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PERCEPTIONS OF J.S. BACH

AND PERFORMANCE OF HIS MUSIC

IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

D.Phil. Thesis

Katharine Pardee

Wadham College

University of Oxford

Trinity Term 2013

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Katharine Pardee
Wadham College
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ABSTRACT

At the turn of the nineteenth century knowledge of J.S. Bach was limited in England to a very few musicians, mostly German organists connected with the Hanoverian court. By the close of the century, Bach had won widespread popularity, and England was second only to Germany in numbers of published editions, performances, and the written word. This thesis looks at the reception of J.S. Bach in nineteenth-century England, and considers why England reacted with such enthusiasm to his works. First, the elements important to Bach reception are explored and situated in English culture at the beginning of the nineteenth century: areas such as the Ancient and Modern discourse; the interest in historicism; the attraction of German culture; the love for Handel; and the notion of the sublime (especially in terms of music) are discussed. In Chapter 2, Bach is seen through the activities of his proponents in the first part of the nineteenth century, both performers and writers. Since it will be shown that it was on the backs of the choral and organ music that Bach entered into English musical consciousness, the reception of those genres is considered in the following two chapters, with a particular focus on the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor* in the area of choral music (Chapter 3). In Chapter 4 I consider Bach and the English organ, and the activities of Mendelssohn, Gauntlett, and those others who were his advocates in the first half of the century after Wesley. Finally, I summarise the topic by looking at the ways his music was interpreted to fit the ideals of nineteenth-century English culture, and how he was regarded through an English lens.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BG	Bach Gesellschaft
KB	Kritische Bericht (of the NBA)
MT	*Musical Times [and Singing Class Circular]*
MW	*Musical World*
NBA	*Johann Sebastian Bach, Neue Ausgabe Sämtlicher Werke*, eds. Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut Göttingen and Bach-Archiv Leizig (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1954-).
QMMR	*Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*
QMR	*Quarterly Musical Register*
WTC	*Well-Tempered Clavier*

ORTHOGRAPHY

I italicise the titles of large works, in conformance with Oxford University Press House Style.

I use 'Bach Revival' and 'Bach Awakening' interchangeably. (See Introduction)

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the nineteenth century knowledge of J.S. Bach was limited in England to a very few musicians, most of them German organists connected with the Hanoverian court, though some were musicians working outside the court as well. One hundred years later, Bach had achieved widespread popularity across the general music-loving public. In numbers of choral performances he had surpassed Mendelssohn and was rapidly catching up with Handel; fugues from his *Well-Tempered Clavier* were available in numerous British publications; his organ music had changed the course of English organ building and writing; and his image and name were seen on buildings and book covers. He was the subject of paeans to music, and was mentioned by numerous writers and theologians as the pinnacle of expression and moral influence. His music was commonly used as the basis for study by young musicians, and even figured in mathematics examinations at Cambridge. Indeed, the Bach revival in nineteenth-century England was second only to Germany in numbers of published editions, performances, and the written word.

Over the course of the century, Bach's persona and music were adapted to fit English taste and sensibilities. In order to understand the zeal with which Bach was adopted it is useful to look at these criteria, especially as they were in place by the end of the eighteenth century. While some manifestations of these tastes were particular to England (such as the adoration of Handel), others were common to other European countries (for example, debates concerning the relative merits of modern music in the Galant style, and music employing older contrapuntal methods); but in England they took on a specifically English cast that made the English adoption (and adaptation) of Bach distinctive.

There are many ways in which Bach's music resonated in the nineteenth century. Peter Williams, Nicholas Temperley, and others have pointed to the advanced English interest in

historicity and antiquarianism, and the predilection for didacticism, as two of the reasons for the extraordinary growth in popularity of Bach in England.[1] The presence of a German royal family was also undoubtedly important in the respect given to German culture and ideals; and of course the precedence and presence of George Frederick Handel in England cannot be ignored.

This thesis explores the rapid and widespread adoption of Bach into English musical culture, and the reasons for the particularly strong English attraction to Bach. It will be shown that the choral and organ music of Bach was particularly important for the establishing of his reputation in England, so I concentrate on the reception history of these works.

The organ works of Bach were the initial focus of attention. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the *Well-Tempered Clavier* was regarded as organ music, but as knowledge of those preludes and fugues became widespread, the desire to be able to play the *pedaliter* works increased. It was at this point that organ builders became engaged, and the alteration of the English organ to fit these newly-discovered (for the English) works began. It will be seen also that the main promoters of Bach, especially initially, were organists, whether in their roles as performers, teachers, journalists, or conductors.

The choral music of Bach became the next focus in England. Choral singing was an important part of English musical culture, and the desire to perform the Motets, Passions, Masses, and other vocal works was present from an early stage, but because of the language barrier, the differences between Lutheran and Anglican doctrine, and the outright difficulty of the works, they were considerably slower in catching on.

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[1] Peter F. Williams, 'J. S. Bach and English Organ Music', *Music & Letters,* 44/2 (1963), 140-51, and Nicholas Temperley and Peter Wollny, 'Bach Revival', *Grove Music Online; Oxford Music Online,* Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/01708> (accessed 28 Nov. 2011).

Because so many of the great works of Bach simply could not be performed in England when they first came to the attention of English musicians, it took an extended period of time before most of them were known. There was no fixed date on which Bach's works could be considered to have been 'launched'— that is, achieved a momentum of popularity on their own without continued advocacy on the part of fervent supporters. The organ works were the first to become familiar to musicians and widely performed, and it can be safely asserted that they were part of the repertoire by about 1850. In contrast, it was 1854 before the first semi-complete performance of the *St Matthew Passion* took place, and 1876 before the first performance of the *Mass in B Minor.* It was later still before these and other choral works could be regarded as being part of a widely-performed repertoire. The orchestral works achieved popularity relatively late, notwithstanding isolated early performances by Wesley, Salomon, Moscheles, and others (1872 was the year of the first known English performance of a Brandenburg concerto), and it can be argued that they did not carry the significance for English musicians and audiences that the organ and choral works did. It is for this reason, as well as space considerations, that the orchestral and other instrumental works are not considered here. In view of the different periods of popularity of the organ and choral music genres over the course of the century, this study concentrates on the organ music up to about 1850, and the choral music in the third quarter of the century.

Chapter 1 seeks to understand the enthusiastic reception of Bach in the early nineteenth century. There were many ways in which the ground was prepared for his advent: the general reception of German culture in the period; the highly-developed sense of antiquarianism in England; the road laid with Handel reception; and the importance placed on moral rectitude, improved education, religion, and industrialisation. Bach's organ and choral music in particular

were also repeatedly named by nineteenth-century writers as the pinnacle of the sublime in music, so William Crotch's (and others') writings on the sublime will be examined to shed light on this connection.

Chapter 2 explores the Bach awakening, particularly as manifest in the press and other written accounts, and in the activities of his proponents. In this dissertation, I use the terms 'awakening' and 'revival' interchangeably. The second term was regarded by Michael Kassler in his book *The English Bach Awakening*: *Knowledge of J.S. Bach and his Music in England, 1750–1830* as a misnomer, since 'revival' implies prior life, and there was evidently little, if any, knowledge of Bach in England during his lifetime.[2] However, Nicholas Temperley makes a convincing case for the interchangeability of the two words, when he points out that 'those who revive something are not necessarily those who gave it birth'.[3] He draws a parallel with the use of the words 'English Greek Revival' and similar phrases, saying that no one claims that Greek architecture was practised in the fifth century BC in the land that would one day become England, but rather that certain elements of Greek architecture from that period were used in building and design in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, no objection can be made to the word 'awakening' either, and indeed that word does seem especially useful in describing Samuel Wesley's reaction to his introduction and growing knowledge of Bach's music. Since detailed discussions of Wesley, Horn, Kollmann, and other early players in this drama have appeared

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[2] Michael Kassler (ed.), *The English Bach Awakening*: *Knowledge of J.S. Bach and his Music in England, 1750–1830* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).
[3] Nicholas Temperley review, *Music and Letters* 87, no. 2 (May 2006), 321-322.

elsewhere, it is not necessary to explore their activities in depth here.[4] This chapter will instead summarise events, and then focus on the press, particularly post-Wesley, including increasing mention of Bach in journals and elsewhere (and the terms used to discuss him); the growing number of publications of his works and how they appear; the vitally important Mendelssohn ingredient; and the role Bach began to play regularly in British cultural activities. A discussion of two Bach biographies that frame the century (Forkel's *Life of Bach* and Parry's *John Sebastian Bach: The Story of the Development of a Great Personality*)[5] serves to illuminate Bach through two very different lenses. Once the Bach 'movement' takes on a momentum of its own, a few examples of how he is held up as an example of various cultural ideals will be set forth.

Chapter 3 takes an in-depth look at the reception of the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor*. Choral music played a vitally important role in nineteenth-century England, and both performing it and listening to it were means of expressing aspects of the identity of the nation. Bach's music, though challenging both technically and doctrinally, ultimately was shaped to fit British requirements. Other choral works besides these two great ones were of course presented, but taken together these two are broadly representative of the reception of Bach's choral music. They also exemplify the extraordinary energy and persistence shown by those who advocated the music of Bach, a characteristic shared not just by the conductors of the choral works, but by many in the musical community.

In Chapter 4 I address Bach and the English organ. In the 1840s the English organ underwent a revolution in its design and purpose that completely changed its character. The

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[4] See the writings of Michael Kassler, Yo Tomita, and Phillip Olleson, *inter alia*, as referred to in Chapter 2 fn.2, and the Bibliography.

[5] Johann Nikolaus Forkel, *Life of John Sebastian Bach, with a Critical View of his Compositions. Translated* (London: 1820), and C.H.H. Parry, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Story of the Development of a Great Personality* (New York, London: Putnam, 1909).

revolution was accomplished by a relatively small number of organists and builders who were all Bach advocates. Taken together with the changes occurring in the English church—the Oxford movement and the rise of dissenting sects to name only two—as well as the increased value placed on technological achievement, the organ took on an importance and meaning perhaps not seen since before the Reformation—or at least not seen so overtly. (I am alluding particularly to the association with popery that the organ bore during the English Civil War. This however was a negative association, and short- lived, since in this case organs, along with the symbolism they carried, were destroyed.)

The keyboard music of Bach, whether written for the organ or transcribed, is also a focus of the chapter. Henry John Gauntlett's collection *Choral and Instrumental Fugues in Continuation of the English Edition of his Forty-Eight Preludes and Fugues* is discussed at length: largely overlooked by the compilers of the *Neue Bach Ausgabe* (NBA) and other collected editions, the music in this collection predates that in the Bach Gesellschaft (BG), and places England much more prominently than is usually acknowledged in terms of publication of Bach's works. Because Mendelssohn was key to the Bach awakening in England, his activities as an organist in England are discussed in some depth.

All this activity on behalf of Bach is reflected in the English musical press, which was crucial in shaping the musical tastes of the nation. Many of the most prominent and prolific writers on music, editors of music, and music publishers throughout the century were also organists and Bach advocates. Their work with particular regard to the promotion of Bach's organ works is also discussed in this chapter. While they were not the only ones responsible for guiding England's musical direction— the roles of the Philharmonic Society, the provincial musical

festivals, and prominent conductors such as Costa, Jullien, and others, cannot be ignored—the increased amount of laudatory writing about the organ, Bach, and his music as the century progressed helped change the country's musical complexion.

In Chapter 5 I begin by discussing Bach in terms of the musical canon. William Weber's writing on the subject makes a very convenient template for Bach reception in nineteenth-century England,[6] since his definition fits the circumstances of Bach reception well. This forms only the beginning of the chapter however, and I next discuss the elements identified in earlier chapters as particular to England and which accounted for Bach's enthusiastic reception there: the precedence of Handel, the importance of the interest in and connection with Germany, and the widespread interest in searching for the sublime. Bach's music was an antidote to what was perceived as the frivolous music of the late-eighteenth century: his fugues were the ultimate expression of seriousness and profundity, especially when played on huge new nineteenth-century English organs. His choral works were edifying, not entertaining: challenges that could be met and overcome, of the highest religious expression. These views are reflected and reiterated in a book of central importance to nineteenth-century musical aesthetics, Parry's *Art of Music*, and this will form part of the discussion. Paradoxically, Bach, the most religious of composers, did not find an immediate easy resting place in English church music, but ultimately the Lutheran components in Bach's music were made to fit better with Anglicanism. With the precedent of performing Handel's sacred music in secular concert halls, and the blurring of the boundary between secular and sacred, the dissociation for many of Bach's music from a specific church context was natural. The universalism of his music is alive in greater measure than ever

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[6] William Weber, 'The History of the Musical Canon', in Cook and Everist, *Rethinking Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 336-355. For further citations on the musical canon, see Chapter 5, fn 1.

today, as witnessed, for one, in the cover art of the recent *Cantata Pilgrimage* CD series of John Eliot Gardiner.

Inevitably with such a huge topic I have had to draw firm lines around what can and cannot be covered: if this were a straightforward history of the Bach awakening throughout the nineteenth century in Britain, it would be many hundreds of pages longer. Instead I have focused on what I see as the defining moments of Bach reception, and tried to address the question of why Bach achieved such popularity in Britain, and why it was his choral and organ music specifically that carried meaning. Even so certain topics have had to be dealt with only marginally— the introduction of Bach's other choral works, earlier than the *St Matthew Passion*, including the motets, the *St John Passion*, the *Magnificat*, and others, the performances of his music at regional festivals, as well as the advocacy of Bach on the part of certain musicians, in particular Samuel Sebastian Wesley, Joseph Barnby, and Sir Frederick Arthur Gore Ouseley. These important topics can be addressed in future studies, but omitting them at this point does not, I trust, detract from the argument.

Chapter 1

Laying the Ground: England's 'Broad Cultural Readiness' and Bach

In seeking to understand the fervent interest in Bach in the nineteenth century, certain lines of enquiry present themselves: was it a straightforward outgrowth of the interest in ancient artifacts, music, and ideas that had developed in the eighteenth century? Was it a manifestation of the enthusiastic reception of German cultural life? Or was it simply a search for more Handel? I suggest it was all these things and more, which combined to form the particular 'broad cultural readiness'[1] that England displayed for Bach around the beginning of the nineteenth century. With this in mind, I will explore the background for Bach reception in England in this period by briefly examining the Ancient and Modern discourse as it related to music; the importance of antiquarianism in England; German cultural reception; the idea of the moral effect of music; and the role of the sublime in sacred music, including the precedence of Handel's reception.

Ancient and Modern

'Ancients and Moderns' refers to a famous literary debate in France and England in the seventeenth century, which had spread to music and the arts by the eighteenth century. It is a highly complex topic, and the musical side alone has been thoroughly

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[1] Celia Applegate, *Bach in Berlin: Nation and Culture in Mendelssohn's Revival of the St Matthew Passion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 45.

explored by authors over the centuries.[2] In the realm of music, it was far more than a simple disagreement over personal tastes, and was rooted in a fundamental discourse about the role and meaning of art. It is relevant to nineteenth- century Bach reception because Bach's music, which fits into the 'Ancient' category (the definition as set out by the Concert of Antient *[sic]* Music in the nineteenth century included any music older than twenty years), carried connotations of seriousness and learnedness of fundamental importance to its attraction. (Bach incorporated both learned and Galant styles into his music, but, as will be seen, it was mostly his facility with the ancient, learned styles that contributed to his reputation in England). Although the topic is complex and extensive, it is necessary to summarise briefly the argument to set the stage for my discussion of Bach reception.

Broadly speaking, musical ideals in eighteenth-century Europe were organised around two opposing poles: whether music should be directly appealing and expressive of natural things, or whether it should be aligned with the older polyphonic art, with its mathematical hierarchies and relationships. The argument was many-faceted, encompassing a wide variety of issues from the moral influence of music, with or without religious overtones, to more simple aesthetic questions. In Germany, the debate was about the Galant style versus the traditional contrapuntal style. The Galant style, as described by the eighteenth-century theorist and aesthetician Johann Mattheson, was characterised by good taste and cosmopolitan erudition, with strong

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[2] In contemporary writing on music, see for example Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Susan Wollenberg and Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Howard Lee Irving, *Ancients and Moderns: William Crotch and the Development of Classical Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), and Percy Lovell, '"Ancient" Music in Eighteenth-Century England', *Music & Letters* 60/4 (Oct. 1979).

elements of French and Italian culture.[3] Melody was the crucial element for composition, since 'a piece for one voice even without accompaniment can very well exist, but a so-called harmony without melody is only an empty sound and no vocal piece at all'.[4] Simplicity, clarity, and accessibility were also indispensable. Galant affections were 'graceful, gentle, playful, pleasing, joyous, and tender', and 'represented chiefly the various sentiments expressive of love'.[5] The traditional old-style polyphony most often associated with church music became a ready foil to the Galant style. Complex, appealing to the mind above the heart, instrumental in style (whether or not it was actually sung) rather than vocal, polyphony was regarded as artificial as opposed to the naturalness of Galant music. One of the best-known descriptions of the Galant style in opposition to the polyphonic —a description particularly appropriate to this dissertation— is in the criticism of Bach by Scheibe in 1737:

> This great man [i.e. Bach] would be the admiration of whole nations if he had more amenity [*Annehmlichkeit*], if he did not take away the natural element in his pieces by giving them a turgid [*schwülstig*] and confused style, and if he did not darken their beauty by an excess of art... Every ornament, every little grace, and everything that one thinks of as belonging to the method of playing, he expresses completely in notes: and this not only takes away from his pieces the beauty of harmony but completely covers the melody throughout. All the voices must work with each other and be of equal difficulty, and none can be recognized as the principal voice...Turgidity has led...from the natural to the artificial, and from the lofty to the somber;...one admires the onerous labor and uncommon effort--which, however, are vainly employed, since they conflict with Nature.[6]

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[3] Mattheson describes in some detail the 'Galant Homme' and the style of music favoured by him in *Das Neu-Eröffnete Orchestre, oder Universelle und gründliche Anleitung wie ein Galant Homme einen vollkommenen Begriff von der Hoheit und Würde der edlen Music erlangen* (Hamburg: published by the author, 1713).
[4] Mattheson, *Der Vollkommene Kappelmeister*, trans. by Lippman, in Edward A. Lippman, *Musical Aesthetics : A Historical Reader*, Vol. 1 (New York: Pendragon Press, 1986), 124.
[5] Edward A. Lippman, *A History of Western Musical Aesthetics* (Lincoln, [Neb.], London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 76-7.
[6] Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, eds., *The New Bach Reader*, revised and expanded by Christoph Wolff (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 338.

Natural versus artificial; new versus old; sacred versus secular; urbane and international versus provincial: these were the divisions underlying the conflict. In France, the argument was embodied by the contrasting views of Rousseau and Rameau: the one on the side of melody and natural, simple expression; and the other, on the side of harmony and the art of rigorous, disciplined counterpoint.

In England the equivalent was consolidated in the 'Ancients' and 'Moderns' discourse that began early in the eighteenth century and persisted into the nineteenth. In the beginning it found expression in organisations such as the Academy of Ancient Music (founded 1726 as the Academy of Vocal Music; disbanded in 1792), and the Madrigal Society (founded 1741, and still in existence). As the name 'Academy' implies, the first organisation was associated with learned musicians, initially professional but subsequently amateur, its exclusivity being emphasised by the fact that it was a private club. Programmes show that a majority of works performed at Academy concerts were at first sixteenth-century sacred vocal polyphony, with some secular madrigals interspersed. Later, the accepted repertoire broadened to include secular works of Purcell, Haydn, and Handel, and included instrumental as well as vocal selections.[7] The Madrigal Society, in contrast, was intentionally not professional, being made up of 'mechanics, weavers from Spitalfields, and others from various trades and occupations'.[8] While the repertoire through the eighteenth century and much of the nineteenth remained mostly early Italian and English

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[7] Weber writes extensively on the repertoire of the Academy, in *The Rise of Musical Classics*, 56-66. Also see Percy Lovell, '"Ancient" Music', 409, in which the author reports on three programmes from 1733, 1734, and 1739: fourteen sixteenth-century works appeared on the first two concerts, but music by Handel made up the last of the three.

[8] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, vol. 2 (London, 1776), 887.

madrigals, the membership soon seemed to evolve away from its working-class roots: the Madrigal Society historian J.G. Craufurd wrote that by the time records had begun being kept, in 1744, there was no sign of Spitalfields weavers, and the group seemed to be made up of gentlemen and merchants.[9] In 1776 the Concert of Antient Music was founded by members of the aristocracy, with the same purpose of presenting neglected works of early masters. Both aristocratic and autocratic, the Concert of Antient Music prohibited repertoire that was less than twenty years old, and though it began with the earliest repertoire, it too gradually increased the amount of Handel, Mozart, and Haydn in its concerts. Its involvement with the Handel Commemoration in 1784 and further Handel festivals solidified its association with his music, and King George III's attendance at concerts toward the end of the century solidified the aristocratic connection.[10]

The debate between Ancients and Moderns was not played out exclusively in the concert hall or alehouse: many eighteenth-century writers —Hawkins and Burney, to name only two— were vocal advocates of one side or the other. Composer Charles Avison also put pen to paper in his famous essay on musical expression, published in 1752.[11] His disquisition precipitated a volley of letters with composer William Hayes: Avison and the other supporters of Ancient music regarded the modern Italian style as shallow and disorderly, since it favoured air over counterpoint. On the other hand, Hayes and the other proponents of the Modern style thought the polyphony of the Ancients was needlessly complex, and composers in that style were accused of

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[9] J. G. Craufurd, 'The Madrigal Society', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 82nd Sess., (1955-1956), 34.
[10] Nicholas Temperley, et al. 'London (i)', in *Grove Music Online; Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/16904pg5> (accessed August 29, 2011).
[11] Charles Avison, William Hayes, and Pierre Max Dubois, *Charles Avison's Essay on Musical Expression ; with Related Writings by William Hayes and Charles Avison* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

showing off. They regarded the Ancients as authoritarian and reactionary, and viewed their own Modern style as progressive and communicative. This debate brings to mind the famous letters by Scheibe (with responses by Birnbaum) decrying J.S. Bach's style, mentioned above.

The connection between ancient music, sacred polyphony, and moral values was an established ideology by the late-eighteenth century, when the Concert of Antient Music was founded. However, the church had long before been known as a seat of musical learning and proficiency, and even early in the eighteenth century sacred vocal polyphony was widely regarded as superior to other kinds of music for its seriousness, complexity, and profundity.[12] This view was echoed in the increasing number of criticisms of the more popular style of church music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One of the early and most influential speakers on this was the Rev. Arthur Bedford, whose sermon on 'The Great Abuse of Musick' (1711)[13] was still being quoted by critics of so-called 'frivolous' styles of church music one hundred years later.[14] Thomas Tudway was another prominent critic who, in the preface to his anthology of church music (1715-20), called post-Restoration music 'light and airy', without the 'peculiar gravity' of the earlier sacred polyphony.[15] The claim for moral and religious high ground on the part of the advocates of ancient music grew ever-stronger over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as for example

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[12] Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics,* 23. Also see Lovell, '"Ancient" Music'.
[13](London: John Wyatt at the Rose in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1711). For further discussion of this sermon and the ideology of Ancient music, see Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics*, 47-56.
[14] Latrobe, John Antes, *The Music of the Church Considered in its Various Branches, Congregational and Choral: an Historical and Practical Treatise for the General Reader* (London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1831), 229, 252, 377, et al.
[15] Thomas Tudway preface, as reproduced in Christopher Hogwood, 'Thomas Tudway's History of Music', *Music in Eighteenth-Century England: Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth,* ed. Christopher Hogwood and Richard Luckett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 26.

can be seen in 1832 in the *Athenaeum*: 'of all the great musical establishments—the Opera, the Philharmonic, and the Antient Concerts, the latter is the only one to receive the sanction and support of the Episcopal and wealthy clergy--many of whom are among the most ardent admirers of that Music which, though wanting perhaps something of external rites and pompous ceremonies for the full effect of its powers, yet cannot fail, even in the concert-room to awaken deep and religious feelings.'[16]

By the late eighteenth century, many concerts, including those offered by the Academy of Ancient Music, featured works from both Ancient and Modern categories.[17] Charles Burney was among those who grew more catholic in their tastes, and wrote about music both modern and ancient. William Crotch, in an effort to improve public taste, lectured on how to appreciate music of all kinds. By 1818 Crotch was declaring the conflict of Ancients and Moderns to be over, though in actual fact the Ancient Concerts continued for another thirty years.[18] (William Weber maintains that 'by the 1830s the series was the laughing-stock of the press', with the extreme conservatism in programming and the dismal quality of the performances becoming inadequate to attract audiences, who now desired concerts to be more than just social occasions, and particularly wanted to hear Beethoven.[19] However, as the 1832 *Athenaeum* quote indicates, and the longevity of the Madrigal Society attests, respect for the ancient music organisations was not completely moribund.)

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[16] 'Concerts of Antient Music', *The Athenaeum* No.228 (10 March 1832), 164.
[17] The repertoire of the Ancient Music organisations and their role in the establishment of the musical canon has been the subject of several studies, most importantly William Weber's *The Rise of Musical Classics*, and Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn.*
[18] Irving, *Ancients and Moderns*, 32.
[19] William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: the Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna, 1830-1848* (2nd ed., Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 73.

In spite of their advocacy of music of earlier generations, the Ancient Music institutions played a negligible role in the dissemination of the works of Bach. Given that the repertoire featured in these concerts became increasingly recent with the passing of time, and included Handel oratorios, this might seem surprising. In fact the dissemination of knowledge about J.S. Bach was a process led almost exclusively by immigrant musicians who were largely outside the circles that patronised the Ancient Concerts,[20] and by the time that his works were widely known the Ancient Concerts were largely passé. This situation contrasted sharply with that for Mozart and Haydn, who were championed by the Ancient Concerts in the nineteenth century. Bach did make a rare, late entry into the Ancient Music concerts repertoire, as will be seen; but on the whole his music was outside the repertoire for that, and other similar, organisations. However, the Ancient organisations were important to Bach reception because they reinforced the idea that learned, difficult music from earlier eras was to be valued, and that people could benefit intellectually, morally, and spiritually from learning to appreciate such music. Similarly, the association of Ancient music with loftiness, seriousness, moral superiority, and the Church was also to be vitally important in the reception of Bach's music in the nineteenth century.

The Role of Antiquarianism

The Ancients versus Moderns argument was closely related to England's highly developed sense of heritage and quest for national identity, which became increasingly important over the course of the nineteenth century. Interest in this

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[20] Yo Tomita, 'The Dawn of the English Bach Awakening Manifested in Sources of The "48"', in Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*.

country's ancient past can be traced back centuries in England. The reasons for this curiosity are not necessarily the same from one period to the next, though underlying all was a search for self-definition. For example, in the sixteenth century, Henry VIII appointed an official Antiquary who travelled the country looking for and describing sites of antiquarian interest. Later in the Tudor period it was politically expedient to develop an identity for a native English church, and as a consequence scholars were encouraged to delve into the ancient Saxon records of the earliest churches, which were perceived as untainted by Rome. The writing of the sixteenth-century historian John Foxe, which might be called polemical antiquarianism, is one such example: he was clearly motivated by the necessity of justifying the break from Rome.[21] Later in the sixteenth century William Camden wrote his history of Roman Britain, *Britannia* (first published in 1586), and founded a Society of Antiquaries. One hundred years later there was another reason for recalling cultural practices of an earlier era, when the restoration of the monarchy precipitated renewal in many different areas, amongst them the revival of earlier modes of Cathedral music and worship. Examples such as these demonstrate that England long regarded rootedness in the past as important to establishing and maintaining her political and cultural identity. This interest in past history and importance placed on it was carried down through the centuries (though later enquiries seem less politically motivated than in the sixteenth-century), recurring

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[21] See for example his extended dedication to Queen Elizabeth I of his Anglo-Saxon Gospels translation (1571): John Foxe, *The Gospels of the fower Euangelistes translated in the olde Saxons tyme out of Latin into the vulgare toung of the Saxons, newly collected out of auncient monumentes of the sayd Saxons, and now published for testimonie of the same* (1571), Early English Books Online, <http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:2706:2> (accessed 16 August 2011).

in the eighteenth century in the Ancients and Moderns movement, and in the nineteenth century in the advent of what was to become the early music movement. John Butt agrees, calling the 'particular nostalgia' for re-establishing the practices of an earlier age in the Restoration the possible root of the later historicist movements.[22]

There are also numerous sources from the nineteenth century that look back at the Anglo-Saxon church. Some examples include John Lingard, *The Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (Newcastle: E. Walker, 1810), and several works by Henry Soames, among them *An Inquiry into the Doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church in Eight Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford, in the year MDCCCXXX, at the lecture founded by the Rev. John Bampton* (Oxford: S. Collingwood, for C. J. G. and F. Rivington, 1830), and *The Anglo-Saxon Church: its History, Revenues, and General Character* (London: John W. Parker, 1838).

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, rapid industrialisation had changed many people's lives to a disconcerting and disorienting degree. It is possible that reaching backwards into history was one way of seeking stability and re-connecting to the historical continuum. Butt suggests that 'Historical issues became important…*as a consequence of* technological modernization, *as a consequence of* the

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[22] John Butt, *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 166.

growing realization that the past was profoundly different from the present.'[23] All these things taken together, it is clear that the interest in ancient cultures and artifacts was a defining and increasingly important feature of English culture through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, permeating and shaping literature, architecture, art, philosophy, and music.

German Culture and England

The strong ideological connections between England and Germany are of key importance to understanding cultural dynamics in the nineteenth century.[24] The English interest in all things German dated from before the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty to the English throne in 1714,[25] and was not limited to superficial matters like the English adoption of German Christmas traditions. Fundamental ideals were involved, extending to theology, literature, moral values, educational beliefs, music and the arts, and political ideology. The topic has received much attention

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[23] *Ibid*, 39. Italics original.
[24] Until 1871 what is called Germany today was a loose confederation of Germanic states, with Austria and Prussia predominant. The word 'German' refers more to a cultural unity than a political one (indeed many Victorians used the term interchangeably with 'Germanic') and it is in that sense that it is used here.
[25] John R. Davis, *The Victorians and Germany* (Oxford and Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2007), 38. Davis notes that the influx of Germans began in the 1680s, when a small group of theologians, academics, intellectuals, artists and musicians came to Britain. Theological similarities and the rising reputation of German learning far outweighed any sense that they were foreigners.

from scholars.[26] One of the most obvious points of comparison between Germany and England, and one for which it would be reasonable to assume strong cross-cultural influences, was in the realm of theological study. It is tempting, and in many ways apt, to draw parallels between Prussian-dominated Germany and England in the nineteenth century. These were, after all, the two largest centres of Protestantism in the midst of a largely Catholic Europe. For the purpose of nineteenth- century English Bach reception it is not necessary to make a detailed examination of similarities, differences, and mutual influences, and indeed such a study is beyond the scope of this dissertation.[27] It is sufficient to say that Protestantism formed an important part of the identity of each country, though it was not easily defined in either place. For its part, England already had a long history of freethinkers, humanists, deists, and others critical of Christian orthodoxy, and German religious and philosophical ideals were compelling. Perhaps the most visible, and certainly relevant, evidence for mutual affinity of religious ideology between England and Germany in the nineteenth century was expressed through the German adoption of the English oratorio form, and the English translations of these late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century German oratorios. This will be discussed below.

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[26] For further reading, see Davis, *Victorians and Germany*; Charles E. McClelland, *The German Historians and England: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Views* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). McClelland cites the following for background: Manfred Messerschmidt, *Deutschland in Englischer Sicht* (Dusseldorf: M. Triltsch, 1955); Manfred Schlenke, *England und das Friderizianische Preussen, 1740-1763*, (Freiburg i.B.: Karl Alber, 1963); Klaus Dockhorn, *Deutscher Geist und Angelsächsische Geistesgeschichte* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1954); [same author], *Der deutsche Historismus in England* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950); and Percy Ernst Schramm, 'Englands Verhältnis zur Deutschen Kultur zwischen der Reichsgründung und der Jahrhundertwende', in *Deutschland und Europa* (Düsseldorf, 1951). Further references may be seen below.

[27] For further information see Hugh McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848-1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), and *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1996). Celia Applegate has written about Prussian theological ideals as a background to Mendelssohn's Berlin *Matthäus-Passion* performance in 1829 (Applegate, *Bach in Berlin*). Applegate has also done research on the similarities between nineteenth-century German and English Protestantism, which she presented in an unpublished paper, 'Mendelssohn as Mediator: Varieties of Musical Protestantism in Great Britain and Germany', given in Rochester, NY in October 2009.

Interest in German thought extended further than just to religious topics in the nineteenth century. Influential English writers and philosophers such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and (later) Thomas Hill Green travelled to Germany and were critical in spreading knowledge of German ideologies.[28] Further evidence of this interest can be seen in the numbers of articles and books translated into English, from Herder and Goethe in the eighteenth century, to the late nineteenth-century work of Nietzsche. German articles on music and culture were also a feature in the English press from the early nineteenth century. In the beginning, these articles were often simply anecdotal reports about musical events, which served to provide topical variety within the journal; later on they indicated a deeper interest, and were often translated directly from versions published in the German press.[29] Some of the most widely-published German authors were E.T.A. Hoffmann and Rochlitz, and their articles (both attributed and unattributed) often appeared repeatedly in different journals, owing to lax attitudes about copyright.[30] The increasing interest in evolutionary theory may be briefly mentioned here (it will be more fully discussed in Chapter 2), for it promoted a view of European music with Germany at the centre.[31]

With regard to music, it is an oft-repeated cliché that the English had a low opinion of their own capabilities in the nineteenth century, which caused them to

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[28] Green was a Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford and a member of the British Idealism movement. Heavily influenced by Hegel and Kant, he was author of, among other things, *Prolegomena to Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), which was published the year after his death; by 1906 it had gone into five editions. For a discussion of Coleridge's writing on aesthetics and how his views were shaped by German philosophers, see for example Thomas R. Simons, 'Coleridge beyond Kant and Hegel: Transcendent Aesthetics and the Dialectic Pentad', in *Studies in Romanticism* 45, No. 3 (September 22, 2006), 465-81.

[29] Leanne Langley, 'The English Musical Journal in the Early Nineteenth Century' (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1993), 67.

[30] *Ibid*, 73-5.

[31] Jeremy Dibble, 'Parry, Sir Hubert', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/20949> (accessed July 19, 2009).

discount the worth of their own composers and look to foreigners for their musical provision. Certainly there can be no argument that music was extremely important to the Victorians, as Nicholas Temperley and others have pointed out.[32] However, evidence does exist of this inferiority complex beginning as early as 1822, when the following statement appeared in the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*: 'it has been frequently asserted…that the English are by no means a musical people'.[33] References to it increased as the nineteenth century proceeded. In 1838, for example, a leading article in the *Musical World* begins with the defensive phrase, 'the assertion that the English are deficient in a just appreciation of sterling music…',[34] and in 1841 the *Musical World* referred to 'the old-fashioned and still fashionable twaddle in high quarters—that the English cannot be a musical people'.[35] A writer in 1846 continued the theme: 'the genius of the English does not, certainly, lie in music…All people seem agreed…that the English are at once the least musical, and the most given to drunkenness of any nation in Europe.'[36] Later in the century, the English clergyman Hugh Reginald Haweis expressed a commonly-held view when he wrote, 'the English are on the whole a Religious People […], *and the English are not a Musical People*'.[37] (The most famous references to the Englishman's lack of musicality were made by Germans: the sentiment was particularly strongly stated in 1866

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[32] See for example Temperley, *The Lost Chord: Essays on Victorian Music* (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 1989); --(ed.), *The Romantic Age, 1800-1914: Music in Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century : a Social History* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1985).
[33] Vol. IV (1822), 134.
[34] Vol. CIV, n.s. 10 (March 8, 1838), 153.
[35] Vol XV, No. 259 (March 11, 1841), 155.
[36] William Pearson, 'Music - Its Nature and Influence : A Lecture Delivered to the Young Men's Association for Acquiring Christian and Scientific Knowledge, in Connexion with Hurdsfield Church, on Thursday Evening, November 5, 1846' (London, Manchester, Macclesfield: Longman, H. Whitmore, J.H. Brown, 1846).
[37] Hugh Reginald Haweis, *Music and Morals* (London: Strahan & Co., 1871), 125. Italics original.

by Carl Engel, a German musical scholar residing in England, in his book *An Introduction to the Study of National Music* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866). Engel was in turn extensively quoted by Oskar Adolf Hermann Schmitz in his 1914 book, *Das Land ohne Musik: Englische Gesellschaftsprobleme* (Munich: G. Müller, 1914), which is the origin of that notorious phrase.) England's apparent lack of confidence in her own musical ability had a double edge: English rationalist thinkers had a low opinion of music among the arts, in that it was pleasurable in a sensual way, but incapable of seriously engaging the mind. Thus, on the one hand the English rued their 'lack of music'; and on the other hand they did not hold much respect for it anyway.

The other side of the coin is seen in the abundance of foreign musicians in England, and the respect garnered by them: a simple explanation for their large numbers might be that with such a healthy economy the English could afford to bring in eminent Europeans. The imbalance may also be attributed to the cosmopolitan tastes of the aristocracy which looked to the Continent for its music and musicians, and which the aspiring middle class then tried to emulate, as well as to the political pre- eminence of England over most of the nineteenth century, which mitigated the need for competition and self-definition.[38] While foreign musicians in England came from many European countries, Germans and their music were particularly revered for their seriousness and depth. An example can be found in an 1840 article in *The Times* called 'German and Italian Music', in which Italian music is criticized for its 'preference of ornament to simplicity, brilliancy to solidity, rash novelty to tried

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[38] Nicholas Temperley, 'Xenophilia in British Musical History', in Zon (ed.) *Nineteenth Century British Music Studies, Vol. 1* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 8-10.

experience'. The article ends with an excoriation of prevailing tastes as displayed by Italian opera, with German music (particularly Handel) held as the antithesis:

> Thus it is that we find the burden of the Italian Opera thrown upon a few vocalists, the chorus neglected, the instrumentation puerile, while in that of the Germans there is an unity in effect—principals, chorus, and orchestra combining to portray collectively the workings of one mind—to place the composer, not the mechanist, before the audience.[39]

Thus, by mid-century the sentiment was already prevalent that Italian music was superficial and decorative, and German music was serious, profound, and honest. As for France, another writer said, 'the French are too gay and volatile to have much deep impassioned music'[40] while German music was esteemed for its 'originality, deep thought, and spirit of mystery and romance'.[41] With this preference for German music, together with the interest and importance placed on German religious and philosophical ideals, it is interesting, though not surprising, that German religious ideals were conveyed and absorbed through the English oratorios (this term is used here in its generic sense) of German composers such as Handel, Beethoven, Spohr, Haydn, and Mendelssohn. These monumental choral works, with biblical texts and stories, were performed in concert halls, thus blurring the boundaries between sacred and secular and helping to turn concert halls into sacred spaces. In such settings specific points of theology became less relevant than an overall religious aura. The oratorio thus enabled access to a sacred experience by anyone who wished to

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[39] *The Times*, Thursday, Apr 30, 1840; p. 5; Issue 17345; col D 'German and Italian Music'.
[40] Pearson, 'Music - Its Nature and Influence'. This disdain for French music did not extend to other areas of French culture, which held a sure fascination for the English, particularly in the first part of the nineteenth century, and especially café society for the well-to-do.
[41] For this, as well as this writer's characterisations of other nations across Europe, see William Pearson, Music - Its Nature and Influence'. For further discussion of the problem of 'England-Das Land ohne Musik', see Bernarr Rainbow, *The Land without Music: Musical Education in England 1800-1860 and Its Continental Antecedents* (London: Novello, 1967), R. A. Stradling and Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1860-1940: Construction and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1993).

participate, regardless of religious affiliation, if any. In their lack of dogma, oratorios were more influential than German hymns, even when the latter were sung during concerts. (The practice of singing Lutheran hymns during concerts was occasionally instigated by German organists who were serving Lutheran churches in London. See below.) The oratorio thus became a 'powerful auxiliary in [the] search for a creed of undogmatic benevolence'.[42] Not only did choral societies and oratorio festivals invoke powerful extra-musical ideals of nationhood,[43] but in setting biblical passages themselves, they appealed to the Bible-reading proclivities of the English people. Handel was noted in the nineteenth century for not writing specifically for the Church, but rather for the Bible: 'while all composers of sacred music before Handel wrote for the Church, he wrote for the Bible...And it is when in immediate contact with these holy words that he rises...to those supreme summits of sublimity.'[44]

There were other, more concrete reasons for German influence in England. The small number of travellers from England to the Continent in the late seventeenth century grew large by the nineteenth, with fashionable tourists meandering along the Rhine on their way to and from Italy, or around the wealthy and impressive cities of Germany. Travel diaries became popular and important in shaping English taste, with vivid accounts describing the beauties of German architecture, or the art of Dresden, Munich, and other cities. English artists living together with Germans in Rome traded ideas, and German schools of art soon became predominant in English art and architecture. Particularly strong were the influences of Dürer, German lithography,

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[42] Michael Ledger-Lomas, 'Lyra Germanica: German Sacred Music in Mid-Nineteenth Century England', *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute,* XXIX/2 (November 2007), 9.
[43] *Ibid*, 21; see also Howard E. Smither, *The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
[44] Review of 'George Frederick Handel', by Friedrich Chrysander, in *British Quarterly Review,* 36, no. 76, (1862), 57.

architecture, and the Nazarenes and the German historical school of art on mid-nineteenth-century England.[45] Romantic writers and poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge (mentioned earlier) made pilgrimages to the Rhine, the Alps, and elsewhere, and were intensely moved by German literature and drama.[46] The migration of ideas was not only one-way, of course: German artists and writers also took English ideas back to Germany.[47]

The German Palestrina revival had its English counterpart as well, with discussions of the proper Church or Palestrina style, whether mediated by Fux in his ubiquitous rules for counterpoint or not, being rife. The problems inherent in adopting the Palestrina style of church music in a country whose national identity was rooted in Protestantism was a common thread to both countries, and united them to some degree against other countries like Italy and France, where Roman Catholicism was unequivocally predominant. The formal Caecilian movement, widely influential in Germany, Italy, and other parts of Europe, did not make such inroads in early-nineteenth-century England however, in spite of some characteristics of it that might seem made-to-order, for example, its antiquarian concern. Madrigal and Ancient Music societies were already reviving and performing 'ancient' a cappella choral works, and that is perhaps one reason for its failure to gain a foothold. While Fuxian counterpoint was widely taught in the second half of the century (it was at the basis of

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[45] Davis, *Victorians and Germany*, 202.
[46] For a discussion of the impact of Germany on the writings of Wordsworth and Coleridge, see for example Tim Fulford, 'The Politics of the Sublime: Coleridge and Wordsworth in Germany', *Modern Language Review* 91, No. 4 (Oct., 1996), 817-832, and entries on Coleridge and Wordsworth in I. Ousby, ed., *Cambridge Guide to Literature in English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[47] See McClelland, *The German Historians and England.*

exam questions at the Royal College of Organists—founded 1864— and Oxford's exams), evidence is not clear on its systematic use in the first half of the century.

