

The International Tours of Charles Hallé as Viewed in the Contemporary Press

Marten Noorduin

University of Oxford

It can hardly be said that the pianist Charles Hallé (1819-1895) is a musical figure who has been unjustly neglected. The orchestra that he founded in Manchester in 1858 attracted a range of high-profile conductors after Hallé's tenure and continues to be active to this day, as does the music college in the same city of which he was one of the founding professors. The history and development of both of these important institutions have also attracted significant scholarly interest, both because of their continued existence as well as their important function within British musical life of the second half of the nineteenth century.¹

Hallé was possibly the first pianist with a truly intercontinental career—his concert tours took him from many European countries to as far away as Australia—and his activities have been documented in detail by Ann Kersting and more recently Robert Beale.² One of the cornerstones of Hallé's identity as a musician was Beethoven's music, the familiarity of which was still developing during his career. This chapter will show how the critical reception of Hallé's performances in France, the United Kingdom, and Germany was influenced by degree to which Beethoven's music was known by his audience and critics. The final part of this chapter will demonstrate how Hallé's reception by European critics influenced the reception of his performances in Australia in the 1890s, a hitherto largely ignored aspect of his career.

I would like to thank H. Robert Cohen as well as the Transforming Nineteenth-Century Historically Informed Performance (Transforming C19 HIP, or TCHIP) research project for assistance with and helpful advice on this chapter.

¹ Karl Bielenberg, *Karl Halle (1819-1895): Ein deutscher Musiker im europäischen Konzert* (Hagen: Carl v.d. Linnepe, 1991); Geoffrey Thomason, "Hess, Huffs and Hallé facts: Staff appointments in the early years of the Royal Manchester College of Music." *Manchester sounds* 3 (2002), 55-67; Fiona M. Palmer, *Conductors in Britain, 1870-1914: Wielding the Baton at the Height of Empire* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017).

² Ann Kersting, *Carl Halle – Sir Charles Hallé: Ein europäischer Musiker* (Hagen: Carl v.d. Linnepe, 1986); and Robert Beale, *Charles Hallé: A Musical Life* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

The French Reviews

Born in 1819 in Hagen, Westphalia, Germany, Charles Hallé studied in Darmstadt as a young man, before moving to Paris in 1835, where his first reviewed performances as a pianist took place.³ The earliest description of Hallé's playing is in a letter by Heller to Schumann dated November 1839, when Hallé was twenty years old. At a private performance, he had played Schumann's *Carnaval* and *Kinderszenen*; his interpretation was described by Heller as "truly artistic, with power, glow, and intimacy."⁴ Shortly thereafter, in 1840, Hallé played his first public concert, according to his own autobiography with success, and in the presence of Liszt, Chopin, and Meyerbeer.⁵ The first published concert review of Hallé is shortly after that and was written by none other than Hector Berlioz. He described Hallé as a "great virtuoso, who follows in Liszt's footsteps. ... He is a rare and important talent."⁶ Praise like this from someone like Berlioz is of course highly significant and doubtlessly helped spread Hallé's fame considerably.

Other French reviews from around this time are also extremely positive: on 13 April 1845 *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* described Hallé's playing of a programme of Beethoven and Heller as "very fine, energetic, colourful, and full of elegant clarity."⁷ On 8 March 1846, the same periodical described his playing as "fine, unbound, elegant, and with a warmth united with purity."⁸ With such positive reviews in important publications, it is no surprise that Hallé quickly attracted international attention: the English and German press

³ As the titles in the previous footnotes show, there is some disagreement on the spelling of Hallé's first name. This chapter will consistently use his "Frenchified" name Charles.

⁴ "Halle spielte die beiden Werke wahrhaft künstlerisch, mit Kraft, Gluth u Innigkeit." *Briefe und Gedichte aus dem Album Robert und Clara Schumanns*, ed. Wolfgang Boetticher (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1979), 79.

⁵ *Life and Letters of Sir Charles Hallé; Being an Autobiography (1819-1860) with Correspondence and Diaries*, ed. C.E. Hallé and M. Hallé (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1896), 70.

⁶ "Die Matinée von Hallé nicht zu vergessen, eines andern großen Virtuosen, der in Liszt's Fußstapfen tritt. (...) Er ist ein seltenes und beduetendes Talent." Hector Berlioz, "Berichte aus Paris." *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 14, no. 45 (4 June 1841), 181.

