek upon his magic whistle. The people who go out at midnight to listen for it have not long to wait before they hear the awful sound. For, what people are bent upon hearing, they are sure to hear, especially if it is something objectionable.

THE RAT-CATCHER OF HAMELN

In the year 1284, the town of Hameln, situated on the river Weser, in Germany, became awfully infested with rats and mice. All kinds of traps, poisons, and other means employed to destroy the vermin proved of no avail, and the harassed citizens were actually at their wits' end what to do. The plague grew daily more formidable until the people had every reason to fear that before long not only their victuals but they themselves would all be devoured.

When the misery had reached a height positively frightful, there appeared in Hameln a strange man with a queer-shaped hat, who offered to deliver the town from the scourge for a stipulated reward. Some say the reward he demanded was a round sum of money; others maintain that he wanted to marry the burgomaster's pretty daughter. Whatever it may have been, there is certainly no doubt that it was readily promised him.

As soon as the bargain had been struck, the strange man drew from his pocket a small pipe, began to play and walked through the streets of the town. Presently, all the rats and mice came running out of their holes and followed him. Lustily playing he marched with his odd army out of the town and into the river Weser, where every rat and mouse was drowned.

Then the inhabitants of Hameln rejoiced greatly, as after a victory over a powerful enemy. But, when the strange man came

to claim the promised reward, they withheld it from him, and treated him with derision.

However, a few days afterwards, how sorely were they punished for their ingratitude!

The enraged rat-catcher unexpectedly appeared, this time dressed entirely in red. Strange to say, even his face and hands seemed to be quite red. He took his pipe and walked through the streets, playing as before. Presently, all the little children of Hameln came running out of the houses and followed him. He marched with them out of the town into the mountains, where he vanished with them into a deep hole in a rock.

Some persons believe that the children afterwards came to light again, very far off in Transylvania. At all events, there are villages in that country in which the people speak the same language as in Hameln.

The gate through which the strange man took the children is still extant, and there are other evidences of similar importance to be found in Hameln, which prove to the satisfaction of certain respectable citizens that the story is quite true in all its details.

The earliest record of the Rat-catcher of Hameln written in English is probably the quaint one contained in 'A Restitution of decayed Intelligence in Antiquities by the studie and travaile of Richard Verstegan,' Antwerp, 1605. Verstegan concludes his relation with the statement: "And this great wonder hapned on the 22 day of July, in the yeare of our Lord one thowsand three hundreth seauentie and six." The brothers Grimm, however, than

whom a better authority could not be adduced, say that according to the old records preserved in the town-hall of Hameln the memorable event occurred on the 22nd of June, Anno Domini 1284, and that there was formerly on the wall of the town-hall the following old and oddly-spelt inscription:

Im Jahr 1284 na Christi gebort
Tho Hamel worden uthgewort
Hundert and dreiszig Kinder dasülwest geborn
Dorch einen Piper under den Köppen verlorn.²²

Which means in plain English —

In the year 1284, after the birth of Christ,
There were led out of Hameln
One hundred and thirty children, natives of that place,
By a Piper, and were lost under the mountain.

The reader will perhaps be surprised at the smallness of the number recorded of the children lost. But, Hameln is not a large town, and was most likely even less populous six hundred years ago than it is at the present day.

²² 'Deutsche Sagen, herausgegeben von den Brüdern Grimm; Berlin, 1816;' Vol. I., p. 330.

THE EXQUISITE ORGAN

The following story is told by the villagers in the Netherlands.

Once upon a time a countryman of the province of Hainaul went on some business matters to the village of Flobeck, which lies not far from Krekelberg. When he was crossing the flat and lonely tract of land, some miles south-east of Flobeck, he heard some distant music, which came so sweetly through the air that he thought he would just take a few steps in the direction whence it proceeded to ascertain its origin.

He had not gone far when he saw a beautiful palace, from which the fascinating music evidently issued. This astonished him greatly; but he was not one of those faint-hearted men who would have crossed themselves and taken to their heels. Quite the contrary; he at once determined to investigate the matter a little nearer. And so he entered the palace.

Having ascended the broad staircase leading to the principal rooms, he opened the large door and paced from one hall to another. All were splendidly decorated, and most richly furnished. But, nowhere did he meet with any living being. Soon it became evident to him that the inmates were feasting and dancing in an interior court of the palace. Thither he bent his steps.

To be sure, there they were! – a large assemblage of odd-looking people in high glee dancing to the performance of a

musician, who had on his lap an instrument in appearance not unlike a barrel-organ; for it had a long handle which the player turned with all his energy.