By the mid-nineteenth century a substantial number of Lutheran chorales had found their way into various English hymn collections (though ultimately relatively few into the regularly-used repertoire of the latter part of the century); a more detailed picture will be given in Chapter 2. The Lutheran tradition of strong congregational singing was greatly admired in England, where enthusiastic participation was heard more in the Methodist and other non-conformist churches than in the established church. Indeed, until the 1850s or later, the adoption of German hymnody was led by the non-conformist denominations, though over time the Tractarians relaxed their stance toward hymn-singing and began using Lutheran hymns as well. Besides encouraging congregation involvement, Lutheran hymns improved the quality of the English repertoire: many English tunes had secular origins or were not felt to be sufficiently dignified.[48] Nonetheless, German chorales did not become familiar enough to the English that they were recognised when they appeared in oratorios: a German Lutheran audience member listening to Mendelssohn's *Paulus* would have had a different reaction to hearing the familiar chorales than an Anglican listener, to whom they would probably have been unknown. Familiar or not, the use of chorales and earlier styles in oratorios such as *Paulus* and *Elijah* at least succeeded in bringing out their devotional quality, and this represented another vitally important step in the blurring of boundaries between sacred and secular. A contemporary reviewer of *Paulus* wrote: 'Just as there have been recent attempts to have paintings and churches approach their pious roots—to conjure up the spirit of better days, so to speak—so too

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[48] Ledger-Lomas, 'Lyra Germanica', 17.

has the musician the undisputed right to take those styles from the past that most faithfully correspond to his deepest feelings and thoughts.' [49]

The Moral Effect of Music

The linking of music and morality has been a subject for discussion since the ancient Greeks, and in England it formed a strong thread in writing about music from the earliest times. For example, Playford wrote extensively about its virtues in his *Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick* in the 1660s, tracing the recognition of its beneficial effects back to the ancient philosophers:

> Musick in Antient times was held in as great Estimation Reverence and Honour (by the most Noble and vertuous persons) as any of the Liberal Sciences whatsoever, for the manifold uses thereof, conducing to the life of man: the Philosophers accounted it an Invention of the gods bestowing it on men to make them better conditioned than bare Nature afforded, & concludes a special necessity thereof in the education of children, partly from its natural delight, and partly from the efficacy it hath in moving the Affections to Vertue.[50]

Over the succeeding decades the sense grew that sacred music should inspire virtue and seriousness, reinforcing calls for a distinctive style of church music that was sober and disciplined. There was increasing objection to Sunday morning music that sounded the same as the music in the theatres the evening before, with Burney (for example) saying, 'in productions for the church, where tranquility and profound attention are supposed to reign, learning and complication are more likely to be

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[49] 'Uber Mendelssohn's Paulus,' *Cäcelia* 19 (1837), 215, translated by Jeffery Sposato, in 'St. Elsewhere: German and English Reactions to Mendelssohn's *Paulus*', *Nineteenth Century Music,* 32/1 (2008) , 29. Sposato expands on the idea that the English misconstrued the meaning of these chorales and other 'reflective' elements, viewing them not as 'comments on the story from a present-day (as opposed to biblical) perspective, but rather as dramatic elements, more in the line of Handel or Haydn' (p. 27).
[50] John Playford, *Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (London: William Godbid, 1667), A.

understood than in a theatre'.[51] The link of music (and the arts) with morality eventually grew into a topic of critical importance to nineteenth-century romanticism: if music could arouse passions such as sadness or happiness, it could also inspire feelings of devotion or piety.[52]

By the end of the nineteenth century the plethora of works on the link of music and morality and the importance of raising the quality of church music by such clergy-authors as Hugh Reginald Haweis, John Jebb, and William A. Pearson testify to the seriousness with which people embraced the topic.[53] Haweis's book *Music and Morals* alone went into seventy-nine editions between 1871 and 2002.[54] According to these writers, focusing the mind on higher concerns could be achieved by listening to fine choirs singing pure music such as Palestrina and Gregorian chant.

The Oxford movement, launched by Keble in his famous Assize sermon in Oxford in 1833, accelerated the changes: though it did not itself advocate improved church music by increasing congregational participation (it encouraged, among other things, the return to chanting by choirs, taking music away from congregations, and, at least in its early period, no organs), it did foster a belief in a separate style of

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[51] Charles Burney, 'Chiarezza', in Abraham Rees, ed. *The Cyclopaedia; or, Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Literature*, 39 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, & Brown, 1802-19).
[52] The subject is discussed extensively in books on musical aesthetics, for example Lippman, *A History of Western Aesthetics*, as well as in other secondary sources such as William Gatens, *Victorian Cathedral Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), and in Gatens' article, 'John Ruskin and Music', *Victorian Studies,* 30/1 (Fall 1986), 77.
[53] Already in the eighteenth century, organisations such as the Catch and Glee clubs had had a strong moral imperative. The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce (founded in 1754), though strictly speaking not a musical club, drew up a set of 'Rules and Orders' which provide an early example of the kind of didacticism and moral philosophy underlying the slightly later clubs (the Catch Club, for example, was founded in 1761): 'The Readiest Way perhaps of reforming Habits of Vice, is to remove those of idleness, itself the greatest political Vice'. See Brian Robins, *Catch and Glee Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 26.
[54] The number of editions cited here is confirmed by WorldCat identities http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn- n84-804793.

music specifically for the church. One of its musical arms, *The Parish Choir* (the journal of the Society for Promoting Church Music, which ran from 1846 to 1851) also advocated a separation of styles, and maintained that, as a rule, old music was better than new. The best church music was chaste, severe, and simple, and should focus the mind on higher things. Henry John Gauntlett, a major figure in hymn-writing and church music reform from mid-century, about whom more will be said later, wrote about the importance of specific church harmonies. For high-church followers, ancient music was also believed to be the most worthy kind of church music, and the music of Palestrina was revered over all others for its ancient roots and pure style. In the ten years between 1853 and 1862 the Motett Choir, which was the performing arm of the Ecclesiologists, performed thirty works of Palestrina (against only one of Bach).[55]

The drive for distinction in style between sacred and secular music enabled another important trend in nineteenth-century England to be all the more powerful: the blurring of boundaries between sacred and secular.[56] This was seen chiefly in the performance of sacred music in secular places, and of secular music in sacred spaces (as will be discussed, for one, with regard to Wesley's and Jacob's Bach concerts in churches). The most obvious example of the former was the singing of hymns in

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[55] Dale Adelmann, *The Contribution of Cambridge Ecclesiologists to the Revival of Anglican Choral Worship, 1839-62* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), 53.

[56] Declining rates in church attendance over the course of the century may seem to argue in favour of evidence for the decoupling of sacred and secular altogether (for confirmation of the decline, see the three religious censuses of 1851, 1886, and 1903 (Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship in England and Wales (Great Britain Census Office, Horace Mann, London: G. Routledge, 1854), the 1886 British Weekly census of religion in London (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888), and the 1902-03 Daily News's census, The Religious Life of London (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904); see fn 40, chapter 3). However, the increasingly large audiences at oratorio concerts (reportedly 4000 performers and 30,000 in the audience at the 1880 triennial Handel Festival in the Crystal Palace (NYTimes, '4000 Singers', June 30, 1880), and, as will be mentioned in Chapter 3, 10,000 at the St Matthew Passion performances at St Paul's Cathedral, London (with more clamouring to get in), argue the opposite: the desire for a spiritual experience was as great as (or greater than) ever, while the specific impulse to attend religious services may have been in decline.

secular concert halls, which was a practice seen from the end of the eighteenth century. *The Times* records that in March 1801, the Lutheran hymn 'Great God, what do I see and hear?' was featured in two oratorio concerts in Covent Garden, where it was 'performed with unbounded applause'.[57] While the German Lutheran organist Karl Friedrich Baumgarten perhaps initiated this particular occurrence, it was Thomas Greatorex, conductor of the Concerts of Ancient Music from 1793, who encouraged the general practice of hymn-singing in concerts.[58] Another concert on 18 March 1801 at the Theatre-Royal, Covent Garden, contained 'Non nobis' of Bird (*sic*), arranged as an overture and Grand Chorus by Mr Baumgarten, airs from Handel oratorios, a piano sonata, a Concerto on the Flute, as well as hymns.[59] Such a mixture of the sacred and secular is not surprising, and even might have been predicted from an economic standpoint: without the patronage system of the Continent such as, for example, Haydn enjoyed, most posts for professional musicians were either in the popular theatre or in the cathedral,[60] and musicians likely to have influence through their writings were thus mostly organists, whose training was broad, owing to the range of requirements of cathedral posts. Even musicians who were primarily teachers were trained organists, two examples being R.J.S. Stevens and Samuel Wesley.

The singing of hymns in secular concerts is perhaps the most obvious boundary-crossing, but the reception and development of the oratorio was far more important. Beginning with Handel and continuing, *inter alia*, with Mendelssohn, we

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[57] *The Times* (London, England), Wednesday March 25, 1801, Issue 5062, p. 1.
[58] Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, 2 vols. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 245.
[59] *The Times*, 18 March 1801, Issue 5056, 1.
[60] James Day, *'Englishness' in Music: From Elizabethan Times to Elgar, Tippett and Britten* (London: Thames Publishing, 1999), 106.

see extended vocal works with the drama and plot of an opera, presented in secular spaces to an audience who received them with the fervour of a religious experience.[61] Richard Wagner's comment that for the English, going to an oratorio was almost the same as going to church, was perceptive and accurate.[62]

Hand in hand with the popularity of oratorio in England was the sight-singing movement, promoted from the 1830s by clergy and activist lay-people who desired both to improve the music in their own churches, and to raise the standards of morality of the working classes. In its requirement for active participation rather than simply passive listening, it paralleled the virtues of Protestantism hailed by clergy, particularly non-conformist clergy, versus Catholicism. The movement had its roots in the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, when factories set up schools for young people to stave off boredom and its resulting trouble. By the time of her accession to the throne in 1837, Queen Victoria was being urged to 'educate the lower orders',[63] as 'the best chance of national improvement'.[64] The study of music even by the youngest children was seen to improve their taste and happiness. 'It has a tendency to wean the mind from vicious and sensual indulgences; and if properly directed it has a tendency to incline the heart to kindly feelings, and just and generous emotions.'[65] Thus the call for national education went hand-in-hand with the sight-

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[61] Shapiro, Alexander, 'Drama of an Infinitely Superior Nature': Handel's Early English Oratorios and the Religious Sublime', in *Music & Letters* 74, no. 2 (May, 1993), 215-245.
[62] Richard Wagner, translated by Andrew L. Gray, and Mary Whittall, *My Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 525.
[63] Sydney Smith, *Sermons Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, the Foundling Hospital [&C.]* (Lond., 1846), 121.
[64] *Ibid,* 116.
[65] Arthur Mower, 'On Vocal Music Considered as a Branch of National Education', in *Central Society of Education, First Publication* (London: Taylor and Walton, 1837), 307.

singing movement.[66] Led by three pioneers in sight-singing techniques —

Mainzer, Hullah, and Curwen (who was also a clergyman)—sight-singing classes attracted thousands in the evenings. It was an activity strongly encouraged by leading politicians, writers, clergy, and other social commentators, as they felt it was keeping people out of the pubs, and encouraging good behaviour, as well as teaching them a valuable skill which would enrich their lives. William Gatens outlines the moral arguments in favour of the sight-singing movement of the 1840s. Victorians believed that 'music has a significance—for example, emotional expression—which transcends mere formal design…This significance has a capacity to influence the listener's character.'[67] As a result, interest in choral music exploded in the nineteenth century, and people who might ordinarily have been only members of the audience were now singers in one or more of the innumerable choirs, which presented large numbers of performances throughout the year. Nearly seventy years ago Percy Scholes traced choral activities in the nineteenth century, beginning especially from the year of the founding of the *Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* (1844) (whose title itself is an indication of the central role sight-singing played mid-century).[68] In listing choral societies, summaries of their performances and programming, Scholes reveals a compelling picture of the ambitious and enterprising Victorian society, eager for self-improvement. The movement was national: in the second half of the nineteenth

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[66] For a through exploration of the link, see Rainbow, *The Land without Music*, Grant Olwage, 'Hym(N)Ing: Music and Masculinity in the Early Victorian Church', in Peter Horton and Bennett Zon (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies* 3 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), Sarah Kaufman, "Easy, Cheap and True:' Tonic Sol-Fa in Print and in the Concert Hall', *Brio: Journal of the United Kingdom branch of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres,* 40/2 (Fall-Winter 2003), 8.

[67] Gatens, *Victorian Cathedral Music,* 33.

[68] Percy Alfred Scholes, *The Mirror of Music, 1844-1944; a Century of Musical Life in Britain as Reflected in the Pages of the Musical Times* ([London]: Novello, 1947).

century, sixteen large and active London choral societies are listed, and the vast number of groups outside the capital are discussed separately.

It is worth noting that the systems for teaching sight-singing, and for music pedagogy in the early nineteenth century overall, were German in origin. The materials used by such music teachers as Sarah Anna Glover (1786-1867), William Hickson (1803-70), and John Curwen can be traced back to the *Musicalisches Schulgesangbuch* (1826) by Carl Gotthelf Gläser.[69] Joseph Mainzer himself was German.

Leaders in the sight-singing movement and writers supporting it spread the idea of its benefit for promoting strong moral behaviour. Typical was the view of Dr Robert Druitt, a medical doctor and author of *A Popular Tract on Church Music, with Remarks on its Moral and Political Importance.*[70] Druitt believed passionately in the moral benefits of learning to sing, and supported the sight-singing master John Hullah in his efforts to promote singing standards among children and adult amateur choirs, both within the church and without. Druitt was also a believer in a severe, chaste style of church music, where the ancient texts and music were predominant, and said: 'They who would hope to join the saints above…would rather cling to the words which their forefathers in the faith sung before them'.[71]

The message in favour of the moral influence of music became stronger over the course of the century. In an article in the *Illustrated London News* from 1872, Henry Leslie begins by remarking on the 'general high pressure upon all classes of

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[69] Jane Southcott, 'Early Nineteenth-Century Music Pedagogy: German and English Connections', *British Journal of Music Education,* 24/3 (Nov. 2007), 313.
[70] Robert Druitt, *A Popular Tract on Church Music: With Remarks on Its Moral and Political Importance, and a Practical Scheme for Its Reformation* (London: Francis & John Rivington, 1845).
[71] *Ibid*, 44.

society at the present time, and on the necessity of utilizing every calming and soothing influence at our command'. He describes the successful results of several music societies, including 'the concerts for the working classes established in Glasgow and Chester, whereby drunkenness had been greatly diminished', as well as the 'beneficial influence of the festivals at Birmingham'. He concludes, 'English taste requires elevating'.[72]

The Role of the Sublime

In the nineteenth century, it is possible to see the overarching concept under which ideals of expressivity, moral betterment, and the improvement of church music were subsumed, as the sublime. From the beginning of the previous century when the concept began to be widely discussed among prominent English writers, the sublime described a wide range of endeavours, of which music was one. By the nineteenth century a prescriptive application of the term was used to encourage improvement in morality, church worship, and music. A short discussion of the sublime is useful to understand its background as a framework for Bach reception.

The Sublime to 1800

First discussed in a treatise from the first century AD by a writer known as Longinus, the sublime began as a concept of literary criticism.[73] Longinus defined sublimity in

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[72] Henry Leslie, 'Social Influence of Music', *Royal Institution* 60 (London: Illustrated London News, 1872), 207.
[73] 'Longinus', *Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic Edition* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/347517/Longinus> (accessed 13 Nov. 2012).

literature as 'the echo of greatness of spirit': a quality of greatness not merely attributable to skilful handling of the art of writing, but stemming from the 'moral and imaginative power of the writer that pervades the work'. The sublime was not always achieved by those who reached for it. While at least one translation into English of Longinus existed in the seventeenth century,[74] (and Playford used the word in connection with music in 1664--see below), it was not a widely-known concept until Nicolas Boileau's 1674 translation into French, which was itself then translated into English in 1680.[75] This edition of Longinus had a particular influence on English writers such John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, Joseph Addison, Samuel Johnson, William Smith (who himself translated Longinus into English in 1739), Edmund Burke (about whom more will be said), and many others.[76] In the hands of these and later writers, the sublime eventually embraced areas from aesthetics, to public education, to morality, to religion, to British imperialism, to war, and even to the Industrial Revolution.[77]

From the beginning, the sublime was a moral agent, capable of inspiring a divine ecstasy. Writing of the sublime rhetoric of the great poets of old times,

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[74]Longinus 1652. *Peri hypsous, or, Dionysius Longinus of the height of eloquence* rendered out of the original by J.H. Esq.. (London: printed by Roger Daniel for Francis Eaglesfield, 1652).

[75] *A Treatise of the Lofty or Elegancy of Speech, written originally in Greek by Longin, and now translated out of French by Mr J.P.* (London: Printed by N.T. for John Holford, 1680).

[76] Authors such as Lippman and Le Huray include discussion of the sublime in their books on music and aesthetics. In-depth and dedicated discussions include Peter De Bolla, *The Discourse on the Sublime: Readings in History, Aesthetics, and the Subject* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), Philip Shaw, *The Sublime* (The New Critical Idiom; London ; New York: Routledge, 2006), Peter Kivy, *The Possessor and the Possessed : Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, and the Idea of Musical Genius* (Yale Series in the Philosophy and Theory of Art; New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2001), Samuel Holt Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England* (Ann Arbor Paperbacks; [Ann Arbor]: University of Michigan Press, 1960), Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959), and Thomas Weiskel, *The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence* (Baltimore ; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986). See bibliography for further references.

[77] George Landow, *Victorian Web,* <http://www.victorianweb.org/> (accessed 15 February 2010).

Longinus said, 'So, from the mighty genius of the ancients, there flow into the souls of their votaries, as if from sacred caverns, certain effluences of inspiration, whereby men without any excess in themselves of the divine madness are rapt by the majesty of others into a kindred ecstasy.'[78] Eighteenth-century British writers wrote about the moral dimension of the sublime in an aesthetic sense: it could be inspired by things they could see. Interestingly, many of them had taken a Continental tour in which they had crossed the Alps, an experience which then epitomised their concepts of the sublime, and inspired them to describe both its beauty and its awesomeness. Eighteenth-century British statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke saw a different aspect of the sublime, which he wrote about in his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). In a highly prescriptive manner characteristic of many later writers on the sublime, Burke differentiated the sublime from the beautiful, making them mutually exclusive, as dark is from light. He connected the sublime to pain and terror, and beauty to pleasure. In his chapter comparing the sublime and the beautiful, he says:

> Sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small; beauty should be smooth, and polished; the great, rugged and negligent; beauty should shun the right line, yet deviate from it insensibly; the great in many cases loves the right line, and when it deviates, it often makes a strong deviation; beauty should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy; beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, and even massive.[79]

About music he says:

> the beautiful in music will not bear that loudness and strength of sounds, which may be used to raise other passions; nor notes, which are shrill, or harsh, or deep; it agrees best with such as are clear, even, smooth, and weak… Great variety, and quick transitions from one measure or tone to another, are contrary to the genius of beautiful in music. Such transitions often excite mirth, or other sudden and

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[78]*Longinus on the Sublime*, by Longinus, tr. T.R.R. Stebbing (Oxford: Shrimpton, 1867), 52.

[79]Edmund Burke and Adam Phillips, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 113.

> tumultuous passions; but not that sinking, that melting, that languor, which is the characteristical effect of the beautiful, as it regards every sense.[80]

In contrast, for the sublime 'excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror. The noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder or artillery, awakes a great and aweful sensation in the mind, though we can observe no nicety or artifice in those sorts of music.'[81] Burke's description of the sublime was the first to introduce the physiological and psychological impact: the effects on the body, and the emotions of terror, fear, awe, etc. that are inspired by it.

As will be discussed, Handel was among the first composers whose music was called sublime.[82] The word was applied to his music by critics from as early as the 1740s, first to describe his genius, and then to justify the huge performing forces becoming popular in his oratorios. Charles Burney, to cite one example, reported in his *Commemoration of Handel* that there were more than five hundred musicians at the Westminster Abbey performance in 1784, and that the effect of the chorus 'Sing ye to the Lord' from *Israel in Egypt* was 'at once pleasing, grand, and sublime'.[83] Handel's oratorios were so popular and highly regarded that they were held up as benchmarks of sublimity against which other music was measured. Writers and

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[80] *Ibid,* 112.
[81] *Ibid,* 75.
[82] In the earliest known English usage of the word 'sublime' with reference to music, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* article 'Sublime', Playford says in his *Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (1664/7) (Pref. sig. A2v), 'This [art] of Musick is the most sublime and excellent, for its wonderful Effects and Inventions.' However, this is not a reference to a specific composer.
[83] Charles Burney, *An Account of the Musical Performances in Westminster-Abbey*, 'Commemoration of Handel' (London: printed for the benefit of the Musical Fund; and sold by T. Payne and Son; and G. Robinson, 1785), 39.

musicians began to analyse what made the music sublime, and those with a specific agenda to improve taste began laying out the criteria.

The Sublime in the Nineteenth Century

In the early 1800s, William Crotch gave a famous series of lectures on music at the Royal Institution (published in 1831), which attempted to codify the sublime in music. Like Burke's, Crotch's writings were prescriptive, with the aim of raising taste: if the average listener did not instantly know sublime music, he could be taught to recognize it. Sublimity in music was no longer the province only of the educated class. It will be remembered that in Galant aesthetics, the enjoyable, expressive, accessible music (modern) was considered beautiful, while in contrast the old German church music—difficult polyphony—was music of the intellect, and was not expressive: the latter of the two, in Crotch's writings, was considered sublime. The educated elite could appreciate ancient music, which often included the sublime, for its ingenious polyphony which, when good, could seem to fit all things together in a perfect, inevitable way; while the more casual listener could now first recognize it according to Crotch's specifications, and then appreciate it as a means to (or evidence of) self-improvement.

Crotch counted as sublime things that were high, lofty, and elevated, not small, delicate, light, pretty, playful, or comic. Things that inspired a sense of infinity and immensity were also in this category: 'innumerable voices and instruments sounding the praises of God and in solemn and becoming strains' were sublime.[84] Uniformity

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[84] William Crotch, *Substance of Several Courses of Lectures on Music* (Clarabricken: Boethius Press, 1986), 32.

was often the cause of the sublime, as was simplicity and its opposite, intricacy.

Sublimity was to be found in a gothic cathedral, where a vast number of intricate parts came together, and in music:

> the great compass of notes employed in a full orchestra conveys an idea of vastness undefined. A uniform succession of major chords, the most agreeable of all sounds, resembles a blaze of light; while the unintelligible combination of extraneous discords conveys a feeling like that caused by darkness. The clearness of harmony in a madrigal of many voices, or in the full anthem, and the deep science of the organ fugue produce sublimity from seemingly opposite causes. Also a passage performed by many voices or instruments in unisons or octaves, and one in full and florid counterpoint.[85]

This is not as contradictory as it might seem: unison voices would evoke a notion of unity and power from a massed number of disparate elements, while complex counterpoint was also the coming-together of many different voices to create harmony out of a sense of chaos. Church music and oratorio were the types of music most likely to be sublime. Borrowing an idea from the artist Joshua Reynolds,[86] Crotch added the category of 'ornamental' to the sublime and beautiful, with much of the contemporary music of the times falling under that rubric. Writing about organ music he quoted Bach's biographer Forkel: 'The common, the trite, can never become solemn, can never excite a sublime feeling; it must therefore, in every respect, be banished from the organ.'[87]

Crotch was not afraid to deal in specifics: about the Hallelujah chorus, he says 'The kingdom of this world, when performed soft is beautiful; but when repeated loud, and with the full band, is sublime.'[88] Church music should always be sublime

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[85] *Ibid*, 34.
[86] Reynolds used the term 'picturesque' in describing art. See Joshua Reynolds, *Complete Works, with an Original Memoir, and Anecdotes*, Vol. 1 (London: McLean, 1824), lxxi.
[87] Crotch, *Substance,* 115.
[88] *Ibid*, 49.

and scientific (in this sense, meaning that it should follow strict rules of counterpoint), and contain no modern harmonies or melodies. In his separation of the sublime and the beautiful, which is a continuation of the views of Burke and other earlier writers, Crotch is looking backwards to the eighteenth century. However, his transference of these sublime categories to music opens the door to a new way of writing and thinking about music.

By the 1830s clergy and others interested in church reform began writing in a similar tone about the sublime and church music. Equally prescriptive, they were interested in raising tastes and standards, reinforcing the idea that church music should be different from other music, and include elements that invoke sublimity. Thus, for example, the Rev. John Jebb said in 1843, 'The anthem should be a prayer, a thanksgiving, or a meditation—not a narrative or a dialogue.'[89] In 1849 Charles Abbot Stevens, also a clergyman, formulated a list of topics on which he offered criticism, including these two items:

> The use, from whatever source derived, of all those 'exaggerated and effeminate melodies, that rather express the morbid sentiments of religious excitement than the deep-seated energy of a calm but influential devotion of the understanding and heart.'
>
> The insertion of passages or expressions characterized by an obvious ill-taste; involving, among other (so-called) graces, the most trifling puerilities of embellishment, arpeggios, roulades, mawkish appoggiaturas, quasi-sentimental turns, cadences, and ….SHAKES![90]

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[89] John Jebb, *The Choral Service of the United Church of England and Ireland, Being an Enquiry into the Liturgical System of the Cathedral and Collegiate Foundations of the Anglican Communion* (London, 1843). Jebb (1805-86) was an Irish-born Church of England clergyman who spent most of his professional life at Hereford Cathedral. He was a zealous reformer of the liturgy and published many sermons and pamphlets on that subject.

[90] Charles Abbot Stevens, *Practical Remarks on the Reformation of Cathedral Music* (London: Francis & John Rivington, 1849), 40. Stevens is quoting from 'The Rev. J. Jebb's Lectures at Leeds'.

The best style of music is 'of a sublime temperament; of such a sober, solemn, devout character, as ought (only) to be admitted into the Sanctuary of God'.[91]

The Rev. William Pearson is more specific.[92] Like Crotch, he applies the criteria for the sublime and beautiful (in Pearson's case, as outlined by Alison in his *Essay on...Taste)*[93] to *Messiah*. (He is not so inclined as Crotch is however to omit the beautiful from the criteria of ideal church music, as long as it is not too ornamented.) Quoting from Alison, Pearson says, 'rapid motion in a straight line is expressive of great power; in curve lines of great power united with ease, freedom, and playfulness. Slow motion in a straight line is expressive of gentleness—in a curve line…of gentleness, uniting with it delicacy and beauty.'[94] Rapid motion in curved lines (Pearson suggests that curved may be regarded as the same as contrary) is seen in the chorus 'Lift up your heads' at the words

> 'He is the King of Glory', where almost every voice moving in 'Contrary Motion', i.e. in different directions at the same time…gives you exactly the idea of 'Ease, Freedom, and Playfulness,' that you really almost fancy that you see the joyous choir of angels careering along the regions of space.[95]

Rapid movement in similar lines is seen in the passage, 'Unto us a child is born', where

> the voices are moving swiftly along…in the same direction at the same time; especially in that passage where each voice catching up successively the fugue, 'And the government shall be upon his shoulder' moves rapidly onward till all falling in together upon the words 'Wonderful', 'Counsellor', 'the Mighty God'—convey to the imagination an idea of power that is absolutely overwhelming. So again in the Hallelujah Chorus the rapid Similar Motion comes in with wonderful effect, especially in that passage where all

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[91] *Ibid,* 42.
[92] Pearson, 'Music—Its Nature and Influence'.
[93] Francis Jeffrey and Archibald Alison, *Essay on Beauty: and Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (London: Alexander Murray, 1871).
[94] Pearson, 'Music—Its Nature and Influence', 20.
[95] *Ibid,* 21.

> the voices drop down together on the words 'And the kingdom of this world is become,' etc.[96]

(In a sign of the changing times, some clergy began to regard Handel's choruses, as well as Masses by Haydn and Mozart, as inappropriate for church because of their enjoyable melodies and lack of rigorous counterpoint, though it was acknowledged that they were indeed used. See Stevens, 'Practical Remarks on the Reformation of Cathedral Music', p. 40-41 for a discussion of this.)

Pearson also discusses the way in which music can influence mood and spirit. For example, when a soldier is 'marching out to the battle, would the same fiery spirit be stirred up in the breast of the soldier, if the Band is playing a merely gay or tender tune, instead of pealing out some martial stirring air? Carrying forward Burke's assertion of the physiological effects of the sublime, Pearson writes that the way the 'floor or pew trembles to certain notes of the organ, some of the finer fibres of the human frame should be put in tremulous motion when they happen to be in unison with any notes proceeding from external objects.'[97] In creating the proper atmosphere through church music, Pearson says further,

> It is essential to the sublime that there should be a degree of indefiniteness and indistinctness about it. Thus a mountain whose top is capped with a cloud, or a precipice whose base is enveloped in mist give you a much greater idea of the sublime than they would do if seen plainly and distinctly. As it is we look up to an enormous height, and down to a fearful depth; and yet we do not see all; the Imagination supplied a still loftier height, a still lower deep.[98]

There were other criteria for sublimity in church music: unison singing was regarded by Stevens as being 'most proper as a vehicle for solemn and sublime language of the Psalms and Offices', because of the power and unity of a large

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[96] *Ibid,* 20.

[97] *Ibid*, 16-17.

[98] *Ibid*, 27.

number of people.[99] Also, fugues were regarded as sublime, particularly those in the *stile antico*, which were seen as learned, scientific, and sublime (though 'Burney regarded them as heavy and dull').[100] It is not a surprise that the music of Palestrina was undergoing a significant revival in the nineteenth century, and his treatment of dissonance, the white-note slow-moving counterpoint, and the *a cappella* performance practice all became markers of sublimity for nineteenth-century writers on music. When Henry John Gauntlett describes the 'pure sublime' in church music thus: 'harmonies should be very simple, consisting chiefly of concords with a few of the least intricate discords such as a 5th and 4th, 7th, and 3rd, etc. Sudden modulation is out of place. The diminished octave is a most offensive transgression',[101] he is describing the Palestrina style.[102]

Taken together, Pearson, Stevens, Gauntlett and other writers seemed to be describing a somewhat benign style of sublimity, as well as devising a formula for achieving it. Longinus himself had believed that rules teaching sublimity were a necessary discipline. 'Genius without science', he wrote, 'left alone, with no ballast or ought to steady it, upon its own mere impulse and undisciplined impetuosity, has an inherent liability to shipwreck.'[103] However he had also warned that what was intended to be sublime could end up being merely emotional effect: the sublime could easily be reduced to bombast, affectation, and forced emotion.[104] The emerging

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[99] Stevens, *Practical Remarks,* 19.
[100] Tomita, 'The Dawn of the English Bach Awakening Manifested in Sources of The "48"', 64.
[101] *MW* 2 (1836), 197.
[102] For more information, see James Garratt, *Palestrina and the German Romantic Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Garratt cautions the reader to make careful distinction between Palestrina's style, and the 'Palestrina style' as mediated by Fux.
[103] Longinus, trans. Stebbing, 5.
[104] *Ibid,* chapters III and IV, 7-19.

definition of this nineteenth-century, benign, beatific, religious sublime encompassed purity, solemnity, mystery, spirituality, and intellectual engagement. For Victorian writers, it could be reduced to a style, and indeed, one of the early uses of the term 'sublime style' was in connection with Bach: 'Respecting his compositions, those which are most celebrated are his organ fugues. They are difficult of execution, profoundly learned, and full of original and highly interesting passages. Their prevailing style is sublime.'[105] This reduction satisfied the Victorian impulse for didacticism. Spiritual and moral leaders, clergy and laymen alike, appropriated the sublime for the church and concert hall, and felt bound to teaching how to achieve it in the name of spiritual and social progress.[106]

Handel and the Sublime

It would not be possible to consider fully Bach's reception into nineteenth-century English culture without considering that of Handel as well. There were of course many similarities between the two composers—both German, from the same period, and both composers of large-scale sacred choral and instrumental works. Having moved to England in 1712, Handel was fully adopted by the English, and by the end of his life had become an adored, even cult, figure. It would have been only natural,

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[105] Charles Burney, *A General History of Music* (London, 1789).

[106] This benign style of sublimity described by nineteenth-century writers on church music and Handel's oratorios stands in contrast to the heroic sublime as used by other nineteenth-century writers to describe Beethoven's music in particular, and especially works such as the *Eroica* symphony, *Wellington's Victory*, and so on. A discussion of the heroic sublime is not necessary in the context of the topic of this dissertation, though it can serve to throw the more beatific style into sharper relief. The reader is referred to Carl Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Approaches to his Music,* trans. Mary Whittall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), Dimitri Tymoczko, 'The Sublime Beethoven', *Boston Review* <http://bostonreview.net/BR24.6/tymoczko.html> (accessed 13 November 2012), Abigail Chantler, *E.T.A. Hoffman's Musical Aesthetics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Stephen Rumph, *Beethoven after Napoleon: Political Romanticism in the Late Works* (Berkeley, Calif. ; London : University of California Press, 2004).

once Handel was firmly ensconced in British culture, for the patterns of the performance of his music and 'adoption' to be repeated with Bach. In the words of John Butt, 'the supremely accessible oratorios of Handel…would eventually contribute to the Romantic reception of Bach as a model of sacred choral music.'[107]

It was in connection with Handel that the discourse on the musical sublime took hold in England. Possibly the first mention of the sublimity of Handel's works was made by John Lockman, in his second introductory essay to his libretto of *Rosalinda* (1740). In the context of writing about 'that Drama of an infinitely superior nature, Oratorios' and Milton's Paradise Lost, he refers to 'the wonderful sublimity of Mr Handel's compositions'.[108] Several recent writers have explored the sublime in Handel's music, as viewed by eighteenth-century commentators.[109] Claudia Johnson relates the Handelian sublime to his style: his 'departure from the rules of strict and thoroughly developed counterpoint and freedom of modulation', and shows that indeed those who wrote about Handel in the eighteenth century wrote in terms of his 'bold strokes', 'daring flights',[110] and his 'truly great and heroic style'.[111] She cites the Avison-Hayes series of essays and rebuttals[112] as furthering the discourse on Handel and the musical sublime, since in their extended and very public debate on the merits

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[107] John Butt, 'Choral Music', in Jim Samson, *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 214.
[108] John Lockman, *Rosalinda, a musical drama. As it is performed at Hickford's great room, in Brewer's Street. By Mr. Lockman. Set to music by Mr. John Christopher Smith* (London: Strahan, 1740), xx-xxi.
[109] Peter Kivy, 'Mainwaring's "Handel": Its Relation to English Aesthetics', *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 17/2 (1964), 170-78, Claudia L. Johnson, '"Giant Handel" And the Musical Sublime', *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 19/4 (1986), 515-33, and Shapiro, "Drama of an Infinitely Superior Nature'.
[110] Johnson, '"Giant Handel"', 518.
[111] *Ibid*, 519.
[112] Avison, Hayes, and Dubois, *Essay.*

and drawbacks of various styles and composers they continually described Handel and his musical style in more and more detail. Their writings, and others, promote 'the notion that the genius of the sublime is expansive, scorning the cramping restriction of rules; that sublime works, as a result, seem primitive rather than refined, natural rather than artful, irregular rather than correct'.[113] In contrast, Hayes characterised the compositional style of Geminiani, held up by Avison as among the greatest of composers, as 'slow, cautious, elaborate, revising, altering, polishing'.[114]

Handel's sublime style did not spring from a vacuum. His ceremonial music was partly rooted in works by such composers as Purcell, Blow, and Croft, including the music that the latter wrote for the many religious thanksgiving ceremonies held by Queen Anne. His oratorios were a synthesis of opera and religious ceremonial works, and his use of biblical paraphrase was a crucial ingredient in the linking of sacred and secular.[115] Biblical paraphrase, or loosely translating sacred texts into everyday language, was a way of making the Bible relevant in contemporary society. To unite Biblical paraphrase with sublime poetry was to attempt to raise the everyday to the numinous, and was a widely-practised exercise already in the seventeenth century. In his paraphrasing of Scripture, Isaac Watts went so far as to advocate not only for the modernisation of language, but also for the exchanging of Biblical place names with 'Scotland', 'England', and so on.[116] In Nicholas Brady's words, in praising God with sublime poetry set to music 'This divine art has such an admirable secret of uniting

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[113] Johnson, '"Giant Handel"', 518.
[114] *Ibid*, 519.
[115] Shapiro, 'Drama', 223-4.
[116] Isaac Watts, 'A Short Essay Toward the Improvement of Psalmody', in *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, (1707), 246.

heaven and earth together, that the scale of musick appear to me, to be the exact counterpart of Jacob's ladder.'[117] Handel's use not only of biblical texts but also of biblical events expressed in poetry and set to music, such as the Song of Moses (the central text of *Israel in Egypt*) was a way of recalling the sublime from a period when 'God taught poetry to the Hebrews'.[118]

Handel's sublime style as described by his contemporaries seems to be aligned with Longinus rather than Burke. Burke, of course, did not publish *A Philosophical Enquiry* until 1757, only two years before Handel's death. Longinus wrote about the sublime in connection with writing and rhetoric, and it is with reference to these criteria that Handel is described. Longinus identified 'Boldness and Grandeur in the Thoughts' and 'the Power of raising the Passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree' as central to a concept of the sublime, and Handel's 'bold strokes' and 'daring flights' are related to that. Burke's definition of the sublime does not seem to apply until late in the century, and subsequently throughout the nineteenth. Here we find performances of Handel that overwhelm physically, as per Burke's prescription: the massive performing forces would have been incomprehensibly huge in size and loudness.[119]

The fashion for performance of Handel oratorios by ever-larger choirs is well-known, as was the practice of standing for the Hallelujah Chorus, something which astonished Haydn when he attended the 1791 Handel Commemoration. That the

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[117] Nicholas Brady, *Church Musick Vindicated: a Sermon (1697)* (Los Angeles : William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1955), 12-15. For more on this subject, see Shapiro, 'Drama'.
[118] Aaron Hill, preface to *The Creation*, London, 1720 (reprinted Los Angeles, 1949), 6.
[119] Ruth Smith writes about Handel and the Longinian sublime in *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 108-26.

same patterns of performance and reception were repeated with Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Bach is hardly surprising.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Handel's reputation began to decline in comparison with Bach's in the eyes of some critics.

> Bach, the great contemporary of Handel, whose subtlety was much greater, while his harmonic instincts were a century in advance of the Saxon, has won appreciation here only within recent years. The objective and dramatic style of Handel stood a much better chance of recognition with the English mind than did that of the reflective, subjective, Bach.[120]

Later in the same year, writer and journalist John Fuller-Maitland showed that, as beloved as Handel was, in some views he deserved to be eclipsed by Bach:

> Unlike Bach or Haydn, Handel lacked the power by which an artist is compelled to progress beyond his contemporaries, and to point the way to new methods…His influence upon modern music is very slight; there is not a single development of musical form which can be traced back to him, and for a time the supremacy of his music served only to paralyse musical progress in this country.[121]

A final comparison must be made between Bach and Handel in England: Because Handel 'lived on' after his death in countless imitators, well into the nineteenth century, he was not necessarily seen as an ancient composer, and was thus not appropriated only by the mainly elite Ancient organisations; his appeal easily crossed class boundaries. In contrast, Bach's music had been the province of relatively few connoisseurs in England, and did not even feature on Ancient Music programmes. It was only after considerable time and effort on the part of dedicated Bach supporters that his music approached the same broad appeal.

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[120] Correspondence on 'The Worship of Handel', *Musical Herald* 16 (April 1890), 378.
[121] Fuller-Maitland, John, 'Handel', in *The Dictionary of National Biography: from the earliest times to 1900* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921-22); this article quoted in the *Musical Herald* 23 (Nov. 1890), 532.

Conclusion

Bach's route to widespread acceptance did not have the backing of any established organisation or large body of musicians in the early nineteenth century. His supporters were outside the mainstream, and if Samuel Wesley is taken as an example, one might say that the more fervent the support, the further outside the conventional establishment the supporters were. These few avid devotees were not crying in the wilderness however: the strength of their support, and crucially, the fact that their words and actions were falling on fertile ground, made all the difference. The ground on which the seeds were sown was made up of a rich mixture of belief in the importance of history, admiration for German culture and values, the adoration of Handel, a need to create order in a dramatically growing and potentially volatile society, and a belief in the moral superiority of a society where upward striving of all kinds was valued. It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that popular acceptance began to grow and Bach moved into—and was co-opted by— the growing middle class.

Chapter 2

Bach as Reflected in the Activities of his English Proponents

Many the crownèd heads of music;—thou
Of song's wide realms art emperor alone;
No rival hath assailed that peerless throne,
Such splendour shines upon no other brow;
Poets before thy footstool pay their vow;
Thou keep'st a state whereat proud kings fall prone,
A majesty of music all thine own,
A sway to which the laureled masters bow.
To thee the lords of song ascribe their fame,
For thee the chiming spheres attune their fires;
To all the ends of earth thy glorious name
Resounds, while high in heaven immortal lyres
Salute thee, and the streets of gold acclaim
Thy worth with plaudits of celestial choirs

--from Alfred Hayes, JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH [from The Cup of Quietness, 1911]

The narrative of the early English Bach awakening[1] has been related recently by several writers—Michael Kassler, and Yo Tomita, to name only two.[2] A study of Bach's influence on nineteenth-century English composers is outside the scope of this dissertation, but the activities of his proponents are central. The abundance of writings about these Bach apostles makes only a brief summary necessary here. Less examined

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[1] The term 'awakening' is used by Kassler et al in *The English Bach Awakening*. I use the terms 'awakening' and 'revival' interchangeably, however. See the Introduction for my explanation for the interchangeability of these terms. In particular I do not reserve the term 'revival' for the nineteenth-century German embrace of Bach, nor 'awakening' for the English.