⁷ "tour à tour fin, énergique, chaleureux et plein d'une élégante netteté." *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* 12, no. 15 (13 April 1845), 115-16.

⁸ "l'exécution fine, déliée, élégante en qui la chaleur s'unit à la pureté." *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* 13, no. 10 (8 March 1846), 77.

began to write about him often during this period, which worked in his favour, because when he moved to England in 1848 his reputation had preceded him.

The only other French reviews of his playing are from the 1870s, when he returned to Paris to play two recitals. Both of these were enthusiastically reviewed, again in the *Revue et Gazette musicale*. On 24 April 1870, Hallé's playing is described as "noble, simple, with much charm, and carefully avoiding any lack of taste."⁹ On the first of May, however, Hallé's playing was reviewed enthusiastically in the case of all music (even Chopin) with the exception of his interpretation of Beethoven, in which Hallé's fine detailed playing did not save him from the criticism that he did not play with enough energy. Nevertheless, the reviewer claimed that although Hallé has rivals, he was not surpassed by anyone.¹⁰

So in summary, in the French press Hallé's playing was greatly praised, particularly for its neatness and delicacy. The only minor criticism is found in a single review from 1870 in which his Beethoven was criticised for being insufficiently energetic, which nonetheless did not prevent Hallé for being considered one of the most prominent pianists of his time.

The English Reviews

In the English press, Hallé's performances, particularly those of Beethoven, were received with boundless enthusiasm, and he quickly became a critical darling. Here is a representative sample of the critical writing about him in the English musical press during his first two decades in London:

Splendid performances [of Beethoven's 5th concerto].¹¹

as an interpreter of classic music Hallé has certainly no superior.¹²

His performance, striking and brilliant, was listened to from beginning to end with breathless attention.¹³

⁹ "noble, simple, plein de charme, évitant soigneusement toute faute de goût." *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* 37, no. 17 (24 April 1870), 133.

¹⁰ *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* 37, no. 18 (24 April 1870), 141-42.

¹¹ *The Musical World* 24, no. 13 (31 March 1849), 207.

¹² *The Musical World* 25, no. 43 (26 October 1850), 685.

¹³ *The Musical World* 30, no. 21 (22 May 1852), 324.

it is impossible to speak too highly....[of the] masterly style of M. Charles Hallé.¹⁴

It is unnecessary to say how M. Hallé plays the two sonatas of Beethoven.¹⁵

The performance was irreproachable.¹⁶

Beethoven's sonata [for piano and violin, op. 96] ... was marvellously well given by Mr. Hallé and M. Sainton.¹⁷

The great pianist played throughout magnificently, enchanting his aristocratic audience from the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata to the last Mazurka of Chopin.¹⁸

What was it precisely that made Hallé's playing so popular? As with all aspects of musicianship, success is dependent on a complex interplay of factors. On the side of the performer these factors include talent, training, and opportunity. Considering Berlioz's comments cited above, Hallé's connections with other important musicians, and his long practice schedules,¹⁹ it is easy to see where this critical acclaim comes from: clearly, Hallé was a very talented pianist who worked hard to nurture and develop his playing. But an equally important part of the equation are the expectations on the part of the critics, and although these are not always stated explicitly, some of the reviews from the 1860s and 1870s give an inkling of what the critics appreciated so much in his playing.

One reviewer wrote in the *Musical World* of 30 May 1868 that "[Hallé's] object is not so much to display his capabilities as an executant as to make his hearers familiar with the choicest productions of the art."²⁰ What this entailed was shown a few months later, when another review in the same publication claimed that "Mr Charles Hallé is gifted with the first

¹⁴ *The Musical World* 32, no. 18 (6 May 1854), 295.

¹⁵ *The Musical World* 34, no. 26 (28 June 1856), 411.

¹⁶ *The Musical World* 34, no. 29 (19 July 1856), 457.

¹⁷ *The Musical World* 36, no. 28 (10 July 1858), 441.

¹⁸ *The Musical World* 38, no. 23 (9 June 1860), 368.

¹⁹ Kersting, *Carl Halle*, 92.