Nov, when these strange people saw the countryman peeping in, they beckoned him to come forward. He availed himself gladly of the invitation, and took his seat by the side of the musician; for, no music he had ever heard in his life appeared to him comparable to that which the man produced on the admirable instrument with the long handle. Sometimes it was very soft and deep-toned; – suddenly it rose up to a high pitch, like an *Æolian* harp when a gust of wind passes over its strings; – now it gradually diminished in power, and its sweetness actually moved our countryman to tears; – now, again, it grew suddenly so loud, as if a whole military band was playing, only that it was much more beautiful.

The countryman expressed his admiration in the highest terms, adding that nothing in the world could delight him more than to be permitted to turn the handle of the exquisite organ for a little while. The musician showed himself quite willing to afford him this pleasure, and placed the instrument on his lap.

The delighted countryman turned the handle a few times round: – No sound was forthcoming. – He turned again, more vigorously: – The delicious music began.

"Oh! Ever-blessed Mother Mary! how exquisite!" exclaimed the enraptured countryman.

Scarcely had he said the words when everything vanished, and

he found himself sitting in a fallow field, having on his lap a large cat whose tail he had been wrenching so vehemently that poor puss was still mewling from its very heart in most ear-piercing modulations. On the spot where the palace had stood he saw a large dust heap, and that was all.²³

²³ 'Niederländische Sagen, herausgegeben von J. W. Wolf; Leipzig, 1843;' p. 464.

ROYAL MUSICIANS

A royal personage being a lover of music possesses many advantages for attaining proficiency in this art, which are rarely at the command of a poor musician, however talented he may be. The young prince has from the beginning the best instruction, excellent instruments, and every possible assistance in making progress. The most distinguished musicians consider it an honour to play to him whenever he is disposed to listen to them. If it affords him pleasure to be a composer, whatever he produces, even if it is a large orchestral work, he can directly have performed; and he is thus enabled to ascertain at once whether it sounds exactly as he contemplated in composing it, and whether the peculiar instrumental effects in certain bars, which he had aimed at producing, really answer his expectation. Repeated rehearsals, and revisions of the score, with the ready assistance of the most experienced professional musicians in his service, enable him to improve his composition as long as he likes. And should he be inclined to join the musicians with his instrument in a performance, – to become for a little while, so to say, one of them, – he may be sure that they will do everything to help him through by covering his mistakes and giving him, if possible, the opportunity of displaying his skill.

What can be more delightful for an influential amateur than to join with first-rate professional players in practising the classical

Quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven! All this, and more, is at the command of the royal musician; and the poor striving disciple of the art may have some excuse for envying him on this account.

However, if the poor disciple is a true artist, he will also duly appreciate the disadvantage under which the royal musician labours for attaining proficiency in the art. He will see how necessary it is for the sake of progress to know exactly the truth about one's own powers and requirements, and that in this respect even a musical beggar enjoys an advantage above the King, – or rather, he has it, whether he enjoys it or not; a candid opinion as to his musical accomplishments is gratuitously offered him, and it is often a just one. If his music is bad, he, instead of being deceived with fine words of flattery, will simply be told: "Leave off! Begone!" If it pleases, he will be rewarded. But the royal musician gets praise, however his music may be; there is no distinction made between good and bad.

No wonder, therefore, that history records but few good royal musicians, although many are known to have occupied themselves with music almost like professional musicians. As an example of an estimable one may be mentioned King David "the sweet singer of Israel," who, as a youth, soothed the evil spirit of Saul by playing upon his *kinnor*; and who later, as King, admonished his people in the psalms: "Praise ye the Lord! Praise him with the sound of the trumpet; praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him

with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals. Praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals."

And in his religious fervour he joined his royal band in a procession conveying the ark. On this occasion "David danced before the Lord with all his might." The band consisted of vocal and instrumental performers. "And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah, the master of the song with the singers: David also had upon him an ephod of linen. Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps. And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal, the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw King David dancing and playing: and she despised him in her heart." (II. Sam. chap. vi., I. Chron. chap. xv.) Michal, Saul's daughter, was David's wife; nevertheless, after the ceremony she upbraided him: "How glorious was the King of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaids, as one of the vain fellows who shamelessly uncovereth himself!" If the musicians exhibited some vanity, they might, at any rate, be more easily excused than many of the present day; for it was an extraordinary honour for them to perform with a King who was certainly a noble musician, and of whose companionship they could have been proud even if he had not been a King. Moreover, he was, as is recorded in the Bible, not only "cunning

in playing," but also "a mighty and valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord was with him." There are not many royal musicians of whom thus much could be said without flattery.