[2] *Ibid.* Essays by Tomita are included in Kassler's book; see bibliography. Also see Matthew Charles Dirst, 'Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier in Musical Thought and Practice, 1750-1850' (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1996), Temperley and Wollny, 'Bach Revival', *Oxford Music Online*, Williams, 'J. S. Bach and English Organ Music', 140-151; Michael Kassler, *A.F.C. Kollmann's Quarterly Musical Register (1812): An Annotated Edition with an Introduction to His Life and Works* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley: The Man and His Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003); R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Russell Stinson, *The Reception of Bach's Organ Works from Mendelssohn to Brahms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). For an excellent nineteenth-century account of Bach in England, see F.G.Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', *Musical Times and Singing-Class Circular* 37, No.643 (Sept. 1896), No. 644 (October 1896), No. 645 (November 1896), and No. 646 (December 1896).

has been Bach's presence and image in the English press, so a more complete study of that follows.

It is clear that Bach was known to at least a few in England from the mid-eighteenth century. German musicians in London including Bach's own son Johann Christian (who moved to London in 1762) certainly were familiar with his works, and even discounting the statement by Forkel that the English Suites were written for an English nobleman (for which we have no evidence), there is much to indicate that many works of Bach were circulating in manuscript form in England from about 1750. Reports of performers such as Clementi, John Field, and George Pinto practising the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (henceforth *WTC*) in the 1790s, writings on Bach by Burney and Hawkins, and extant copies of various works from England dating from the late-eighteenth century bear this out. [3] The earliest known sources of the 'organ works'—whether or not that really means the *WTC*—are Burney (he was 'in possession of the chief part of Bach's organ works',[4] by which he almost surely meant the *WTC*); a collection now in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge which includes eleven of the *WTC*;[5] and a set of four pieces attributed to John Robinson but really by Bach, now in the Royal College of Music.[6] Kassler and Tomita have shown that several works of Bach were published in England for the first time anywhere.[7] These earliest Bach proponents were not high-society concert-goers who patronised the Ancient Concerts, as were many advocates of the music of other eighteenth-

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[3] Kassler includes a complete chronology in his book *The English Bach Awakening.*
[4] Burney, *History*, Vol. 4, 593.
[5] Music ms. 161A; also known as 32 G 68.
[6] Ms. 814. See Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*; also Williams, 'J.S. Bach and English Organ Music'.
[7] Kassler, *English Bach Awakening,* 12-14; Yo Tomita, 'The Dawn of the English Bach Awakening', 65.

century composers such as Mozart and Haydn, but were practising musicians who could appreciate his craftsmanship and compositional abilities. Many of them were well-connected to the nobility as teachers, and were able to spread knowledge of Bach to their students, some of whom were in the royal household. One such musician was A.F.C. Kollmann, organist of the German chapel of St James from 1784, who wrote admiringly about Bach in his theoretical works, and was a significant player in the Bach awakening. In Kollmann's book *Essay on Musical Harmony* (1796), he published excerpts from the F minor Prelude of the *WTC II* and wrote about it in the text;[8] and in his *Essay on Practical Musical Composition* (1799), he published the first organ trio sonata of Bach, as well as the Prelude and Fugue in C Major from the *WTC II*—the first time these works had been published anywhere.[9] Kollmann also included excerpts from the *Musical Offering* and the *Art of Fugue* in this book, and later published an edition and separate analysis of the Chromatic Fantasy, BWV 903.[10] He also announced publication of an analysed edition of the entire *WTC* (the project was never realised, but may have been the catalyst for the publication of three different editions in Germany within the following year).[11] Kollmann also produced two issues of a new musical journal called *Quarterly Musical Register* (1812), in which he included a long article about Bach in the first issue, including

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[8] Kollmann, A.F.C., *Essay on Musical Harmony* (London: J. Dale, 1796), Plates 8 & 17; also 77, 81, 92, and 119.

[9] Kollmann, *Essay on Practical Musical Composition* (London: printed for the author, 1799). A full list of references to J.S. Bach and the quotations of his music in this source is given in BDokIII/1021, 569-585. Also see Temperley and Wollny, 'Bach Revival', and Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*, 58.

[10] *John Sebastian Bach's Celebrated Fantasia Chromatica for the Piano Forte, with some additions by A.F.C. Kollmann* (London: Preston, 1806); The analysis appears in Kollmann, A.F.C., *New Theory of Musical Harmony, according to a Complete and Natural System of that Science* (London: W. Bulmer, 1806), 84. Kassler discusses the analysis in his chapter 'Kollmann's Proof of the Regularity of Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy*', in *English Bach Awakening,* 211-50.

[11] See Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*, 58, as well as Alfred Durr, 'On the Earliest Manuscripts and Prints of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier in England', in Paul Brainard and Ray Robinson (ed.), *A Bach Tribute: Essays in Honor of William H. Scheide* (Kassel, 1993), 121-34.

passages translated from Forkel's biography.[12] Another German immigrant musician was Carl Friedrich Horn (1762-1830), who became Queen Charlotte's music teacher in 1789. Horn was later to work with Samuel Wesley on publishing the organ trio sonatas. Clementi also published Bach keyboard works in his *Selection of Practical Harmony*,[13] and much later in the 1830s, Henry John Gauntlett, a student of Wesley and friend of Mendelssohn, published a collection of Bach's Fugues 'in continuation of the English edition of his forty-eight preludes and fugues' (more will be said about this collection in Chapter 4).[14] The interest in Bach shown by these musicians was focused on his keyboard music, particularly the fugues, as the inclusion of analyses of the works bears witness. It was these musicians who kept Bach's music alive in England; but it was the tireless effort of Samuel Wesley and a small group of his friends, beginning about 1807, that brought the attention of the wider public to Bach's music. The story of the Bach revival in early nineteenth-century England is as much a story of indefatigable efforts by an ever-growing band of zealous devotees with strong personalities as it is a story of growing appreciation for a master composer on the part of the British public.

Samuel Wesley was first introduced to Bach's music in 1804 or 1805, according to his own account,[15] by the young English musician George Pinto (1785-1806), who along with John Field was a student of Clementi. Although it was not until 1807 that Wesley became a true convert to the cause of Sebastian Bach,

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[12] Reprinted in Kassler, *Kollmann*.
[13] Muzio Clementi, *Clementi's Selection of Practical Harmony* (London: Clementi, Banger, Davis and Collard, [1801-02]).
[14] J.S. Bach and Henry J. Gauntlett, *Choral and Instrumental Fugues of John Sebastian Bach in Continuation of the English Edition of His Forty-Eight Preludes and Fugues* (London: C. Lonsdale, 1838-51), 9 v. of music.
[15] Samuel Wesley 'Reminiscences' (unpublished), circa 1836 (BL, Add. MS 27593).

when he did, he did his utmost to spread the gospel, playing the pieces at every opportunity, and inventing opportunities as necessary.[16] Wesley promoted not only the *WTC*, but also other works of Bach, offering music for violin, at least one choral work, and organ music, often in conjunction with Benjamin Jacob, J.P. Salomon (the violinist and impresario, who is said to have played the unaccompanied partitas and sonatas himself in his concerts in London),[17] Horn, Vincent Novello, and others. In 1809 he and Horn published the organ trio sonatas,[18] followed by an analysed edition of the *WTC*, beginning in 1810.[19] Accounts of Wesley's concerts, including those with Benjamin Jacob and William Crotch, indicate that audiences were huge and enthusiastic; indeed, one concert at the Surrey Chapel at which he and Benjamin Jacob played organ fugues and violin sonatas of J.S. Bach reportedly lasted for four hours and was attended by 3000 people.[20]

Wesley never tired of promoting interest in the works of Bach, and did so for the rest of his life. While he was well-known for his acerbic wit and blunt speech, after he died he was remembered with the greatest amount of respect and affection; and that perhaps played a role itself in the spreading of the Bach fire which he had

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[16] Wesley's letters to Benjamin Jacob abut J.S. Bach from 1808-09 are replete with extravagant terminology and religious imagery, and he used the term 'conversion' several times, particularly with reference to his brother Charles' and Charles Burney's growing esteem for J.S. Bach as against Handel. See for example S. Wesley-Benjamin Jacob letter, 17/11/1808 (?), in Michael Kassler and Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley (1766-1837): A Sourcebook* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 245.

[17] Robert Pascall, 'Ein Uberblick der frühen Bach-Rezeption in England bis zirka 1860', in Ingrid Fuchs (ed.) *Johann Sebastian Bach: Beiträge zur Wirkungsgeschichte* (Vienna: Verband der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs, 1992), 150.

[18] J.S. Bach, ed. C.F. Horn and S. Wesley, *A Trio [or rather, Six Trios], composed originally for the Organ ... adapted for three Hands upon the Piano Forte* (London: C.F. Horn, 1809).

[19] *S. Wesley and C.F. Horn's New and Correct Edition of the Preludes and Fugues of John Sebastian Bach* (London: Rt. Birchall, 1810-).

[20] Wesley himself reports this in his 'Reminiscences'. Benjamin Jacob gives a similar account in a letter to John Sainsbury (*A Dictionary of Musicians),* of 15 January 1824 (Glasgow University Library, Euing Collection).

worked so hard to kindle.[21] After his death, he was frequently hailed for his vital contribution to the Bach revival in England, and no account of the Bach revival in England has failed to mention Wesley and his role.

Wesley's student Henry John Gauntlett (1805-1876) was to become key in the next stage of the Bach awakening. Gauntlett, trained as a lawyer but also an excellent organist and composer, was key in the redesigning, with organ builder William Hill, of English organs in the so-called German style: these organs were equipped with C-compass manual keyboards and full pedal boards, necessary for the proper performance of Bach's organ works. He was also a strong advocate of Bach's works, and made his views known through frequent articles in journals such as the *Musical World* (of which he was apparently editor for a short period in 1836-7). Gauntlett also gained the admiration and respect of Mendelssohn, who regarded Gauntlett's work in organ design as essential to his own performances in England on the organ.[22]

Between 1838 and 1851 Gauntlett published the aforementioned volumes of Bach 'fugues in continuation of the 48' arranged for the organ, which he had gathered from a variety of sources. It is important to note that most of the works in the collection were appearing for the first time in England (though they may have been published earlier elsewhere), and all pre-date the German Bach Gesellschaft, with several also pre- dating the Peters/Griepenkerl edition of the organ works.

Among devotees of Bach perhaps none was as important as Felix Mendelssohn who, in his ten trips to England, tirelessly promoted the works of Bach. (A full account of Mendelssohn's playing of Bach on the organ in England is in Chapter 4.) It was not only Mendelssohn's startlingly different way of playing or his

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[21]London *Times*, 'Death of Mr. Samuel Wesley', Issue 16545 (12 October 1837), 4.
[22] Nicholas Temperley, 'Gauntlett, Henry John', in *Grove Music Online*, accessed 24 April 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/10750>; and Nicholas Thistlethwaite, *The Making of the Victorian Organ,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 185-90.

sharing of wondrous unknown works by Bach, but also the devotion of which he himself was the object, which finally pushed the Bach revival into a newly widespread public sphere. Samuel Wesley may have been equally loquacious on the topic of Bach, and may have played even more of his works in public (though not the *pedaliter* works on the pedals, as far as we know), but Mendelssohn, with his elegance and eloquence, was the consolidator. Mendelssohn played a vital role in the English Bach revival, both directly, by promoting the works at every turn, and indirectly, because the public loved and revered him to such an extent that what he believed in, they did too. Evidence of how Mendelssohn was viewed by the English can be seen most obviously in writings about him after his early death. Reginald Haweis, the late nineteenth-century English clergyman and prolific writer on the moral effect of music (mentioned in Chapter 1), promoted the vision of Mendelssohn as a moral agent when he wrote:

> In this age of degradation, Mendelssohn towers above his contemporaries like a moral lighthouse in the midst of a dark and troubled sea. His light always shone strong and pure. The winds of heaven were about his head, and the 'still small voice' was in his heart. In a lying generation he was true, and in an adulterous generation he was pure—and not popularity or gain could tempt him to sully the pages of that spotless inspiration with one meretricious effect or one impure association.[23]

Mendelssohn succeeded in selling Bach not only to an elite, educated audience of laypeople as well as musicians, but also to the casual oratorio enthusiast. His concerts were attended by thousands, and he inspired cult-like adulation. The crucial role he played in the Bach revival simply by the force of his personality is illustrated in his obituary in the *Musical Times* (1848):

> The beauty … of the numerous demonstrations made by MENDELSSOHN in honour of BACH, was that he announced himself the disciple of a master contemned by ignorance and

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[23] Haweis, *Music and Morals,* 90-1.

> prejudice. But with MENDELSSOHN in the opposition, who would venture to speak against BACH even at the Philharmonic/ Here was no uncouth, obscure man – no vulgar enthusiast from the plough, opposing the opinions of elegant society – but a gentleman as cultivated in mind, as polished in manners, as fashionably caressed [sic], and fortunate as could be desired. And yet this man placed all his advantages in one stake for the truth – and whenever propriety and the zeal of judicious advocacy permitted, declared himself for SEBASTIAN BACH. We are filled with affectionate respect for his memory while we record these things. A popular master who sets public opinion at hazard upon a sentiment, and who throws all his trophies at the feet of the composer who realises his ideal and has led him to the sublime, has great influence. Romance like this sways the destiny of the art.[24]

Not only did Mendelssohn bring wonderful works of art to the attention of the public, but he managed to sell Bach as a purveyor of truth and perfection. Mendelssohn did not evangelize for a particular brand of Christianity per se; rather he promoted a more general enlightened Protestantism common at the time in his native Berlin.[25]

The death of Mendelssohn in 1847 inspired an outpouring of grief like that for a national hero. The fact that he was young served to elevate him even more—if that were possible—to the status of immortal genius, and gave the final impetus necessary to keep the Bach awakening going on its own, and indeed gain momentum. Performances and publication of his works increased exponentially from this point, as people felt called upon to honour Mendelssohn's memory by showing esteem for Bach, as Felix had done himself. The dramatic increase in numbers of performances

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[24] 'The Late Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular,* 2/44 (1848), 153-59.

[25] Mendelssohn's own religious views have been the subject of many studies. See for example Todd, *Mendelssohn*, Jeffrey Sposato, *The Price of Assimilation: Felix Mendelssohn and the Nineteenth- Century Anti-Semitic Tradition* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), and several articles by Leon Botstein, including 'Mendelssohn as Jew: Revisiting Controversy on the Occasion of the Composer's 200th Birthday', *Musical Quarterly* 92/1 (Spring-Summer 2009), 210-19.

of Bach cannot be wholly attributed to Mendelssohn's influence, but written accounts such as the ones quoted above indicate that it surely helped: in his retrospective account of the first hundred years of the *Musical Times*, Percy Scholes shows that performances of Bach's choral works in London rose from none in 1846-47, to 44 in 1926-7, placing him second only to Handel.[26]

English Editions of Bach's Music in the Nineteenth Century

With the centenary of Bach's death in 1850 and the launch of the Bach Gesellschaft, heretofore unpublished works became available for the first time, and a wealth of Bach's works for all manner of consumers flooded the market. Until the on-line publication of the *Bach Bibliography* in 1997, it was difficult to ascertain all British publications of Bach's works up to 1850, and even now one cannot assume that the list is complete.[27] Most earlier catalogues, including Schneider's early 'complete' list of Bach works published up to 1850 in the *Bach Jahrbuch* v. 3 (1906), the Schmieder catalogue, and the NBA, omitted detailed mention (for one) of Gauntlett's collection of Fugues from 1838-51. The *Bach Bibliography* however contains the most complete list of known Bach printed editions: in the hundred years from 1750 to 1849, Tomita lists 49 published English editions of Bach works.[28]

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[26] Scholes, *Mirror,* 144-7. Scholes was taking an overview of a long period in order to put it into a historical context.

[27] Yo Tomita, *Bach Bibliography*, <http://www.qub.ac.uk/~tomita/bachbib/>. In a recent article, Tomita raised awareness of the vast number of Bach scores that were announced as printed in the nineteenth century, yet cannot be found today. Specifically, 26.3 per cent of the total number of items reported to Hofmeister's *Musikalisch-literarischer Monatsbericht über Musikalien, musikalische Schriften und Abbildungen* (1829–1947) (3617 in the Bach Bibliography as of July 2012) are yet to be located in libraries. See Tomita, 'Veiled Aspects of Bach Reception in the Long Nineteenth Century Exposed through a Macro-examination of Printed Music: with Particular Focus on *The Well-Tempered Clavier*', in *Understanding Bach* 7 (2012), 29-53.

[28] Tomita includes pieces published in theoretical treatises, for example those Kollmann presents as 'specimens'. He also lists the individual works published in Gauntlett's nine volumes of Bach fugues separately, but I have counted the volumes together. Different editions of the same work are counted separately: Rinck's organ tutor, for example, and Czerny's editions of the *WTC*.

In contrast, in the thirty years between 1850 and 1880, 158 English editions of works of Bach are listed.[29]

A similar picture is revealed in a perusal of British Library integrated catalogue (the British Library, being a legal deposit library, theoretically has a copy of every English publication, though there are inevitable omissions): between 1750-1850, 213 published editions of Bach works from all countries are listed, of which 34, or 16%, are English. In contrast, in the fifty years between 1850-1900, 787 editions are listed, of which 369, or nearly 50%, are English.

Of course these numbers do not represent the total number of Bach works published during these years; nor are they definitive for the numbers of English editions of Bach works. Peter Williams, among others, has already spoken about the vast amount of German and other publications imported into English music shops.[30] However, they do reflect the extraordinary rise of interest in Bach, and the increasingly large proportion of English publication of his music.

Exactly what was published in English editions is revealing: during the early nineteenth century, apart from the *WTC* and organ works published by Wesley, Horn, Czerny, and others, there are a very few choral works, and these are excerpts or arrangements from the *St Matthew Passion* or the *Mass in B Minor*, usually included in other collections (see Chapter 3). One curiosity is an 1832 arrangement 'from Sebastian Bach' of 'Bin ich gleich von Dir gewichen', from the *St Matthew Passion*, by Edward Taylor, as noted in the Novello catalogue. The chorale tune is set in a flowing accompaniment with new words and re-named 'The Venetian Boatmen's

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[29] I have counted the individual entries of the *WTC*, for example, as one.

[30] Williams, 'J.S. Bach and English Organ Music', 142.

Evening Song' (this edition is still in print).[31] This piece is reproduced in the Appendix. Late in the century, Bach obviously caught the popular imagination, as fictional accounts about him also reveal, and hundreds of arrangements were made of his music. In addition to the 'Venetian Boatmen' and the ubiquitous Gounod arrangement of the first prelude from the *WTC*, songs were set to music of the English Suites ('All Ye Woods and Trees'), editions of Bach were simplified for the beginner musician,[32] and works that were unknown before the Bach Gesellschaft came into print.[33]

The Press and the Bach Awakening

It is interesting to follow public reaction to the Bach awakening in the press. Mention of the composer is rare before 1810, when the Wesley/Horn edition of the *WTC* began appearing and the efforts of the Bach 'Junto' began to take off.[34] The first known descriptions in England in print of J.S. Bach and his music are in Hawkins and Burney's histories.[35] Because long-running musical journals did not get off the ground in England until nearly 1820, with one significant exception mention of Bach earlier than this is in newspapers and journals aimed at the general public. (The one exception is Kollmann's *Quarterly Musical Register* of 1812, in which, as mentioned earlier, he

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[31] Catalogue number NOV400215. For a review of this work, see *Harmonicon* 10 (1832), 178-9.

[32] For example, a volume called *Organ Voluntaries, consisting of Preludes and Fugues selected from the works of John Sebastian Bach (with such alterations, additions, and accommodations as have been deemed necessary for their general use in Churches)*, was apparently published in London by George Drummond in 1823, and was endorsed by William Crotch who wrote the preface, which was entitled 'J.S.B. made easy'. A rather disdainful article about this edition, and Dr Crotch's involvement in it, was published in the *Musical Times* 40/675 (May 1, 1899), 301-02. I have not been able to locate this edition.

[33] For a listing of all known English publications of Bach before 1830, see Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*.

[34] 'Junto' was a term Wesley himself used in a letter to Benjamin Jacob of 13 August 1808, to describe his proposed assemblage of Bach enthusiasts. See *Letters of Samuel Wesley to Mr. Jacobs, organist of Surrey Chapel, relating to the introduction into this country of the works of John Sebastian Bach*, ed. Eliza Wesley (London: W. Reeves, 1878). Also see Kassler and Olleson, *Source Book*, 239.

[35] Burney first describes Bach in *The Present State of Music in Germany*, 1773, and mentions him again in *A General History of Music* in 1776. Hawkins includes a brief biography of Bach in v 5 of *General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 1776.

translated excerpts of Forkel's Life of Bach, and included analyses of some of his works. The *QMR* had a run of only two issues however, so while it was ambitious and innovative, it was not widely influential.)[36]

Several matters of interest are revealed in looking at these earliest mentions. First, perhaps not surprisingly, nearly every time a book or article about Bach or an edition of his music was published, articles appeared in the press about him, though they are not necessarily related to the publication. For example, in 1813 Wesley and Horn's edition of the WTC is released, and along with reviews in the press, an account of a young 13-year-old girl playing his music also appeared. Thus the activities of the Bach proponents not only brought his music in front of the public, but they also precipitated other peripheral activities related to the composer. Second, the expanding ripples of the Bach awakening were begun and continued by a small group of aficionados (Burney, Kollmann, Horn, Jacob, Wesley, and Crotch) who had a remarkably wide influence in non-musical circles. Thus, for example, sandwiched between the latest racing results from Newmarket and a laudatory article about 'Cornwell's Improv'd Chymical Opodeldoc' is a short description of Bach's life and music, excerpted from Burney's *General History* (though not identified as such).[37] This appeared around the same time as the publication of Volumes 3 and 4 of that work, and thus perhaps served as a little publicity for it. Another example is seen in an anonymous laudatory article about the value of playing Bach on the piano, which

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[36] The translation of portions of Forkel's Bach biography appears in the first issue of the *QMR* (Jan. 1812), in a section called 'Of John Sebastian Bach, and his Works', pp. 28-40. The excerpts are mainly from Forkel's second chapter, relating to Bach's life. The list of works listed by Kollmann come from Forkel's chapter 9. Both editions of the *QMR* are reproduced in Kassler, Kollmann.

[37] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, issue 5133 (Friday 2 October, 1789). This is the first item in the table below.

coincided with the publication of Kollmann's book discussing that very issue (the article was probably written by Kollmann).[38]

The following table summarises the appearances of J.S. Bach in the general press before 1820. (Not included are advertisements for upcoming performances by the Bach 'junto' which began appearing about 1809; or Kollmann's discussions of Bach in the *QMR*.)

EVENT	SUBSEQUENT PRESS
1789: Burney's *General History of Music*, vols. 3 and 4 are published	*Morning Post and Daily Advertiser,* Fri. 2 Oct, 1789: Article by Burney on Bach. This is an unidentified reprint of Burney's writing on Bach from Vol 4 of the *History*.
1796-99 Kollmann's two books of *Essays* are published	
1802: *WTC* is published on the Continent	*Monthly Register, and Encyclopedian Magazine*, 1/1 (April 1802), 83: Announcement of importation of 'Bach's organ works' in 2 vols. together with various works of Haydn, including 'The Seasons, a new musical work of Haydn, for the Piano Forte…price 1 Guinea'; and works of Mozart (for example, 'Mozarts [*sic*] Requiem, part 1, in score…1l. 1s.'): 'Sebastian Bach's works for the Organ, Nos.1 & 2, 10s. each'
Forkel's biography of Bach is published in Germany (summer)	
1804: *Rees' Cyclopedia* with article on Bach by Burney is published*	
1806 and 1807: Kollmann's books *New Theory of Musical Harmony* and an edition of *A Second Practical Guide to Thorough Bass* were published	*La Belle Assemblée* (sometimes called *Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine*), 1/10 (Dec. 1806), 600-602; and 2/1(Jan 1807), 36-38: two articles extolling Kollmann's publications, mentioning Bach several times. It is likely that Kollmann himself wrote the articles.

[38] Kassler, *Kollmann,* 90-1.

1808: Jacob begins his exhibitions in the Surrey Chapel, at which works of Bach feature prominently, and Wesley and Salomon take part	
1812: Kollmann publishes his *Quarterly Musical Register* in which he translates portions of Forkel	*Lady's Monthly Museum,* 'Musical Memoranda' (Sept. 1812), 158-59: story about Bach, including the (false) account of Handel and Bach meeting in Salzburg.
1813: Wesley/Horn *WTC* completed and published	*Gentleman's Magazine* reviews the Wesley/Horn *WTC* (Jan. 1813), 59-60; Kollmann's *Quarterly Musical Register* (April 1813), 354-6; and the composition of a young girl, age 13, who is said to be able to 'now execute with ease and accuracy …the fugues of J.S. Bach.' (May 1813), 461.
	La Belle Assemblée (April 1814), 160, Biography of JSB: The story of Bach and Handel's meeting in Salzburg is repeated. The entire article is encased in quotation marks, implying perhaps that it was derived from elsewhere.
	Gentleman's Magazine (May 1815), 445. Review of a work by S. Wesley, in which he is called 'The Sebastian Bach of England'.
	1814-1816: Wesley wrote for the *European Magazine* and frequently mentioned Sebastian Bach.

*Abraham Rees et al, *The Cyclopedia; or, Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Literature*, 39 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, & Brown, 1802-19).

Even after these early years, when the first long-running musical journals in England came into existence, profiles of Bach continued to appear in the general press. This was important, because knowledge of the composer continued to be aimed at the general (educated) public, whereas musical journals were read by people who already had a keen interest in music. While it may be wrong to impute the concept of 'target audiences' to journalists of two hundred years ago, it is interesting to note the juxtaposition of articles about Bach with other items. For example, in *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* of 1821, an article entitled 'Sebastian Bach

and his Musical Compositions' is placed between one on Hamlet, and one on 'The Science of Political Economy'.[39] At the very least, it is plain that Bach—and music—is treated seriously enough to warrant inclusion in a magazine that discusses these other serious topics.

Often accounts contain stories from Bach's life, true or not. In addition to the apocryphal story of the meeting between Bach and Handel in Salzburg, two stories which were told in the obituary and in Forkel's biography reappear with considerable frequency: the story of the young Sebastian being caught after copying his brother's manuscript of organ compositions by candlelight; and the 'competition' with claveciniste Marchand, who failed to show up for the appointment, and was found to have secretly left town, leaving Bach the victor.

In a later twist to the story of the fictitious meeting of Bach and Handel, another article from 1837 acknowledges that this longed-for meeting did not happen, but claims that it was not for lack of trying: several attempts by Bach to meet Handel are related, but Handel is variously 'too busy' or Bach is sick, or another problem gets in the way.[40] The fact that this article was published soon after Mendelssohn's triumphant Birmingham Festival appearance surely reflects the role Mendelssohn played in popularizing Bach.

A surprisingly lengthy, trenchant and prophetic article about Bach appeared in the journal *The Analyst: a quarterly journal of science, literature, natural history, and the fine arts*, in the same year. This article is sixteen pages long—approximately 7500

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[39] v.1, 467- 475.
[40] 'The Amenities and Modesty of True Genius', *Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety* Issue 10 (Saturday, December 16, 1837), 4.

words.[41] It is unequivocal about the place Bach should take in the minds and hearts of the English. The author is anonymous, though judging by the tone of the writing and the opinions expressed it seems likely that he was one of the same writers who wrote on the Birmingham Festival in the following issue of the journal—'Y.D.' and 'T.W.' It is possible that 'T.W.' was Thomas Attwood Walmisley, who in the previous year had been appointed Professor of Music at Cambridge. Walmisley was an avid 'Bachist', and delivered important lectures on the composer. The *Analyst* article is worth quoting at length, since it is vociferous in its condemnation of the blind adoration of Handel and others, and by extension the taste of the general public, as well as perceptive in its evaluation of Bach and its predictions of Bach's future reception. It begins with a gentle admonition of the poor state of music culture in England, and the perspicacious observation that the first reason that Bach had not caught on in England was because he was never there, as Handel was.

> The reverence in which we English hold the works of Handel is well known. And why is this? Because they surpass all others in grandeur, beauty, and ideality of conception, in finish and elaborateness of execution? Oh, no! But simply because he had the good fortune to spend a great part of his life in our favoured isle, and there to produce his great works. This, without periphrasis, is one great constituent in the excessive and often ridiculous veneration in which the name of Handel is held. He is *our* Handel, belonging, we fondly imagine, to none but ourselves; *we* alone can understand him. Foreigners must be content with their Leos, their Pergolesis, their Bachs, their Grauns, and a host of other composers, respectable, no doubt, but not to be named in the same breath with our idol, our own peculiar treasure, the 'giant Handel.' And this because, instead of Germany, he lived and wrote in England; because he composed in a fog instead of under a blue sky; and because he gratified English self-love by setting his music to English words. All this, doubtless, is contemptible enough; but, contemptible as it is, such is the fact: we do but state it, in the hope that people, now knowing the seat of the disease, will set about removing it with all due diligence.[42]

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[41] *The Analyst* 7 (June 1837), 3-18. The editors of this journal were Neville Wood, William Holl, and Edward Mammatt.
[42] 'Sebastian Bach and His Works', *The Analyst* 7 (June 1837), 3-4.

The author's second explanation for the lack of knowledge of Bach is that he never stooped to popularity in his writing, in the way that Handel did.

> Handel was essentially a popular composer—that is, he adapted his undoubtedly great powers to the capacities of uncultivated tastes; and inasmuch as he has done so he lowered his claims to rank as a great artist, in the highest acceptation of the term.[43]

The third cause for the lack of awareness of Bach is

> the unreflecting readiness with which most men bow down before authority—in other words before the dictum of individuals. Now such a dictum, to be at all valuable, must proceed from one really competent to judge of the point on which he decides. We must, before we regard him as an authority, first ascertain that he has given the subject mature consideration, and then that, having done so, his mental faculties and their cultivation are such as will enable him to decide in a satisfactory manner.[44]

The author then names Burney as an example of an expert to whom people look for an educated viewpoint, but who has

> dismissed the name of Bach with a sneer…[and] condescends to assign our author a niche in the temple of fame, with the limitation, however, that he would have merited one more honourable *if he had been more assiduous in courting popular applause!* This is the dictum of one of the wise ones by whom the public has been "tenderly led by the nose, as asses are."[45]

Crotch is the next culprit, for dismissing the vocal works of Bach as inferior to Handel's, even though he praised the preludes and fugues. The author exhorts the reader to investigate Bach's works and see their genius for himself.

The author next relates a summary of Bach's life taken from Forkel, including the much-loved stories of Bach's copying his brother's organ score by moonlight, and the competition with Marchand. Along the way he once again excoriates the English, this time for considering music as a science and not an art; hence 'we have treatises

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[43] *Ibid,* 4.
[44] *Ibid,* 4-5.
[45] *Ibid*, 5. Italics original.

without end and theories without number, [instead of] a more useful, more practical, musical education. It is through practice alone, not through theory, that art can be improved and elevated.'

Bach is then hailed as a 'true genius':

> Here we have the rare and noble example of a man naturally possessed of musical powers, greater, perhaps, than have ever been enjoyed by any single individual, engaged in diligent and unremitting study from early childhood to the close of his long career, never for one moment losing sight of the degree of excellence he wished to obtain, though he knew it unattainable, and consequently always making advances towards it. He who is satisfied with what he has already performed, and looks to no further improvement, does but shew how unworthy is his idea of what ought to be accomplished, and how contemptible his ambition. The essence of true genius is to keep in view a nobler, a more ethereal, sphere of action than is ever dreamt of by common minds—to regard what is already attained only as one step in advance towards the regions of perfect purity, of perfect beauty, in which alone it lives, and moves, and has its being. Can he who is endowed with such a genius ever rest in his glorious career? --ever console himself with the idea that he has done more or better than his rivals? –ever relax his efforts to fulfill the ideal on which his mind's eye continually rests? No! for rest implies satisfaction; and he is not, cannot be satisfied: no! for he disdains comparison with aught but his own elevated ideas of perfection: no! for he longs—he thirsts--for that perfection as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, and he knows that his utmost efforts can only *approach* him to the wished-for end, never enable him to attain it. Such is the essence of true genius—such its constitution.[46]

A call for a correct and complete edition of Bach's works, in chronological order, is made; and then the author discusses Bach's keyboard fugues in general terms, and then six 'Protestant' vocal works: a Litany in D on words by Martin Luther (no title given), four cantatas with their German titles, and the *St Matthew Passion*, which the author rates more highly than Handel's *Messiah*.

> The double chorus in E Minor, at the beginning of the *Passionsmusik*, is, both in design and execution, the grandest, the most productive of sublime and holy feeling of any we are acquainted with….On the whole, admiring as we do Handel's great work on the same subject, yet regarding it as a work of art, and not as a mere candidate for the majority of suffrages, we

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[46] *Ibid,* 10.

> should without hesitation assign it a lower rank than the *Messiah* [*sic*] of Bach.

He closes his review of Bach's works with brief mention of three masses, including the *B minor*, which 'displays such consummate learning, such complete mastery of the art, and in the employment of these such inconceivable sublimity and such entire loveliness, that it seems rather the work of a disembodied and exalted spirit, than that of a mere mortal.'[47]

In conclusion,

> our thorough conviction is, that Sebastian Bach, having shewn in his works what art should be, not what it is, must still wait many a long year for general appreciation, general admiration; but that, when once appreciated, once admired, he will be looked upon as the great pioneer who, disregarding vulgar and temporary applause, singing only for 'himself and the muses,' cleared the way for the new and glorious career which art has yet to run, under auspices more bright—for aims more noble.[48]

In the next issue of the *Analyst* is a highly critical review of the 1837 Birmingham Festival, in which the authors, 'Y.D.' and 'T.W.', stand up against the sainted Mendelssohn, and the programme is severely criticised for presenting the entire *St Paul* oratorio, while only snippets of the *St Matthew Passion*, which in the writers' view was far superior. The authors call for a complete *Mass in B Minor*, or another full work of Bach.[49]

Bach had two particularly important advocates in the general press: Henry Chorley and Edward Holmes. Chorley, an acquaintance and great admirer of Mendelssohn, wrote often about Bach during his years at the *Athenaeum*. Some of his writings in connection with the *Mass in B Minor* will be discussed in a later chapter.

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[47] *Ibid,* 17.

[48] *Ibid,* 18.

[49] Y.D. and T.W., 'The Birmingham Musical Festival', *The Analyst* 7 (Jun 1837), 207-33.

Edward Holmes was also was a frequent writer on Bach, not only for the *Musical Times*, but also for *Fraser's Magazine*. An example of one of his perceptive articles can be found in a review of the first English edition of the motets, from 1851: 'Progress of the English Choir'.[50] (The article is unsigned, but there is little doubt that it is by Holmes.)[51] In this wide-ranging essay Holmes touches thoughtfully on the benefits of the choral singing movement, the style of Handel's music, his cosmopolitan life as contrasted with Bach's own circumscribed one, the newly-published Bach Gesellschaft edition of Bach's organ music, the thrill of playing the works on the organ, and the difference between the way in which Bach treated the chorale and the ways in which Roman Catholic composers treated the Gregorian cantus firmus.

> If we mark the first appearance of a book calculated to place science on higher ground, and to give new life to social and choral performance, that work endures as a rock, unmoved amidst the ever-shifting scene. The first appearance of a choral work of Sebastian Bach—his far-famed six motets for a double choir—in a complete English dress, is a trophy of quiet national progress, which shows what is doing and going forward in the undercurrent of musical society in this country.[52]

About choral music, Holmes says

> Choir music is a great branch of the art for which the musician will always cherish affection, on account of its abstract object—its superiority to passing influences or the dictates of fashion. Its aim is defined, and its progress constant. The expression of the loftiest thoughts and aspirations of mankind in one united voice of many parts, and the development of the art of counterpoint and fugue, the energetic living principle of music, are both intimately concerned in the progress of the choir. Religion finds, in its varied tones and cadences, expression for every solemn feeling. The 'resonant fugue,' with its several parts inverted, above, below, or in the midst, revolving like a planet in its orbit, seems to symbolise eternity; and the chant or response which dies off under the

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[50] *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 44 (1851), 609-618.
[51] Langley, 'English Musical Journal', 121.
[52] *Fraser's Magazine* 44 (1851), 609.

> cathedral roof, leaves in the memory an effect as permanent as the building itself.[53]

Holmes then generously praises Handel, but specifically his sacred music, saying that his operas are 'nearly a blank for prosperity'.[54] Though Holmes again promotes the idea of Bach as a lowly court musician working in isolation out in the country, in contrast to Handel the widely-travelled cosmopolitan composer, his words are far more gentle than the *Analyst* author's.

In another article on Bach in *Fraser's* from the same year (reprinted in the *Musical Times*), the anonymous author (again, presumably Holmes) speaks in glowing terms of the revelation in hearing the Credo from the *Mass in B Minor*, performed by Dr Henry Leslie's choir. His tone is one of reverence, as he anoints Handel's successor; and he looks forward to the day, not long hence, when the musical education of the people will enable them to appreciate and even commune with such advanced music. The author says that this was

> an event of the utmost importance in the musical history of London. This great work comes essentially into the category of the new; and what is better than that ephemeral quality of a composition which too often decays in its first gloss—the novelty is eternal. We listened to this Credo with such wonder and delight at its sublime harmony, that it seemed to us as if the sensations of years had been crowded into one single evening; nor could we have believed that the music of any past age or school was capable of renewing in us a pleasure so keen and so enthusiastic as we then experienced. In laying the foundation-stone of a bridge or of a triumphal arch or column destined to overlook many generations of human kind, men congregate with solemn feelings, and project their thoughts into futurity; and in a spirit akin to this, shared in some degree by every experienced and judicious listener, this most holy and sublime Credo was received. It seemed as if, in this inauguration of Sebastian Bach, we were present at a most important solemnity—as if we saw the first gigantic foot-print in this country of the man who is to succeed Handel—to adorn an advanced age, when music, having become imbued through early training, and as part of general education, shall have prepared the ear of audiences for the highest efforts of the art. That 'good things

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[53] *Ibid*, 610.
[54] *Ibid*, 611.

> will have their time' is a well-established saying; and it is one of the consolations with respect to Bach which experience derives from watching the mysterious working of events.[55]

The author goes on to provide a comprehensive history of the introduction of Bach to the English, by Wesley, Horn, Jacob, Crotch, and Mendelssohn.

Bach in the Early Nineteenth-Century Musical Press

With the appearance of the first long-run music journals, mention of Bach in the press increases, though not dramatically until the second generation of Bach-proponents. The first of these journals, the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, which ran from 1818 to 1830, was edited by Richard MacKenzie Bacon. Bacon was a musical amateur and strict Handelian. He was disappointed that musical taste was not developing as it seemed to be in Germany and Italy, but he was determined to raise the taste of the English public.[56] In the entire run of the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, there are only three references to J.S. Bach: a review of the English translation of Forkel's biography, and once each in connection with Clementi and Wesley.

Brief mention may be made of an announcement in the *English Musical Gazette, or Monthly Intelligencer*, on Jan. 1 1819, of the imminent publishing of the Credo from the *Mass in B Minor*. Under the title 'Works in the Press', the announcement reads

> We are informed, that a magnificent Credo of the mighty master, Sebastian Bach, a MS. never before printed, is soon to be published by subscription, and is now in a state of forward preparation for the press,

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[55] 'Our Musical Spring', *Fraser's Magazine* 43 (1851), 590.
[56] See Langley, 'English Musical Journal', 194-281.

> under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Samuel Wesley. So grand a work must naturally excite lofty expectations in the musical world, which, however, are pretty certain to be fully answered and highly gratified, when we consider the sublime and inexhaustible genius of the author.[57]

The *English Musical Gazette, or Monthly Intelligencer* had a run of only seven issues totalling 125 pages, between January and June of 1819.

A similar case to the *QMMR* is seen with the second long-running English musical journal, the *Harmonicon* (1823-1833). The policy of the editor, William Ayrton, was not to review any music that was published before 1823. In 1827 he wrote, 'Were ours a retrospective review, we would dwell with no ordinary satisfaction on a fugue by Sebastian Bach.' (This, in spite of the fact that he was not an enthusiastic admirer of J.S. Bach, by his own admission.)[58] In the full run of the *Harmonicon*, there are only nine articles mentioning Bach, and all but two of those are from after Mendelssohn's revival of the *Matthäus Passion* in Berlin, which was followed closely by his first visit to England. There are several mentions of this performance, including one that signals a change in tone: it is worth quoting in full. Taken from 'a journal' in Berlin, this article emphasises the revelation of Bach in the humblest of circumstances:

> Genius has always something to surprise and astonish; its history is composed of inexplicable prodigies; it confounds all the calculations of sober reason, anticipates the march of time, and attains by intuition what mediocrity is forced to arrive at by painful study. In the example before us, we have a fresh proof of the power of its conceptions—nay, more, a most miraculous display of its power. A man who passed his whole life in the inconsiderable towns of Germany; who travelled for the sole purpose of listening to organists, in the hope to find models, and

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[57] *The English Musical Gazette; or, Monthly Intelligencer* I, No. 1 (January 1, 1819), 14.
[58] Langley, 'English Musical Journal', 390. Ayrton was apparently also the anonymous editor of *Sacred Minstrelsy: a collection of Sacred Music by the Great Masters of all ages and nations* (London: John William Parker, 1834-5), in which he published arrangements of the Passion Chorale from the *St Matthew Passion,* and the Crucifixus from the *B Minor Mass.* See Chapter 3, p.128, fn 65.

> who could meet with none but performers whom his native talent had already left far behind in the race of excellence; who never dreamed of making a fortune, and lived happy in his mediocrity; who had a numerous family, whose musical education formed the principal occupation of his life, while the rest of his time was consumed in inconsiderable occupations, which yielded very trifling advantages; --this man, I say, in a position so little favourable to the development of talent, alone, without master or advisor, was not only the most able performer on the organ and harpsichord that ever existed, or perhaps will ever exist, but succeeded, by the publication even of a small portion of his instrumental compositions, in exciting the enthusiastic admiration of all Europe, and in attaining the front rank among the greatest musicians of Germany. Need we add the name to the portrait, and say that this man was Sebastian Bach?[59]

The situation changes dramatically with the advent of the *Musical World*, in 1836. By this time, Mendelssohn had paid several visits to England, playing Bach's works every time, and was clearly taking the country by storm. What might be termed a Mendelssohn circle was forming, made up of English organists and writers who were also friends with the young German: Henry John Gauntlett, mentioned earlier, and the organist/writers E.H. Holmes and Henry Chorley.[60] The activities of these musicians initiate a dramatic rise in writing about Bach, and a change in tone is evident. The wide-ranging activities of these few writers meant that knowledge of Bach increased exponentially, and illustrates how much influence the press had in forming public taste.