²⁰ *The Musical World* 46, no. 22 (30 May 1868), 371.

of all qualifications requisite in a pianist—a denial of self.”²¹ Other reviews took a very similar line: some years later, the same publication reported that “the performance [of Beethoven’s op. 73] on Tuesday was about perfect, the piano solo blending with the whole composition, out of which it grows so artistically, with just the prominence intended. The reading of the work was marked by the reverent adherence to the author’s text for which Mr. Hallé is celebrated.”²² The periodical *Concordia* described Hallé’s approach to Beethoven’s Hammerklavier sonata op. 106 a couple of years later as “Chaste, careful, and contentious,”²³ and reviewed another concert by stating that “Mr Hallé, of course, ‘read’ the work with all due ‘diligence’ (...) and was applauded to the echo.”²⁴ Similarly, *The Musical World* described Hallé’s performance style as “quiet and unobtrusive (...) [and] sufficiently well known to our musical readers.”²⁵

These reviews indicate that what the English reviewers appreciated in Hallé’s playing was not only his technical skill, but also that he treated the music he played with a certain reverence, a denial of self, or a contentious chastity. In short, Hallé’s approach was to stick fairly close to the score, perhaps more so than other pianists of this time: eye-witness accounts indicate that he occasionally berated other pianists for not following the score closely, although he himself seems to have departed from his own principles at times.²⁶ All of this is wonderfully summarized in a letter from his student Julius Stockhausen to Clara Schumann from 1870:

He manages to live with the English! And that’s how he plays for them: it is the most correct, sensible, and cold playing that I have ever heard, but so conscientious, that you want to hear it anyway. And that’s what the English like. They do not understand

²¹ *The Musical World* 46, no. 48 (28 November 1868), 808.

²² *The Musical World* 51, no. 52 (27 December 1873), 869.

²³ *Concordia* 1, no. 9 (Saturday, 26 June 1875), 148.

²⁴ *Concordia* 1, no. 34 (Saturday, 18 December 1875), 546.

²⁵ *The Musical World* 56, no. 51 (21 December 1878), 813.

²⁶ See the discussion on the extent to which Hallé and other nineteenth-century pianists followed the score in Neal Peres da Costa, *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), particularly at 101.

expression. They don't get it, when someone loses himself, and say: "What a pity! He is an enthusiast!"²⁷

The German Reviews

Stockhausen clearly considered both the English music scene in general and Hallé in particular as overly concerned with correctness, and lacking any proper sense of expression, resulting in a coldness that many musicians in Germany presumably did not value as much as the English did. And it is indeed true that even the earliest reviews of Hallé's playing by German critics bring up his musical cleanliness as a criticism. In what may be the first published review of Hallé's playing in German, written by Beethoven's secretary Anton Schindler in 1842, this issue is already brought up in relation to the repertoire that would make him famous in England. According to Schindler, Hallé's rendition of Beethoven's archduke trio was the best he had heard, although he also criticized Hallé for playing the piano sonatas far too "cleanly".²⁸ And this latter criticism becomes something of a recurring theme in German reviews of Hallé's playing: despite the fact that his performances of Chopin and Heller are almost always praised, his performances of Beethoven were criticized for being too clean, cold, or lacking in spirit.

The Belgian critic August Gathy would later repeat his criticism in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* on 11 May 1843, when he described Hallé as "a proficient pianist: solid, healthy, powerful, and robust, but to me, if I have to express an individual opinion, much of what he plays needs a more spirited performance."²⁹ Years later, the reviewer of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* had a similar opinion on 12 October 1864, when he described Hallé as "a significant artist", and greatly praised his Chopin, Bach, and Heller

²⁷ "Er versteht's, mit Engländern zu leben! Und so spielt er ihnen auch vor. Es ist das korrekteste, verständigste, kälteste Spiel, das ich je gehört, aber so gewissenhaft, daß man es doch gerne hört. Und das mögen die Engländer. Ausdruck verstehen sie nicht. Sie begreifen nicht, daß man außer sich gerät und sagen: 'What a pity! He is an enthusiast!'" Julia Wirth, *Julius Stockhausen: der Sänger des deutschen Liedes* (Frankfurt am Main: Englert und Schlosser, 1927), 342.

²⁸ Anton Schindler, *Beethoven in Paris: Nebst anderen den unsterblichen Tondicten betreffenden Mittheilungen und einem Facsimile von Beethovens Handschrift* (Münster: Aschendorff'sche Buchhandlung, 1842), 75.