The German common saying —

Wo man singt da lass dich ruhig nieder,
Böse Menschen haben keine Lieder;

is as untenable as Shakespeare's assertion —

The man that has no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;

considering that the Italian banditti sing hymns to the Virgin Mary, and that there are kind-hearted Englishmen who cannot distinguish between the airs of 'God save the Queen' and the 'Old Hundredth.' Anyhow, it may be doubted whether certain distinguished royal musicians had really music in their soul. Take, for instance, the Emperor Nero, who lived about the middle of the first century of our era. Some statements transmitted to us, respecting the depravity of this cruel monarch may be unfounded, — such as that the large conflagration of Rome, which occurred in his reign, was the work of incendiaries secretly hired by him, and that he amused himself with looking at the fire from the top of a high tower, and singing to the accompaniment of the

lyre the destruction of Troy, of which he had read, and which he desired to see represented in the spectacle before him. Some say that he played on the bagpipe. His principal instruments, on which he practised assiduously, were the lyre and the harp. His voice was weak and hoarse; nevertheless, in contesting with the best singers of his time, he always, of course, gained the prize. Foreign musicians streamed to Rome to hear him, and to flatter him. About five thousand of them were successful in so far as they obtained appointments in his service with high salaries. He undertook a professional tour through Greece, to perform in public; and as those of his audience who did not applaud him ran the risk of losing their life, a brilliant success could not fail to be constantly the result of his appearance as a musician. The surest means of obtaining his favour was to praise his voice, to be enraptured by his singing, and distressed when he took the whim that he could not sing. It gratified him to be pressingly implored to sing. In short, he did not appreciate music for the sake of its beauties, but because it appeared to him a suitable means for flattering his excessive vanity.

Such miserable royal musicians would at the present day, fortunately, not be tolerated. But a rather harmless vanity like that shown in the following example is still not uncommon, and may easily be excused, as it is not incompatible with a good heart.

Joseph Clemens Cajetan, Elector and Archbishop of Cologne, sent in the year 1720, the following letter to the Jesuit Seminary in Munich. It is here translated from the German.

"Bonn, July 28th, 1720.

Dear Privy Councillor Rauch!

It may perhaps appear presumptuous that an Ignoramus, who knows nothing at all about music, ventures to compose. This applies to me, as I send you herewith eleven Motetts and other pieces, which I have composed myself. I have achieved this in a strange way, since I am not acquainted with the notes; nor have I the slightest understanding respecting the art of music. I am, therefore, compelled, when anything musical enters my head, to sing it to a musical composer, and he commits it to paper. However, I must have a good ear and good taste, because the public, when they hear my music, always applaud it. The method which I have prescribed to myself in composing is that of the bees, which extract the honey from the most beautiful flowers, and mix it together. Thus also I. Everything I have composed I have taken from only good masters whose works pleased me. I candidly confess my theft, while others deny theirs, as they want to appropriate whatever they have taken from others. No one, therefore, dares to be vexed if he hears old airs in my compositions; for, as they are beautiful, their antiquity cannot detract from their value. I have determined to present this work to the church Sti. Michaelis Archangeli, with the P. P. Societatis Jesu, wherein my grandparents founded a Seminarium Musicale; and I desire that this memorial of myself shall be preserved there for eternity, especially for the reason that I have composed most of this music in the time of my persecution.

The causes which induced me to compose the several pieces I herewith add, thus: —

No. 1. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini; — I made when I had to suffer the greatest persecution, anno 1706.

No. 2. Ne nobis Domine; — on account of obtained victories.

No. 3. Tempus est; — on leaving the two towns, Rüssel and Valencien, in gratitude for the many kindnesses which I and my kindred received from the inhabitants of those towns.

No. 4. Victoria; — after the battle of Belgrade against the Turks, in 1717.

No. 5. Per hoc vitæ spatium; — when I was debating with myself what pursuit I should follow, whether I should become spiritual or remain secular.

No. 6. Quare fremuerunt gentes; — for my own consolation at a time when I was unjustly persecuted to the utmost.

No. 7. Quem vidistis Pastores; — for Christmas.

No. 8. Parce Domine! — at Lent.

No. 9. Maria Mater gratiæ; — to the honour of the ever-blessed Mother of God.

No. 10. When my brother-in-law, the Dauphin, died, anno 1711.

No. 11. On the death of the nephew of the Dauphin and his consort, in 1712; which composition I request the Seminary to have sung also for me after my death.