Gauntlett was strongly influential in the *Musical World* (1836-91) during its first years, from about 1836-38, and indeed seems to have served as editor for a short while.[61] In the first year of the *Musical World's* publication, there are twenty-six substantial references to Sebastian Bach over 232 pages, many of which are far more than announcements of performances or publications. In a single issue in April of

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[59] *Harmonicon* (1830), 420.
[60] With regard to the same period, one should mention the music critic George Hogarth, who was also a Bach advocate, though apparently he did not know Mendelssohn.
[61] Langley outlines the editorial history of the Musical World in the 'English Musical Journal', 573-85.

1838, thirty different publications of Bach's music were reviewed. Gauntlett, though apparently a difficult personality, was a perceptive music critic, known especially for his intelligent writing on Beethoven. If indeed he was serving as editor, his choice of published articles confirm that he was himself widely read, and willing to publish a broad range of articles. In an example from the first year of the *Musical World*, 1836, Gauntlett (if editor) included part of a nearly ten-year-old letter from Zelter to Goethe, in which Zelter decried foreign influence (especially French) on Bach: 'French influence...that is to say, of Couperin…must be lifted off like thick scum; the bright water of Bach lies beneath.'[62]

In 1838 the journal was sold to Frederick Davison, of Gray and Davison organ builders. (The Gray and Davison company was already making its mark in the construction of so-called German System organs which had the resources necessary to play the organ works of J.S. Bach.) Davison was hostile to Gauntlett, who left in short order. The next editor was Edward Holmes, another organist, who also had made his mark as music book reviewer for the *Atlas*. Assisted by Egerton Webbe, a discerning and witty writer, organist, and composer, Holmes tried to raise English musical tastes by promoting the music of Bach. Holmes had also written a book (anonymously) called *A Ramble among the Musicians of Germany*, in which he spent a lot of ink on organists and organs, though he did not discuss Bach at length.[63] Holmes was later to write for the *Spectator, Fraser's Magazine*, and *The Musical Times*, among others, and was always a strong advocate for the music of Bach. After Holmes and Webbe, who

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[62] *MW* 1 (1836), 106. The original letters between Zelter and Goethe were written in 1827. For further discussion this exchange, see Matthew Dirst, 'Bach's French Overtures and the Politics of Overdotting', *Early Music* 25, No. 1 (Feb. 1997), 35-44.
[63] [E. Holmes], *A ramble among the musicians of Germany, by a musical professor* (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1828).

lasted only six months, came Henry Smart, also an organist and advocate of Bach. Smart's tenure also did not last however, and in 1841, George MacFarren took over. MacFarren died suddenly in 1843, but not before he was able to publish Forkel's *Life of Johann Sebastian Bach* in the journal. After this J.W. Davison took over as editor, but by this time advocates of Bach were becoming less and less necessary to the spreading of his fame.

With the rapid proliferation of music journals in nineteenth-century England and the rise of music criticism, mention of Bach increased to the point where there was little effort needed on the part of his proponents to get his name in print. In particular, the *Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* (founded 1844) provided an important forum for the sight-singing movement, which was to become an essential ingredient in the proliferation of Bach's music.

Two Views of Bach

The nineteenth century was framed by two important biographies of Bach which express aesthetic outlooks in general, and views of the composer in particular, at each end of the century.

The first biography was Forkel's, which appeared in German in 1802, though it was not translated into English until 1820.[64] Forkel's admirable and admiring biography related many details of Bach's life, including the famous anecdotes of the moonlight copying and competition with Marchand. In its characterisation of Bach

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[64] Johann Nikolaus Forkel, *Life of John Sebastian Bach, with a critical view of his compositions. Translated* (London: 1820). For a discussion of the identity of the translator, see Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*, 169-210.

however as 'the greatest master of musical expressiveness who ever existed', and in its advocacy of Bach as a German national hero, it also prompted Joseph Kerman to write, 'The history of the nineteenth-century Bach revival begins as a triumph of ideology over practice'.[65] This of course is a twentieth-century commentary; there is no evidence that nineteenth-century English readers resented the claim of German pre-eminence in the least, and they eagerly absorbed the ideal of the composer with the 'musical poetic spirit'.[66] Forkel famously omits any discussion of the vocal music. Carl Dahlhaus and others attributed this omission to the 'metaphysics of instrumental music',[67] while others defended Forkel by saying the omission was probably owing to lack of knowledge of the vocal works.[68]

Just over one hundred years later—in 1909—Charles Hubert Hastings Parry's book on Bach appeared.[68] Parry, deeply influenced by the social Darwinist theories of Herbert Spencer, the moral view of art as espoused by Ruskin, as well as the emerging psychological theories of Freud and others, was a believer in an evolutionary theory of music which, among other things, attempted to position a composer in a developmental continuum. From Spencer, Parry adopted the principle that biological evolution was paralleled by social and intellectual history, and that music was essential to that history.[70] His view was distinctly different from previous approaches

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[65] Joseph Kerman, 'A Few Canonic Variations', *Critical Inquiry,* 10/1 (1983), 107-25.
[66] 'musicalischen Dichtergeist'. J.N. Forkel, *Über Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst, und Kunstwerkerk* (Leipzig: Hoffmeister und Kühnel, 1802), 24.
[67] Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 26 and elsewhere.
[68] For example, Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, 'Johann Nikolaus Forkel und die Anfänge der Bach-Forschung', in Michael Heinemann and Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Bach Und Die Nachwelt*, 4 vols. (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1997).
[69] Parry, *Bach.*
[70] Jeremy Dibble, 'Parry as Historiographer', in *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies* ed. Bennett Zon (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 37-51.

to music history, which were largely reliant on composer biographies, and the view of the composer as an isolated phenomenon of genius. He emphasised influences, progress, and developments, and wrote that 'in music, we can judge how and why men were driven in particular directions by the limits of their opportunities or the circumstances of their lives, and why certain forms of art were prosperous at certain times in history, and different ones at others.'[71] He sought to de-mythologise musicians and composers, by examining their accomplishments in the context of their time, disparaging 'the common weakness of looking upon an exceptionally able man as a divinely appointed prophet whose judgment is infallible…[E]ven the greatest men the world has produced were all of them products of the times that preceded them and of the circumstances in which they lived.'[72] His biography of Bach is strikingly different from any that had appeared before, and intentionally so: he commends Philip Spitta[73] on his exhaustive detail, but says that in order to be able to stand back and get an overall picture of the composer and his place—to see the forest instead of the individual trees—it was necessary to leave out what he would consider extraneous details. Parry says that 'the mere events and facts of the life apart from Art are insignificant… [Bach's] life was unified by the persistence of strong and decisive qualities of character and temperament, which happened to be very characteristic of the race and period to which he belonged.'[74] This approach is considerably different also from the short biographical accounts of the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, cited

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[71] C. Hubert H. Parry, 'On Some Bearings of the Historical Method upon Music', *Proceedings of the Musical Association,* 11th session (Nov. 1884), 2.
[72] Parry, *Bach*, 3.
[73] Julius August Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach, His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, Tr. By C. Bell and J.A. Fuller-Maitland* (London: Novello, 1884) 3 vols.
[74] Parry, *Bach*, vi.

above, which repeatedly told certain stories about Bach and details of his life (even if they were completely fabricated), which were meant to provide evidence of his phenomenal genius.[75]

In his first chapter, entitled 'Convergences' (the chapter titles themselves are signposts of his theory), Parry states that 'the man, whatever his greatness or pre-eminence, is the product and representative of the conditions and influences of his time, and they are the fruit of the times that went before.'[76] Nonetheless, a brilliant composer is more than just a product of his time and environment: features of the personality of the artist are vital to his success. He must be willing to discount convention, must be willing to fight for his convictions (and it helps if there is some struggle in his life), must be willing to acquire the discipline to tame and nurture his abilities, and of course must actually possess the necessary raw talent. Parry duly traces, first, a history of Europe in which Protestant Germany is shown to be the ultimate victor, albeit at a price, of a religious war with 'the old Church':

> And when the terrible wars, in which the old Church endeavoured to suppress the impulse to break away from her domination, wore themselves out and the turmoil died down, great manifestations of art followed, which presented themselves, not in the countries or among people who had submitted or had been coerced into acquiescing in the old order of things, but among those who had established their right to liberty of thought and to the exercise of those kinds of religion which

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[75] Parry was perhaps the best-known music historian in the nineteenth century to write from the perspective of evolutionary theory. In addition to the citations in preceding footnotes, his views can be seen in such works as *Studies of Great Composers* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1887), *The Art of Music* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1893), *The Music of the Seventeenth Century,* and *The Oxford History of Music 3* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902). Other famous advocates of evolutionary theories of music were Herbert Spencer ('The Origin and Function of Music', *Fraser's Magazine*, October 1857, and other essays), Charles Darwin himself (who wrote about the origins of music in several of his books, including *The Origin of Species* (1859), and *The Descent of Man* (1871)), Edmund Gurney (*The Power of Sound* (London, 1880) and other works), Joseph Goddard (*The Philosophy of Music* (London, 1862), [same author], *Musical Development; or, Remarks on the Spirit of The Principal Musical Forms* (London: Thomas Murby and Simpkin (1868) and other works). For recent discussions of evolutionary theory in music, see Peter Kivy, 'Charles Darwin on Music', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 11, No. 1 (Spring, 1958), 42-48; Bojan Bujic, *Music in European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and Bennett Zon, *Music and Metaphor in Nineteenth-Century British Musicology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

[76] Parry, *Bach*, 3.

> were more consonant with the progress of enlightenment and complete spiritual sincerity. Other nations may have suffered more cruelly in religious wars, and may possibly have sacrificed more, but Germany not only suffered and spent her blood freely, she was also foremost in the expenditure of intellectual energy, and the most effectual of all nations in the argumentative war, in insistence on liberty of conviction, and in appeal to men's judgment and sense of right.[77]

Next, Parry relates a history of music in which he upholds as examples composers such as Monteverdi, Purcell, and Schütz. While each of these composers was gifted, each was thwarted by the times and resources of art in the period in which he lived, and thus none had all the ingredients necessary to produce the ultimate greatness: Monteverdi was 'defeated by the immaturity of methods in the special branch of art he cultivated',[78] while Purcell 'most frequently suggests to the hearer how great his achievements would have been if his opportunities had been more favourable.'[79] Music benefited from Germany's exposure to the naturally more-musically-gifted Italians, an exposure which enabled the combination of discipline and rigorous compositional forms plus Protestantism, with the vivacity and beauty of musical idea and expression of the Italians.

In a final, extensive look at Bach's own forebears, Parry traces the clues to Bach's greatness to his times, his training, his work, his nationality, and his genes, and draws them together like threads to form a great knot, converging in the life of Sebastian Bach.

> It is inevitable in art… that the lower order of human beings should provide the groundwork for the achievements of those of higher type. The mechanics and everyday workmen fashion the details and appliances, and the organisers use them for great and comprehensive works. At the end of the seventeenth century things were more or less

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[77] *Ibid,* 5.
[78] *Ibid*, 4.
[79] *Ibid.*

> in a state of preparation; the appliances were ready in plenty, but they needed the gathering together and systematisation–the comprehension which only a man gifted with the highest faculties and perception of the widest range can command.[80]

In this passage Parry portrays Bach as the right person coming at the right time, when music and culture had reached a proper state of readiness. By speaking of lower and higher orders of humans, mechanics and everyday workmen, he is also revealing the cultural hegemony and hierarchical structure of the society of which he himself was a part. Parry may also be revealing his familiarity with Wagner's essay, 'Was ist Deutsch', in which Wagner describes German music, the spirit of which he maintained was embodied in Bach's music, as the exalted consolidation of the virtues of Italian and French music:

> Yet Bach's spirit, the German spirit, stepped forth from the sanctuary of divinest Music, the place of its new-birth. When Goethe's 'Götz' appeared, its joyous cry went up: 'That's German!' And, beholding his likeness, the German also knew to shew himself, to show the world, what Shakespeare is, whom his own people did not understand. These deeds the German spirit brought forth of itself, from its inmost longing to grow conscious of itself. And this consciousness told it—what it was the first to publish to the world—that *the Beautiful and Noble came not into the world for sake of profit, nay, not for sake of even fame and recognition.* And everything done in the sense of this teaching is '*deutsch*'; and *therefore* is the German great; and *only what is done in that sense, can lead Germany to greatness.*[81]

There are similarities between Forkel's biography and Parry's, in the tacit acceptance of German musical superiority, and the recognition–even adulation–of Bach's remarkable genius. Parry's biography in the main however represents a different, post-Darwinian, approach to Bach. Taken together with other writings on the composer from each end of the century (especially Kollmann's, with his portrayal of Bach as the Sun from 1796), they show a progression from an idealised, awe-

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[80] *Ibid,* 23.

[81] Richard Wagner, 'What is German', tr. William Ashton Ellis. Originally printed Bayreuther Blätter, Feb. 1878. Italics original. <http://users.belgacom.net/wagnerlibrary/prose/ wagwiger.htm#d0e961> (accessed 15 June 2011). Parry was not a Wagnerite, but did study his music dramas. See Dibble, 'Parry as Historiographer', 41-42.

inspiring figure with Pythagorean resonance, to a far more human one; a wish to make him flesh-and-blood; a real person with which everyone could identify. The stories in the press from the first half of the century which repeat the accounts of Bach copying his brother's music by moonlight, with the subsequent discipline by his brother, and the Marchand incident, are told in the same tone as children's Bible stories: on the one hand they are early indications of the wish to bring the composer down to human level, while on the other hand they impart a moral message. A different approach to humanising the composer is taken later in the century with more extended but completely fictitious narratives, such as one that appeared in *The Argosy: a magazine of tales, travels, essays, and poems*, 1 May 1869. (This article, called 'The Cantor's Triumph', is reprinted in the appendix, and is discussed further in Chapter 5.) Here, the figure of Bach is given another dimension: it is not enough simply to describe what happened, but now a personality takes shape. In the opening paragraph Bach is described this way: 'His countenance was fresh and blooming; a grave cheerfulness played round the corners of his firm mouth; his splendid forehead was high and transparent, but the glance of his fiery black eyes had a power—a force—whose influence few men could withstand.'[82] Parry's biography rounds out the human picture of Bach in a different way: it attempts to explain him and position him in history and in society. Its tone on the one hand contributes unwittingly to the myth, while on the other hand presents him as a rational phenomenon.

Parry's portrayal of Bach in his biography was foreshadowed in his earlier book, *The Art of Music*.[83] This book, tellingly enlarged a few years later and re-titled

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[82] p. 392.
[83] (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1893).

The Evolution of the Art of Music,[84] set Bach in a wider aesthetic context, and amplified his view of Bach as a composer whose ultimate style and works of genius were attained in an organic process, each characteristic feature arrived at as a further outgrowth of existing styles. Parry describes a progression of musical styles in which gradually each branch of music becomes more dependent on others: opera gradually becomes more reliant on instrumental music; choral music moves forward only when composers see the value of older forms of writing, and combine those techniques with a more modern sense of harmony: 'The old methods were resumed under the influence of the new feeling for tonality.'[85] Thus choral music had reached something of a stasis until Handel and Bach. Both combined the Italian art with German seriousness, but Bach in particular had a special feeling for 'the peculiar mystic sentiment, which was then characteristic of Teutonic Christianity'.[86] The isolated circumstances of his life, together with his personal and particular Lutheran faith, allowed him to write not for popular taste, but to express his own personal feelings: 'he laboured throughout his life with simplicity and singleness of heart to come up to his own highest ideals in all branches of art, and to satisfy his own critical judgment without a thought of the effect his work would have on any but an ideal auditor.'[87] In sum,

> Bach, with higher ideals [than Handel] produced work which was often experimental, and even at times unpractical; but he used the sum of his predecessors' work as his stepping-stone, and did much greater service to his art. He appeals to a much smaller public than Handel, and is totally unacceptable to shallow, worldly or unpoetical temperaments; but he has given much higher pleasure

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[84] (London: Kegan Paul, 1896).
[85] *Ibid,* 173.
[86] *Ibid*, 179.
[87] *Ibid*, 187.

> to those whose mental and emotional organization is sufficiently high to be in touch with him.[88]

Thus, as in his Bach biography, Parry characterises the great composer and those who appreciate him as being of a higher, more discerning order. His own innate greatness allowed him to rise from his humble circumstances. His appeal is not to the coarser, uneducated person, but rather to those who have enough refinement to be able to appreciate the skill, subtlety, and inspiration of Bach's works. Handel, whose appeal was extraordinarily broad, is, in Parry's account, condemned as populist and therefore not as worthy an artist as Bach. By characterizing Bach in this way, Parry is again positioning him securely in a high evolutionary plane, as well as in the upper reaches of the British social hierarchy of which he himself was a part, and reinforcing the cultural hegemonical values of the place and period. Bach's persona is moulded into the template of the ideal British gentleman, which is a key ingredient to the adoption of Bach as an 'English' composer, and bears striking similarities to the reception of both Handel and Mendelssohn in Britain.

In contrasting the stories about Bach over the course of the century, an irony is revealed: with Forkel, Bach is introduced from the standpoint of his instrumental music and his German nationality. While Bach is revered, and constantly referred to in religious terms by Wesley,[89] it is not his own religiosity that is hailed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the discomfort that people felt with the juxtaposition of religion with virtuosic handling of counterpoint in Bach may be seen in the fact that the 371 Chorales were published (in Germany) without words in the 1830s: their appeal was initially to organists and students only. By end of the century,

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[88] *Ibid.*, 190.
[89] See Eliza Wesley, ed. *Letters of Samuel Wesley to Mr. Jacobs.*

Bach's religiosity and personal faith is one of his most revered attributes, if one goes by what was written about him. His was regarded as the ultimate in religious music, both in church and outside. In church, his arias and chorales were sung with English words. Outside church, in town and concert halls, his choral music drew huge audiences, which frequently were encouraged to behave like reverent church congregations, with applause prohibited. These, and other, aspects of nineteenth-century performance practice will be explored in Chapter 3.

Bach in English Hymnbooks

Given the popularity of hymn-singing in the rapidly growing nonconformist churches of the nineteenth century, it may seem surprising that Bach did not find a home in the church early in the century. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Lutheran hymns struck a chord with Anglicans, in that they encouraged unmediated connections with God, and active participation by singing His praises. However, as much as the Oxford Movement was concerned with raising the tone of church services, early proponents did not believe in organs or the congregational singing of metrical psalmody.[90] Non-conformist churches believed in singing, but Bach's music was difficult and in German, hurdles which will be explored in Chapter 3 in the context of the *St Matthew Passion* and the *B Minor Mass*. Nonetheless, in time, some chorales began appearing in hymn collections. An early example is *Psalms and Hymns, being a Collection of*

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[90] Theologians such as Frederick Oakeley, as well as the Cambridge Camden Society, believed that the future of congregational participation was in the singing of Latin hymns in Gregorian tones. See Bernarr Rainbow, *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church (1839-1872)* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1970), 89.

Tunes, adapted to the Several Selections made for the Church, and more particularly to that compiled for the use St Margaret's Westminster by the Rev. H.H. Milman.[91] A review in the *Musical World* from that year hails the quality of the collection, and says that it contains 'a great variety of novelties from the German Coral-Bucher of Sebastian Bach,' including 'some arrangements by Mr Gauntlett from Bach'.[92] More Bach chorales appeared in Joseph Warren's *John Sebastian Bach Hymns. A collection of his celebrated chorales, adapted to select portions of hymns from various authors with an accompaniment for the piano forte or organ.*[93] Catherine Winkworth's efforts in *Lyra Germanica* (1855) and *The Chorale Book for England* (1863—with musical advice by Sterndale Bennett and Otto Goldschmidt) paid off in the inclusion of some Bach chorales in *Hymns Ancient and Modern.*[94] (There were ten German hymns in the *A&M*, about four percent of the total, of which eight were from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.)[95] There were a few other collections of German hymns (for example, Frances Cox's translations of German hymns in *Sacred Hymns from the German,*[96] but German hymns did not have the impact on English hymnody that, for example, the Genevan Psalter hymns had done. The influence of the Oxford movement and historicism was felt more in the increasing interest in the ancient church, and in the plethora of translations from Latin.[97]

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[91] (London: J.B. Nichol and Son, 1837).

[92] *MW 6* (1837), 90.

[93] (London : R. Cocks & Co, [1842]). Warren, 1804-81, was an organist, music collector, and writer on music, who produced many organ instruction books which discussed pedal-playing, and extolled the works of Bach.

[94] W.H. Monk, ed., *Hymns: Ancient and Modern* (first edition, London: Novello, 1861). See also J.R. Watson, *The English Hymn - A Critical and Historical Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Oxford Scholarship Online. Oxford University Press. (accessed electronically through OLIS 22 February 2009)

[95] Susan Drain, *The Anglican Church in Nineteenth Century Britain : Hymns Ancient and Modern (1860-1875)* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1989), 254.

[96] Frances Elizabeth Cox, ed., *Sacred Hymns from the German* (first edition, London: Wm. Pickering, 1841; second edition, London : Rivingtons, 1864).

[97] Drain, *Anglican Church.*

Popularizing Bach

In a poem from 1869 Bach's music reflects pre-Raphaelite ideals in its depiction of nature, which evokes a heaven like a 'flowery dell':

> **Sebastian Bach**, when listening to your
> strain, More wondrous sweet than any words
> may tell, I seem to wander through some
> flowery dell Where tall, slim trees with many
> an ivy chain, Take sun and shade, and songful
> birds are fain, And wind-borne rustlings softly
> fall and swell, Led by a white-robed angel, who
> doth dwell
> In realms untouched by any mortal stain,
> Where through enamelled banks a stream doth stray
> Which murmurs soothingly its woodland story;
> Until, at last, I reach a fuller day
> Made glorious by that blessèd consistory
> Of crownèd Spirits who rejoice alway
> With psalms that ring through heaven's high clerestory.

--Davies, William (1830-1896): CIX. SEBASTIAN BACH, (from Songs of A Wayfarer, 1869)[98]

The Hayes poem quoted partially in the beginning of this chapter begins thus:

> Not Alpine!---Himalayan is the range
> Of thy stupendous voice. Through every clime
> Of passion mounting, where the mists of time
> Girdle unconquered heights, above all change
> Of seasons, thou dost fling to Heaven thy strange
> Prodigious harmonies, that grandly chime
> In pauses of the storm of sound, sublime
> As thunder of descending avalange.
> Thine are the giant leaps, o'er monstrous chasms,
> From ledge to ledge; depths of abysmal gloom;
> Rending of stubborn rocks by lightning-spasms.
> Thine too the gently-sloping vales, where loom
> Soft forms, the rainbow weaves her frail phantasms,
> Butterflies toy, and fairy flowers bloom.
> Mid yonder pinnacles of ice, that hold
> Communion with the silent hosts of heaven,
> Where broods the eagle and where sleeps the levin,
> Where first alights the day's young dream of gold,
> There well the fountains, free and clear and cold,
> Of music's mightiest flood, its pathway riven
> By glacier-ploughs, till all its streams are driven
> To where the runes of ocean are unrolled.
> There is its power at large; the billows raise
> The pæan which the sons of morning sang;

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[98] William Davies, *Songs of a Wayfarer* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1869).

Deep in its bosom huge Behemoth plays,
The tempest tears its breast with granite fang;
Or, when the great tides slumber, placid bays
Reflect the snow-clad mountains whence it sprang…
--from Alfred Hayes, JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (from The Cup of Quietness, 1911)[99]

In this poem images recalling Burke and the sublime ('thunder of descending avalange') are mixed with pre-Raphaelite images ('butterflies toy, and fairy flowers bloom'); images that could be from ancient mythology ('the paean which the sons of morning sang'; 'where broods the eagle and where sleeps the levin…'); images that evoke Greek heroes ('laureled masters'); Pythagorean ideology ('chiming spheres'); all ultimately winding up 'high in heaven…with…celestial choirs.'

Bach also figured in Cambridge University mathematics exams. Scholes reports the following question, asked first in 1858, and then again in the 1890s:

> Bach's 'Well-tempered Clavier' consists of two books, each containing the same number of fugues. In the first book, instead of having (as is usual) one subject, one fugue has 2 and another has a prime number; in the second book, two less than half the number of fugues in it have two subjects, and one has the same prime number as before, which is a measure of the whole number of fugues, and also of the whole number of subjects diminished by eighteen. If the whole number of fugues were increased by one, one-seventh of the result (which is an integer) is less by two than one-third of the whole number of subjects in the first book. How many fugues are there?[100]

Conclusion

The path of Bach acceptance in nineteenth-century England can be mapped out clearly by looking at the activities of a small number of proponents who acted with missionary zeal, especially in the performance of his works and in articles written about him. Bach was introduced to England as a 'Master of Harmony', primarily on

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[99] Alfred Hayes, *The Cup of Quietness* (London: Methuen & Co., 1911).
[100] Scholes, *Mirror,* 415.

the basis of his keyboard fugues, which were most often played on the organ (notwithstanding Wesley's early performances of a motet and violin sonatas). The vocal works were not ignored: there was mention of them and occasional attempts at performance, particularly the *St Matthew Passion*, over the next decades, but any discussion of their worth was based largely on the word of a few experts who might have had access to the scores. For the most part the difficulties of choral performance could not be overcome until after mid-century. Newspaper and journal articles paint a picture of Bach, and reveal that from the beginning there was a desire to come to terms with him as a person: the earliest accounts in the press relate stories about him that provoke a sympathetic response from the reader, and thereby permit a personal relationship (of sorts) to be established. It is evident that creating an image of him was important to his popular adoption, and when the stories from his obituary became familiar and well-worn, stories were made up about him.

The Parry biography, coming at the beginning of the twentieth century, revealed a later view of Bach from the perspective of evolutionary theory. From Forkel's biography forward, awe and reverence are part of the pattern when considering Bach and his music. These are reflected in the terms Wesley used for the composer—'Our God', 'The Man', and so on—as well as in the descriptions of Bach's life spent seemingly in the humblest of circumstances, far from the European centres of culture. These descriptions at times sound much like the revelation of Jesus born in a crude stable. Bach seems to be regarded as an agent or conduit for some greater power. In contrast, Parry's view of Bach gives reasons for Bach's greatness, which are the culmination of the times in which he lived, his family background, the culture in which he worked, and his circumstances which shaped what he did. Bach,

in Parry's organicist view, was not divine, but on the other hand he was clearly a higher order of human, able to be appreciated most fully by other members of that class.

Nonetheless, the spreading of Bach's popularity can be seen in the increasing number of articles written about him, the increase in publication of his works, and the increasing number of performances of his works. The culture of choral singing was particularly important to his popularising, since even non-musicians were given direct access to his music, rather than depending on others to play it. Also key was the promotion of Bach as a religious composer, and the co-opting of him and his music by prominent clergy, community leaders, and church musicians. By the end of the century it was no longer necessary for a 'Bach elite' to promote his music, since it had taken on a life of its own. That process however involved reconfiguring his image—or in fact, creating a new image which reflected the ideals of the changing society. It is not only interesting to note the increase in Bach's 'presence' in performance, publication, and periodicals, but also to take note of the way in which he was portrayed.

Chapter 3

The Nineteenth-Century Reception of the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor*

In his fascinating book *The Mirror of Music*, Percy Scholes describes how Bach 'wins a footing' in the British choral repertory of the nineteenth century.[1] He shows that between the years 1846 and 1926 the number of annual choral performances of Bach increased from none to forty-four.[2] This was second only to Handel, at sixty-two performances in 1926 (forty-six of which were of the *Messiah*), and significantly more even than Mendelssohn and Elgar. Hundreds of English editions of Bach's choral works were produced by the turn of the twentieth century, including individual numbers from the cantatas, passions, masses, and motets, enabling regular performances in church services and concerts around the country.

Yet in the early years of the English Bach awakening, the choral music played only a small role. To be sure, Samuel Wesley performed the motet *Jesu meine Freude* (BWV 227) as early as 1809, and excerpts from the other works appeared in collections early on. However, the numbers of publications and performances of the solo keyboard works (mostly the *WTC* and free organ works) dwarfed choral performances until well into the second half of the nineteenth century. It is

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[1] Scholes, *Mirror*, 69. In his book, Scholes was giving a broad overview of music practice and attitudes in England from 1844 through 1944 as he saw it through the pages of the *Musical Times*. His conclusions on Bach were reached by surveying concert programmes, articles, and related items as reported in that popular journal.

[2] *Ibid*, 144-6. Scholes does not count total numbers of performances over that entire period, but rather samples choral society programmes for the years 1846-7, 1886-7, and 1926-7. His statistics show that in 1846-7 there were no performances of Bach by choral societies; in 1886-7 there were six performances (one each of the *Mass in B Minor, St Matthew Passion, St John Passion, Lieber Herr Gott* ('whatever this may be'), *Thou Guide of Israel*, and *God's Time is Best);* and in 1926-7, 44 performances (8 each of the *Mass in B Minor* and the *St Matthew Passion*, 6 of the *Christmas Oratorio*; 3 each of the *St John Passion* and the Peasant Cantata; 2 of the *Magnificat*, and one each of fourteen church cantatas.

reasonable to ask why the choral music of J.S. Bach did not feature more prominently in England, especially given the fact that Mendelssohn, who played such a vital role in spreading the popularity of Bach, had just arrived in the country from his triumphant performance of the *Matthäus Passion* in Berlin in 1829. Yet Mendelssohn made no attempt to introduce Bach to the English as a choral composer, even though his own choral compositions took their cue in many ways from Bach's. Indeed, given the poor reviews of the first performances of the *St Matthew Passion* some fifty years after Wesley and Horn began their evangelism for Bach, it is extraordinary that there was still enough persistence on the part of musicians to keep trying until it finally did gain a foothold.

This chapter will explore the first performances of the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor* in England, and the adjustments and adaptations that had to be made before the works could be assimilated into British choral culture. It is true that some other choral works were occasionally heard before the first performance of the *St Matthew* (the motets and the *Magnificat* among them), and in addition, excerpts from both the *St Matthew* and the *Mass* were performed on occasion, but it was these two massive works that became iconic in the nineteenth century, and occasioned the greatest outpouring of emotional reaction in audiences and in the press.

Before exploring the history of the first complete (or semi-complete) performances, it is interesting to note the earliest known performances in England of excerpts from both works. In the case of the *St Matthew Passion*, the first known performance of excerpts was given at the Birmingham Festival in 1837, when Mendelssohn came to conduct his oratorio *St Paul* and play the E-flat Prelude and Fugue, BWV 552, on the organ. The excerpts were scheduled to be sung on the last day and presumably conducted by Mendelssohn, but owing to the early departure of

Mendelssohn's coach back to London, from where he was due to return immediately to Germany, he was not there for the performance. One might assume that because Mendelssohn himself had suggested playing the Bach E-flat organ prelude and fugue, and because he had organised the performance of the *Matthäus Passion* in Berlin in 1829, he had programmed the *Passion* excerpts himself. That is not the case, however, as is confirmed by a letter which he wrote to his sister Fanny a few months before the festival. Instead, Chevalier Sigmund Neukomm programmed the movements, which were ''Tis done! The Holy One is taken', semi-chorus, 'Leave him! Loose him', duet, 'Moon retire, veil thy head', and chorus, 'Ye lightnings, ye thunders'. (BWV 244, 27a: 'So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen' – 'Laßt ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!' - 27b. 'Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken verschwunden?').[3]

Whether or not it was planned this way, the *St Matthew* selections were therefore not conducted by Mendelssohn. 'Tradition says that the performance was vile',[4] and the production was 'laboured…unvocal and unfit for the words'.[5] Perhaps it would have been somewhat better received had Mendelssohn actually been conducting, since he undoubtedly would have known the piece better than anyone else present. But rehearsals for all seven concerts held over four days were compressed into the single day preceding the Festival; thus an adequate performance of this difficult music would have been nearly impossible under anyone's direction.[6] However, the comments are not only about the poor performance, but also about the music being 'unvocal' and 'unfit for the words'. One might speculate that the first

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[3] Letter from Felix to his sister Fanny, 24 June 1837, in Peter Ward Jones, *The Mendelssohns on Honeymoon: The 1837 Diary of Felix and Cécile Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Together with Letters to Their Families* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 169.
[4] *MT* 37/645 (Nov. 1, 1896), 725.
[5] Scholes, *Mirror*, 70.
[6] Todd, *Mendelssohn*, 357.

criticism would have been overlooked and the piece given a second chance, had the highly esteemed Mendelssohn been on the podium himself. The second criticism, that of the words, could well apply to a poor English translation which, again, might have been overlooked had Mendelssohn been performing it himself. Whatever the exact reasons for the poor reviews, it was to be nearly twenty years before the *St Matthew* was heard in its (relative) entirety and to general acclaim.

A second presentation of excerpts from the *Passion* took place only a week before the first 'complete' performance, discussed below. This was by the New Philharmonic Society, in St Martin's Hall, on 22 March 1854, and was the first known performance of movements from the *St Matthew* since the notorious one at the 1837 Birmingham Festival. Though performances of any Bach choral work had been sporadic up to this point, the 1850s marked an increase: in 1851 Hullah performed the Credo from the *Mass in B Minor*; and in 1852 the *Magnificat* had its first British performance. As in 1837, this second performance of *St Matthew* excerpts provoked poor reviews. The *Musical Times* noted its 'peculiar style',[7] and the *Illustrated London News* found it 'dry and heavy'.[8]

An early published excerpt from the *St Matthew* was mentioned in Chapter 2: Edward Taylor's 1832 arrangement of the chorale 'Bin ich gleich von Dir gewichen', BWV 244, No. 40 for two trebles, with new words. Calling the work 'The Venetian Boatmen's Evening Hymn', Taylor interspersed phrases from 'O Welt ich muß dich lassen', which he set with the text 'O sacra, pia Virgine'. This is the first known

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[7] *MT* 6/121 (1 April 1854), 11-13.
[8] As later reported by W.A. Frost, *MT* 38/648 (1 Feb 1897), 125.

English-published excerpt from the *St Matthew*. The work is reproduced in the Appendix.

'Complete' Performances of the *St Matthew Passion*

It was through the efforts of English musician William Sterndale Bennett that the first performances of the *St Matthew* took place in 1854. Bennett had met Mendelssohn in 1833, and the two had become good friends, with Bennett paying numerous visits to Mendelssohn in Germany over the years. Bennett formulated the idea for a Bach Society in 1849, and brought in several prominent London musicians to help govern it, including E.J. Hopkins (Bach performer and proponent, and organist of the Temple Church), George Smart (conductor, composer, and Handel scholar), Henry Smart (nephew of George, organist, organ consultant, and composer), Cipriani Potter (pianist, composer, and teacher) and Dr Charles Steggall (organist, teacher of Joseph Barnby, F.G. Edwards, and Edwin Lemare, among others, and founder of the Royal College of Organists). Charles Villiers Stanford later wrote about Bennett and the Bach Society:

> In his younger days he had diligently studied Bach's music, certainly in his clavier-music as far as he had been able to find it in print in England or Germany. The instrumental works of Bach had been appreciated in this country, as is well known, by an earlier generation of musicians; but Bennett merits remembrance as a pioneer in the introduction here, under difficult circumstances, of the composer's vocal masterpieces. In 1848 or 1849 he purchased a pianoforte score – printed in Paris! – of the St Matthew 'Passions-Musik', was startled by the beauty and modern freshness of its opening bars, while on further reference he became convinced that in the great Church-compositions of Bach an entirely new region was accessible to an Oratorio-loving country. In October 1849, he asked a few musicians to his house and proposed the formation of a society for the collection

> of printed or manuscript works of Bach and for the private practice of his vocal music by members.[9]

The purpose of the Bach Society was to collect and perform the works of J.S. Bach, as articulated in the following statement:

> 1. The collection of the musical works of John Sebastian Bach, including as far as is practicable all the editions extant; also copies of all available authentic manuscripts, and all biographical works relating to him and his family, with a view to forming a library of reference for the use of Members.
>
> 2. The furtherance and promotion of a general acquaintance with the numerous Vocal and Instrumental works of this great and comparatively unknown master, chiefly by performances – the frequency and extent of which must be governed by the means at the Society's disposal.[10]

The *St Matthew Passion* was the first major choral work to be performed by the Bach Society. Rehearsals began on Bach's birthday in March of 1850, and though the Society presented excerpts of the work (as well as other Bach choral works including some motets) over subsequent years, it was not until April 1854 that the first 'complete' performance was accomplished. The work was repeated in November of the same year.

Bennett had obtained Mendelssohn's vocal parts from his 1829 and 1841 performances of the *Matthäus-Passion* in Germany. Mendelssohn had made substantial cuts in the piece, as his friend Eduard Devrient later remembered:

> It could not be our purpose to give the work, which was influenced by the taste of the period, in the entirety, but we had to convey the impression of its outstanding value. Most of the arias had to be omitted; of the others only the so-called symphonies (*Accompagnements*) could be given; even the part taken from the

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[9] Charles Villiers Stanford, *Interludes: Records and Reflections* (London: J. Murray, 1922), 185.
[10] J. R. Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907), 207.

> Gospel would have to be shorn of all that was not essential to the recital of the Passion.[11]

Bennett made the same cuts, as well as a few additional ones. In a programme note for the first performance, printed on each programme, he wrote, 'This work is produced according to the version adopted by Mendelssohn at Berlin and Leipzig and the omissions made accordingly. Beyond this a small portion of the narrative is omitted, rendering it more acceptable to the English public without in the smallest degree affecting the musical importance of the work.'[12] Bennett's grandson Robert later drew up a table detailing the Mendelssohn and Sterndale Bennett cuts and comparing them to those made later by Vaughan Williams (Vaughan Williams's own performances of the work at the Leith Hill Festival were very well-known in the 1950s, so the comparison was appropriate).[13] The table is reproduced in the Appendix.

Mendelssohn had also substituted modern instruments for Bach's original ones —for example, clarinets for some of the obsolete oboes, and piano or cellos and double bass for the organ in the recitatives.[14] One can assume that similar substitutions were made by Sterndale Bennett: the orchestra of the Bach Society was made up of a mixture of professionals and amateur volunteers, and oboi da caccia and other obsolete instruments were surely hard to come by. Even assuming they were to be found among professional musicians in London at the time, the budget was so

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[11] As quoted by R. Sterndale Bennett, 'Three Abridged Versions of Bach's St. Matthew Passion', *Music & Letters* 37, No. 4 (1956), 336-39.
[12] In addition to appearing in each programme, this notice was reported by R. Sterndale Bennett, *ibid*, 337.
[13] *Ibid.* A recording of Vaughan Williams conducting the *St Matthew Passion* at Leith Hill in 1958 is available on disc: Pearl (label) GEMS 0079 [01/01].
[14] Peter Ward Jones, 'Die Continuo- und Orgelstimmen zur Leipziger Aufführung der Matthäus-Passion im Jahre 1841', in Anselm Hartinger, Christoph Wolff, and Peter Wollny, *"Zu Gross, Zu Unerreichbar": Bach-Rezeption Im Zeitalter Mendelssohns Und Schumanns* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2007). Mendelssohn used piano in the recitatives in his 1829 performance of the *St Matthew*, and cellos and double bass for his 1841 performance.

depleted by the time of the first performance that it could not extend to calling in last-minute professional help.[15]

In addition, for an English performance there had to be an English translation. Fortunately among the members of the Bach Society was the young Helen Johnston, who learned German and lithography specifically so that she could translate the *St Matthew Passion* for the cause. Stanford later wrote:

> A pupil of Bennett's, Miss Helen F. Johnston, who in her eighteenth year had been the first candidate for membership, well deserves to have her name coupled with that of her master in any record of the movement. She framed the course of her young life to suit the special work, studied German, the theory of music, the organ and lithography, and gradually produced, consulting Bennett at every step, an English version of the St Matthew 'Passions-Musik'. She set up a lithographic press in her house and prepared with her own hands the parts needed for the rehearsals of that great work.[16]

Sir John Stainer, who as a young boy was a singer in these first performances, later recalled that the translation was ongoing even during the rehearsal period, and that 'fresh sheets of lithographed music were produced at each rehearsal.'[17]

Not surprisingly, the choir and orchestra were larger than most performances today, but compared to numbers of performers encountered in Handel oratorios of the period, the Bach Society forces were actually relatively modest: the choir numbered about one hundred and the orchestra about fifty.[18] In his history of the Bach Choir, Basil Keen notes that financial economy dictated the modest scale of the performance, and that only about twenty-five members of the Bach Society sang (the remaining

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[15] J. R. Sterndale Bennett, *Life*, 232-4.
[16] Stanford, *Interludes,* 186.
[17] F.G. Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 797-800.
[18] Papers of the Bach Society, Royal College of Music, London.

singers being students from the Royal Academy of Music, and boys from the Chapel Royal). The orchestra was a mixture of professional musicians and students.[19]

The initial performances of the *St Matthew*, in the Hanover Square Rooms in 1854, were not successful by any account. Newspapers praised the ambitions of the Bach Society in bringing such a worthy piece before the public, but were cool about the quality of the performance, saying that they would reserve comment until the next performance.[20]

Stainer was more frank:

> My recollections as to the first performance are limited, and (worst of all) it was wretchedly rendered from beginning to end. Those troublesome little choruses led off by a rush of violins had been insufficiently rehearsed and were a series of catastrophes. The entrance of the strings when overlapping the pianoforte in the Recits was nearly every time a bungle.[21]

In later years Bennett himself said these two 1854 performances were not the real first performances, but only trial-runs.[22] He was heartened enough by the excitement generated however that he continued rehearsing it, and produced what he later claimed to be the first 'real' performance of the work, in 1858 in St Martin's Hall, for which the Prince Consort himself was in attendance.

An examination of Bennett's working scores alongside contemporary accounts reveals an interesting picture. (Mendelssohn's full score and some of the choral and orchestral parts used by him in his 1829 and 1841 performances are now in the Bodleian Library, as are Sterndale Bennett's performing copies from the 1840s and

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[19] Basil Keen, *The Bach Choir: The First Hundred Years* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 7.
[20] 'The Passions-Musik of Bach', *Athenaeum* /1381 (April 15 1854), 469-70, 'Music and the Drama', *Athenaeum* /1414 (Dec. 2 1854), 1467-8.
[21] As quoted by Peter Charlton, *John Stainer and the Musical Life of Victorian Britain* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1984), 16.
[22] Bennett, *Life*, 278.