²⁹ "Er ist in jeder Beziehung ein tüchtiger Klavierspieler, solide, gesund, kräftig und kernig; doch schien mir, — wenn ich mein individuelles Urtheil aussprechen soll, manches von ihm Vorgetragene auf geistvollere Auffassung oder Belebung Anspruch machen zu dürfen." A.G. [August Gathy], *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 18, no. 38 (11 May 1843), 153.

interpretations, but also said that there were many objectionable things in Hallé's rendition of Beethoven's Waldstein sonata.³⁰ The *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung*, on 26 November 1864, had, in addition to significant praise for Hallé's interpretations of Heller and Chopin, the following to say: "For all things Beethoven his interpretative power is not quite sufficient, which one could notice in his not especially powerful rendition of Beethoven's concerto in E-flat major. The more delicate parts worked better than the heroic, where we wished that Hallé possessed the bigger, round tone of Moscheles, Hiller, or the salon player Alfred Jaell."³¹ Another example, and there are several more, is found in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* again, which on 30 November 1864 praised Hallé using terms as "thoughtful, well rounded, and noble" to describe his playing, but also mentioned that his interpretation of Beethoven, in this case the G-major concerto, was very different from what German critics were used to.³²

Interestingly, these German criticisms were reported on by the English language press. The American periodical *The Musical Review and Musical World* published, under the heading "musical gossip," the following about one of Hallé's concerts in Leipzig: "The execution is greatly praised by German critics, but they think that his touch lacks power and that his performance is rather cold."³³ Another journal published in the United States, *Dwight's Journal of Music*, reported of one of Hallé's German performances, presumably on the basis of German reviews, that "his style is so totally different from the generality of German players, that the public at first hardly seemed to understand him" Nevertheless, the article also states that Hallé is considered to be "one of the greatest players of the day."³⁴

So in summary, the early French reviews and the English reviews were extremely positive of virtually all of Halle's interpretations, while one later French review and almost all German reviews were somewhat critical of Hallé's interpretation of Beethoven. It is of course possible that the difference between English and German pianos is the root cause for

³⁰ *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 2, no. 41 (12 October 1864), 702.

³¹ "Für alle Sachen von Beethoven scheint aber seine Auffassungskraft nicht vollständig auszureichen, wie man bei der nicht besonders kraftvollen Wiedergabe des grossartigen Es-dur Concertes wahrzunehmen Gelegenheit hatte. Die zarteren Stellen desselben gelangen besser, als die heroischen, bei welchen letzteren wir Herrn Halle den grossen, runden Ton Moscheles, Hiller oder auch vom Salonspieler Alfred Jaell gewünscht hätten." *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung* 12, no. 48 (26 November 1864), 380.

³² *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 2, no. 48 (30 November 1864), 809.

³³ *The Musical Review and Musical World* 15, no. 23 (5 November 1864), 358.

³⁴ *Dwight's Journal of Music* 24, no. 17 (12 November 1864), 341.

Hallé's more negative reception in Germany, and perhaps some of the criticisms of his tone can be explained that way. But I think there is another factor that may have played an even larger role.

I suspect that part of the explanation for this difference in reception is the varying state of knowledge of Beethoven's piano sonatas (which were a cornerstone of Hallé's repertoire) in different countries. In the United Kingdom, where Hallé was arguably most successful, the number of editions of Beethoven sonatas available to the public was rather small when Hallé arrived.³⁵ There were some early editions of individual sonatas during Beethoven's lifetime, and one early edition contained op. 2 until 53, but it was not until the mid-30s that a single edition with all sonatas appeared, published by Cramer and edited by Moscheles.³⁶ This edition came in three volumes, and was therefore relatively expensive, and consequently few people were probably familiar with it. This might explain why in 1839 a reviewer of *The Musical World* admitted ignorance of Beethoven's op. 106 in a review of a performance of that very work by Moscheles;³⁷ despite the fact that the first edition of the sonata had been published in London two decades before.³⁸

Only from the 1850s onwards did publishers in the United Kingdom really produce the sonatas in significant quantities. As Elissa Miller-Kay has shown, there were only a handful of editions of the Beethoven sonatas published during Hallé's time in London.³⁹ These included collections edited by Julius Benedict,⁴⁰ William Sterndale Bennett,⁴¹ Carl

³⁵ See Alan Tyson, *The Authentic English Editions of Beethoven's Works* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963) and William S. Newman, "A Chronological Checklist of Collected Editions of Beethoven's Solo Piano Sonatas Since His Own Day." *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 33, no. 3 (March 1977): 503-50.