I therefore desire you herewith to deliver the compositions, with this letter by my own hand, in my name,

to the P. Magister Chori, and at the same time to assure him and the whole Seminary of my clemency. I attribute all this to Divine Grace which has enlightened me to accomplish thus much. I also assure you of my clemency.

Joseph Clemens."

For this present from the Elector, the Inspector of the Seminary in Munich, the Jesuit Gregorius Schilger, thanked him in a letter written in Latin, of which the following is a literal translation: —

"Most Exalted and Serene Prince and Elector! Most Gracious Lord and Master!

With most humble reverence, I kiss your gracious hand and your most valuable gift of your musical compositions, which to the great joy and with feelings of gratitude of us all, were handed to me, with your gracious letter, by your Serene Highness' Privy Councillor, Joannes Rauch. For, is it not a great blessing, not only to the Gregorian Institution of the Munich Seminary, but also to those on whom devolves the direction and management of it, that you so graciously remember them, and present them with a musical treasure so precious!

We, therefore, throw ourselves at the feet of your Serene Highness, and before the Archiepiscopal Pastoral Staff, and express as well as it is in our power our most dutiful thanks, with every devotion and reverence, as we are in duty bound to your sovereign clemency for ever.

This memorial of your highest favour shall be permanently preserved in the archives of the Elector's

church at Munich, to the everlasting glory of God, to the honour of the Holy Virgin and of the Holy Archangel Michael, and in memory of your gracious condescension.

Moreover, we admire the very great merit of the music of your Serene Highness not only on account of the high position of its composer, but also on account of its very pleasing artistic effect, which has astonished every one, when the music had been carefully examined by all the Gregorian musicians we summoned to try it. We all – not only I, who consider myself the most insignificant, but also the Gregorian disciples – we all pray in deep humility that the kindly blessings of Heaven may for many years support your Serene Highness in your beneficent functions, for the advantage of the Church, and for the consolation of all good people, especially also for the benefit of your dependants, of whom the Gregorian disciples delight in being the most humble. Permit me to recommend especially these, together with myself, your most humble servant, in our deepest reverence, to your most gracious favour and benevolence. We thus continually pray with bended knees, venturing to hope with the most implicit confidence that Heaven's blessing will result to us from the Archiepiscopal Mitre and Pastoral Staff, which we humbly reverence with our kisses.

Your Serene Highness'

Most humble Servant,

Gregorius Schilger, Soc. Jesu,

Inspector of the St. Gregorian House.

Munich, August 7th, 1720."

There are some touching instances on record of royal personages in affliction finding relief and consolation in studying music. The last King of Hanover had the misfortune of being nearly deprived of his eyesight some time before he came to the throne. As Crown Prince he published a pamphlet entitled 'Ideas and Reflections on the Properties of Music,' from which a few short extracts may find a place here, as they show how soothing a balm this art was to him: —

"From early youth I have striven to make music my own. It has become to me a companion and comforter through life; it has become more and more valuable to me the more I learnt to comprehend and appreciate its boundless exuberance of ideas, its inexhaustible fulness, the more intimately its whole poetry was interwoven with my whole being... By means of music, ideas, feelings, and historical events, natural phenomena, pictures, scenes of life of all sorts, are as clearly and intelligibly expressed as by any language in words; and we are ourselves enabled to express ourselves in such a manner and to make ourselves understood by others... Of all the senses of man, sight and hearing are those by which most effect is produced upon mind and heart, and which are consequently the most powerful springs for the moral and rational feelings, actions, and opinions of men. But Hearing appears to be the most influential and operative of the two organs; for this reason, that by inharmonious discordant tones our feelings may be

so shocked, even to their deepest recesses, and so painfully wounded as to drive us almost beside ourselves; which impression cannot possibly be produced in us by a bad picture, a dreary landscape, or a very faulty poem... I have known persons whose spirits were broken, and their hearts rent by care, grief, and affliction. They wandered about, murmuring at their fate, absorbed in meditation, in vain seeking hope, in vain looking for a way to escape. But, the excess of their inward pangs needed alleviation; the heart discovered the means of procuring it: the deep-drawn sighs of the oppressed bosom were involuntarily converted into tones of lamentation, and this unconscious effusion was productive of relief, composure, and courageously calm resignation. Yes, indeed, it is above all in the gloomy hours of affliction that Music is a soothing comforter, a sympathizing friend to the sufferer; it gives expression to the gnawing anguish which rends the soul, and which it thereby mitigates and softens: it lends a tear to the stupefaction of grief; it drops mollifying healing balsam into every wounded heart. Whoever has experienced this effect himself, or witnessed it in others, will admit with me that for this fairest service rendered by the art we cannot sufficiently thank and revere it."

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