50s.)[23] Sterndale Bennett had acquired the choral parts used by Mendelssohn in his performances for use in the Bach Society performances of 1854.[24] Scribbled directions 'Col Tenore' and 'Col Alto voce' and 'Col Soprano' in the full score indicate that the strings doubled the choir at the beginning of the chorus 'Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken verschwunden?'.[25] Was this to provide more volume in this exciting chorus, or evidence that the choir needed help? Dynamic markings in the chorales point to a dramatically shaded performance, which enabled individual phrases of the text to be emphasized (for example, the chorale No. 21 'Erkenne mich, mein Hüter' (p. 65 of Bennett's conducting score): the first phrase is marked 'p', the second phrase 'cresc'; third phrase 'mf'; fourth phrase crescendo and diminuendo marks; and the fifth phrase 'cresc'). This is something mentioned much later by John Stainer: in his recollection of the early rehearsals, Stainer remembered that one choir member asked if they 'couldn't have a little expression in the chorales...as they were too beautiful to be sung at one dead level of sound. Bennett answered, "Oh! Yes, by all means!"' Stainer added, 'This was the veritable origin of that over-done expression which ultimately turned these congregational chorales into fastidious part-songs, a genuine misfortune and a blot in the otherwise fine performances.'[26] Another example of alterations or adjustments made by Bennett can be seen in the final chorale from part 1, 'O Mensch bewein dein Sünde gross', where each bar of the original is divided

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[23] These include a piano-vocal score published by Maurice Schlesinger in Paris (n.d.), which C.V. Stanford refers to in his memoir *Interludes*, 184; as well as the first edition of the full score, published by Schlesinger (Berlin, 1830), which he used to conduct from. Other relevant scores in the Bodleian Library are a proof-corrected score used by Bennett to make corrections for his piano-vocal score (London: Lamborn Cock, Hutchings & Co, [1862]), and a presentation copy from the Bach Society of the *St Matthew Passion*, as published in Leipzig by the Bach-Gesellschaft, 1856.

[24] Margaret Crum, ed. *Catalogue of the Mendelssohn Papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Vol. II* (Tutzing; Hans Schneider, 1983), 32.

[25] (Berlin: Schlesinger, 1830), 115-16.

[26] Charlton, *John Stainer*, 15.

in two by vertical pencil lines extending from the top to bottom of the score, suggesting that Bennett conducted with the quaver as the unit of beat. The chorale also shows many dynamic markings. (For example, from the end of the first sung phrase to the end of the second, bars 22-27, there are dynamic markings on each bar: bar 22: crescendo and diminuendo markings; Bar 23: 'cresc' (in the orchestra parts); bar 24 F[orte] then P[iano] for the entrance of the singers; Bar 25: 'cresc'; bar 26 'Dim—p[iano]', and so on.) Examples of a few more markings in Bennett's score will suffice: in the aria and chorale that opens part II, 'Ach, nun ist mein Jesus hin', the cellos are directed to double a tricky bass entrance (bar 89); and at the end of the chorus 'Lasst ihn kreuzigen', the choir is directed to 'remain standing'— the word 'remain' underlined twice.

The cuts made in the Bach Society's performances of the *St Matthew Passion* are of equal interest. Almost all nineteenth-century performances of the work had substantial cuts, if only for reasons of length. Besides cutting arias and choruses, parts of movements might be cut: the da capo section of arias frequently fell under the knife, for example. However, there is evidence for other reasons for making certain cuts. Recent writers on Mendelssohn have contended that he cut movements in his own performances based on their antipathy to Jewishness.[27] Barbara David Wright, in her dissertation on performances of the *St Matthew Passion*, suggests that they may have been due to his squeamishness about the graphic pietistic texts.[28] Devrient, as

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[27] For more information on this questions, see Sposato, *The Price of Assimilation*, Michael P. Steinberg, 'Mendelssohn's Music and German-Jewish Culture: An Intervention', *The Musical Quarterly,* 83/1 (1999), 31-44, Botstein, 'Mendelssohn as Jew', Peter Ward Jones, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Musical Quarterly,* 83/1 (1999), 27-30, Eric Werner, *Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1963).

[28] Barbara David Wright, 'Johann Sebastian Bach's *Matthäus-Passion*: A Performance History 1829-1854', (Ph.D. diss. University of Michigan, 1983).

noted above, implies that changes were necessary owing to the different tastes of the period.

The following are the cuts in detail taken by Bennett:[29]

Gospel of Matthew, Chap 26

Vs. 12: 'For in that she hath poured this ointment on My body, she did it for my burial.' (In Bach's score, second half of Recitative 4e, between the Evangelist and Jesus, 'Das sie dies Wasser hat auf meinem Leib...')

Vs. 26-29: Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take, Eat; this is My body…' (Bach: second half of Recitative 11, from 'Da sie aber aßen...')

Vs. 39: And he went a little farther, and fell on his face…'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me…' (Bach: Recitative 21, 'Und ging hin ein wenig...')

Bass arioso, 'The Saviour falleth low before his Father; thereby He raiseth me and all the sons of Adam to taste once more the grace of God…' (Bach: Recitative 22, 'Der Heiland fällt vor seinem Vater nieder...')

'What though the trials await me here, Tho' afflictions prove severe…' (Bach: Bass Aria 23, 'Gerne will ich mich bequemen...')

Vs. 42: And again, he went away for a second time and prayed, 'My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from me except I drink it…'

Vs. 43-46: And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy…(Bach: Recitative 24, 'Und er kam zu seinem Jüngern...')

Vs. 51-56: And behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear…'I sat daily with you teaching in the temple…' (Bach: Recitative 28, 'Und siehe, einer aus denen, die mit Jesu waren...und ihr habt mich nicht gegriffen.')

Chap 27

Vs. 1-10: [Judas' remorse and suicide] When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took council against Jesus…Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet…(Bach: Recitative 41a-43, 'Des Morgens aber hielten alle Hohepriester...Da ist erfüllet, das gesagt ist...')

Second verse of the chorale: 'O may Thy love constrain me, To give my heart to theee…' (Bach: Choral 44, 'Befiehl du deine Weg...')

Vs. 31-32: And when they had mocked him and stripped him…they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon: him compelled they to bear His cross. (Bach: Recitative 55, 'Und da sue ihn verspottet hatten...')

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[29] The references to Bach's score are for Johann Sebastian Bach, *St Matthew Passion*, reprinted from the Bach-Gesellschaft Edition, 1854, ed. by Julius Rietz (New York: Dover Publications, 1990).

Vs. 45-49: Now from the sixth hour darkness…Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani…'wait, let us see if Elias will come to save Him.' (Bach: Recitative 61a, 'Und von der sechsten Stunde an...')
Vs. 51-53: the curtain of the temple was torn in two… (Bach: Recitative 63a, 'Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel...')
Vs. 59-60: Joseph took the body and wrapped it…laid it in a tomb…' (Bach: Recitative 66a, 'Und Joseph nahm den Leib...')

One may assume that most cuts were made for reasons of length. Bennett eliminated what might be called side stories to the main one, as for example, Judas' demise. Less obvious is the elimination of the Words of Institution from the Last Supper: 'Take; eat this is My body which is given for you'. For a concert performance, this is understandable: it is central to the teachings of Christianity, but it is not central to the dramatic action. However, the same passage was cut some years later, in 1871, by Barnby in a Westminster Abbey service. The answer lies in the fact that it would have been viewed as deeply disrespectful—even sacrilegious—to utter these words outside the context of a service, and not by a priest. Whether other cuts were made deliberately to change the tone of the religious message or not, the result did occasionally do just that. Wright cites an example of the elimination of the second verse of the Passion chorale, which follows the foretelling of Peter's betrayal of Christ. She points out that Bach highlights this part of the story by framing it on either side with two verses of this chorale: Verse 1 is in E major, and verse 2 falls to E-flat. When Bennett cuts verse two, he 'loses that emphasis of the Christian's individual relationship with God which was so important to Lutheran theology, and recurs throughout the work'.[30] Removing arias and chorales would thus de-emphasise or even change certain matters of doctrine, not to mention key relationships. In addition, a higher proportion of recitatives (which normally serve to advance the story) over

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[30] *Ibid,* 238.

arias (which comment and carry the emotion) alters the balance for the listener of storyline to emotional reaction to teaching. The *St Matthew Passion* in this form becomes a far more dramatic, theatrical story, where the action is emphasised, and the emotional weight is borne by the relatively few remaining arias and chorales.

Over the eight years between 1854 and 1862, the Bach Society under Bennett performed the *St Matthew* four times. At their final performance in 1862 the work was far better rendered and received, and in that year Bennett, with the assistance of Miss Johnston, was able to publish by subscription the first English edition of the entire work, including the parts that had been cut.

Overall, Johnston's translation was an excellent effort. Among other things, it demonstrated that while Mendelssohn may have left passages out because he was squeamish, that was not necessary in England, because any offensive imagery could be translated away by paraphrasing. Several examples will serve as illustration. In the aria 'Blüte nur', the passage that might be rendered in direct translation: 'Bleed on, dear heart, Ah! a child that you raised, that sucked at your breast, threatens to murder its guardian for it has become a serpent' becomes in English the gentler, 'break and die, thou dearest heart. Ah! A child which thou hast trained, which upon thy breast remained, now a serpent has become; murder is the parent's doom.' Or, in another aria the sensuous text, 'submerge thyself in me' becomes in translation, 'come and dwell my heart within.' The biggest change was in the tenor aria, 'Geduld'. The German text spits with a shower of 'sche', 'z', 's', and 't' sounds:

> Geduld!
> Wenn mich falsche Zungen stechen,
> Leid ich wider meine Schuld
> Schimpf and Spott,
> Ei, so mag der liebe Gott
> Meines Herzens Unschuld rächen.

Translated closely, it is:

> Patience! If false tongues sting me,
> Though I suffer, innocent,
> Mocking scorn,
> Ah, then may the Lord above
> Give my guiltless heart its vengeance.

Johnson/Bennett's edition renders it:

> Rejoice!
> If ye be reproached for the name of Christ,
> happy are ye, that when His glory shall be revealed,
> ye may be glad with exceeding joy.

The fundamental doctrine remains unchanged, but the Lutheran sense of enduring hard times for the sake of vengeance and reward in the hereafter is slightly altered to display a more beatific vision of heavenly glory.

In 1870 Novello issued Sterndale Bennett/Johnston's edition as an inexpensive octavo, with an extensive introduction by G.A. MacFarren who strongly promoted the sacred element of the work. This introduction was also published in installments in the *Musical Times*.[31] MacFarren's essay offers insight into the text changes and cuts, including those that might have been made as a result of differences between Lutheran and Anglican practices. These include the problem of a singer representing Christ Himself, with Christ actually speaking (singing), something which had been an objection from the same people who insisted that such a dramatic work as the *St Matthew* should never be performed in church. MacFarren, in contrast, believed that the Church was the only right place for a performance of the work. Contrasting the 'old way' of regarding the Passion with the new, MacFarren says that in earlier times

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[31] G. A. Macfarren, 'Bach's Grosse Passions-Musik. (St Matthew)', *MT* 14 (1870), 327-29, 359-61, 391-93, 423-6.

> men's minds dwelt on the personal pains of the great sufferer, and were still imbued with the early Christian principle of enhancing to the utmost his bodily agony, even to the extent of making pain paramount at the expense of beauty, as exemplified in the pictorial illustrations of the doctrine, which represent the Saviour and the Virgin as hideous, to prevent their possible involvement in pleasurable associations. The loveliness of the divine character; its resistless attraction to all men, even the enemies of Him who bore it, and the exquisite beauty of holiness, are points more fondly regarded, and more familiar in the present day; and we assert our Christianity in emulating the charities of the sacred example, than in deploring the pangs through which He passed who taught the lesson of love.[32]

He emphasises the teaching role of the *Passion* over its dramatic values, criticising for example performances which end the first part of the *Passion* with the chorus 'Have Lightnings and Thunders', cutting out the chorale which summarises what we have learned, or what we must remember, in preparation for the sermon. (Could he have been specifically criticising Joseph Barnby with this example, whose theatrical performances of the *Passion* began in 1870? Barnby's performances are discussed briefly below.)

MacFarren's tone in this article is very much that of a persuasive teacher, who is well aware of how unfamiliar the style will seem to the uninitiated. Over the course of the four extensive sections of his article, he works hard to convince his audience of the value of the piece, explaining its basis in Lutheran practice, the difference between Bach's counterpoint and Handel's, the old instruments, and why the translation is good, if occasionally puzzling. One wonders what lies behind this approach. Celia Applegate reflects on the similar efforts of Forkel to convince the general public of the value of Bach, saying that 'like his contemporaries, the founders

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[32] *Ibid*, 360.

of historical associations and museums, Forkel had come to believe that preservation of the past required participation of the public'.[33] Forkel's reason for advocating the music of Bach was patriotic; MacFarren's was religious. Both writers spoke with the fervour of the converted, who need to see their own experience validated by the conversion of others.

In this same spring as MacFarren's article, Joseph Barnby, with his Barnby's Choir, directed a well-received performance of the *St Matthew Passion* in Exeter Hall. The review in the *Musical Times* looked to a better past, 'by taking us back, and showing us how at one time sacred art, unfettered by the crushing effect of popular applause, was moulded solely by the requirements of the subject which it illustrated; and how artists became priests in a faith which their God-like nature enabled them to glorify and ennoble.'[34] The review also mentions the 'sublimity of the work' in contrast to the 'sensation' school of composition 'to which modern music is rapidly drifting'. All told, the review was more about the piece than the performance, though it did note the extensive cuts, as well as the frequent outbursts of applause and interruptions for encores.

However, it was Barnby's performance in the following year (1871) that was the turning point: for the first time the *St Matthew Passion* was presented in the context of a church service—at Westminster Abbey, during Evensong, with a sermon in the middle, and the congregation joining in with the chorales.[35] The press was uniformly enthusiastic, agreeing that this was the natural setting for the work to be

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[33] Applegate, *Bach in Berlin,* 208.
[34] 'The Oratorio Concerts', *MT* 14/327 (May 1 1870), 459.
[35] That same year, 1871, also saw the *St Matthew Passion* performed at the Three Choirs Festival by S.S. Wesley.

performed. In an article entitled 'Special Service in Westminster Abbey', *The Times* called the *St Matthew* 'Bach's sublime musical illustration of the Passion of our Saviour', and said that it had been presented 'for the first time in this country in accordance with the original intent of the composer'.[36]

This Westminster Abbey performance, some seventeen years after the first one by the Bach Society, was a very dramatic one. The choir was made up of men and boys, the latter drawn from Eton, Windsor, Rochester, the Abbey, and the Temple Church (women were not allowed to sing in the Abbey or cathedrals). The chorales, which were sung by the chorus and congregation of thousands, were often unaccompanied, which was variously reviewed as being sublime or an annoyance.[37] As before, Barnby cut out the concerted chorale which closes Part I, so that the first half ended with the dramatic chorus 'Have Lightnings and Thunders'. He also left out the Words of Institution: the Passion was now presented as part of a church service, but not as a service of Holy Communion.

In 1873 there were six performances of the *St Matthew Passion* in London during Holy Week: four in the Albert Hall directed by Barnby, one at Westminster Abbey, and the first of what was to turn into an annual tradition—the *St Matthew Passion* at St Paul's Cathedral. At the St Paul's service, ten thousand were reported to have been in the audience, with more clamouring to get in. *The Times* said, 'A crowd

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[36] *The Times* (7 April 1871), 5. A similar review appeared in the *MT*15 (1 May 1871), 74.

[37] The *Musical Times* was rapturous: 'No words can express the effect produced by the vast body of choristers, more especially in the Lutheran chorales (which were unaccompanied) (*MT* 15/339 (May 1 1871), 74). Similarly, *The Times* called the 'chorals' *[sic]* 'indescribable--something, indeed, apart from anything of the kind in our remembrance.' (*The Times,* issue 27031 (Friday April 7, 1871), 5). On the other hand, the review in the *Monthly Musical Record* said, 'The various exquisitely harmonised chorales which occur in the course of the work were also most effective; but why *will* Mr. Barnby, in disregard of the composer's intentions, give them without accompaniment? If it is intended to exhibit the finished part-singing of his choir, surely some fitter opportunity might be found.' (May 1, 1871), 60). Italics original.

more religiously attentive never assembled in a church', and referred again to 'Bach's sublime music'.[38] John Stainer, in his first year at the Cathedral, led a surpliced choir of about three hundred men and boys and an orchestra of about fifty. Stationed in each transept were two groups of boys, four hundred in number, with a trumpet leading each group, to encourage congregational singing of the chorales. Still more cuts were made, and in an echo of both Mendelssohn and Bennett, Stainer said, 'it was thought advisable to take the opportunity of making some slight modification in the words… Several passages contain expressions which, if not inconsistent with orthodox teaching (i.e. according to the views of an English Churchman) are at least misleading in their tendency.'[39]

An examination of the St Paul's version, which is clearly labelled 'abridged', reveals the extent of these cuts, as well as more toning-down and even wholesale re-writing of the texts. (The Last Supper text, however, is restored.) The resulting poetry is often not very good. Several passages are worth mentioning. One is for the tenor aria, 'Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen':

> Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen So
> schlafen unsre Sünden ein.
> Meinen Tod büßet seine Seelennot;
> Sein Trauren machet mich voll Freuden.
> Drum muß uns sein verdienstlich Leiden
> Recht bitter und doch süße sein.
>
> (close English translation):
>
> I will stay awake beside my Jesus.
> In this way our sins fall asleep.
> His soul's distress redeems my death;

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[38] 'Bach's Matthew Passion at St Paul's', *The Times* (10 April 1873), 10.
[39] J.S. Bach, *A Selection from the Passion of our Lord according to S. Matthew, with the words revised and adapted according to the use of S. Paul's Cathedral* (London, New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1891), i.

His grief fills me with joy.
Thus his meritorious passion must be for us
Right bitter and yet sweet.

(St Paul's version):

With Jesus I will watch and pray;
Lest evil tempt my steps astray.
He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
Our transgressions did cause his wounds.
All we like sheep had turned aside;
To rescue us, He toil'd, He died.[40]

In this passage, the St Paul's version interpolates words from *Messiah*: 'Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; all we like sheep have turned aside.' (The last words undoubtedly would have been 'gone astray' but for the need to rhyme with 'He died'.)

Another interesting change is seen at the end of the *Passion*. The original text ends with 'ruhe sanft, sanfte ruh!' or, 'rest quietly', sung to descending choral lines. The St Paul's text ends with the same falling line, to the words, 'shall soon be changed to Easter joy'.

One can imagine the reasons for these changes. The St Paul's performances attracted huge numbers of people, and many in the audience may not have been regular church goers.[41] By interpolating texts from *Messiah*, Stainer was giving the public something familiar to hold onto, when the music must have struck many as being unfathomably complicated. Similarly, by ending the *Passion* story on an upbeat note—'Easter joy'—the message was made more appealing. The Cathedral printed

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[40] *Ibid*, vi.
[41] Data collected by the *Census of Great Britain, 1851,* the 1886 *British Weekly* census of religion in London, and the 1902-03 *Daily News*'s census, indicates that church attendance declined from about 42-44% at mid-century, to about 22% in the early twentieth century. The statistics presented in these surveys are difficult to interpret however, and a more complex and nuanced view can be seen in McLeod, *Religion and Society in England.*

copies of the words to the *Passion* for people in the congregation, and since it is possible these wordbooks were studied and used as devotional readers at home, they had to be inoffensive and relatively simple to understand.

As mentioned above, almost all nineteenth-century performances of the *St Matthew Passion*, both in England and abroad, substituted modern instruments for the older, obsolete ones Bach specified in his scores. Larger orchestras were necessary as well, to balance the larger choral forces, as well as to fill the larger halls. The question of how to handle the recitatives was particularly thorny: even if the organ was thought to be the best instrument for that purpose, it was frequently not possible to use the organs already in the churches or cathedrals because the pitch differential between organs and orchestras was so great. The pitch of the London Philharmonic was A=453 until 1874,[42] while in the same period the organ in St Paul's, according to Hopkins, was at 'Handel's tuning fork' of about A=423.[43] Harmonium was used in Barnby's Westminster Abbey performances,[44] while piano was used by Stainer at St Paul's—a usage which was criticised in the press (the piano was thought to be out of place in a sacred space). Even in Exeter Hall performances, one press account said that 'the piano sounded oddly'.[45]

'Additional accompaniments' may also be mentioned briefly. As with Handel, musicians in the nineteenth century often felt that Bach's music could be improved by adding a little colour to the orchestra parts. Several writers commented on the small

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[42] Bruce Haynes, *A History of Performing Pitch: The Story Of "A"* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 379.
[43] *Ibid,* 337.
[44] See for example the *Musical Times* review cited earlier: *MT* 15/339 (May 1 1871), 74.
[45] 'Bach's Oratorio "Passione"', *Athenaeum* 2260 (18 Feb 1871), 216.

orchestra Bach had had to deal with, and thought that, had Bach had the option, he would have added instruments in the way they felt was effective. In his preface to his edition of the *Matthäus-Passion* (1867), Robert Franz said that added instruments offered greater expression and opportunities for light and shadow. He also said that Bach left out the timpani and brass perhaps because it was Passiontide and he was forbidden from using them.[46] If comments in the press are any indication, most performances of the *St Matthew Passion* were using such 'additional accompaniments' by the end of the nineteenth century. An example from Robert Franz's edition will suffice to show an example: a four-bar excerpt from the Evangelist's recitative 'Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel zerriß in zwei Stück' is shown below, followed by the score as it appears in the Bach Gesellschaft edition:

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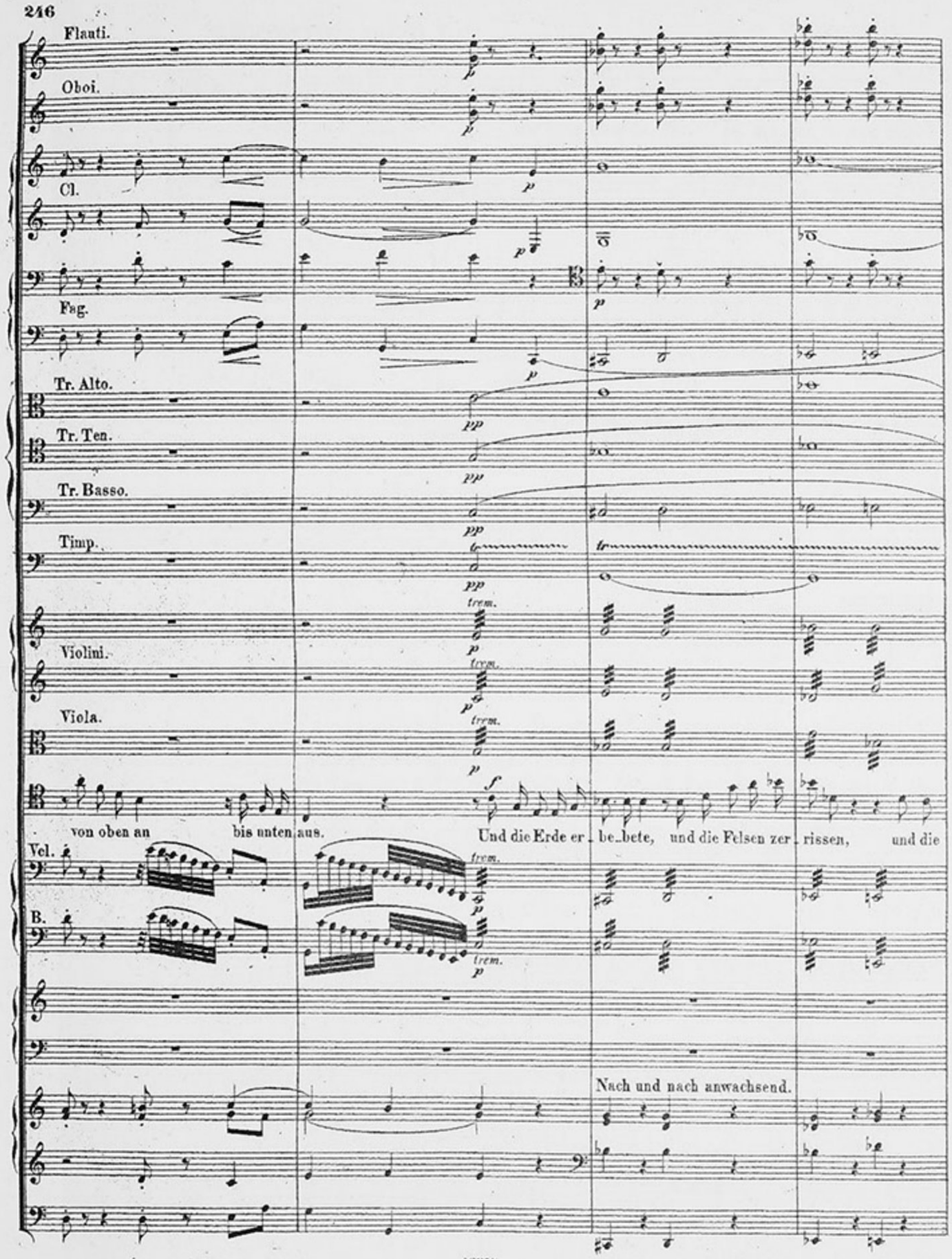
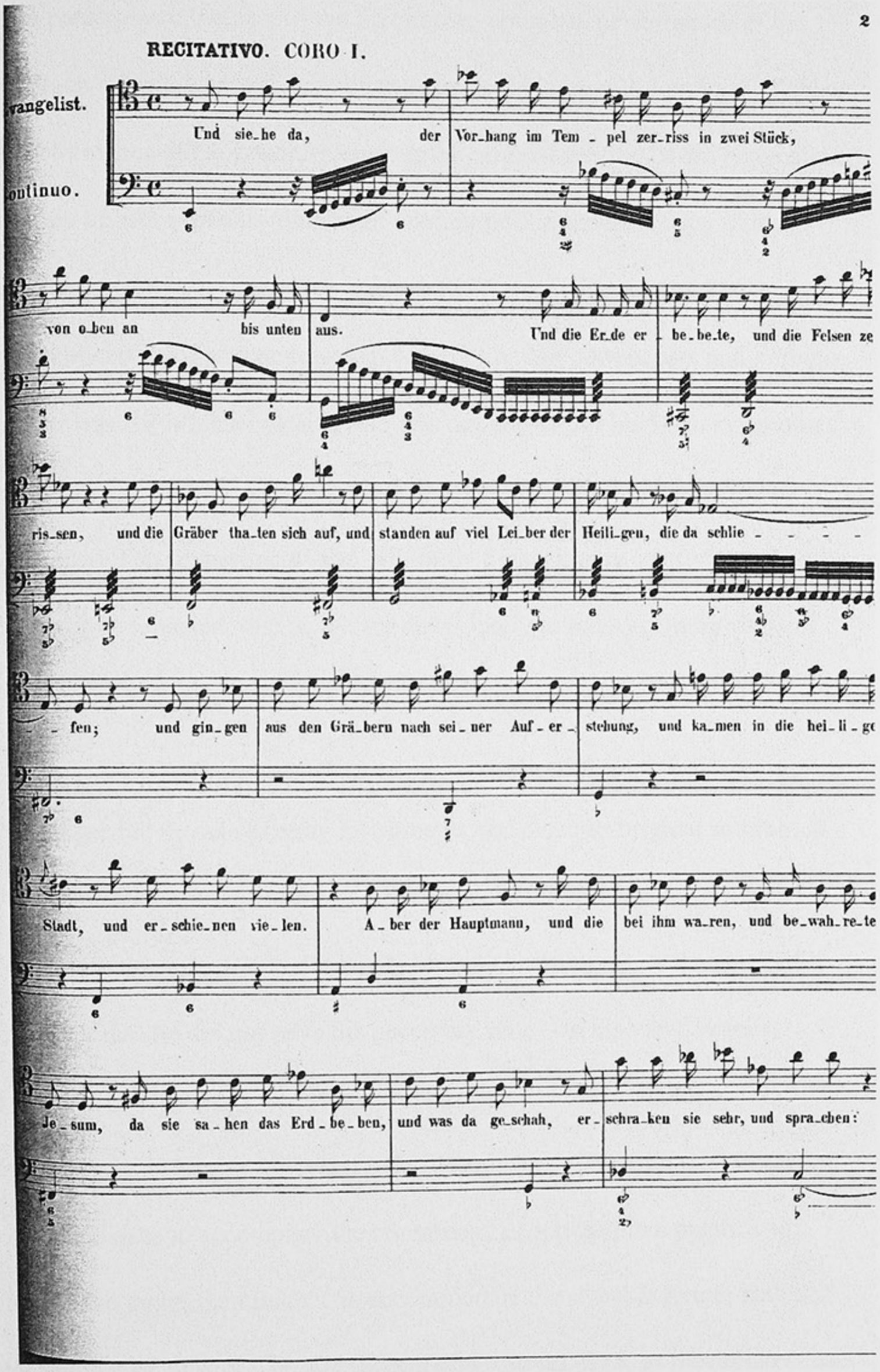
[46] 'Letzteres ist wesentlich Orchesterinstrumenten, je nach den Umständen dem Streichquartett oder den Holzbläsern, übertragen...Nur wenn man dies im Auge behält, wird richtige Vertheilung von Licht und Schatten gewonnen werden.' 'Obschon Bach in der Passion keine Blechinstrumente und Pauken angewendet hat, glaube ich auf ihre Mitwirkung nicht ganz Verzicht leisten su müssen. Vielleicht war es ja überhaupt mehr eine Forderung des kirchlichen Herkommens in der Passionszeit, die den Meister von jenen Instrumenten auch da absehen liess, wo sie ohne Zweifel von gewaltigem Effekt waren.' Robert Franz, 'Vorbemerkung', in *Joh. Seb. Bach's Passionsmusik nach dem Evangelischen Matthäus mit ausgeführten Accompagnement bearbeitet von Robert Franz* (Leipzig: n.p., 1867).

From *Joh. Seb. Bach's Passionsmusik nach dem Evangelischen Matthäus mit ausgeführten Accompagnement bearbeitet von Robert Franz* (Leipzig: n.p., 1867), 246.



Johann Sebastian Bach, *St Matthew Passion*, from the Bach-Gesellschaft Edition, 1854, ed. by Julius Rietz (New York: Dover Publications, 1990), 249.

In 1873, the year of the first St Paul's *St Matthew Passion*, an extraordinary performance of the entire, uncut work took place in Exeter Hall. This little-known

presentation pushes back the date of the first known complete performance of the work since Bach's death by more than thirty years, and places it in London.[47] Further, while the performance did not exclusively employ original scoring, it did come closer to that than any known previous nineteenth-century performance. A copy of the programme for the concert, which took place on 25 April 1873, is reproduced overleaf; the concert itself was reviewed in several London newspapers and journals. The conductor was Sir Michael Costa (who was not known for his Bach sympathies), and the choir was the Sacred Harmonic Society. In its review of the occasion, the *Athenaeum* called it an 'experiment' and said further that 'it may safely be asserted that it will never be repeated; that is, we are never likely to have again upwards of four hours devoted to the execution of the seventy-eight numbers of the original score.'[48]

With regard to the use of early instruments and close-to-original scoring, as opposed to 'additional accompaniments', the *Athenaeum* implies that it was not because of any particular belief in the merits of early instruments on the part of Sir Michael, but because he did not have the necessary time—in his view, years as opposed to months—'properly and reverentially, to turn to account the modern orchestra appliances in Bach's orchestration.' Nonetheless, Costa did use two cellos and two double basses to accompany the recitatives, as opposed to a piano. The orchestra was also larger than Bach's, to accommodate the sizeable Exeter Hall and the greater number of singers. The *Athenaeum* said, 'So far, then, as the architectural attributes of Exeter Hall admitted, the approximation allowing for the increased

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[47] It has been generally accepted that the first complete performance was by Felix Mottl in 1907, in Karlsruhe.
[48] Bach's 'Grosse Passions-Musik', *Atheneaum* no.2375 (May 1873), 574.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY, EXETER HALL.

On FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 25th, 1873,

WILL BE PERFORMED

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH'S ORATORIO,

THE PASSION,

According to St. Matthew, the Evangelist.

PART I.

Double Chorus With Chorale	. . . . .	Come, ye daughters O Thou begotten
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	When Jesus
Chorale	. . . .	O blessed Jesus
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	Then assembled
Double Chorus	. . . .	Not on the feast-day
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . . .	Now when Jesus
Chorus	. . . .	To what purpose
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	When Jesus understood
Recit. and Air	Madame PATEY . .	Grief for sin
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. PATEY . . .	Then went one
Air	Madame L. SHERRINGTON	Break and die
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	Now the first day
Chorus	. . . .	Where wilt Thou
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	He said
Chorus	. . . .	Lord, is it I?
Chorale	. . . .	My sin it was
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Mr. PATEY, and Mr. SANTLEY . .	He answered
Recit. and Air	Madame L. SHERRINGTON	Jesus, Saviour
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And when they had sung
Chorale	. . . .	O Lord, Thy love
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Mr. PATEY, and Mr. SANTLEY . .	Peter answered
Chorale	. . . .	Though all men
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	Then cometh Jesus
Recit. and Air with Chorus	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	O grief! With Jesus I will watch
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And He went
Recit. and Air	Mr. SANTLEY . .	What tho' trials
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And He came
Chorale	. . . .	O Father
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And He came
Duet & Chorus	Madame L. SHERRINGTON and Madame PATEY .	My Saviour, Jesus
Double Chorus	. . . .	Have lightnings
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And behold
Chorale	. . . .	O man, thy heavy sin

PART II.

Solo & Chorus	Madame PATEY . .	Alas! now
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	And they that had
Chorale	. . . .	The world accuses
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Madame PATEY, and Mr. C. HENRY . .	Yea, tho' many
Recit. and Air	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	Rejoice, Rejoice
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Mr. C. HENRY, and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And the high priest
Double Chorus	. . . .	He is guilty
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	Then did they spit
Double Chorus	. . . .	O tell us!
Chorale	. . . .	O Lord, who dares
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Madame L. SHERRINGTON, and Mr. PATEY . .	Now Peter sat
Chorus	. . . .	Surely thou also
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. PATEY . .	Then began he
Air	Madame PATEY . . Violin Obbligato, Mr. SAINTON	Have mercy upon me
Chorale	. . . .	Lamb of God
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. PATEY . .	When the morning
Double Chorus	. . . .	What is that to us
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Mr. PATEY, and Mr. C. HENRY . .	And he cast down
Air	Mr. PATEY . . Violin Obbligato, Mr. H. W. HILL	Give, O give me
Recit. acc.	Mr. E. LLOYD, Mr. PATEY, and Mr. SANTLEY . .	And they took counsel
Chorale	. . . .	Commit thy ways
Recit. and Chorus	Mr. E. LLOYD, Madame L. SHERRINGTON, and Mr. PATEY . .	Now at that feast Barabbas!
Chorus	. . . .	Let Him be crucified
Chorale	. . . .	Mysterious act
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. PATEY . .	The governor said
Recit. and Air	Madame L. SHERRINGTON	For love of us
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	But they cried out
Chorus	. . . .	Let Him be crucified
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. PATEY . .	When Pilate saw
Chorus	. . . .	His blood be upon us
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	Then released he
Recit. and Air	Madame PATEY . .	Be my weeping
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	Then the soldiers
Double Chorus	. . . .	Hail! King of the Jews
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	And they spit
Chorale	. . . .	O Thou whose head
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	And after that
Recit. and Air	Mr. SANTLEY . . Viol da Gamba Obbligato, Mr. PETTIT . .	Come, blessed cross
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	When they were come
Double Chorus	. . . .	Thou that destroyest
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	The thieves also
Recit. and Air with Chorus	Madame PATEY . .	See the Saviour's
Recit. and Chorus	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. SANTLEY . .	Now from the sixth He calleth for Elias
Chorale	. . . .	If I should e'er
Recit. and Chorus	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	And behold
Recit. and Air	Mr. PATEY . .	Up, my soul
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD . .	And Joseph took
Double Chorus	. . . .	Sir, we remember
Recit.	Mr. E. LLOYD and Mr. PATEY . . .	Pilate said
Soli & Chorus	Madame L. SHERRINGTON, Madame PATEY, Mr. E. LLOYD, and Mr. C. HENRY . .	Now doth the Lord
Double Chorus	. . . .	In tears of grief

ORGANIST, Mr. WILLING.

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CONDUCTOR - - SIR MICHAEL COSTA.

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numbers of the executants, to the execution, heard in the Leipzig church was as close as possible.' As for the use of viola da gamba, 'the revival of the old instrument only proved that the viola or the violoncello would have been preferable.'[49]

The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular also reviewed the performance.[50] Commenting on the use of strings instead of pianoforte in the recitatives, the *MT* noted that it was 'scarcely pleasing: in the first place, it is unsuited, we think, to a work so truly sacred, and in the second place it does not carry out the composer's intention that the recitatives of our Saviour only should have orchestral accompaniment.' The *MT* did like the viola da gamba however, calling it 'exceedingly welcome'; and it also noted that this was 'not a resuscitation on this occasion, for although not used in previous performances of this composition here, it has been played by the same artist [Mr. Pettit] in the several recent presentations of Bach's "St. John" Passion music, and also, we believe, by Mr Webb, in the Historical Lectures of Herr Pauer.' This complete performance underlines the importance of the English Bach awakening in the broader field of nineteenth-century Bach reception; and the use of 'original instruments' as far as was practicable also places England ahead of the curve in the early-music movement.

By 1894, the Bach Choir was performing the *Matthäus-Passion* in German, nearly complete, and with Hélène Dolmetsch playing the viola da gamba and Arnold Dolmetsch the harpsichord (though the *Musical Times* says he 'presided at the piano').[51]

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[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *MT* 16/363 (1 May 1873), 75.
[51] *MT* 35/614 (1 April 1894), 240. An announcement in the *Bow Bells* said that he was to play harpsichord: *Bow Bells* 25/322 (2 Mar 1894), 228.

While it is true that the *St Matthew Passion* was eventually successfully introduced in England, there were difficulties along the way, as I have shown. These difficulties were perhaps best summarised by Mendelssohn himself, in a letter he wrote to translator William Bartholomew a few weeks before his death in 1847.[52] The letter reveals that Mendelssohn had been asked to prepare an edition of the *St Matthew Passion* for an English audience. He declined, saying,

> I cannot rescore the work, nor can I point out any alterations, as it has always been a rule for me to leave these works absolutely as they were written, and as I have often quarreled with those who did not. And at the same time, the circumstance of Christ being introduced in the music which certainly will not do for England, seems to me so essential to the whole work, to its structure and its meaning—particularly with regard to the Passione, the one after St. Matth. —that I feel convinced these masterpieces cannot for the present moment be made popular in your Country.

The *Mass in B Minor*

It is interesting to compare the reception of the *Mass* with that of the *St Matthew Passion*: both of them monumental choral works by the same composer, but with a strikingly different performance and reception history. In England, introduction of the *St Matthew Passion* paved the way for introduction of the *Mass in B Minor*; but performance of the *Mass*, like that of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, was preceded well in advance by claims that it was among the most learned and exalted music ever written.

The table below shows the chronology of the English introduction of the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor*, along with publications dates and other significant events.

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[52] The letter was printed in *MT* 33/587 (1 Jan. 1892), 15-17. Thanks to Peter Ward Jones, who brought this letter to my attention.

Chronology of *St Matthew Passion* and *Mass in B Minor* in Nineteenth-Century England:

Date	*St Matthew Passion*	*B Minor Mass*
1789		Burney writes about the Credo
1815		S.Wesley plans to publish the Credo
1819		Possible performance of the Credo on the Apollonicon
1829	Mendelssohn's performance in Berlin	
1830	Full score published by Schlesingerschen Buch- und Musikhandlung	
1832	The chorale 'Bin ich gleich von Dir gewichen' is arranged as a partsong by Edward Taylor, called 'The Venetian Boatmen's Evening Hymn'. It is published by Novello	
1833	A.B. Marx publishes *Klavierauszug*	Nägeli publishes the *Missa*, A.B. Marx publishes a *Klavierauszug* of the entire Mass
1835	The Passion Chorale is published in *Sacred Minstrelsy: a collection of Sacred Music by the Great Masters of all ages and nations*, [ed. William Ayrton].	'Crucifixus' is published in *Sacred Minstrelsy: a collection of Sacred Music by the Great Masters of all ages and nations*, [ed. William Ayrton].
1837	Mendelssohn plays Bach at the Birmingham Festival, and some movements from the *Passion* are performed	
1838		1 May: The (London) Choral Harmonists perform the Credo (Scholes) 23 May: Ancient Concerts perform movements from the Gloria Gauntlett publishes a collection of Bach fugues transcribed for organ, including the 'Gratias agimus'
1840s		Sacred Harmonic Society puts the Mass into rehearsal (Scholes)
1841	Mendelssohn performs the *Passion* in Leipzig	
1845		Nägeli/Simrock publish the rest of the Mass
1849	Bach Society founded	Henry Smart, 'possessing three copies of the Mass in B Minor presents one to the Bach Society and one to William Sterndale Bennett' (papers of the Bach Society, 15 Dec. 1849)

1850		'Et in unum' from the Credo performed at first Bach Society concert
1851		John Hullah performs Credo with his choir
1852		'Duet from the B Minor Mass' is performed in a Bach Society concert
1854	New Philharmonic Society performs excerpts at St. Martin's Hall on 22 March, a week before the Bach Society's first 'complete' performance.	
	Bach Society performs the *Passion* for the first time (twice, several months apart) BG publishes the *Passion*	
1856–57		BG publishes *Mass*
1858	Bach Society performs *Passion* again	
1860		Bach Society programmes the first eleven movements of the *Mass*
1862	English ed. published by Bach Society	
1868		Sanctus performed by Henry Leslie's Choir
1870	Bach Society dissolved. Novello publishes cheap edition. Barnby performs the *Passion* at St. James' Hall	
1871	Barnby performs the work during a service at Westminster Abbey The *Passion* is performed at the Gloucester Festival	
1873	Barnby performs *Passion* four times in Albert Hall during Passion Week; Stainer gives the first of many annual performances during Holy Week at St Paul's Cathedral. Costa conducts the *St Matthew* complete, for the first time.	
1875		Bach Choir is formed
1876		Premiere of *Mass* by the Bach Choir (two performances).
1876–88		Annual performances by Bach Choir
1885		Bach bicentenary: *Mass* performed in Albert Hall Novello publishes inexpensive vocal score
1886		Leeds Festival performance

Two things are immediately noticeable: first, that in most years in the table there is an event related either to the *St Matthew Passion* or to the *Mass*—but not both works in the same year; second, that far more activity happened early on related to the

Mass, especially the Credo, than to the *Passion*, but nonetheless the premiere of the complete *Mass* was fully twenty-two years after that of the *Passion*. The first feature may be explained simply by the fact that both works are massive, and that there simply was not the energy on the part of either the musicians or the audiences to tackle both works at the same time. The second feature may be explained by looking at the differences between the two works, and seeing what the appeal of each was to the English.

