

# THE Musical Times

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Review

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with considerable trepidation that we venture to call attention to a few wrong dates. Playford's 'A breefe introduction to the skill of musick' was first published in 1654, not 1653 (p. 123)—a facsimile reproduction of the title-page of this rare book appeared in THE MUSICAL TIMES of January, 1906; Daniel Purcell died in the year 1717, not 1718 (p. 138); and Sir Hubert Parry was elected to the Professorship of Music at Oxford in 1899, not 1900 (p. 285). These 'dry-bones' may be considered 'altogether ridiculous and harmful,' but accuracy, even in 'A History of Music in England,' is not without its advantages.

#### VIOLIN MUSIC.

*Old English Violin Music.* Edited by Alfred Moffatt. No. 1, Sonata in G major, by James Lates; No. 2, Sonata in D minor, by Henry Eccles; No. 3, Sonata in B flat major, by William Babell; No. 4, Sonata in G minor, by John Stanley; No. 5, Sonata in A major, by John Collett; No. 6, Trio-Sonata in E minor, by T. A. Arne.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Lovers of ancient music have a rich and delightful store provided for them in this Old English Violin Music edited by Mr. Alfred Moffatt. Six numbers of the series have already been published, and if the succeeding works maintain the same high level of excellence of this first set of pieces the collection will be one of great value and historical interest. As the Editor remarks, considerable attention has been given to the resuscitation of church music, glees and madrigals, organ and even harpsichord music by the older English composers; but very little has been done to make known the mass of music for the violin written by English musicians from the time of Purcell to the close of the 18th century.

No. 1 is a Sonata in G major by James Lates, a name, like other composers in this series, more or less unfamiliar. According to the biographical notes which preface these pieces, Lates lived from 1710-77, and resided chiefly in Oxford. He received his musical education from the first masters in Italy, and was an excellent violinist, leading the concerts at the University city with credit. For some years he held a lucrative professional situation at Blenheim, under the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough. The Sonata under notice has been arranged from 'Six solos for a violin and violoncello with a thorough Bass for the harpsichord,' published about 1768. It consists of a fine opening *Allegro*, an expressive *Largo* in C minor, and an energetic and spirited *Rondo* in the main key.

No. 2 is a Sonata in D minor by Henry Eccles, born about 1670, and a member of the King's Band from 1710-16. In the latter year he migrated to Paris, and entered the French king's private orchestra. Eccles's playing excited much admiration in Paris, where he resided until his death in 1742. He wrote several sonatas for the violin, and the work now for the first time resuscitated is a fine example of its class. Beginning with a beautiful and plaintive *Adagio*, a brisk and jovial *Allegro* follows, the whole concluding with an expressive *Largo*, and an *Allegro* in the form of a Gigue; altogether this is a most captivating work.

No. 3 is a Sonata in B flat major by William Babell (1690-1723), a pupil of the celebrated Dr. Pepusch; he was for some years organist of All Hallows' Church, Bread Street (where he is buried), and also a member of George the First's private band. He appears to have been not only an excellent violinist but a fine performer on the harpsichord. According to Johann Mattheson—with whom Handel fought his celebrated duel—he surpassed even the great composer of 'The Messiah' as an executant on the organ. The Sonata in B flat consists of a Preludio, Giga, Air, Hornpipe à l'Inglese, and Gavotte. The movements are rather short: but the dances are delightfully bright and sportive, and the Preludio and Air full of refined melody.

No. 4, a Sonata in G minor, is by John Stanley, the celebrated blind composer and organist. Stanley's sonata—in four movements, a *Preludio*, *Allegro*, *Andante* and *Tempo di Giga*—is in every respect a very fine work.

No. 5 is a Sonata in A major by John Collett. No biographical particulars have been discovered concerning him, but this work is the second of six sonatas printed for the author about 1755. The opening *Allegro* is particularly

vivid and pleasing, and the following *Largo* in excellent contrast. The *Finale*, a movement in six-eight rhythm, is full of vivacious animation and 'go,' and is carried into the fifth position. The preceding works never exceed the third position, No. 3 going no higher than the first; but with modern proficiency in phrasing and sliding, the editor has judiciously suggested throughout a more advanced form of fingering than the mere actual position of the notes might require. Mr. Moffatt is an expert in violin editing, and his workmanship in the violin parts and in the pianoforte accompaniments arranged from the old figured-basses deserves high commendation.

The last number of the series is a Trio-Sonata for two violins, violoncello (*ad lib.*) and pianoforte by the celebrated composer of the immortal 'Rule, Britannia,' Dr. Thomas Augustine Arne. The Sonata probably dates from the year 1740, and is the last of a set of seven similar works. It contains four movements—*Siciliano*, *Moderato*, *Largo*, and *Allegro*—and will prove quite effective even without the violoncello, although much additional interest will be given by the inclusion of that instrument.

It has been a real pleasure to study these fascinating old works. Without a dull or tedious passage from beginning to end, one cannot but comment on the pure, healthy, vigorous and joyous tone displayed by our English composers of the 17th and 18th centuries. Thanks are due to Mr. Moffatt for rescuing these examples from the musty-dusty recesses of our museums and bringing them into the light of the present day. They can well stand its fullest glare!

*A History of the Bradford Festival Choral Society:* from its formation in 1856 to its jubilee in 1906. By G. F. Sewell.

[Bradford: G. F. Sewell.]

The author of this interesting book is one of those veteran Yorkshire music-lovers of whom any county might be proud. As one of the original members of the Bradford Festival Choral Society, who more fitting than he to write its history? This task he has discharged with commendable skill, although he was to some extent handicapped by the earliest records, covering the first twenty years, having been lost; that was before he became the secretary, twenty-five years ago. The Society owes its origin to the enthusiasm of the late Samuel Smith, Mayor of Bradford in 1849, when Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' was first performed (complete) in Bradford on December 7 of that year, and when the gallery was nearly filled with factory operatives. The completion of St. George's Hall, on August 27, 1853, gave an impetus to choral music in Bradford, and the Festival Choral Society was duly formed in 1856.

The first president was Mr. Samuel Smith, and the first conductor, William Jackson, of Masham, who was paid five shillings for each rehearsal, £1 11s. 6d. for each concert 'in town,' and two guineas for outside engagements of the Society. 'Coffee and buns' were provided from the Society's funds for those members of the choir who came from a distance, the cost of these refreshments in one year amounting to the sum of £40 13s. 10d. In 1858 the Society had the proud distinction of singing before Queen Victoria and the Court at Buckingham Palace. Their first concert with orchestra was given in 1862, and these Bradford singers had the honour of introducing Beethoven's Choral Symphony into Yorkshire on March 14, 1873. The pitfalls of programme-making are amusingly shown when, in 1872, the Burmese Ambassadors visited Bradford and a concert was given in their honour. On that occasion the programme included 'Rule, Britannia' and 'Come, if you dare'!

The conductors of the Society have included William Jackson (already mentioned, and the composer of 'The Year,' 'The Deliverance of Israel,' and other works), R. S. Burton, Edward Hecht, Dr. J. C. Bridge, and Mr. R. H. Wilson. The present conductor is Dr. F. H. Cowen. The Society has provided contingents of singers for festivals at Hereford, Gloucester and Chester, and in the jubilee year the Society sang, by invitation, at the London Philharmonic Society's concert of May 17, 1906, when it fully maintained its reputation in Bach's motet 'Sing ye to the Lord' (unaccompanied), and in Beethoven's Choral Symphony. The Society owns the autograph of one of