³⁶ Marten Noorduyn, "Re-examining Czerny's and Moscheles's Metronome Marks for Beethoven's Piano Sonatas." *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 15 (2018), 209-35.

³⁷ "Moscheles' Matinees of Classical Pianoforte Music." *The Musical World* 4, no. 64 (21 March 1839): 182-83.

³⁸ Tyson, *The Authentic English Editions*, 102.

³⁹ Elissa Miller-Kay, *The Virtuosity of Interpretation: the Performance History of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas in London, 1800-1880*. Ph.D. dissertation, New York University (2016), 273.

⁴⁰ *Pianoforte Works by Ludwig van Beethoven*, ed. Julius Benedict (London: Addison & Co., Addison & Hodson, Addison & Hollier; ca. 1845-60).

⁴¹ *Beethoven's Works*, ed. William Sterndale Bennett (London: Leader and Cock, 1850-66).

Czerny,⁴² Ernst Pauer,⁴³ one by Hallé himself,⁴⁴ and one by Cipriani Potter.⁴⁵ So when Hallé came to the United Kingdom in 1848 and started playing Beethoven sonatas, he was not playing for an audience overly familiar with these pieces. In fact, reading between the lines of the reviews, one gets an impression that many members of the audience, including at least some critics, may have been hearing these pieces for the first time. These listeners probably appreciated having them played by a pianist who played them neatly and clearly, even if others (presumably those more familiar with the music) would characterise that as cold and uninvolved.⁴⁶

In Germany and France, on the other hand, the situation was very different. Firstly, the sonatas were published en masse much earlier than in England. Secondly, many of these publishers issued the sonatas individually at a relatively cheap price. Thirdly, many of these sonatas were issued with both German and French title pages, which implies that they were intended to appeal across linguistic borders. Until the mid 1830s, publishers Nikolaus Simrock (in Bonn), B. Schott's sons (Mainz), Johann Anton André (Offenbach am Main), Tobias Haslinger (Vienna), August Craz (Hamburg), and G. M. Meyer (Braunschweig) all sold Beethoven sonatas separately. Between 1840 and 1870, there are at least a dozen more editions, and the presence of several financially successful but pirated editions with Moscheles's name indicates how much more popular Beethoven sonatas were in Germany than in the United Kingdom.⁴⁷

A German critic, therefore, had very different expectations of a Beethoven sonata performance than an English one, and Hallé's reverential treatment of Beethoven would have sounded out of place in a context in which these works were as popular as they were, and perhaps a more passionate and involved performance was expected. The single mixed review

⁴² *Beethoven's Master Pieces: Being the Entire of his Grand Sonatas for the Piano Forte*, ed. Carl Czerny (London: Robert Cocks and Co., ca. 1858-59). This edition was in part based on the earlier Haslinger edition from the late 1820s and early 1830s; see Marten Noorduyn, "Re-Examining", at 215-216.

⁴³ *Sonatas for the Pianoforte by L. van Beethoven*, ed. Ernst Pauer (London: Augener & Co., 1870).

⁴⁴ *Beethoven's Sonatas for the Pianoforte*, ed. Charles Hallé (London: Chappell, 1861-66).

⁴⁵ *Sonata Pathétique, for the Pianoforte by Louis van Beethoven*, ed. Cipriani Potter (London: Mills, 1854).

⁴⁶ The desire to play very neatly and cleanly can also be detected in *Charles Hallé's Practical Pianoforte School*, which includes several of Beethoven's piano sonatas preceded by an etude by the editor that covers some of the sonata's difficulties. See Kersting, *Carl Halle*, 132-135 and 233-237.

⁴⁷ Noorduyn, "Re-examining", at 217-218.

that Hallé got from a French critic in 1870, in which he was criticised for insufficiently energetic playing, can also be read in this light.