* * *

> [Bach's] Credo for five voices with accompaniments, of which I am in possession of the score, … is one of the most clear, correct, and masterly, I have ever seen.[53]

Thus was the *Mass in B Minor*—or part of it—introduced to the educated Englishman: a tantalising report which was to remain unverifiable to most of the music-loving public until parts of the work began to be performed almost fifty years later, in 1838. For in contrast to the preludes and fugues of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, or other keyboard music which people could have heard or played themselves, the Credo lived on its reputation from study and word-of-mouth alone. The English musicians who saw the score immediately recognised in it the culmination of those features they held to be of the highest merit to music, and thus this movement became one of the foundations on which the Bach awakening was built, long before anyone was able to hear it in performance.

The route to popular acceptance of the *Mass in B Minor* was quite different from that of the *St Matthew Passion*. It was a liturgical work, yet it is not a Protestant

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[53] Burney, *History*, 592.

form by any means. In the Anglican church of the nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic mass rite was forbidden, and in fact, a complete mass would have been out of place in the Lutheran church of Bach's time as well, though the so-called *Missa* (the Kyrie and Gloria) would have been used. In addition, even if it had been usable in a liturgical context, its extreme length made it inappropriate for a church service. In England, the long wait until the first 'full' performance (1876) in fact could have had much to do with the state of worship in the nineteenth-century Anglican church: not until the second stage of the Oxford Movement—the so-called Ritualist movement of the 1860s— would such a work, with its Roman Catholic allusions, be acceptable in any context. Further, Bach's *Mass* does not tell a dramatic story, it has no hymn-tunes in which audiences could participate, and it did not have the active endorsement of Mendelssohn. The Latin language was a barrier, though the same was true of the German of the *St Matthew Passion.* (Perhaps the difference was that the *Passion* told an intricate story, while the *Mass* text might have been familiar to the audience.) Nonetheless, the Latin was repellent to non-conformist churches as well as to many Anglicans, and was difficult to understand for the average layman. (Until the early twentieth century it was not performed complete in translation to my knowledge. Isolated movements were translated however, particularly for use as church anthems. According to Thomas Armstrong, Vaughan Williams prepared a translation into 'British' for the Leith Hill Festival in the 1930s.)[54] In its favour, the *Mass in B Minor* did not have recitatives, which had created significant problems in English performances of the *St Matthew Passion*, as discussed earlier.

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[54] Thomas Armstrong, 'Bach and the English Choralist' *MT* 91/1289 (July 1950), 261–263.

The *Mass in B Minor* appealed to the English in other ways that the *St Matthew Passion* did not in its extensive use of fugues, and particularly those in the *stile antico,* which were seen as serious and elevated. Bach had not lost his reputation as the supreme writer of fugues, and indeed, it will be remembered that it was on that tide that he rode into England at the turn of the nineteenth century. It is useful at this point to summarise the double-layered attraction of fugues: they required effort and education to understand and were thus a reward of upward-striving, an example of victory through struggle, and they were frequently performed on organs, which were located mainly in churches, lending an air of seriousness to the form. (Adding to the attraction was the fact that the organ itself was frequently regarded as sublime, because of the way its deep pedal notes could make a room shake, and the fact that a single person was in charge of seemingly limitless range and colour.)[55] With all this in mind, it is no surprise that the *Mass*, and particularly the Credo, made such an impression. Of course it cannot be discounted that the Credo was the only movement of the *Mass* apparently available in England at the turn of the nineteenth century, and that had Burney had another movement in his possession instead then that might have been the one that ignited the enthusiasm for the work as a whole. But Wesley could not have wished for a better piece to demonstrate that Bach could write elevated choral pieces as well as keyboard fugues, and his attempt to publish the work in 1815 bears out the fact that he thought extremely highly of it and was convinced that it

[55] Nineteenth-century examples of the 'sublime' organ are seen in Francis Linley, *A Practical Introduction to the Organ* (London: J. Bland, c.1800), 5: 'It may not be improper to observe here, that there have been pedals introduced, which extend as far as an octave below double C or G on the Stop Diapason: this produces a very awful and sublime effect when introduced at intervals'. Also, in Joseph Warren, *Hamilton's Catechism of the Organ* , 4th ed. (London: Robert Cocks & Co., 1865), 1: 'A large and powerful organ, in the hands of a master, in one of his best moments of musical inspiration, is inferior to no source of the sublime in absorbing the imagination. The rush and concourse of sound have been, not inaptly, compared to the full and even volume of a mighty river, flowing onwards, wave after wave, occasionally dashing against some rock, till, sweeping with momentarily increasing vehemence to the brow of a precipice, it rushes down, a wide-spreading and overwhelming flood.'

would appeal to other musicians as well. The publishing attempt was not successful however, and it was a further twenty-three years before the Credo was performed in England.

Regardless of the attraction of its fugues, the endorsement of respected musicians, and the growing importance of choral music in England, it was the *St Matthew* that first won the hearts of the British public. Because the *Mass* had to wait until 1876 for a complete performance, the *St Matthew Passion* paved the way for it, with the result that those things reviewers complained about in regard to the *Passion* were no longer issues by the time the *Mass* was introduced. There was less need to 'sell' Bach to the public. Concert-goers knew and accepted his choral style, and with the vivid memory of the moving participatory performances of the *St Matthew* in St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey fresh in their minds, they were well-primed to like the *Mass*. The use of elaborate additional accompaniments was also beginning to fade, and the increasingly predominant view of them was that they were an 'excrescence'.[56] The 1873 performance of the complete *St Matthew Passion* with its (relatively) original scoring by Michael Costa and the Sacred Harmonic Society signalled a new stage in the performance of choral music. Generally speaking therefore, reviews of the *Mass in B Minor* (some of which are discussed below) were more favourable than those for the *St Matthew Passion*, even though not all the problems (particularly regarding adequate instruments) were solved.

One final aspect of the *Mass* in England that was very different from the *St Matthew Passion* bears discussion: the scores used in performance. The *St Matthew*

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[56] *MT* 43/710 (April 1, 1902), 234.

Passion arrived in England via a highly traceable route: as we have noted, Mendelssohn's chorus parts were sent here for Sterndale Bennett to use in his Bach Society performances. In addition, subscription lists of the full score of the Schlesinger edition (1830) of the *St Matthew Passion* list a number of English music houses, so we know that it was readily available to buy.

The scores used in nineteenth-century England of the *Mass* are considerably more complicated to track down. We know that the Credo was here in manuscript copies long before the rest of the work. Copies of the movement are the only manuscript sources of the *Mass* that exist in England, and as noted earlier the first reported performance of any movement from the *Mass* was of the Credo. In his article on early Credo sources in England, Yo Tomita traces and describes the early manuscript copies of this movement in England.[57] All extant copies of the Credo derive from Burney's copy, which he probably acquired from C.P.E. Bach. Tomita points out that most extant copies with an English connection bear evidence that they were used for study and perhaps even performance. While it is true that there must have been multiple German copies of the work since Zelter was rehearsing it with the Singakademie in the 1820s, it was not until 1833 that Nägeli published the first section of the *Mass*—the so-called *Missa*.[58] A.B. Marx issued his *Klavierauszug* in 1834, but there were no orchestra parts supplied.[59] The full score did not appear in print until 1845.[60] Thus, any performance with orchestra of the Credo or any

[57] Yo Tomita, 'Bach's *Credo* in England: an Early History' in Anne Leahy and Yo Tomita (eds.): *Bach Studies from Dublin: Selected Papers Presented at the Ninth Biennial Conference on Baroque Music, Held at Trinity College Dublin from 12th to 16th July 2000*, Irish musical studies 8 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 205-227.

[58] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Messe...Nach dem Autographum gestochen* (Zurich: Bey Hans Georg Nägeli, 1833).

[59] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Die hohe Messe in H-moll,* Clavierauszug von Adolph Berhard Marx (Bonn: Bei N. Simrock, 1834).

[60] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Die hohe Messe in H-moll nach dem Autographum gestochen* (Bonn: Bei N. Simrock, 1845).

subsequent movement in England prior to 1845 presents a bit of a mystery as to what score was used. (Tomita suggests that the RM.21.e27 manuscript might have been used by the Choral Harmonists in their 1838 performance—see below.) After 1845 the Nägeli/Simrock score was readily available; and as is well-known the Bach Gesellschaft edition came out in 1856.[61]

It may be of interest now to fill in some further details of performance and reception relevant to the appearance of the *Mass in B Minor* in England.

1815: The Credo is mentioned in Wesley's letters. Beginning in September of this year we read of his enthusiasm for the Credo, which he has seen (and probably copied) from Burney. After fretting in one letter that he has left his copy somewhere and cannot find it, he expresses his intention to publish the movement, saying that he needed only seventy subscribers for the project. As late as 1819 he was still planning to publish the movement, according to a notice in the press: '1 January 1819: Publication by subscription of Credo from J.S. Bach's *B Minor Mass* announced to be "in a state of forward preparation for the press."'[62] Unfortunately this publishing project came to nought. There were no performances of movements from the *B Minor Mass* for almost twenty years after this.

1819: Rachel Cowgill notes a possible performance of a movement from the *Mass in B Minor* on the Apollonicon organ (discussed in Chapter 4) on 15 July. The announcement of the concert in *The Times* read:

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[61] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Messe in H-moll* (Leipzig: Bach-Gesellschaft, 1856).
[62] Announcement in *The English Musical Gazette* (1 January 1819), as reported in Kassler and Olleson, *Source Book*, 53.

> A Grand Selection of Music will be performed on the Apollonicon, by five Professors under the direction of Mr. Thomas Adams…in which will be introduced the following celebrated pieces from the Creation, 'With verdure clad', 'On mighty pens,' 'The marvellous work,' and 'The Heavens are telling'; Selections from Mozart and Bach's grand Masses; Irish melody 'Erin go Bragh', with extempore variations by Mr. Adams; Air, 'Regna amore', 'Zauberflöte', Mozart; Haydn's celebrated Surprise Symphony'; duet 'Hark my darid car [*sic*]', Purcell &c.[63]

If indeed the 'selections from Mozart and Bach's grand Masses' included the Credo, this would predate the first previously known performance by twenty years; however it must be noted that it is equally possible that 'grand Masses' meant movements from the smaller A Major Mass, BWV 234, or the spurious 'messa a 8 voci', both of which had been published by that time.[64]

1833/34: Marx published his *Klavierauszug* of the *Messe in H-Moll*. Because there was no published copy of the full score yet, and this was the complete Mass, this was probably based on the Singakademie copy/copies and not on the Nägeli edition of the *Missa*, also published in this year.[65] It is well-known that Zelter had rehearsed the entire Mass with the Singakademie during the 1820s, and Mendelssohn himself had his first exposure to the piece as a boy at these rehearsals. Marx had published a piano-reduction copy of the *Matthäus-Passion* as well, along with the full score which was apparently from the Singakademie library, in 1830. There is no reason to think that he would not also have had access to the *B Minor Mass*. It is reasonable to assume that after this date choirs could have rehearsed and perhaps even performed the complete Mass with this score, though they would not yet have had the full score to work from. They could have performed the *Missa* from the full Nägeli score.

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[63] *The Times (14 July 1819), as cited by Rachel Cowgill, 'The London Apollonicon Recitals, 1817-32:* A Case Study in Bach, Mozart and Haydn Reception', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association,* 123/2 (1996), 215.

[64] Cowgill, *Apollonicon,* 215.

[65] Mendelssohn also owned a copy of the full score of the Mass, to which Marx also would probably have had access. Mendelssohn's copy may well have been made from the missing Singakademie score(s) as well.

1835: The 'Crucifixus' was published as 'Quartet, "Crucifixus."/ From a MS. Mass, by John Sebastian Bach' in *Sacred Minstrelsy: a collection of Sacred Music by the Great Masters of all ages and nations.*[66]

1838 brought a flurry of activity for Bach reception and the *Mass in B Minor*. Mendelssohn had just made his triumphant debut at the Birmingham Festival in the autumn of 1837, not only with his own *St Paul*, but with selections from the *St Matthew Passion* as well as the E-flat Prelude and Fugue on the magnificent new Town Hall organ. Scholes speculates that this event was responsible for the enthusiastic attempts to perform Bach choral works over the next year.

On 25 April, several choral works of Bach were performed by the Ancient Concerts. The works were chosen by Lord Burghersh, who had heard Mendelssohn and the Bach selections at the Birmingham Festival. For the Ancient Concerts he chose Bach's *Magnificat*, as well as a 'double-chorus Kyrie'.[67]

On 1 May 1838, the Choral Harmonists performed the Credo, according to Scholes.[68] Since this predated the first full printed edition of the *B Minor Mass*, it must be assumed that the Choral Harmonists were working from a (presumably English) manuscript copy (perhaps RM.21.e27). Unfortunately the British Library reports that the records of the Choral Harmonists were destroyed during the second World War, and no programme or other contemporary confirmation of this

[66] (London: John William Parker, 1834-45), ii.90-2. This source has recently been discovered by Robin Leaver, who reports that the unnamed editor, possibly William Ayrton, used the manuscript copy in the Royal Music Library, shelfmark RM.21.e.27 as his model. See Leaver, 'An Early English Imprint of the B minor "Crucifixus" (BWV 232II/5)', *Understanding Bach* 3 (2008), 39-54, <www.bachnetwork.co.uk/ub3/LEAVER.pdf>.
[67] *MW* 8/17 (26 April 1838), 284.
[68] Scholes, *Mirror*, 70.

performance has been found. Smend[69] and other later writers mention this performance, but whether they report from first-hand knowledge is unknown. The 1900 *Grove Dictionary*[70] and Scholes both report that the Choral Harmonists was a high-quality society of amateurs, 'backed by the collaboration of the most eminent professional vocalists and instrumentalists'[71] including Vincent Novello. The group performed many important works with orchestra, including Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in 1839 and 1844.

Later in the month, on 23 May, the Ancient Concerts performed movements from the Gloria of the *Mass*. The responsibility for selecting the programme for this concert fell to the Archbishop of York, who chose the three movements 'Gloria', 'Qui sedes', and 'Quoniam tu solus', calling them ('protestantly', to use Scholes' word) 'Selections from Service'. Unfortunately the Archbishop did not understand the challenge this music would pose, for the performance was reportedly dismal. The *Musical World* 'applaud[ed] the zeal but lament[ed] the indiscretion of its originator.'

> The chorus [Gloria] is accompanied, we believe, by three obligati trumpets, the alto tromba extending to E in alt. This part, of course, Mr. Harper could not play... The aria 'Qui sedes' has an obbligato for the teneroon or oboe d'amore... This Mr Gratton Cooke attempted on the common oboe, and of course stopped at the very outset of his exertions. The bass solo 'Quoniam' is accompanied by a corno and two fagotti. The passages for horn were next to impracticable, and Mr. Denman was furnished with a fagotti part which appeared greatly incorrect. Of course the selection was slaughtered, the soli players retiring in dismay and leaving Mr. Knyvett to play their parts on the organ, which he did most manfully, after the fashion of the men of the last generation, 'Solo on the Cornet Stop'.[72]

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[69]NBA, Kritische Bericht ii/1, 43.
[70]Charles Mackeson, 'Choral Harmonists', in George Grove, ed., *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1900), 352. accessed 4 July 2011, http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=IhJjDfa8xp8C&pg=PA352&dq=choral+harmonists&hl=en&ei=7pERTpLnEJSGhQf_odjuDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&sqi=2&ved=0CEAQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=choral%20harmonists&f=false)
[71] Scholes, *Mirror,* 28.
[72] *MW* 9/115/New Series No. 21 (May 1838), 67.

Later in the century, F.G. Edwards, looking back to the early days of the Bach awakening in the *Musical Times*, was to refer to this as the 'Farewell Symphony performance'.[73]

A few months later an advertisement soliciting subscriptions for the second part of the Mass appeared in the *Musical World* (Aug. 16, 1838, p. 268.)

SEB. BACH'S GRAND MASS
IN B MINOR.
The 2nd part of the *Full Score* of the above Work is now in course of Publication by SUBSCRIPTION. Price of the First Part, 12s; Second Part, 6s; Pianoforte Score, 12s; the Five Vocal Parts, 8s.
The Third, and last Part of the Full Score will be Published in December, Subscriptions will be received by
G. ANDRE, Importer of Foreign Music, 70, Berners Street, Oxford Street.
Catalogues of some Unpublished *original MSS.* of *Mozart* to be had Gratis.

No details are known conclusively what publisher this was, but it is likely to have been Nägeli attempting to raise business for the second part of the *Mass*.

Also in 1838, Henry John Gauntlett published the first of his *Choral and Instrumental Fugues of John Seb. Bach in Continuation of the English Edition of his 48 Preludes and Fugues arranged from his Masses Litanies Oratorios and Exercises.*[74] Included in the first volume is an organ arrangement of the 'Gratias Agimus tibi'—again, one of the Palestrina-style fugues. A note at the bottom of the page indicates that this is from the Marx Edition. (See illustration, overleaf.)

The review of this selection in the *Musical World* says, 'The subject is as old as the hills (the same which concludes the oratorio of *St Paul)*, but the genius of Bach has added a second, which although it renders the performance somewhat difficult,

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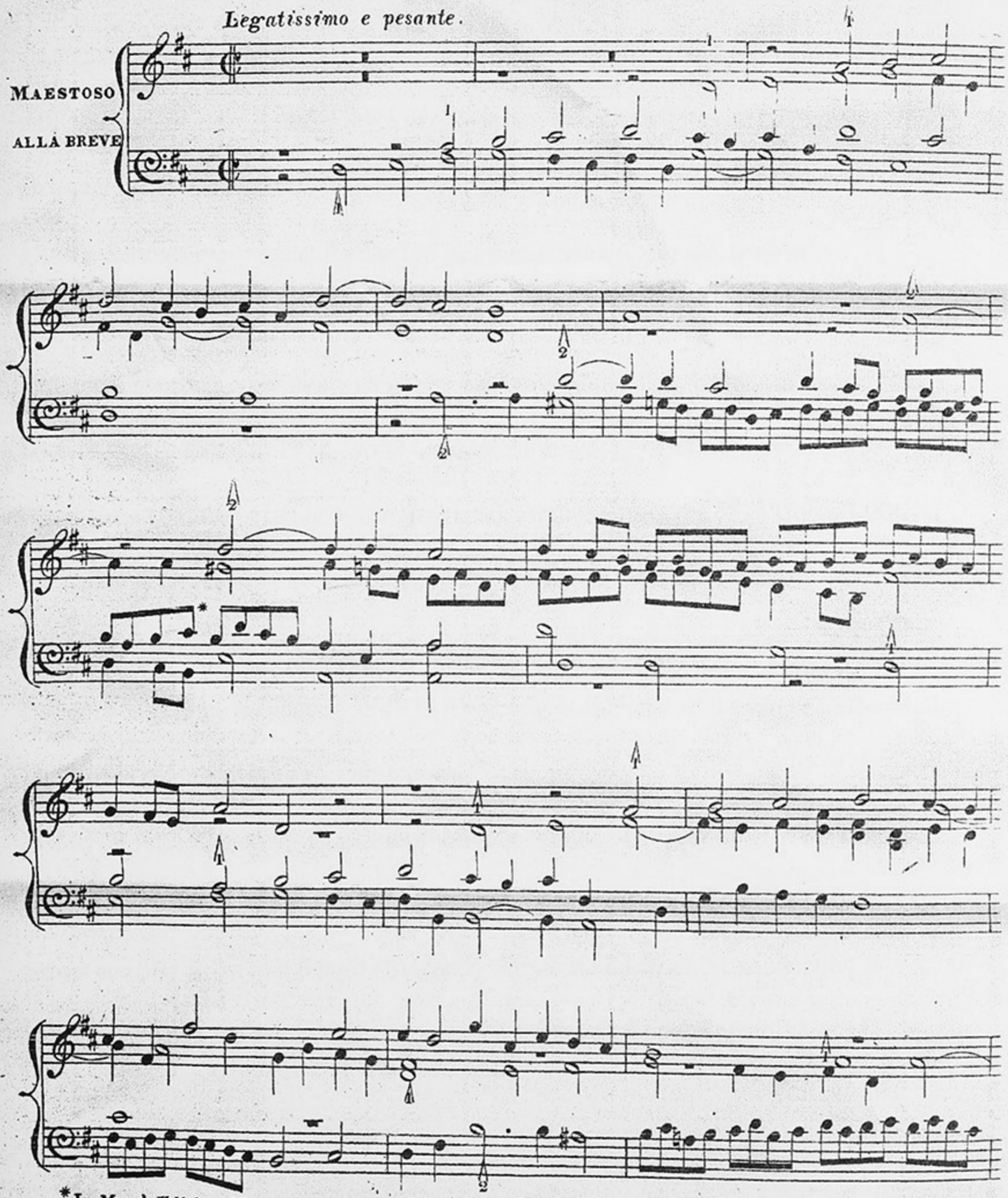
[73] F.G. Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 800.
[74] 9 vols (London: C. Lonsdale, 1838–1851).

"GRATIAS AGIMUS TIBI"

(From a Gloria in D major)

*In Marx's Edition this note and its corresponding one in the Soprano of the next bar is marked C♮. I think Marx at times incorrect: he unquestionally is so in his reading of the celebrated G Minor Pedal Fugue.

throws around it the charm of novelty and interest. The close inwoven points have been previously used by Palestrina, and will be found in an elaborate chorus from the Canon Mass in C by the Roman composer.'[75] Thus in a few sentences the writer assures his readers that Bach will be familiar, not completely strange; that he is linked with the exalted church music style of Palestrina; and that his genius surpasses previous composers' efforts with similar material.

1840s: Scholes reports that the Sacred Harmonic Society put the *Mass* into rehearsal.[76] The Society never performed the *Mass* however. The group's connection with the dissenting community might be the explanation. The Sacred Harmonic Society was founded in 1832, 'soon to be transformed into a symbol of religious dissent as a coalition of nonconformist choirs excluded from the 1834 [Royal] festival [at Westminster Abbey]. Its membership largely drawn from the musically uneducated lower classes, the society maintained a high moral tone and social purpose, which extended also to its audiences. In 1836 it was granted the use of the larger Exeter Hall, focus of London's dissenting community.'[77]

1850, 29 July: The duet, 'Et in unum' from the Credo was performed at the first Bach Society concert. Sterndale Bennett was the nominal conductor, but Henry Smart actually filled that duty.[78] (Evidently Smart did much of the conducting at rehearsals, while Sterndale Bennett himself accompanied on the piano.)[79]

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[75] *MT* 37/646 (1 Dec.1896), 800.
[76]Scholes, *Mirror*, 71.
[77]Cyril Ehrlich, Simon McVeigh and Michael Musgrave, 'London: Musical Life: Concert Life 1800–1850', *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy http://www.grovemusic.com (Accessed 16 August 2007).
[78]J.R. Sterndale Bennett, *Life,* 207.
[79]*Ibid,* 206.

1851: John Hullah performed the Credo with his choir at St Martin's Hall. Before this, as reported by Edward Holmes, 'the late Mr Cooper, organist of St Sepulchre's, who possessed a very genuine taste for music of this exalted class, was one of the first who fully estimated the merits of this composition. He got [the Credo] up in private, at some chapel, with an organ accompaniment.'[80]

The review from the *Athenaeum* reflected the general feeling about Bach at this time: he was worthy to be studied and admired, but the style was still strange and difficult, and as always the obsolete instruments were a problem. The reviewer (probably Henry Chorley) refers to 'Giant Bach the scarcely accessible' vs. 'Giant Handel the majestically familiar.' He continues,

> The pomp of the opening of the 'Credo', with its artful intertexture and stupendous harmonies, the deep expression and dramatic modulations of the 'Et incarnatus,' the jubilant glory of the 'Et resurrexit' and the confession succeeded by triumph in the final chorus from the 'Confiteor' up to the Amen were absorbing…in the dignity of their first ideas and the consummate science and unexpectedness with which these are amplified…The *solos* are strange, —and, we think, of an inferior excellence… In the duet 'et in unum Dominum' two *soprani* voices are perpetually taxed, in reply, with the most harassing divisions of time and the strangest setting of the Latin text. Yet, were this duet once thoroughly mastered, it might possibly sound as naturally flowing as 'Cantando in di.' So, again, the bass solo in the 'Et resurrexit' is tantamount to the most crabbed of *solfeggi*; —while throughout the air 'et in spiritum sanctum' with its lovely pastoral *ritornel* for the *oboe* (why pastoral to such words?), the singer has to grope his way, distanced oftener than supported by the accompaniment, through zig-zag mazes of sound, where the eye must lead him because the ear offers no assistance—and in which the mind suggests no clue—so arbitrarily purposeless seems the ordinance of the song, if the words are studied.[81]

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[80][Edward Holmes], 'Our Musical Spring', *Fraser's Magazine* 43/257 (May 1851), 592. Holmes is referring to George Cooper (c1783-1843), who, in addition to being organist at St Sepulchre's, was assistant organist at St Paul's Cathedral. As reported by Yo Tomita, in 'The Dawn of the Bach Awakening' in *The English Bach Awakening* (fn 218, p. 109), Cooper had apparently bought Burney's copy of the Credo at auction in 1826, according to an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the New York Public Library, Music Division, Drexel 2235.3. After Cooper's death the score was sold at auction (9-11 December 1844), according to an unpriced, unannotated copy of the auction catalogue, which is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Harding F 140 (26), lot 581. Its current location is not known.

[81] *Athenaeum* 1221 (March 1851), 331.

1854: Sterndale Bennett premiered the (reasonably) complete *St Matthew Passion* with the Bach Society in two identical concerts. In the two *Athenaeum* reviews, which were both critical of the performers, the writer (probably Chorley again) praised the Bach Society for its efforts, but added that 'certain portions of Bach's Mass in B Minor show the grand and inventive composer in a higher strain of inspiration'.[82] It is curious that the reviewer should mention the *Mass*, since no public performance had yet taken place in England.[83]

1875: The Bach Choir was founded in this year, with the aim of performing the *Mass in B Minor:* (The Bach Society had similarly been formed almost thirty years earlier with the intention of performing the *St Matthew Passion.*) While the details of the founding of the Bach Choir have been written about by Basil Keen and Teri Noel Towe it is worth summarising them here.[84]

The first idea to perform the *Mass* belonged to Arthur Duke Coleridge, who had learned of it from Thomas Attwood Walmisley in Cambridge. Coleridge approached his good friend Otto Goldschmidt, who with his wife, the soprano Jenny Lind, was most enthusiastic about the idea. They used their excellent social connections to arrange rehearsals and recruit singers, and Jenny Lind herself led supplementary rehearsals for the women in her house. It is worth mentioning that the founders of the Bach Choir were far more aristocratic and wealthy than the founders of the Bach Society, who were practising musicians. Goldschmidt and Coleridge managed to persuade Sir Charles Freake, Lord Monteagle, W.H. Gladstone, George Grove, and others who were strong supporters of the arts to back the idea. Goldschmidt travelled

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[82] *Athenaeum* 1381 (April 1854), 469-70, and 1414 (December 2 1854), 146-7.
[83]Basil Keen also remarks on this in *The Bach Choir*, 4.
[84]Keen, *The Bach Choir,* and Towe, unpublished essay, by personal communication.

to Germany to examine Rietz' score of the Mass in Leipzig, and arranged for the orchestral parts to be borrowed from the Hamburg Cecilianverein.[85] A page of one of the choral parts has been reproduced below, to show the kinds of expression included by Goldschmidt in his performances.[86] After the B Minor Mass premiere, the decision was made to 'form a permanent choir, in commemoration of the first performance in England of Bach's *B Minor Mass*'.

1876, 26 April and 8 May: The first performances of the relatively-complete Mass took place in St James' Hall by the Bach Choir. As listed in the *Musical Times* (1 June 1876), the soloists were Mme Lemmens-Sherrington, Mme Patey, Mr Cummings, and Signor Federici. (For the second performance Mr Kempton stepped in for Mr Federici who was indisposed.) Jenny Lind herself was not a soloist. Several contemporary reviews say her role was only as 'leader of the sopranos', and her name is not listed with the other soloists. Her biographer Joan Bulman writes, 'Jenny, with a dignity and self-effacement that people spoke of as "glorious" in a great prima donna, coached the ladies and herself led the sopranos.'[87]

Subsequent to the performances—perhaps realising the premiere would generate excitement and interest—the *Musical Times* printed an extensive article analysing the work. This article, by Ebenezer Prout, parallels the articles written by G.A. Macfarren at the time of the Novello octavo edition of the *St Matthew Passion* in 1870, noted earlier. The Prout article appeared in three parts: June, July, and August

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[85]Mrs Raymond Maude, OBE, *The Life of Jenny Lind* (London: Cassell, 1926), 210. The Minutes of the Bach Choir (19 January 1876) also thanked the Cäcilienverein for allowing Goldschmidt to borrow the Mass score and parts.
[86]J.S. Bach, *Mass in B Minor,* ed. O. Goldschmidt, chorus parts (London: Novello and Co. for the Bach Choir, 1885).
[87]Joan Bulman, *Jenny Lind, a Biography* (London: J. Barrie, 1956), 312.

Edition of the Bach Choir,
London.

Editor
OTTO GOLDSCHMIDT.
1885.

MASS in B minor

(DIE HOHE MESSE in H moll.)

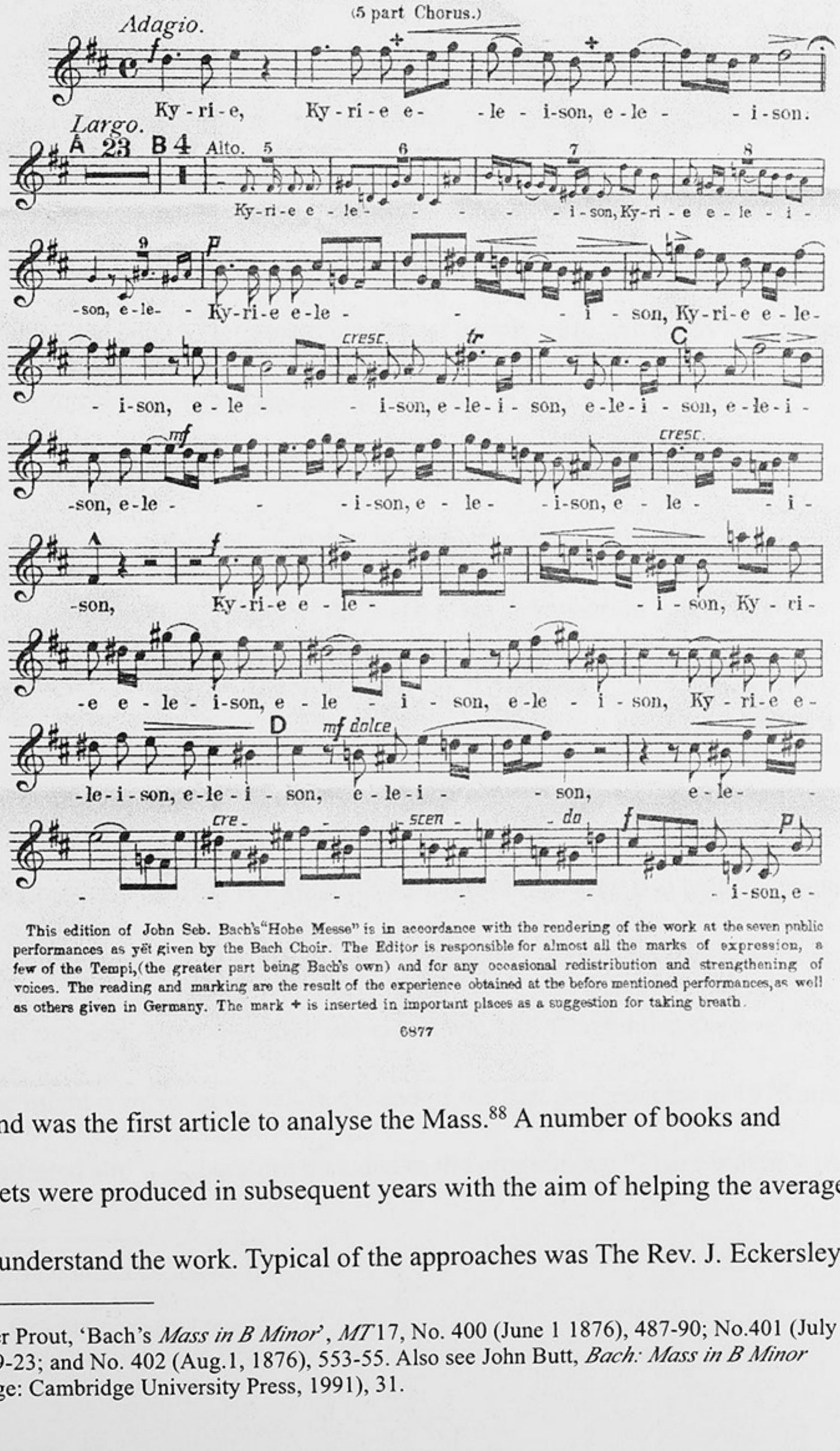
by

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH.

CHORUS PARTS.

Nº 1. KYRIE.

(5 part Chorus.)



This edition of John Seb. Bach's "Hohe Messe" is in accordance with the rendering of the work at the seven public performances as yet given by the Bach Choir. The Editor is responsible for almost all the marks of expression, a few of the Tempi, (the greater part being Bach's own) and for any occasional redistribution and strengthening of voices. The reading and marking are the result of the experience obtained at the before mentioned performances, as well as others given in Germany. The mark + is inserted in important places as a suggestion for taking breath.

1876, and was the first article to analyse the Mass.[88] A number of books and pamphlets were produced in subsequent years with the aim of helping the average person understand the work. Typical of the approaches was The Rev. J. Eckersley's, in

[88] Ebenezer Prout, 'Bach's *Mass in B Minor*', *MT* 17, No. 400 (June 1 1876), 487-90; No.401 (July 1, 1876), 519-23; and No. 402 (Aug.1, 1876), 553-55. Also see John Butt, *Bach: Mass in B Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 31.

his book *Remarks on Bach's Mass in B Minor,* which begins by noting the complaints often heard about Bach's choral music, that 'a single theme is dwelt upon for a very long time as it passes from one set of voices to another… Even people of considerable musical taste often find it difficult to keep their attention fixed. Why should it not suffice to say what has to be said at once and have done with it?'[89] Other monographs that appeared in England around the turn of the twentieth century include Alan Gray and Sedley Taylor, *Bach's Mass in B Minor*;[90] and Charles Sanford Terry's *Bach, the Mass in B minor*:[91] It is indicative of the industrious and ambitious nature of the British public that such a significant number of people were willing to make this kind of serious effort to understand the music of Bach.

As with the first performance of the *St Matthew Passion*, substantial cuts were taken in these first performances of the *Mass*. A note included in the programme says that 'owing to the unusual length of the work some abbreviation is absolutely necessary for the convenience of both singers and audience'.[92] In a letter to the *Musical Times* in 1953, Stanley Godman writes about this first performance of the *B Minor Mass*: 'The omissions from the first performance were the second Kyrie, Gratias agimus and the first Hosanna….Some omissions were also made in some of the solo numbers (nos. 2,7, 9, 10, 14, and 18…) either in the vocal portions or in the orchestral ritornels. Even with all these cuts it was still thought that some of the audience might want to leave before the end of the first performance in 1876 and a special printed slip was therefore included in the programme: "There will be a pause

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[89](London: Novello and Co, 1904), 1.
[90](Cambridge: [n.p.], 1908).
[91](Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1915).
[92]Letter to the Editor, 'Sterndale Bennett', *MT* 94, no.1329 (Nov. 1953), 521.

before the Agnus Dei to allow time for those wishing to leave before the conclusion of the performance. BY ORDER."'[93] Sir George Grove wrote the programme notes, noting the following changes to the orchestration: clarinets substituted for the oboi d'amore; the high trumpet parts were rearranged for trumpet and clarinets; trumpets were added in the Credo to support the voices; the flute parts were doubled in number; and violas were added.

The reviews were generally very positive, in contrast to those of the first performances of the *St Matthew Passion.* The performers were all praised, though there was some grumbling about Goldschmidt's editing and the substitutions of clarinets. Reviewers were even complimentary about the behaviour of the audiences: at the early *St Matthew Passion* performances, the disruptive repetition of movements as encores was much-lamented in the newspapers. Much to the relief of the *Times,* at least, this reprising did not happen at the *Mass* premiere.[94]

Between 1876 and 1888 the Bach Choir presented annual performances of the *Mass* in its near-entirety, with Goldschmidt at the podium until 1885. Interestingly, the *Passions* were forbidden from performance by policy of the Bach Choir committee, which said they should only be performed in a sacred building. Thus, the *Mass* was again differentiated from the *St Matthew Passion*, which, as has been seen, was often said to have its true home in the church. Like the *Missa Solemnis*, another Mass not at home in a church, with which it was often compared, the *Mass in B Minor* transcended conventional religious bounds, and turned concert halls into sacred spaces.

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[93]Letter to the Editor, 'The B Minor Mass in England', *MT* 94, no.1330. (Dec.1953), 575.
[94]'Bach's Mass in B Minor', *The Times* (11 May 1876), 5.

1885 brought the bicentenary of Bach's birth, and at the invitation of the Bach Choir a number of choral societies came together to present the Mass in a festival concert in the Albert Hall on March 21. By this time, Goldschmidt's relations with the Bach Choir had become strained, though he did conduct this performance. Participating choirs included the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, the Sacred Harmonic Society, Henry Leslie's Choir, the South London Choral Association, members of the Chapel Royal, and the choirs of St Paul's Cathedral and St George's Windsor. There were about 120 in the orchestra, with John Stainer playing the organ, and six hundred in the chorus. Two thousand books of words were ordered from Novello, but no record of the actual number of audience members survives. For this performance, the previously unavailable oboi d'amore were used and a suitable trumpet was found (a special player for the latter being brought in from Berlin). The reviews of the concert were mostly favourable, though the *Musical Times* criticised the cuts taken in the work as 'inappropriate in a festival performance intended as a tribute to the composer'. It also complained that the doubling of the bassoons in the 'Quoniam' drowned out the horn, and that trumpets were improperly used in the first movement of the Credo to double the voices, contrary to Bach's scoring.[95] The *Monthly Musical Record* said, 'The vocal tone, good in quality, was somewhat disappointing in quantity, for not withstanding the earnest exertions of all concerned, in so large a space the voice parts made little or none of the effect desired.'[96]

The 1885 bicentenary festival was to be Goldschmidt's last appearance with the Bach Choir. His successor, Charles Villiers Stanford, performed his first *Mass in B*

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[95] 'The Bach Choir', *MT* 26/506 (Apr. 1885), 203.
[96] 'The Bach Choir', *Monthly Musical Record* 25/172 (April 1885), 91.

Minor with that group on 12 May 1888. Stanford took a 'fresh approach', indicative of the next stage of Bach performance, which was mostly welcomed by the press after what they had begun to see as Goldschmidt's quirky tempos and overly-expressive interpretations. Stanford deleted Goldschmidt's phrasing and dynamic markings, and continued to use Bach's original instruments as far as he was able. In a curious move however, reminiscent of the substitution of words from the *Messiah* into the *St Matthew Passion* for the St Paul's Cathedral performances (mentioned earlier), Stanford tried to make the audience stand for the Sanctus. George Bernard Shaw, writing as Corno di Bassetti, said this was a 'manufactured gesture; and in any event audiences would be reluctant to rise the more they came to know how long the Sanctus lasted!'[97] The Mass continued to be a prominent feature of the London Bach Choir, as well as the other Bach Choirs that sprang up around the country—and indeed the world.

In **1886** the *Mass* was presented in a monumental programme at the triennial Leeds Festival, with Sir Arthur Sullivan conducting. In his edition of the *Mass*, prepared for the Festival, Sullivan notes that the 'few marks of expression' were inserted by him for the Festival, and that they were 'indications of degrees of force, rather than of expression.'[98] For the first time the *Mass* was performed without any cuts, and again, as in the bicentenary performance the year before in the Albert Hall, proper trumpets were sought. This time the trumpets were made for the occasion by the principal trumpet of the Leeds Festival, Walter Morrow. Teri Noel Towe writes about these 'Bach' trumpets, quoting from N.C. Gatty:

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[97] G. B. Shaw, *London Music in 1888–89 as heard by Corno di Bassetti* (London: Constable, 1937), 33.
[98] 'Editorial note', John Sebastian Bach, *Mass in B minor*, ed. A. Sullivan (London: Novello, 1908), n.p.

> It was the merit of Kosleck of Berlin to introduce a high trumpet specially to perform Bach's trumpet parts in their integrity in the B Minor Mass, which was produced under [Joseph] Joachim's direction on the occasion of the unveiling of the statue of J. S. Bach in 1884. A performance of the same work, in which Kosleck again took part, was given by the London Bach Choir in the Albert Hall, London, March 21, 1885. The trumpet is not bent back but straight, and is fitted with two pistons. It is an A trumpet with a posthorn bore and bell. Kosleck's trumpet was improved by Walter Morrow, the well-known English trumpeter, who altered the bore and bell to that of the real trumpet. Morrow's trumpet, like Kosleck's, is straight and has two pistons, measuring in length 58½inches. It is also an A trumpet. With it the twentieth, and at French pitch the twenty-first proper tone of the 8-foot or normal trumpet can be reached. An instrument of this straight type is sometimes made in D, an octave higher than the old natural trumpet, or a tone higher than the modern valve trumpet in C, but owing to its limited length the proper tone quality is somewhat lost.[99]

Towe further says, 'the Bach Trumpet in D appears to have been considered a specific instrument in Britain; in orchestral rosters in concert programmes from the 1920s and 1930s, one sees it listed opposite the name of a particular trumpeter who made the instrument something of a specialty.'