The Australian Reviews

But if Hallé's comparative success in England was at least in part based on the audience's relative unfamiliarity with the Beethoven sonatas that had made up his core repertoire, then we can expect that an audience that would have been even less familiar with these pieces would find his playing entirely unobjectionable. And this is what is reflected in the reviews of Hallé's performances during his and his wife's two tours of Australia in 1890 and 1891, which have hitherto played only a marginal role in the literature.

At the time when the Hallés undertook these tours, during which they visited Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane,⁴⁸ the musical life in the colonies had developed to a point where musicians from the United Kingdom were involved in large-scale musical festivals in Australia.⁴⁹ In 1888, Frederic Cowen, who would succeed Hallé at his orchestra in Manchester as principal conductor, participated in a gigantic music festival in Melbourne, along with fifteen of the best English players that had been brought over for this occasion.⁵⁰ So when Hallé arrived in Australia the first time, accompanied by his wife Wilhelmine Normann-Neruda, a famous violinist in her own right who was also known as Lady Hallé, he found an audience that clearly was not altogether unfamiliar with the kind of music that he had in his repertoire, and which also already knew his name, for reasons that will be made clear below.

In the lead-up to this visit, the Australian press described Hallé as follows in order to raise interest for the upcoming concerts:

As a pianist Sir Charles Hallé is a most accurate, if a somewhat cold, performer, his rendering of Beethoven and other classical masters being invariably scholarly and correct. In Schumann and more modern composers, such as Rubinstein, his own

⁴⁸ See *Life and Letters of Sir Charles Hallé; being an Autobiography (1819-1860) with Correspondence and Diaries*, ed. C.E. Hallé and Marie Hallé (London, 1896), 367-95.

⁴⁹ For a discussion of the complex relationship between the musical lives of Britain and colonial Australia, see Sarah Kirkby, "'The Worst Oratorio Ever!' Colonialist Condescension in the Critical Reception of George Tolhurst's *Ruth* (1864)." *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 16 (2019), 199-227.

⁵⁰ See Frederic Cowen, *My Art and My Friends* (London: E. Arnold, 1913), 187-217.

peculiar style is hardly heard to so much advantage, but his reading of the music of these writers is always distinguished by care and thought. (...) Sir Charles Hallé has devoted considerable time to teaching, and the pianoforte school that he published is a most valuable assistance to pianoforte students, particularly to those who do not have the advantage of studying with a master.⁵¹

Two important conclusions can be drawn from this announcement. The first is that the critical reception of Hallé in Europe clearly influenced the expectations in Australia. The second is that Hallé's fame had preceded him to Australia, with editions of his piano school as the most likely vessel. These educational editions furthermore may have also played an important part in the spread of Beethoven's piano music in Australia, along with any other imported editions, as there is no evidence of editions of this repertoire produced in Australia that I am aware of. As a consequence, several music teachers wrote to their local paper on the importance of Hallé's visit to those who had been using his editions to learn the pieces, and who would now finally be able to hear the intended aim of their hard work. As one piano teacher put it, "students can thus realize, perhaps for the first time, what all the technical training on which we lay such stress, and which seems such drudgery to themselves, is to culminate in."⁵²

All of this is to say that Hallé's audience was already primed to react positively to his concerts before he had played a note: his audience was already invested in him through his educational publications, and their familiarity with other interpretations of the same repertoire was probably limited, especially compared to his audience at home.⁵³ This is also suggested by the fact that Hallé, probably foreseeing the difficulty of procuring adequate instruments, had brought his own Broadwood piano,⁵⁴ which also provided an additional incentive for musically-interested residents of Australia to attend his concerts.

As such, it should be no surprise that the criticisms of the French and German press were nowhere to be seen in the Australian reviews. But even the English appreciation for

⁵¹ *Illustrated Australian News and Musical Times*, no. 410 (1 May 1890), 10.

⁵² Annie Wigmore, "Visit of Sir Charles Hallé." *Launceston Examiner* (10 June 1890), 1.

⁵³ This seems to have been particularly true in Adelaide, where the music-loving public were "very unfortunate of recent years in having no regular opportunities of listening to such music." *South Australian Register* (13 August 1890), 4.

⁵⁴ *Daily Telegraph* (23 May 1890), 5; "Sir Charles Hallé's views." *Express and Telegraph* (13 August 1890), 4.

Hallé's conscientiousness is not explicitly present, possibly because that label implies a thorough knowledge of the score on the part of the reviewer that may not (yet) have existed. The following is a representative sample of the critical reception of Hallé's performances during his tours of Australia in 1890 and 1891:

Sir Charles Hallé's first concert took place in the Town-hall tonight and was a brilliant success. There was a very large audience, including the Governor and the Countess of Hopetown. Sir Charles's pianoforte and Normann-Neruda's (Lady Hallé's) violin playing created quite a furore. There was intense enthusiasm amongst the audience.⁵⁵

"Hallé" is perhaps the greatest living referee to whom can be assigned the task of deciding in what manner expression should be given to the tone-poetry of the "mighty minds of old."⁵⁶

It is enough to say that, often as [Mendelssohn's first piano trio] has been heard in Melbourne before, yesterday's rendering was the culminating point, and was greeted as such by the audience, the performers being recalled. (...) Sir Charles Halle plays Beethoven with his head as well as his fingers, and to listen to him is an intellectual luxury.⁵⁷

The sonata was thus perfectly played last night by Sir Charles Hallé, who raised a storm of enthusiasm by his rendering of the great classic. (...) The execution was marvellous—criticism is quite misplaced in such a case.⁵⁸

As far as I can tell, none of Hallé's performances in Australia during either of the tours received any negative criticism whatsoever, but the similarities with earlier reviews are notable. The fact that Hallé's playing was considered "intellectual"—evidently a positive attribute in this context—most clearly resonates with both the criticism of "coldness" made in

⁵⁵ "Sir Charles Hallé's First Concert." *Daily Telegraph* (23 May 1890), 5.

⁵⁶ "Sir Charles and Lady Hallé." *South Australian Register* (13 August 1890), 4.

⁵⁷ "Sir Charles and Lady Hallé." Seventh Concert. *Argus* (18 June 1891), 7.

⁵⁸ "The First Hallé Concert." *Daily Telegraph* (26 June 1891), 6.

France and Germany, and the praise of “conscientiousness” in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the fact that Hallé was considered a touchstone of what should be normative in certain repertoires also resonates with many observations in the English press from earlier in his career. Not that this means that his playing cannot have developed throughout his career, but these shared characteristics suggest that his basic approach to the music remained largely unchanged.

Finally, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions from the data presented in this paper on this previously relatively unexplored dimension of Hallé’s career. First, there is a substantial difference in the way that Hallé’s playing is reviewed in Germany and France vis-à-vis the United Kingdom and Australia, which has to do with Hallé’s “cold contentiousness” being a good or a bad aspect of his playing. Second, the success of Hallé’s playing style in England might have been helped by the fact that his primary repertoire was considered to be important (Beethoven was a major interest of English musical culture since the mid-1810s),⁵⁹ while also paradoxically relatively unknown. Third, even decades after Hallé’s playing and published editions familiarized the English public, particularly in London, with the Beethoven sonatas, Hallé did not seem to have gone out of favour because of his playing style. This suggests that on some level, Hallé’s way of playing might even have become normative in England. Fourth, despite the evidence for the characterisations of English and German priorities in the musical press, there are several critics—such as Berlioz, who praised Hallé’s playing but who were also very knowledgeable of the repertoire—who defy the stated national preference of performance. And, there is also Stockhausen’s letter to Clara Schumann, which further complicates the matter by explicitly praising Hallé for some of the qualities that others seemed to have disparaged. Fifth, Hallé’s activities as an author of didactic materials, in consort with the positive reviews from the UK press, also contributed to his substantial success in Australia in the early 1890s.

Any future research on these national preferences in the nineteenth century will therefore have to draw on large amounts of data in order to avoid overvaluing the opinions of

⁵⁹ See Marten Noorduyn, “The Rehearsal Practices of the London Philharmonic in the Early to Mid–Nineteenth Century,” in *Practice in Context: Historically Informed Practices in Nineteenth–Century Instrumental Music*, ed. Claire Holden, Eric F. Clarke, and Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey (Oxford: Oxford University Press), in press.

prominent but minority voices. RIPM's full text database is a powerful research tool that provides easy access to that data, and I am sure that it will support my own future research into the reception and performance practices of nineteenth-century musicians, as well that of many others. I therefore wholeheartedly thank RIPM's founder, H. Robert Cohen, for making this all possible.