An extensive organ part was arranged by Mr Frederic Cliffe, 'under Sir Arthur Sullivan's personal supervision' as is noted in the programme. The chorus numbered 300, and the orchestra over 100. Several reviews of the Festival began by noting that the orchestra was almost entirely made up of English players, including several born in other countries which were under English protectorate. The *Musical Times* wrote, 'Apart from three or four artists in the orchestra, everybody concerned represented native talent. In a sense, we do not except Mme. Albani, who may stand for the Greater Britain beyond the sea, and who is a born subject of the Queen.' The review continued, 'Sir Arthur Sullivan evidently aimed at a "monumental performance"…It seemed that the choir became, for the time, an immense organ, plus all that raises the

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[99] Nicholas Comyn Gatty, 'incorporating material from W. H. S. [William H. Stone] and D. J. B. [D. J. Blaikley]', 'Bach Trumpet', *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Third Edition, (New York, 1937), 397; noted in an unpublished article by Teri Noel Towe, by kind communication.

human voice above the noblest of instruments.'[100] A reviewer for the *Daily News* of this performance said, 'Those who attended were fortunate in their presence, for they heard a performance which might well furnish a remembrance for a lifetime... The stupendous force of the "Sanctus," the "Cum Sancto Spiritu," and the "Hosanna" defies description, but it wrought upon the enthusiasm of the audience in a manner seldom witnessed when a composition of this character is concerned... Sir Arthur Sullivan displayed pre-eminently his fitness for the position he holds, and in a firm but undemonstrative fashion led on his forces to a signal victory.'[101]

In later years F.G. Edwards wrote about this performance, 'It has been said that "Sullivan nearly killed himself over that performance," so completely did he throw himself, body and soul, into the preparation and presentation of Bach's colossal work. The rendering of the "Osanna" has been described as literally overwhelming.'[102] One of the reasons for the success of this performance was the unusually large number of rehearsals. The *Monthly Musical Record* said, 'It was currently reported that there had been 50 meetings of the choir. The band had had 3 days' rehearsal in London, and choir, band, and principals, meeting together for the first time at Leeds, had the advantage of three long and heavy rehearsals on the Monday and Tuesday of the Festival week.'[103]

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[100] 'Leeds Musical Festival', *MT* 27/525 (Nov. 1886), 653–657.
[101] Frederick R. Spark and Joseph Bennett, *History of the Leeds Music Festivals* (Leeds and London, 1892), 313. Thanks to Teri Noel Towe for providing the reference for this source.
[102] Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 800.
[103] *Monthly Musical Record* 16/191 (1 Nov. 1886), 247.

Conclusion

Performances and reviews of Bach's choral works throughout the nineteenth century in England show how quickly and thoroughly his music entered the public imagination. In his review of the Bach revival through the pages of the *Musical Times*, Scholes says, 'It is safe to say that [by 1908] or a little later Bach was, with the sole exception of Handel (sustained by his *Messiah*), the composer most popular with the bigger choral societies and the better small ones also.'[104] The *Mass in B Minor* was a staple of these choral societies, and Scholes reports that in 1908 there were nine performances of the work in four months.[105] Given the superficial similarities between the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor* (both are very long sacred choral works by the same composer), it is no surprise that the *St Matthew* was receiving a growing number of performances. Urged on by a new generation of Bach advocates, the ambitions and industriousness of the British found a perfect outlet in these monumental works by this most exalted of composers. This gradual wholesale adoption of Bach in England was an effort spearheaded by knowledgeable musicians, who convinced the general public that Bach was worth spending time to understand. That the public was open to this idea of self-improvement and was willing to be led by people whom they trusted speaks clearly about the ambitions of English society in the period, and betrays a further dimension of the 'broad cultural readiness' to adopt Bach into their culture.

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[104] Scholes, *Mirror*, 75.
[105] *Ibid*, 74.

Chapter 4

A 'Glorious Confusion':[1] Bach and the Organ in Nineteenth-Century England

In comparison with some other European countries, the English organ and its music held a relatively insecure place in the eighteenth century.[2] To the extent that it was present however, it had become established in a unique tradition quite different from the Continent. In the nineteenth century, the instrument and its music in England underwent fundamental changes. This chapter will explore the role the music of J.S. Bach had in those changes. The first section considers the earliest publications of Bach organ works and the activities of the people who promoted them: 'evangelists' such as Samuel Wesley, Henry Gauntlett, and Felix Mendelssohn. The second section examines the role of the organ in society at the outset of the century as reflected in the written word, which provides a convenient window through which to regard the changing landscape. Organ tutors from the first part of the century are then briefly considered: how did organists learn to play with pedals, and what was the role of Bach in organ pedagogy? Finally, the technological ingenuity in organ building and design as displayed by the enterprising and ingenious Victorian will be briefly discussed. This study is not intended to be a technical survey, since the development of the English organ in the nineteenth century in that area has been thoroughly dealt with elsewhere;[3] nor is it

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[1] *MW* 6/70 (14 July 1837), 75.

[2] Only a minority of churches had organs, and only the affluent had access to the pleasure gardens and the concerts there. Compared to today, organs had widespread presence in private homes for about 200 years up to the mid-nineteenth century. However, this dissertation considers only organs in churches and halls. Barrel organs, even though they were found in nineteenth-century churches, are also not considered here. For more on chamber organs, see for example Michael I. Wilson, *The Chamber Organ in Britain, 1600-1830* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), and Stephen Bicknell, *The History of the English Organ* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[3] See for example Bicknell, *History,* and Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ.*

a survey of English organ music after the introduction of Bach's music.[4] It is intended to be the beginnings of an enquiry into the social history of an instrument which has always borne meaning in addition to its function as a musical instrument, whether as a force for moral improvement through its association with the church, or as a showcase for a community's wealth, as in the Town Hall organs of the nineteenth century, as a sign of a culture's ingenuity, as exemplified by Elizabeth I's gift of an organ to the Sultan of Turkey in 1599, or as a sign of popery, as seen in the triumphalist brandishing of organ pipes by Republicans during the English civil war period.[5] Since the introduction of Bach through the *WTC* has been discussed elsewhere,[6] this chapter will be restricted to the introduction of *pedaliter* works of Bach, or transcriptions of works intended to be played with pedal.

A brief look at the state of the organ in England in the eighteenth century is useful in providing a background. In churches, organs had a prescribed role in the liturgy, while in concerts they were usually featured as part of the continuo, though as a solo instrument in concertos as well. The many and varied types of organ voluntaries belie the single title, as they ranged from soft chords followed by flowing fugues, to devotional pieces from the vocal works of Handel, Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, to works with a slow introduction followed by a sprightly second movement, the latter often featuring the trumpet or cornet or other characteristically-voiced stops for the solo sound. Literature was matched to instrument: organs where

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[4] For which see Williams, 'J.S. Bach and English Organ Music'.
[5] Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm During the English Civil War* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 137; F.G.Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 722-26.
[6] See for example Tomita, 'Dawn of the English Bach Awakening', and [same author], "'Most ingenious, most learned, and yet practicable work': The English Reception of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century seen through the Editions Published in London", in *The Piano in Nineteenth-Century British Culture: Essays on Instruments, Performers and Repertoire*, eds. Therese Ellsworth and Susan Wollenberg (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 33-67.

voluntaries were expected to be played had some of these typically English sounds, as well as a standard collection of other stops; and organs in halls had their own form as well, which suited their role as continuo and occasional solo instrument. A lively culture of organ music had grown up, too, in the London Pleasure Gardens (principally Vauxhall and Ranelagh) with organ concertos and other works by composers such as Arne, Hook, and Handel. The situation was not so stable by the end of the eighteenth century however. The growing popularity of oratorio singing, especially by the growing amateur choral societies, meant that the organ had to begin functioning as a substitute orchestra, with the ability to support many voices and supply orchestral colours as well. Larger numbers in churches and a new concentration on congregational singing (a trend encouraged by the increasing influence of the Evangelicals; see p. 181ff) also led to the need for more sizeable instruments. Alongside these new practical requirements was a desire for a different musical experience from the organ: the increasing number of trips to the continent to see and hear the huge instruments in Haarlem and Rotterdam and the Silbermann organs in Dresden and eastern Europe opened up new vistas for the travellers, and in turn, for their readers back home, and we begin to read about the 'solemn and awful effect' of low pedal notes.[7] Further, the influx of foreign music publications brought new possibilities to both players at home and their increasing audiences.[8]

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[7] *Gentlemen's Magazine* 42 (December 1772), 563.
[8] Williams, 'J.S. Bach and English Organ Music', 142.

Organ Works Circulating before Wesley

Before Wesley began his evangelising for Bach, only the *WTC* and a few other isolated keyboard works were known. (Notable exceptions were the early copies of the Credo from the *Mass in B Minor*; see Chapter 3.) Only a very few *pedaliter* works of Bach are known to have been present in England prior to 1807, and one of those was not attributed to him by its owner: Benjamin Cooke's copy of the Praeludium in C, BWV 545a and Fugue in C, BWV 545, now in the Royal College of Music, Ms. 814. (Benjamin Cooke, 1734-93, was organist at Westminster Abbey from 1762 until his death.) The origin of Cooke's copy is obscure, and he himself attributes it to John Robinson (1682-1762), his predecessor at Westminster Abbey. The presence of this work raises many tantalising questions. Where did it come from? Did the Abbey organ have pedals that could adequately accommodate this work? How could Cooke have thought it was written by Robinson, when Robinson could not play pedals himself?[9] Another Bach organ work with obbligato pedal was the trio sonata BWV 525, published by A.F.C. Kollmann in his *Essay on Practical Musical Composition* in 1799.[10] Kassler reports that this trio, published here for the first time, appeared alongside one of the '48' preludes and fugues (BWV 870), substantial parts of the Musical Offering, (BWV 1079), the Art of Fugue (BWV 1080), and the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue (BWV 903/2).[11] In 1801, Clementi included the 'Preludio:

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[9] For more information, see David Knight, 'The Pedal Organ at Westminster Abbey in the Eighteenth Century, with Some Remarks on BWV 545b', *The organ yearbook* 29 (2000).
[10] Kollmann, *Essay on Practical Musical Composition.*
[11] Kassler, *Kollmann,* 58.

Gravement' from the *Pièce d'Orgue* BWV 572 in his *Selection of Practical Harmony*, Vol. 1.[12]

In 1807 the first *pedaliter* work of Bach was published in England by Carl Friedrich Horn: *A Sett of Twelve Fugues, Composed for the Organ by Sebastian Bach, Arranged as Quartettos*.[13] While most of the selections were from the *WTC*, one was the fugue from the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 538. Finally in 1809-10 Samuel Wesley and Horn published the trio sonatas, offering them as works to be played in duet: one player took the left hand and pedal parts, and the other played the right hand part up an octave.[14] Wesley's preface to these works highlights the extraordinary effect Bach's *pedaliter* organ works had on the English public:

> The following Trio was designed for the Organ, and performed by the matchless Author in a very extraordinary Manner; the first and second Treble Parts he played with both Hands on two Sets of keys, and the Bass (wonderful as it appears) he executed entirely upon the Pedals, without Assistance. As these trios need only Publicity to secure Admiration (which all Judges of the Sublime and beautiful in Music who have heard them unanimously testify), we are happy to present the musical World with some of the choicest Fruits of Learning and Taste that were ever gathered from the Tree of Harmony.[15]

Wesley's Circle and the Organ

It has already been noted that the activities of Samuel Wesley and his fellow Bach advocates were crucial to the introduction of Bach's organ works to England. Aside from a motet and some violin works, Wesley mostly promoted organ works, under which the *WTC* can be included, since as has been noted above, fugues were *de facto*

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[12] Clementi, *Selection of Practical Harmony*, 132.
[13] (London: C.F. Horn, 1807).
[14] J.S. Bach, ed. S. Wesley and C.F. Horn, *A Trio [or rather, Six Trios]*. A complete discussion of the publication of the trio sonatas is in Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*, 417-430.
[15] Preface: Bach, Wesley, Horn, *Trios*.

organ works. There was however one particular organ piece that stood out in popularity: the E-flat fugue, the so-called 'St Anne' after its subject, which uses the same notes as the hymn tune by that name. (F. G. Edwards credits Benjamin Jacob with giving the fugue that moniker in his publication of the Prelude (in truncated form) and Fugue in 1827.)[16] One can imagine the reasons for the attraction: the first section of the fugue is in the *stile antico*, a style which was favoured for its seriousness and reference to the music of Palestrina and the ancient style.[17] Also, the reference to an English hymn tune must have struck people at the least with a sense of delightful familiarity. Finally, with its tripartite structure and final merging of fugue subjects, the work has a powerful *per aspera ad astra* character that would have resonated strongly with listeners. Whatever the reason, the work was played by more people and on more occasions than any other *pedaliter* organ work of Bach, right through the half-century mark. William Crotch was credited by Dr Gauntlett as being the first person to have performed it in England, on the piano during one of his Lectures in 1816.[18] However, prior to that performance, Samuel Wesley and Vincent Novello had played it in duet form, in an arrangement by Novello, in 1810. Wesley later wrote a new prelude for the work (1814), and the two were performed together at the benefit concert for the widow and children of William Russell at the Foundling Hospital on June 15 of that year.[19] Wesley's newly-written prelude is quite slow and

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[16] F.G.Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular,* 37 (1896), 723.
[17] This was briefly mentioned in Chapter 1; also see Garratt, *Palestrina.* For a discussion of the Palestrina revival and the musical canon, see Weber, 'The History of the Musical Canon'. For a discussion of the attraction of the *stile antico* for the early Bach players in England, Jacob, Wesley, Crotch and others, see Chapter 5.
[18] F.G.Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 723.
[19] The autograph of this prelude is in the BL, at Add. Ms. 14340.

serious, beginning in the relative minor key (C minor). Its character is strikingly different from Bach's majestic and vigorous prelude, and when performed with the fugue in duet form, the comparison is naturally made to the standard eighteenth-century voluntary form of slow introduction and sprightly second movement. The beginning of the prelude is reproduced overleaf.[20] H.J. Gauntlett and S.S. Wesley both played the fugue on the organ at the same trial for the organist position at St Stephen's Coleman St. in 1827, as noted in the *Morning Post*.[21]

Most organists could not negotiate pedals well (nor were the vast majority of organs equipped with them), and the *pedaliter* organ works therefore remained problematic. It was not until the 1840s that a widespread effort to supply English organs with pedal departments took hold, and organists began learning to use them. However, the earliest pedal boards were intractable, with awkward pedals, inconsistencies of compass, dimensions, and alignment.[22] Curiosity about, and interest in, Bach was growing in the meantime, and as the *WTC* became more familiar, a desire to know more of Bach's music spread. If English organists wanted to play Bach's works there was no shortage of imported editions available: in 1838 the *Musical World* listed thirty publications of Bach's works, most of which were of Continental provenance.[23] Within England the organ works appeared mostly in

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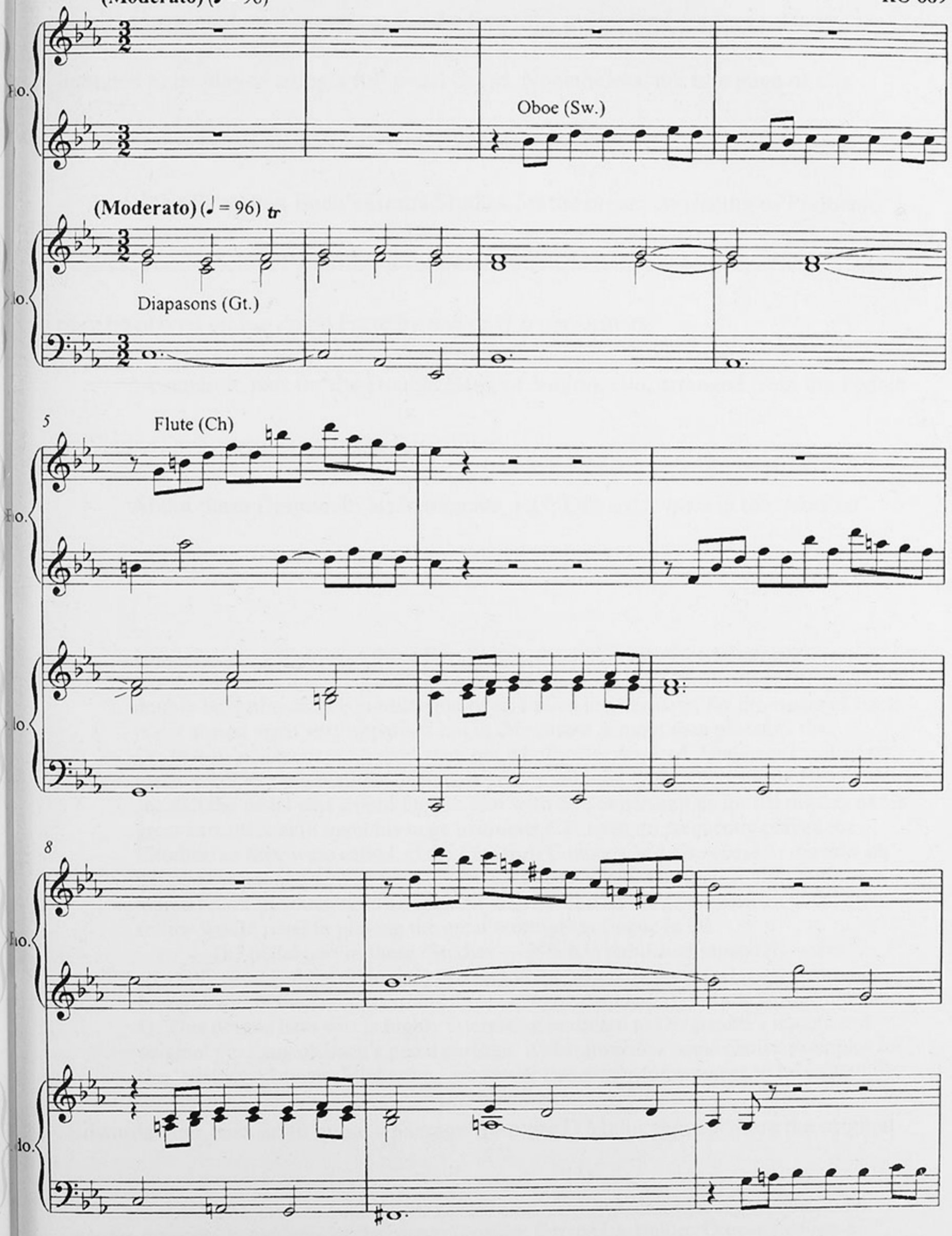
[20] Samuel Wesley, *Organ Works* v.12, ed. Atkinson (Banchory: Fagus Music, 2003).
[21] Temperley and Wollny, 'Bach Revival', report that they played it as a duet, but that seems improbable, since they were competing against each other for the post. On the other hand, the organ was not supplied with pedals when it was built, and it is not clear when pedals were added. An examination of the records of repair is inconclusive: the organ was 'cleaned and repaired' for the sum of £40.5s in 1805, and again for £20.8s in 1828, but no mention of adding pedals to it can be found in either case. While £40 might have been adequate to add some pedals and pipes, £20 would probably not have been enough, and further, 1828 is a year after the organ trials at which Gauntlett and Wesley were reported to have played this piece.
[22] For example, a description of early English 'toe pedals' as contrasted with later 'German pedals' can be found in Hodges, writing in QMMR 9 (1827), 4, as well as in Pearce, *Evolution of the Pedal Organ* (London: Office of "Musical Opinion", 1927). Thistlethwaite also includes a description of early English pedals, along with a list of all known organs with pedals up to 1820, in *Victorian Organ*, 15-23.
[23] *MW* 8, N.S. 16 (19 April 1838), 260.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GRAND FUGUE IN E FLAT BY SEBASTIAN BACH

Samuel Wesley

KO 669

Samuel Wesley, Organ Works v.12, ed. Atkinson (Banchory: Fagus Music, 2003).

various miscellaneous collections until the mid-1830s—Novello was particularly active in this sense— but a 'collected edition' had yet to appear. In 1836 however a collection of organ preludes and fugues was issued by Coventry and Hollier.[24] The music was printed on three staves for the first time in England, and was clearly intended to be played using a full pedal board. Nonetheless, the title page of this publication suggests an alternative mode of performance:

'John Sebastian Bach's Grand Studies for the organ, consisting of Preludes, Fugues, Toccatas, and Fantasias never before published in this country. These Studies may be played on the Piano Forte by one or two performers.

'A separate part for the Double Bass, or Violoncello, arranged from the Pedale by Signor Dragonetti, is added to this edition.'

About these Dragonetti arrangements, F.G. Edwards wrote in the *Musical Times* in 1896:

> One interesting feature of this edition is (on the authority of the Musical Library, April 1836) that it was issued 'at the expense and risk of Signor Dragonetti', the great double-bass player. The predilection of an Italian contrabassist for the music of Bach is not at first sight very apparent; but in this case it is more than probably that Dragonetti's 'expense and risk' were not wholly disinterested. Dragonetti looked at these matchless productions of Bach's genius with the eyes of a virtuoso. He could see that the pedal part would furnish him with fine opportunities for the display of his great executive skill upon his huge instrument. Dragonetti frequently played the 'Studies' as they were called, at the Classical Concerts and elsewhere, *a duetto* with the pianoforte, and always with the greatest acceptance. The pianist played the manual portion which 'Old Dragonetti' double-bassed the pedal part. How the old fellow would revel in playing the great semiquaver Fugue in D!
>
> The pedal part of these 'Studies'—which is published separately—was specially arranged (or deranged) by Dragonetti, whereby the pedal passages were brought within the compass of his three-stringed double-bass, whose lowest note was G. This double bass part is highly interesting in regard to Dragonetti's minute and original phrasing of Bach's pedal passage; it also furnishes some choice examples for the 'History of musical tinkering,' whenever that portly tome comes to be written.[25]

Edwards then goes on to quote a passage from the D Major fugue, where the original

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[24] *John Sebastian Bach's Grand Studies for the Organ. Consisting of preludes, fugues, toccatas, and fantasias, never before published in this country* (London: Coventry & Hollier; Cramer, Addison & Beale, 1837).

[25] F.G.Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 725.

pedal part, idiomatically written by Bach to be played by alternate feet, is re-written by Dragonetti as a straightforward scale, which makes sense on the double bass but would be considerably more difficult on the organ. There are other curiosities about Dragonetti's arrangement, especially regarding what is assigned to the pedal/double bass: modern editions give more passages to the pedal than this edition does, and Mendelssohn's personal copy of this Coventry & Hollier edition, in the Bodleian Library, contain his penciled corrections, many of which have to do with restoring to the pedal what Coventry & Hollier had assigned to the manuals. The modern reader is struck by how new and unfamiliar the concept of playing complex lines with the feet must have been to the nineteenth-century English organist.

An interesting picture of the spread in knowledge and popularity of Bach's organ works in England is revealed by looking at all known public performances of the works in England. Nicholas Thistlethwaite has drawn up such a list, showing that the isolated performances of the 1830s increased to several performances each year by 1844, by which time organs with German-style pedal boards were being built in sufficient number to support the playing of these *pedaliter* pieces, and their performance was no longer novel.[26]

Henry John Gauntlett as Editor of Bach's Music

Among the foot soldiers promoting the keyboard music of Bach in the first part of the nineteenth century, perhaps none was as tireless as Henry John Gauntlett (1805-76). The son of a clergyman, Gauntlett was originally trained as a solicitor, a profession which he practised for some years before giving it up in favour of organ-playing and

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[26] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 176-7.

consulting, hymn-writing, and journalism. Gauntlett studied organ for a time with Samuel Wesley, from whom he undoubtedly learned to love the music of Bach, and later became one of Mendelssohn's most ardent admirers. Mendelssohn returned the admiration, and was fulsome in his praise not only of Gauntlett's abilities as an organist (Mendelssohn chose Gauntlett to play the organ for the premiere of *Elijah* in Birmingham in 1846), but also as the most persistent and active advocate for the so-called German system of organ building, with independent pedal divisions, full choruses in each manual division, and a C-compass. Thistlethwaite identifies at least twenty organs that Gauntlett designed or 'improved' in the German system between 1838-49, an effort that, as seen earlier, was regarded as indispensable by Mendelssohn.[27] Gauntlett also patented an electric action for organs.[28]

Aside from his other musical endeavours, Gauntlett published a collection of Bach works called *Choral and Instrumental Fugues of John Sebastian Bach in Continuation of the English Edition of his Forty-Eight Preludes and Fugues/arranged from his masses, litanies, oratorios, and exercises.*[29] The contents of the nine volumes, published between 1838 and 1851, is listed in the table below. Though the collection contains mostly arrangements of choral and instrumental works, there are some original organ pieces. Most of the works were receiving their first English printing, as was Gauntlett's intent when he claimed in an advertisement that they were 'now published for the first time in this country'.[30] The collection is interesting and important for a number of reasons. First, all the organ works pre-date the Peters/ Griepenkerl edition of the 1840s; yet only volume 1 of the collection is mentioned in

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[27] *Ibid*, 189.
[28] *Ibid*, 187.
[29] 9 vols (London: C. Lonsdale, 1838–1851).
[30] *MW* 8, N.S. no. 16 (19 April 1838), 269.

the critical commentary of the *Neue Bach Ausgabe*: the anthology therefore highlights the energetic and enterprising English interest in the music of J.S. Bach, and adds significant weight to the English contribution to the European Bach revival. Second, it reveals a wealth of performance practice information from the first half of the nineteenth century, which may include evidence of how Mendelssohn himself phrased and registered on the organ. The collection is inscribed to George Gwilt, architect, friend of Samuel Wesley, and Bach advocate.

Choral and Instrumental Fugues of John Sebastian Bach in Continuation of the English Edition of his forty-eight Preludes and Fugues arranged from his Masses Litanies Oratorios and Exercises

No.	Title	Actual title, if different; BWV No.	Possible Source (see below for full references)	Owned by F.Mendel-ssohn?	Notes
Bk I, 1	Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele' from the Choral Vorspiele	BWV 759, Anh. III 172; by Gottfried August Homilius	Schicht (Leipzig) 1803-06	yes	3 staves; includes harmonised chorale at end
2	Fugue in G Minor (No. 1)	BWV 578	B&H (Leipzig) 1821; or Lischke (Berlin) 1825-27	yes	2 staves; ped marked *Allegro con brio*; a variety of touch marked
3	'Gratias agimus tibi, from a Gloria in D Major'	(From the B-Minor Mass) BWV 232/6	ed. Marx, Simrock (Bonn) 1834	yes	2 staves; *Maestoso alla breve; legatissimo e pesante*, Notes refer to Marx
4	Fugue in C Minor	BWV 574b ('Legrenzi')	Haslinger (Vienna) 1831	FMB owned a ms of a 'Fuge für die Orgel c.moll'	2 staves; pedal marked *Brillante*
5	'O Let the Congregation of Saints Praise Thee' from 'A Litany. Choral Fugue. '	BWV 105, 'Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht'	ed. Marx, Simrock (Bonn) 1830	yes	2 staves; *Allegro e Moderato, ben marcato.*
6	Fugue from a Toccata (E minor)	Opening mvt. of BWV 830, E minor Partita	various publishers, from 1801	?	Ped. part marked; *Andante con moto*
Bk II 7	Kyrie Eleison from the Mass in G Major (Choral Fugue for 4 voices)	BWV 236	various publishers from 1754	yes	*A tempo ordinario*

8	Fugue in D Minor (No.1)	Art of Fugue, first fugue; BWV 1080	Various publishers from 1751	yes	*A tempo ordinario*
9	Fugue in D Minor (no.2); The same Theme as that in No. 8 but by inversion	Art of Fugue, 4th fugue	See above	yes	*A tempo ordinario*
10	Rondo from the Six Sonatas for the pianoforte and violin (Finale of the Second).	BWV 1015iv	Various publishers from 1802	yes	3 staves; intended for organ duet on 2 mans, or for violin and piano; *Presto*
11	Fugue in D Minor—The Theme from the Chorale 'Wir Glauben all' an einen Gott'	BWV 680: large setting of the chorale prelude in Clavierübung III	Various publishers from 1739, including Schicht,	yes	2 staves; *Andante maestoso*
12	Grand Fugue in E-flat Major, in 3 Movements (The theme is the commencing phrase of a Chorale)	BWV 552ii	Original printing 1739; then Hoffmeister (Leipzig) 1804	yes	2 staves; *Maestoso alla Breve; Andante moderato; Allegretto*
Bk.III 13	Passacaglia being xx variations and Grand Fugue on a Ground Base	BWV 582	Dunst (Frankfurt) 1831	yes	2 staves; extensive registration and other markings; *Larghetto appassionato;* see discussion below
14	'Der aber die Herzen erforschet' choral fugue from the 6th motet	From 'Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf', BWV 226	Schicht (Leipzig) 1803	yes	Pedal marked; *Alla breve; Tempo giusto*; 2 staves; Gauntlett's numbering of the motets reflects Schicht's numbering; however, there are some textual differences between Schicht and Gauntlett
15	'Ihr aber seyd nicht fleischlich; Choral Fugue from the Fifth Motet	From BWV 227, Jesu meine Freude	Schicht—see above	yes	*Allegro non tanto; Tempo giusto* See above
16	Fugue in four parts on the Chorale 'Aus Tiefer Not' (From the Exercises. The Corale [*sic*] will be found in Bach's Choralgesänge, No. 10.)	BWV 687; small setting from Clavierübung III	See above, at no.11	yes	*Andante Sostenuto; il Canto un poco piu forte.*
17	'Herr mein Hirt brunn' aller Freuden' Choral Fugue from 2nd Motet	From BWV 228, 'Fürchte dich nicht, ich bin bei dir'	Schicht--see above at No. 14	yes	*Andante Maestoso*

18	Fugue in 4 Parts on the Corale [*sic*] 'Jesus Christus unser Heiland' (From the Exercises. The Corale will be found in Bach's Choralgesänge No. 30)	BWV 689, from the Clavierübung III	see above, at No.11	yes	Pedal marked (in spite of the original designation as manualiter) *Moderato con molto Sentimento*
Bk.IV 19	Grand Fugue in G Minor, No.II	BWV 542ii	Marx (and others)	yes	Two staves *Con brio ed Animato*; comparisons to 'German Editions of this splendid composition' as well as to 'Marx's collection of 1833'*
20	Toccata in F-sharp minor Part I	BWV 910i	Trautwein (Berlin) 1837	?	*Colla piú gran forza e prestezza; Andante e con tristezza*
21	Toccata in F-sharp Minor. Part II	BWV 910 (cont.)	See above, no. 20	?	
22	Counterpoint for two Claviers and Pedal on the Corale 'Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam'. From the Exercises; the Corale will be found in Bach's Choralgesange [*sic*] Nos. 66 &119	BWV 684, from the Clavierübung III	see above, at No.11	yes	2 staves *Brillante*
23	Prelude in G Minor	BWV 535i	Peters (Leipzig) 1832	?	Two staves; *Allegro molto*
24	Fugue in G Minor. (No.III)	BWV 535ii	See above	See above	Two staves; *Allegro Maestoso*
Bk. V 25	Brilliant three-part Fugue in A Minor	BWV 944ii	Czerny 1820/24/29 or Clementi 1822-31	?	Some passages compared to 'Mr Clementi's edition' and 'Czerny'
26	Counterpoint for 2 Claviers and Pedal on the Corale 'Wo soll ich fliehen hin?'	BWV 646; Schübler Choräle	Schicht	yes	Three staves; From the Vorspiele; the Corale will be found in Bach's Choralgesänge Nos 25, 281, and 331
27	Fuga in C Major	BWV 953	Clementi		*Allegro;*
28	Voluntary in A Major; Preludio,	First mvt from BWV 806, the English Suites,	Trautwein (Berlin) 1828-35	yes	*Siciliano; Preludio*
29	Intermezzo	BWV 798; Sinfonia 12	Hoffmeister (Vienna; Leipzig)	yes	*Allegretto*
29 (*sic*)	Fuga on the Choral 'Allein Gott in der Höh' (See Bach's Choralgesange [sic] Nos. 125, 249, 313, and 326)	BWV 677; from the Clavierübung III	See above at No. 11	yes	*Allegro*

30	Fantasia in G Major;	BWV 572	Clementi	yes	*Molto vivace; Preludio, Gravement, Coda* Notes refer to Clementi ed.
Bk. VI 32	Toccata (partly in Canon)	BWV 540i	Peters (Leipzig) 1832	yes	*Allegro*
33	Fugue in F Major (The Toccata in F Major, No.40, may be played as a Prelude to this Fugue.)	BWV 540ii	See above	yes	*Maestoso*
34	Prelude and Fugue in D Major	BWV 908	Czerny 1839	?	*Allegro*
35	Prelude and Fugue in E Minor, No.2	BWV 533	Marx 1833*	yes	*Andante Maestoso*
36	Fantasia in G Minor (which may be played as a Prelude to Fugues No. 2 and No. 19)	BWV 542	Marx 1833	yes	*Maestoso*
Bk.VII 37	Prelude in G Major	BWV 541i	Peters (Leipzig) 1832	yes	Two staves; *Allegro*
38	Fugue in G Major (The Leipsic edition of this composition is singularly incorrect)**	BWV 541ii	Marx 1833, See above	yes	*Allegretto*
39	Prelude in B-flat—No 1	BWV 907	Czerny 1839	?	*Allegro molto*
40	Fugue in 3 Parts, B-flat	BWV 907ii	See above	?	*Allegro molto*
41	Fantasia Chromatique, Pt. 1 (When performed on the Organ, Full without the reeds.)	BWV 903 first and second parts	Hoffmeister (Vienna, Leipzig) 1802; also ed. Kollmann Preston (London) 1806	yes	*Allegro molto*
42	Fugue in D Minor (the second part of Fantasia Chromatique)	BWV 903, fugue	See above	yes	
Bk.VIII 43	Fugue in C Minor (no.2)	BWV 1079: Musicalisches Opfer, Ricercar a 3	Numerous publications	yes	*Allegro*
44 & 45	Prelude and Fugue in B-flat	BWV 898, I and ii. Fugue on BACH	B&H 1819	?	*Andante Maestoso; Fuga*
46	Toccata in A Minor	BWV 551	Peters (Leipzig) 1832	?	
47	Fugue in E Minor (from the Suites Anglaises)	BWV 810, fifth mvt.	See above at No. 28	yes	*Allegro molto*
48	Fugue in E Minor—No. 3	BWV 914iv	Various include. Czerny, 1839	?	

Bk. IX 49	Von Himmel Hoch, da komm' ich her: Variations in Canon on the Christmas Choral. In C. With Pedal	BWV 769	Schicht 1805/06	yes	Mostly 3-stave
50	Grand Fugue in B Minor (Pedal obligato)	BWV 544ii	Various, including Wien u. Pesth 1812	yes	Mostly 3-stave *Allegro*
51	Fugue in C Major (ditto)	BWV 545ii	Various Including Wien u. Pesth 1812; Peters 1844	yes	*3-stave Maestoso*
52	Fugue in C Minor (ditto)	BWV 546ii	Various including Coventry & Hollier; Wien u. Pesth 1812	yes	2-stave *Allegro moderato*
53	Grand Fugue in D Minor (ditto)	BWV 538ii	Various including Coventry & Hollier;	yes	2- and 3-stave *moderato*
54	Gregorian Te Deum, arranged by Sebastian Bach (The olden melody will be found in Marbecke)	BWV 328	various	?	*a tempo ordinario*
(Separate publication) Cramer, Addison, and Beale,	Pastoral Symphony arranged for the organ or Pianoforte by Henry John Gauntlett	BWV 590 First movement only	Marx 1825	yes	

* William A. Little has shown that this edition was co-edited by Mendelssohn; it is properly called 'Marx-Mendelssohn edition'. See Little, 'Felix Mendelssohn and J.S. Bach's Prelude and Fugue in E Minor (BWV 533) in *The American Organist* 29, No. 2 (Feb. 2005), 73-83.

* * Mendelssohn wrote a detailed letter to Peters about the errors in this work, dated 6 January 1840. See Rudolf Evers, *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Briefe* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1984), 207-08. Thanks to William A. Little for providing this citation.

Full citations for possible sources (in order of appearance in table): (If more than one published edition was extant, the earliest and/or most likely alternative is listed)

-- *J. S. Bachs CHORAL-VORSPIELE für die Orgel mit einem und zwey Klavieren und Pedal*, 4 Heft, hrsg. v. Schicht (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1803-06).
--*Fugen für Pianoforte oder Orgel von J.S. Bach*, Nr. 2 (Leipzig; Breitkopf und Härtel, 1821)
--*Die hohe Messe in H-moll,* Clavierauszug von Adolph Bernhard Marx (Bonn: Bei N. Simrock, 1834).
--*Sämtliche Orgel-Werke* (Wien: Haslinger, 1831)
--*Kirchenmusik zu 4 Singstimmen mit Orchester*, herausgegeben A.B. Marx (2 Vols) (Bonn: Simrock, 1830).
--*Oeuvres complettes* (Vienna: Hoffmeister et Comp; Leipzic: Hoffmeister & Kühnel, 1801).
--*Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurgs Abhandlung von der Fuge zweyter theil. nebst LX Kupfertafeln* (Berlin: A. Haude u. J.C. Spener, 1754).
--*Die Kunst der Fuge* (n.p.: Breitkopf, 1751(2?).
--*Clavier Sonaten mit obligator Violine* (Zürich: Hans Nägeli, 1802).
--*Dritter Theil der Clavier Übung*...(Nürnberg, Balthasar Schmid, 1739).
--*Passacglia [sic] von J.S. Bach* (Frankfurt a.M.: Dunst, 1831).

--*Motetten in Partitur*, herausgegeben Schicht (Leipzig: Breitkopf u. Härtel, 1803).
--*Toccata in Fis-moll für Orgel oder Pianoforte* (Berlin: Trautwein, 1837).
--*Prelude et Fugue pour l'Orgue ou le Piano-Forte* (Leipig: Peters, 1832).
--*Die Kunst des Fingersatzes auf dem Piano-Forte...dargestellt von Carl Czerny* (Wien: Diabelli & Co., 1820/24).
or *Clementi's Selection of Practical Harmony* (Leipzig: Peters, 1822-31).
--*Grandes Suites dites Suites angloises pour le Clavecin* (Berlin: Troutwein, bet. 1828-35).
--*XV Simphonies pour le Clavecin* (Vienne, Leipzic: Hoffmeister & Co., 1801).
--*Toccata et Fugue pour l'orgue ou le Piano-Forte* (Leipzig: Peters, 1832).
--*Compositions pour le Piano-Forte, Edition nouvelle par Charles Czerny* (Leipzig: Peters, 1839).
--*Johann Sebastian Bach's noch wenig bekannte Orgelkompositionen, Heft 1-3, herausgegeben A.B. Marx* (Leipzig, Breitkopf u. Härtel, 1833).
--*Fantaisie chromatique* (Vienne, Leipzic: Hoffmeister & Co., 1802); or, *Fantasia Chromatica for the Piano-Forte, with some additions. By A.F.C. Kollmann* (London: Prestige, 1806).
--*Musikalisches Opfer* (Leipzig: Breitkopf u. Härtel, 1831). (This, in addition to the first printing in Bach's lifetime).
--*Praeludium und Fuge über den Namen BACH für das Pianoforte oder die Orgel,* Hrsg.v. Stolze (Leipzig: Breitkopf u. Härtel, 1819).
--*Fuge von J.S. Bach;* supplementary publication in *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 28 (1826) (Leipzig: Breitkopf u. Härtel, 1826); also published separately; or, in *Oeuvres Complets*, hrsg. v. Czerny (Leipzig: Peters, 1839)
--*Sechs Praeludien und Sechs Fugen für die Orgel oder Pianoforte mit Pedal* (Wien und Pesth, 1812).
--*Grand Studies for the Organ* (London: Coventry and Hollier, 1834).
--*J.S. Bachs vierstimmige Choralgesänge,* hrsg. v. C.P.E. Bach (Berlin, Leipzig: Birnstiel, 1765/69); or (same title) hrsg. v. Becker (Leipzig: Friese, 1841).

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A brief glance at the works in the collection reveals that most of them are not fugues in the sense that Fux later codified the word, but are perhaps better-described simply as contrapuntal pieces. Those works which are in fact more akin to strict Fuxian fugues are analysed with letters indicating the subject and countersubject. This flexible approach to 'fugue', together with the earlier publications of analysed fugues by Diettenhofer, Wesley, Horn, and Kollmann[31] confirm that English musicians were not unacquainted or unappreciative of strict fugues; but that the less-rigorous type, as they had come to know in Handel, co-existed with the strict one. Fugue was a texture as well as a form.

Gauntlett seems to have used many sources for his material, including editions

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31 Diettenhofer included several fugues from the *WTC* in his 1802 collection *Set of Ten Miscellaneous Fugues*. See Kassler *English Bach Awakening*, 68-9. The contributions of Wesley, Horn, and Kollmann have been written about in an earlier chapter.

prepared by Czerny, Clementi (who had published at least part of the Clavierbüchlein for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach in 1822-31, in *Clementi's Selection of PRACTICAL HARMONY...*), A.B. Marx/Mendelssohn (see note *, above), Dunst, and Schicht. Some works are the same as in the Coventry & Hollier collection of Bach *Grand Studies* which came out at nearly the same time (the publication date of the first six volumes was 1836, though they were not reviewed in the *Musical World* until 1838).

In spite of the fact that the collection is advertised under the category of 'Organ Music', and was reviewed as 'organ music' in the journals, and many of the works have pedal indications (or say 'pedal obbligato'), editorial performance markings contain dynamic and accent indications that could only be realised on a piano. These and other markings provide a wealth of information about nineteenth-century performance practice.[32] Some of the arrangements are nearly unplayable, whether using pedal or not, or in duet form. A specific example can be seen in bar 23 of the third work in Book 1, *Gratias agimus tibi* (transcribed from the *Mass in B Minor*). This passage contains stretches so wide that they could only be played (by one person) if pedal is used; and yet the lowest voice, which one would assume to be the pedal line, features fast-moving linear stepwise motion, and is thus very awkward to play by the feet. Other contrapuntal lines are not reasonable candidates for the pedal. If the piece is played as a duet, there are awkward voice-crossings and compressed voice leading in this bar which make it difficult to play without careful advanced preparation.

Given the friendly relationship between Mendelssohn and Gauntlett, and

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[32] William A. Little has written of the possible significance of Gauntlett's editorial markings in 'Mendelssohn's Dilemma: "the Collection of Chorale Preludes or the Passacaille?"', *The American Organist,* 43, No. 1 (Jan. 2009), 66-71. This article is a translation of 'Mendelssohn's Dilemma: Die Sammlung Choralvorspiele oder die Passacaille?' in *Zu gross, zu unerreichbar', Bach-Rezeption im Zeitalter Mendelssohns und Schumanns*, Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 2007, 381-393.

adding in circumstantial evidence in the collection, it is tempting to think that Mendelssohn himself had a hand at least in selecting the works with Gauntlett. Indeed, William A. Little makes a convincing case for probable consultation of some kind between the two.[33] However, there is no evidence to support a collaboration definitively; and the clues that seem to indicate such a thing could also be interpreted as merely indicating Gauntlett's high esteem for Mendelssohn. Whatever the truth, it is certainly the case that Mendelssohn did not lend Gauntlett his own scores, since many of the pieces owned by Mendelssohn (now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford) are from different sources than the same pieces in Gauntlett's collection. Though a generalisation is easily made that Gauntlett's selections are much more heavily edited than Mendelssohn's own personal copies, in some cases the reverse is true: some pieces are more heavily marked in Mendelssohn's copies, betraying a different original source. One example is the G Minor Fugue, BWV578, which in Mendelssohn's own copy contains ornamentation not in Gauntlett's. Another example can be seen in BWV 687, the small setting of 'Aus Tiefer Not' from *Clavierübung III*, in which Mendelssohn's copy has articulation markings and Gauntlett's has none. Because almost all the selections in Gauntlett's collection could also be found in Mendelssohn's own library, perhaps at some point the two discussed what to include, in a lost letter, or even in person. However, this must remain only speculation. At the very least Gauntlett's admiration for Mendelssohn is clear: the fact that he began the collection with what he thought was Mendelssohn's most beloved Bach chorale prelude, 'Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele' (in actuality he mistakenly published a piece based on the same chorale by Homilius), cannot be easily dismissed as coincidence.

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[33] *Ibid.*

Further, Gauntlett's remark about the Fugue in G Major (no. 38), where he says 'The Leipsic edition of this composition is singularly incorrect' specifically reflects Mendelssohn's views on the Peters edition, as we know from letters to the Leipzig firm complaining of inaccuracies. (See note **, above.)

A study of the Passacaglia and Fugue as published by Gauntlett in this collection raises some particularly interesting questions about performance practice in the nineteenth century, and some even more important and interesting questions about the transmission of the Passacaglia from Bach's day forward. (William A. Little discusses this edition, as well as Mendelssohn's connection with the piece, in his article 'Mendelssohn's Dilemma', cited above.)

The Passacaglia appears at the beginning of Volume 3 in Gauntlett's collection and we know that Vol. 3 was published no later than 1838, since it was reviewed in the *Musical World* in that year.[34] A copy of the first page of Gauntlett's edition is reproduced overleaf. It is heavily edited, with registrations, manual changes, phrasing and articulation marks, and dynamics all supplied in copious amounts.

Before Gauntlett's, only one edition of the Passacaglia was in print: Dunst's of 1831, published in Frankfurt. There is little doubt that Gauntlett based his edition on Dunst's, because certain distinguishing characteristics of Dunst's are present. (These characteristics are identified by Kilian in the *Kritische Bericht* of the NBA, as well as by Little in 'Mendelssohn's Dilemma'.) Mendelssohn himself owned a copy of the Dunst edition to which he made corrections; this copy is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Mendelssohn's corrections were evidently made by comparing his copy of Dunst's edition with what he believed to be an autograph--a manuscript owned by

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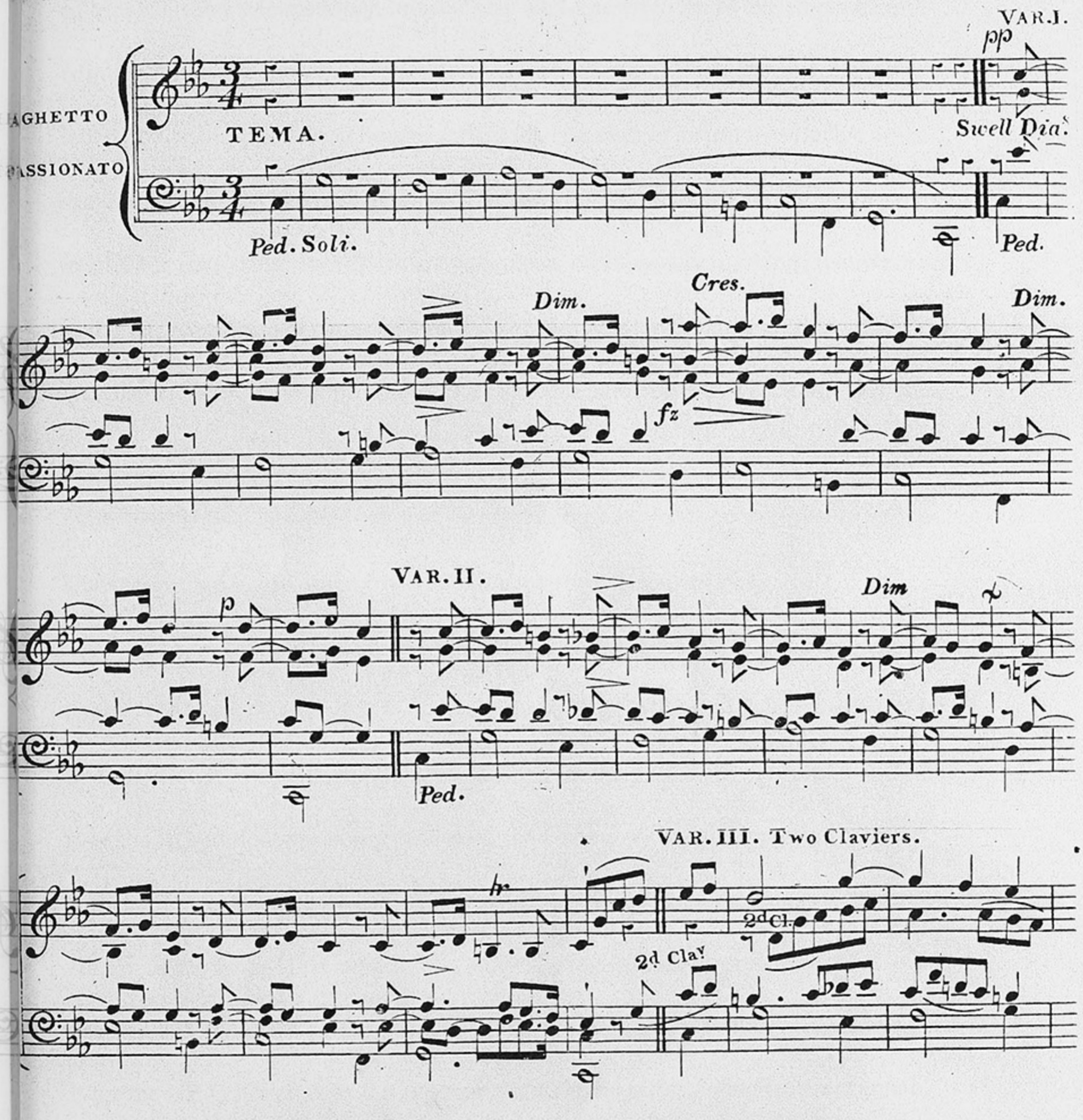
[34] *MW* 9 (n.s.2), No.129 (30 Aug 1838), 292.

A PASSACAGLIA, BEING XX VARIATIONS AND GRAND FUGUE ON A GROUND BASE.

* The PASSACAILLE, or PASSACAGLIA is a species of CHACONNE in Triple Time, but of a more passionate character.— The CHACONNE possesses the most variety of all AIRS DE DANSE in the $\frac{3}{4}$ Mode, and is usually constructed on a BASSE CONTRAINTE, a composition in which by the nature of the design, the Composer is subjected to a law of uniformity in some one or other of the parts. It is generally formed on a BASE MOTIF consisting of a few Bars which is repeated without intermission throughout the composition in one of the parts whilst the others are ever varying. Dr FORKEL considers this elaborate composition of SEBASTIAN BACH better adapted for Two Clavichords and Pedal than for the Organ, but experience decides against the Doctor's opinion.

Carl Wilhelm Ferdinand Guhr, Kapellmeister of the Frankfurt opera and good friend of Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn himself was well-known to be an extremely careful editor, with a very conservative approach to the editing of Bach's works. His own letters to various publishing houses reflect this: he always insists that Bach's notes speak for themselves, and there are not to be any editorial changes or additions to the music. His own editions of Bach are very clean, omitting any markings that were not in the manuscripts; and carefully transmitting the notes and markings that were there. It is also well known that he insisted that his own name be removed from English editions of Bach's works, since he made no changes to Bach's scores when they were published. Thus it is safe to say that, in examining Mendelssohn's corrections to his Dunst copy, we know exactly what Guhr's manuscript looked like.

The third published edition of the Bach Passacaglia—that by Griepenkerl for Peters (1844) was also based on the Guhr manuscript. This copy was commissioned by Griepenkerl from Gleichauf, as we know from the preface to the edition.[35] By the time the BG edition was being produced, the Guhr copy had disappeared, as had Gleichauf's copy which he had made from it; so the BG used the Peters/Griepenkerl edition as the basis of its own. Kilian, in producing BWV 582 for the NBA, also deemed this edition to be most reliable of all the sources of the Passacaglia, and used it for the NBA. Kilian does throw some doubt on the assumption that the original Guhr manuscript was an autograph, but does not dismiss the possibility. Crucially, Mendelssohn's corrected copy of the Passacaglia, which he made by comparing his Dunst copy with the Guhr manuscript, is different in some key ways from Griepenkerl/Bach Gesellschaft/NBA.

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35 *Johann Sebastian Bach's Compositionen für die Orgel,* ed. Friedrich Conrad Griepenkerl und Ferdinand Roitzsch (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1837).

All the modern editions of the Passacaglia contain unusual cross-beat phrasing in the countersubject of the fugue. This phrasing is atypical in Bach's works, and if it was indeed the composer's own phrasing, then he would have been well-advised to write it in as an indication that he wanted something different from what would have been assumed. In a discussion of the few slurring marks in Bach keyboard works, Peter le Huray says,

> Easily the most interesting of these is the cross-beat slurring of the first countersubject of the fugue [of BWV 582]. This slurring is to found in MS P320—a late-eighteenth-century copy possibly in the hand of Kittel, one of Bach's last pupils. It also appears in Griepenkerl's edition. Whether this effective, if eccentric phrasing was Kittel's, and whether Griepenkerl really did have access to a lost autograph we shall probably never know. Certainly if Bach had asked his pupils to phrase the countersubject across the beat, some indication of this would have been needed in the score, for it goes against the baroque practice of placing 'downbows' on the 'good' notes.[36]

This cross-beat phrasing has become down the ages a beloved feature of the work, as closely identified with the piece (and not only by organists) as the initial mordant of the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor BWV 565 is with that work. Yet from Mendelssohn's careful corrections of his copy, which he based on the Guhr manuscript, and which is entirely possible to have been an autograph (as Mendelssohn believed), we can see that this phrasing was not present.

How, then, to explain the presence of this phrasing in Griepenkerl's version? Griepenkerl commissioned his copy of the Guhr manuscript from Gleichauf at least ten years after the copy made for the Dunst edition, and several years after Mendelssohn made his corrections from Guhr. It is not likely that changes were made in those intervening years to the Guhr manuscript itself, since Guhr would have prized

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[36]Peter Le Huray, *Authenticity in Performance: Eighteenth-Century Case Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 108. Killian regards the Kittel source as corrupt

the copy highly, and would not have allowed anyone to have made changes to it; also, changes in a different ink would have been obvious (presumably) to Gleichauf when he made his copy. It is possible however that the person or persons who copied and typeset the music from Gleichauf's copy made the changes. Interestingly, Gauntlett's edition also has the cross-beat phrasing. It could indeed be the case that this phrasing was common—even standard practice-- in the early nineteenth century, perhaps particularly in this piece, or more generally; indeed, the presence of this cross-beat phrasing in the Bach source P320 (from the Kittel circle) might suggest that the phrasing was common in the late-eighteenth century. With specific reference to Gauntlett's collection, the question is significant and potentially interesting, because Gauntlett does not provide editorial markings in most of the other works, and in those in which he does, cross-beat phrasing is not usually indicated. Examples of both types of editorial phrasing however can be found in the 'Grand Fugue in G Minor' BWV542ii (in Gauntlett's Book 4, No. 19): First, the fugue subject is marked with slurs and staccato marks. However, the slurs very clearly do not go from weak to strong beats, and the staccato marks are within the confines of the larger beats, on each quaver. This is contrary to later-nineteenth-century articulation marks occasionally found in editions of Bach (for example, Straube's edition of BWV 542, where the slurring together of the first two notes, and subsequent slurring of last beats over to first beats, quaver-to-semi-quaver, is clearly notated).[37] The second example from the same piece does show weak-to-strong 'reverse' phrasing: at the end of the fugue in the penultimate bar, the quavers in the manual parts are strongly marked with slurs and accent marks, weak-beat-to-strong.

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[37] J.S. Bach, *Orgelwerke*, ed. Straube (Leipzig: Peters, 1913).

William A. Little maintains that this phrasing, along with the manual changes and registration scheme notated in Gauntlett, might even reflect how Mendelssohn himself performed the piece. Given the dearth of large three-manual organs in England with pedal divisions in 1838, when this collection came out, Little maintains that it seems unlikely Gauntlett would have had enough experience with the sizable instrument he seems to require for his edition to have been able to insert the editorial manual changes without advice from a more experienced organist—which Mendelssohn certainly was. (The awkward pedal passages as arranged by Gauntlett in some of the other works, as noted above, also suggest Gauntlett's inexperience with pedal parts.) Given the high esteem in which Gauntlett held Mendelssohn, it seems unlikely that he would have disagreed completely with Mendelssohn's playing style; thus, it seems quite possible that Gauntlett's editorial markings in the Passacaglia represent at the least something similar to what Mendelssohn himself might have done in performance. Though Mendelssohn's editions of Bach organ works do not contain any editorial markings or reveal any performance hints whatever, we know that Mendelssohn did not perform Bach's works without adding or changing stops and manuals--reports of his playing, including manual and registration changes, exist from eye-witnesses, as will be discussed.

Mendelssohn

The crucial person in the adoption of Bach in England was Felix Mendelssohn, who in his ten trips to England tirelessly promoted the works of Bach—almost exclusively

the organ works--at every opportunity.[38] Yet it was not only Mendelssohn's way of playing or his sharing of wondrous unknown works by Bach, but also the devotion of which he himself was the object, which won over huge numbers. Samuel Wesley may have been equally loquacious on the topic, and may have played even more of his works in public, but Mendelssohn, with his elegance and eloquence, was able to spread enthusiasm for Bach to a much greater degree. In addition, Mendelssohn's use of the organ as the instrument on which to introduce Bach was crucial in the latter's acceptance by oratorio enthusiasts, for if they could not appreciate the intricacies of the counterpoint, they could certainly be moved by the thrilling sound of the huge new 'German' style pedal divisions which Mendelssohn used to such effect. Celia Applegate and others have written about the 1829 performance of the *Matthäus-Passion* in Berlin as, among other things, the watershed experience in nineteenth-century Bach reception. It can be argued that if there was such a parallel in England, it was Mendelssohn's performance on the organ at the 1837 Birmingham Festival—a performance that reached far beyond the 'connoisseur', and propelled Bach firmly into the realm of the general public.

Much has been written about Mendelssohn and his playing of Bach on the organ,[39] so the following is a summary, and asks in addition what it was about Bach,

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[38] The only Bach work Mendelssohn is documented as having played or conducted other than the organ works was the triple concerto, with Moscheles and Thalberg, on 1 June 1844, in the Hanover Square Rooms, London. About this occasion Larry Todd (in *Mendelssohn: A Life*) reports (p. 473), 'according to C.E.Horsley, Felix unleashed an "electrical" cadenza that culminated in a "storm, nay a perfect hurricane of octaves, which must have lasted for five minutes."'

[39] See William A. Little, *Mendelssohn and the Organ* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) and journal articles (see bibliography); also 'Felix Mendelssohn and His Place in the Organ World of His Time', *The Mendelssohns. Their Music in History*, ed. J. Michael Cooper and Julie C. Prandi (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 292-302. Other writers on the topic include Stinson, *Reception*, Paul Jourdan, 'Mendelssohn in England, 1829-37', D. Phil. diss. (University of Cambridge, 1998), William Smyth Rockstro, *Mendelssohn* (London, 1884).

especially as introduced by Mendelssohn, that was so appealing, and indeed compelling, to the British public.

The following is a list of places and dates that Mendelssohn is known to have played the organ in England.[40]

1829: 7 June: St Paul's Cathedral, at the invitation of Thomas Attwood.
19 June: St Paul's Cathedral; Mendelssohn plays the closing voluntary (probably an improvisation)
1832: 27 May St Paul's Cathedral; closing voluntary
10 June St Paul's; closing voluntary
1833: May or June St John's, Paddington
23 June St Paul's
25 June Sons of Clergy concert, St Paul's
21 July (home of the ironmonger Friedrich Heinke)
1837: 8 Sept St John's Paddington
10 Sept.: St Paul's Cathedral
12 Sept: Christ Church, Newgate St
[date unknown]: Westminster Abbey, St John's Paddington, St John's Waterloo
19-22 Sept: Birmingham Festival
1840: 22 Sept: Birmingham Festival
27 Sept: Christ Church Newgate St
30 Sept: St Peter's Cornhill
1842: 12 June: St Peter's Cornhill (closing voluntary; an improvisation on Haydn's 'Emperor's Hymn')[41]
16 June: Christ Church Newgate St
17 June: Exeter Hall (Bach 'St Anne' prelude and fugue; improvisation on Handel's 'Harmonious Blacksmith')
9 July: Prince Albert's Chamber organ
1847: 5 May: Hanover Square Rooms, Concert of Ancient Music

No reports survive from the earliest of these occasions, which was private. The second event, the closing voluntary at St Paul's in 1829, was presumably unannounced and heard only by those attending church that morning. But the 1832 voluntary at St Paul's, which featured 'some manuscripts of Sebastian Bach' as well

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[40] This list is partly compiled from Thistlethwaite and Stinson, with additions from Jourdan, Todd, Rockstro, and others. It is impossible of course to know all the private and semi-private occasions Mendelssohn might have played.
[41] See 'Elizabeth Mounsey', in *MT* 46 (1905), 719.

as the little E Minor fugue from memory, excited more attention. W.S. Rockstro,

Mendelssohn's biographer and an organist himself, said of this performance,

> [Mendelssohn] excited so much attention by his treatment of the pedal-board, that a complete revolution in the style of English organ-playing may be dated from that memorable performance.[42]

'Complete revolution' is not an exaggeration: the substantial number of organs which Gauntlett was able to 'improve' or newly-design in the 1830s and 40s is evidence of the excitement that resulted from Mendelssohn's playing. Mendelssohn had made no secret of his view that English organs were inadequate for playing Bach, though had himself made no detailed comments about how to improve them, beyond requesting broader pedal keys in Birmingham, and complaining that there were not enough 'chorus registers on the English Choir Organ'.[43] In a review from 1838 of Mendelssohn's own Preludes and Fugues, op. 37, the writer (unidentified, though most likely Gauntlett) said:

> Although Mendelssohn is admitted to be the greatest extempore performer on the organ, it may be worth while to inquire into the reasons which led to the sensation he produced in our metropolis, and at Birmingham. The instruments he performed on seemed to assume a new character; the pedale appeared with a more grand and imposing tone, and the manuals more brilliant and harmonious. This explanation may be offered. Mendelssohn introduced Bach to the English, as an organ composer. Our native artists had known and appreciated him, as a writer for the clavichord, the forty-eight studios had developed his genius as a profound adept in the strict school of composition; but we had yet to venerate him as the inventor of a set of totally new effects upon the organ. It was not that Wesley was unacquainted with his Fantasias, Passacaglias, Preludes, and Codas, that he did not introduce them to the English: but never having heard a German organ, with its ponderous pedale, he could not realize the inventions of the author; and he was too cautious, and too prudent, to risk the reputation of his favourite, by the performance of passages, which on the squalling organ (which in his day prevailed in our churches) must have sounded absurd and ridiculous.[44]

During his next two visits in 1833 Mendelssohn also found his way to the

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[42]Rockstro, *Mendelssohn*, 48.
[43] *MW* 8/110 [n.s.16] (19 April 1838), 281.
[44] *Ibid*, 101-2.

organ bench on several occasions. His playing continued to generate excitement, as can be seen from this account of his performance at St Paul's Cathedral in 1833 at the annual Sons of Clergy concert:

> Attwood always expected him at the organ for the last voluntary; and the musicians present, each anxious to obtain a view of him, used to form themselves into a thick cloud above his head. One of his first exhibitions was the conversion of the Dettingen Te Deum, and another from the Hallelujah Chorus, into a double fugue.[45]

Mendelssohn was however clearly not yet reaching everyone. Fanny Horsley, whose father was William Horsley the well-known glee and hymn-tune composer (his most famous hymn today is 'There is a green hill far away') and whose family was good friends with Mendelssohn, wrote in a letter to her sister Lucy, 'Thursday evening we met at the Paddington Chapel to hear Felix on the organ…[I]t far exceeded my powers of comprehen- or admira-tion. I slept part of the time, and the rest looked at a poor little withered Poplar tree outside the window.'[46]

The year 1837 marked the beginning of Mendelssohn's more public appearances as an organist. On 10 September he played the closing voluntary at St Paul's to a crowd that, instead of leaving, grew larger and larger. After a half-hour of improvisation and Bach fugues, the impatient vergers realised that Mendelssohn would not be able to 'play them out', so they ordered the organ blower to stop. This he apparently did, toward the end of the A Minor fugue of Bach. The uproar from the highly annoyed crowd was considerable, but the vergers were not to be swayed, and the crowd had to disperse. As Gauntlett later reported however, they agreed to go on

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[45] Mendelssohn's obituary in *Fraser's Magazine* 36 (1847), 737.
[46] Rosamund Brunel Gotch, *Mendelssohn and His Friends in Kensington: Letters from Fanny and Sophy Horsley, Written 1833-36* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934).

the following Tuesday to 'a place where virgers [*sic*] are not'.[47] Thus, a few days later, on 12 September, they met again at Christ Church Newgate St, where Mendelssohn was able to conclude the fugue to the great satisfaction of the hundreds of people gathered to hear him. Mendelssohn's playing here, which included not only the A minor fugue but also 'six extempore fantasias', was described as 'rapturous'.[48] In the audience was Samuel Wesley, who, despite his own age and infirmity, was persuaded by Mendelssohn to play. He did so to the pleasure of everyone present but himself, according to the *Musical World*:

> At the express desire of M. Mendelssohn who wished that he could hereafter say he had heard Wesley play, the veteran took his seat at the instrument and extemporized with a purity and originality of thought for which he has rendered his name ever illustrious. The touch of the instrument however requires a strong and vigorous finger, and Mr. Wesley, who at present is an invalid, was unable to satisfy himself, although he could gratify those around him.[49]

Mendelssohn's performances at the Birmingham Festival a week later were the most important of the trip however, since for the first time he improvised and played Bach organ works to an oratorio-accustomed public. Mendelssohn had been engaged to conduct his own oratorio *St Paul*, and had proposed that the Bach Prelude and Fugue in E-flat also be included in the programme. He was also to improvise on the organ. In Gauntlett's report of the Festival in the *Musical World*, he wrote that Mendelssohn pronounced the new organ to be 'the largest and finest throughout that he has ever heard, whether in England or Germany'.[50] His improvisation, which took place in the evening concert of the first day, gave the audience a taste of what Mendelssohn could do at the huge new organ. Using themes from Handel and from

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[47] *MW* 7/74 (15 Sept. 1837), 9.
[48] *Ibid*, 10.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *MW* 7 no.79 (15 Sept. 1837), 22-23.

the Mozart 'Sinfonia' that had just been played, he 'played in a most masterly style'. The following evening he conducted *St Paul* to great acclaim, and two mornings later he returned a final time to play the Bach prelude and fugue. Excerpts from the *St Matthew Passion* (included at the suggestion of Chevalier Neukomm, who was in charge of programming for the festival) were also featured. The order of pieces in the printed programme placed the organ works at the beginning of the second half, but due to the early departure of Mendelssohn's coach back to London, from where he was due to return immediately to Germany, he played the Bach first on the programme, and then left as the crowd waved him out to the waiting coach.[51]

Comments about the Prelude and Fugue show that even if the general public could not fully appreciate the intricacies of Bach's counterpoint, the power and sonority of the music as played on the huge Birmingham organ was certainly something everyone could admire:

> We are not so infatuated as not to know that the complexity of Bach's fugues is not for the public. Their merits are only appreciated by those who have the power of analyzing their construction and estimating the skill of working a number of subjects together. Subjects for fugues are often selected by those whose learning is in advance of their genius, not always of the most melodious form, but for their convenience in inversions. In this there is little to awaken the attention of the unsophisticated amateur until the climax, when the pedales, and figurative counterpoint, employing the entire grasp of the player, produce a mass of rich and effective combination with the entire capacity of the organ which is quite overpowering.[52]

The E-flat Prelude and Fugue was a particularly good choice for this occasion, and indeed it is hard to think of another piece that would have had the same impact. The E-flat fugue was one of the Bach organ works played most frequently by Mendelssohn, and in anticipation of his performance at the Birmingham Festival of

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[51] See, for example, Mendelssohn's account of the occasion in Ward Jones, *The Mendelssohns on Honeymoon,* 114.
[52] Aris' Birmingham *Gazette* (25 Sept. 1837), as quoted by Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 174 .

1837, he himself remarked that 'the E-flat Prelude especially should be very accessible to the English, I should think, and both in the prelude and in the fugue one can show off the piano, pianissimo, and the whole range of the organ—and it is not a dull piece either in my view!'[53] Surely however more than just colourful registrations would account for the appeal of this prelude and fugue, and indeed would account for why the Fugue in E-flat was the most popular *pedaliter* organ work of Bach during this time. With its grand and sober opening in *stile antico*, lively middle section, and final third section with its combination of themes, the E-flat fugue was both serious and light-hearted, rooted in the past, yet with a compelling forward drive and glorious finish. One can well imagine the impact this piece would have had on the huge and unique Town Hall instrument.

The Birmingham Festival of 1837 seems to have marked a turning point in the acceptance of both Mendelssohn and Bach. On the one hand, Mendelssohn was beginning to be a cult figure.[54] His solo concert-hall performances on the organ, which is an instrument usually confined to the church, together with his concert-style playing of the organ in churches, was merging the sacred and secular. His inclusion of chorales in *St Paul* further served to blur the distinction. A particularly telling quotation from M.A. Evans, *aka* George Eliot, illustrates this well: about Mendelssohn's performance on the organ in Exeter Hall in 1842 (see below), she says that he accomplished a 'sacramental purification of Exeter Hall'. Mendelssohn himself was increasingly referred to in the same breath as such phrases as 'moral purity', 'exquisite purity', and 'entirely religious and Christian character'. On the

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[53] Ward Jones, *Honeymoon Diaries*, 174.
[54] John Michael Cooper uses this phrase to describe Mendelssohn's reception toward the end of his life: John Michael Cooper, 'Mendelssohn Received', in Peter Mercer-Taylor (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

other hand, Bach's star was also rising, as people understood that his music was not necessarily only for connoisseurs, and that there were different and indeed profound ways his music could be appreciated.

From this point until his death in 1847, Mendelssohn's organ performances were mobbed. Rockstro reports an occasion in 1842 where the crowd pressed in so tightly to him while he was playing at Christ Church Newgate Street that he had to break off in the middle of an improvisation and leave quickly, lest he faint.[55] An account from an 1842 performance at the Exeter Hall is worth quoting in its entirety, as it gives an excellent picture of the adored and venerated composer and his ability to inspire the sublime and the beautiful in his playing:

> …but by far the greatest attraction was the performance of M. Mendelssohn Bartholdy on the great organ, that eminent composer having been kindly condescended to display his unrivalled skill upon that instrument in the course of the evening. M. Mendelssohn selected for his first attempt Sebastian Bach's celebrated fugue in E-flat, and played that fine composition in a style which elicited the most enthusiastic admiration of his skill and genius, although there was but little opportunity afforded for those masterly exhibitions of mechanical power which M. Mendelssohn is occasionally accustomed to introduce with such electrifying effect in his performances upon the organ.
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> At a subsequent period of the evening M. Mendelssohn favoured the audience with a short and brilliant extemporaneous effusion, which as it allowed free scope for this own sublime conceptions, was still more warmly appreciated. The subject which M.Mendelssohn selected was that divine composition of Handel, 'The Harmonious Blacksmith'. After an introductory movement of a solemn *adagio* character, which was followed by some beautiful variations and running accompaniments, M. Mendelssohn played a short passage from the exquisite *andante* opening of 'The Harmonious Blacksmith'. He then, having given his theme, launched out into some of the most brilliant ideas to which it has ever fallen to our lot to listen, constantly returning, however, to his subject. The intervals were filled up, as may be supposed, with variations of the most recherché description; now gracefully returning into a minor, and anon suddenly returning to the major key in a magnificent burst of harmony; the more lofty and grand ideas of the performer being relieved, at proper intervals, by a brilliant *allegro*. M. Mendelssohn also executed some of his wonderful *tour de force* on the pedals, giving thereby a fine and highly wrought effect to the whole performance. After many other graceful alternations of the 'sublime and beautiful' of which it would be manifestly impossible to give an adequate idea, M. Mendelssohn

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[55] Rockstro, *Mendelssohn*, 82.

> concluded—after keeping the audience, as it were, spellbound for about a quarter of an hour—as finely as he had commenced; and left his seat at the organ amidst a perfect storm of applause. It was cruelly tantalizing, however, to be restricted to so limited an indulgence, although it must be admitted that M. Mendelssohn's powers are far too extraordinary to be taxed beyond a certain point.[56]

In a letter he wrote after this occasion, Mendelssohn described playing 'before three thousand people, who shouted hurrahs and waved their handkerchiefs, and stamped with their feet till the hall resounded with the uproar'.[57]

Mendelssohn's Playing Style as Reflected in English Writing

Of considerable importance is the fact that Mendelssohn edited a number of Bach organ works for publication in England. Some of these editions were corrections to earlier, German editions, but one, in collaboration with Coventry & Hollier, was more interesting. Called *John Sebastian Bach's Compositions on Corales (Psalm Tunes),* it comprised 59 chorale preludes and two sets of chorale variations. The publication meant that an unprecedented number of Bach organ works were available (with English titles) to English organists. The titles of the works have been listed elsewhere.[58] However, part of Mendelssohn's introduction to the chorales is illuminating as to his own playing style, and that is worth quoting:

> With regard to the Selection of Stops it might not be superfluous to remark in general that for the present compositions the superscription 'Full Organ' does not always mean all the real Stops of an Organ: furthermore, that whenever the superscription says 'on 2 rows of keys and pedal' only soft stops ought to be used. In the Prelude No. 6 on the Chorale 'Oh Lamb of God' it appears necessary to change the Stops at

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[56] *The Times*, Issue 18014 (20 June 1842), 6.
[57] Jacob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847, Ed. By P. And C. Mendelssohn Bartholdy. With a Catalogue of All His Musical Compositions by J. Rietz. Tr. By Lady Wallace* (New edn.; London, 1864).
[58] See for example Margaret Crum and Peter Ward Jones, *Catalogue of the Mendelssohn papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (Tutzing : Schneider, 1980-1989), and Stinson, *Reception.*

the beginning of each new Verse so that the third Verse is played with the greatest number of Stops (perhaps towards the end with the full Organ). In No. 2 also 'Come Holy Ghost' I would recommend here and there to change the Stops after the termination of the different periods of the Cantus Firmus or gradually to increase the Power of the Organ to the end. In No. 3 'On the Rivers of Babylon' most probably only an 8 feet Pedal is meant without any 16 feet Stops. It need hardly be mentioned that for the Prelude No 8 as well as for the one No 14 no 16 feet Stop whatever must be used in the Pedal.

By suggesting the additions of stops in the two chorales *O Lamm Gottes* (BWV 656) and *Komm Heiliger Geist* (BWV 652), Mendelssohn is again encouraging an interpretation of gradual progress toward a grand climax. In the case of BWV 652, he seems to be pushing the concept against the form of the piece, since, in contrast to BWV 656 which sets three successive verses of the chorale, this work features a single verse made up of nine phrases, with no structural exigency for increasing, or indeed even changing, stops. In the case of *An Wasserflüßen Babylon*, BWV 653, Mendelssohn's suggestion of using no 16' stops in the pedal is also puzzling, though the final two bars of the work are written for double pedal, and in the particular context of this quiet piece, a 16' pedal stop might obscure the counterpoint. In other Bach works Mendelssohn is known to have changed stops in the middle of a fugue, or moved to another manual when he played them. In the A minor fugue, BWV 543, we know from two accounts that Mendelssohn moved to a subsidiary manual for the episode, then back to the Great for the return of the theme toward the end.[59]

Mendelssohn's playing was different from anything heard in England before. First, the sensation occasioned by his pedal-playing, and the gravity of sound that was elicited from the new German-system organs that began appearing at exactly the same time in England, were stunning in their effect. Accounts also exist attesting to his different kind of touch. The playing of British organists at the time—Wesley, Jacob,

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[59] Charles William Pearce, *The Life and Works of Edward John Hopkins* (London, 1910), 24.

others—has been described as 'sustained' and 'legato', whereas Mendelssohn's was 'wiry, crisp, energetic'; he had 'freedom of touch'.[60] It is difficult to draw firm conclusions about what this means in terms of how Mendelssohn played the organ, but the long and worshipful review in the *Times* of Mendelssohn's organ performance at Exeter Hall in 1842, quoted above, concludes with this final, perplexing sentence, which actually may give a better clue: 'Some of his staccato notes were truly admirable.' It seems likely that this comment may have been related to Mendelssohn's orchestral treatment of the organ, not only in his use of colour, but in his touch. William Rockstro, in his biography of Mendelssohn, remembers Mendelssohn playing his own organ sonatas: 'We remember noticing the wonderfully delicate staccato of the pedal quavers in the second movement of the fifth sonata, which he played upon a single 8-foot stop, with all the crispness of Dragonetti's most highly finished pizzicato.'[61]

The final surprise to English organists, heard frequently in accounts of his playing, was that he played at least some Bach fugues slowly. Gauntlett said, 'He taught us how to play the *slow* fugue, for Adams had played all fugues fast. I recollect Mendelssohn's saying: "Your organists think Bach did not write a slow fugue for the organ."'[62] The surprise was perhaps owing to the way of playing the old English voluntary, in which, in Thistlethwaite's terms, 'lethargy distinguished the tempo of the opening movement, and volatility that of the fugue'.[63]

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[60] *MW* 9, no.123, n.s.29 (19 July 1838), 210.
[61] Rockstro, *Mendelssohn*, 100.
[62] F.G.Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 724.
[63] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 124.

It is clear, then, that Mendelssohn's touch at the organ, his abilities in pedal-playing, his different approach to registration, and the sound of the new-style organs made an unforgettable impression on all who heard him. While his organ playing garnered a certain acclaim in Germany (see Stinson, for example), it was more startling and impressive in England where it represented a departure from the prevailing style.

Mendelssohn's advocacy of Bach on the organ was critical to the Bach revival in England. Not only did he bring a number of new works to the attention of the British public and in an exciting and different way, but he showed that they could be convincing to everyone, from the highly educated musician to the casual oratorio enthusiast. Because people from all musical backgrounds (or none) held Mendelssohn in such high esteem, they were willing to trust his judgment about Bach, who up to this time had remained largely in the province of the elite. (The excerpt from Mendelssohn's obituary in the *Musical Times* (1848), quoted in Chapter 2, addresses this very issue.)

The second crucial process accelerated by Mendelssohn was his blurring of the boundaries between sacred and secular, thus enabling a concert in a Town Hall to resemble and perhaps even substitute for a worship service, and music in a church taking on concert performance overtones. Abraham Mendelssohn himself, in a letter to his son in 1835, said 'Your aphorism that every room in which Sebastian Bach is sung is transformed into a church, I consider particularly appropriate.'[64] While there were organ concerts in churches before Mendelssohn's arrival in England-- Benjamin

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[64] Letter of 10 March 1835, from *Felix Mendelssohn: Letters,* ed. G. Selden-Goth (London: Paul Elek Publishers Ltd, 1946), as quoted by Jourdan, 'Mendelssohn in England'.

Jacob and Samuel Wesley's concerts of 1808-09 come to mind[65]-- organ music in church was principally liturgical in function in that it was used to accompany or to provide interludes. Closing voluntaries, as indicated by the above comment from Gauntlett's 1837 account of Mendelssohn's playing at St Paul's, were meant to 'play the congregation out', not to entice people to stay and listen. In attracting a large crowd to hear him play, Mendelssohn was the first to turn a closing voluntary in church into a concert. On the other side, Mendelssohn and performances of his oratorios (which included chorales) by large choral forces were turning the concert hall—particularly the Town Hall-- into sacred spaces. Mendelssohn's organ sonatas—concert pieces-- also include chorale tunes. Thus is seen the phenomenon that would become a prominent feature of Victorian music-making: the merging of sacred and secular, the worshipful adoration of certain musicians, and the search for the sublime in secular places.

The English Organ in the Early Nineteenth Century

At the beginning of this chapter I looked briefly at organs and organ music at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in order to provide some background for the changes that began to occur at mid-century in organ literature. Now I would like to consider the organ itself in slightly greater detail, in order to show how the organ began to be seen as an agent for improvement in church music in the nineteenth century, especially as it began to be able to play the *pedaliter* works of Bach.

In *The History of the English Organ* Stephen Bicknell described the typical

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[65] For accounts of the Bach concerts of Wesley, Jacob, Novello, Horn, and others, see Olleson, *Samuel Wesley*, 81ff.

organ of 1800 thus: 'English organs…were perhaps among the quietest organs in the world. Nor were they very large, especially compared to the four- and five-manual instruments of F.H. Clicquot in France, or the great 32'-fronted organs of northern Europe. The tonal palette was narrow, they lacked all but the most rudimentary pedals, they retained an eccentrically long compass for the keyboards, and eschewed the use of all but the most homely materials: pipe metal poor in tin, pine and oak, with mahogany for only some of the increasingly plain and understated cases.'[66] These words are of course written from a twentieth-century perspective: English writers in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries did not necessarily see their organs in the same light. In *The Present State of Music in Germany* (1775), Charles Burney wrote this about the 1755 Silbermann organ in the Dresden Hofkirche:

> The multiplicity of stops in this organ…only augments noise, and adds to the weight of the touch. The vox humana is bad; and there are very few solo stops that are agreeable; no swell has ever been heard of in an organ at Dresden; and the echos to common stops, are all that can be called sweet, by themselves.[67]

And in *The Present State of Music in France and Italy*, he says:

> It is very extraordinary that the swell, which has been introduced into the English organ more than fifty years, and which is so capable of expression and of pleasing effects, that it may well be called the greatest and most important invention that ever was made on any keyed instrument, should be still utterly unknown in Italy. The touch too of the organ, which our builders have so much improved, still remains in its heavy, noisy state; and now I am on this subject I must observe that most of the organs which I have met with on the Continent, seem to be inferior to ours built by Father Smith, Byfield, or Snetzler, in everything but size. As the churches there are often immense, so are the organs; the tone is indeed somewhat softened and refined by space and distance; but when heard near, it is intolerably coarse and noisy; and though the number of stops in these large instruments is very great, they afford but little variety; being for the most part duplicates in unisons and octaves to each other, such as the great and small 12ths, flutes, and 15ths; hence in our organs not only the touch and tone, but the imitative stops are greatly superior to those

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[66] Bicknell, *History*, 213.
[67] Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany,* 56.

of any organs I have ever met with.[68]

Fifty years on, however, Silbermann was the very one to emulate, if this article, probably by Gauntlett, in the *Musical World* of 1837 is any indication:

> Whilst the British organs were miserably small and deficient in tone, and displayed a total absence of the *pedale*, English organ composers ceased to hold any rank of importance in Europe. The glorious confusion of the fugue in our Cathedrals degenerated into the merest twaddle of a counterpoint; the voluntary became a thing of shreds and patches, diversified by alternate exhibitions of noise and childishness. The clergy no longer interested themselves in the musical portions of the service; and 'the Church (to quote the words of a writer in the *Quarterly Review*) lost much by its indolence—not to say scandalous neglect of psalmody.' Organists in high places, chapel-masters, and King's Chapel Directors, were appointed, whose ignorance of organ music, and organ effects, did not long remain the laughter and scorn of the profession, since from its constant exhibition, the mind naturally united the ideas of imbecility and folly with the holders of such appointments….But we rejoice to have our lot in brighter days—in a season in which our English organ-builders have manifested a generous emulation—and honourable ambition—which has raised them far beyond the character of mere artisans. Our country boasts of organists who have taken a station from which no continental performer can dislodge them: and if Silbermann has made his 32-feet pipes, Messrs. Elliott and Hill have raised those enormous piles *whose mouths have measured six feet in their width.*[69]

As noted earlier it was not only the desire to play Bach that was the motivating factor behind the change in organ building and music. Bach's music entered a situation that was already in flux, and his music was a confirmation that change was the right thing.

Music in the English parish church, as Nicholas Temperley and others have shown, was in a poor state at the turn of the nineteenth century.[70] Church bands, which had been widely introduced after the 1770s were notoriously inadequate: there was an undersupply of musicians, congregations were frequently at the mercy of

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[68] Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy: Or, the Journal of a Tour through Those Countries* (2nd edn.; London, 1773), 389.
[69] *MW* 6/70 (14 July 1837), 75.
[70] See for example Temperley, *Parish Church*, 155-62; Bernarr Rainbow, *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church (1839-1872)* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1970), Chapter 1: 'Origins'.

instrumentalists who played together badly and in odd combinations (one example, from a church in Sussex ca. 1800 reported a band made up of two cellos and a clarinet).[71] A gallery choir of some description usually sang along with the band, leading the psalmody and essaying more challenging music from time to time; but that group, sitting up in the back of the church, often came under fire for misbehaviour.[72] Other criticisms were aimed at the kind of music heard in churches: it was trivial, too entertaining, and too reminiscent of the music heard in the opera and theatres. John Antes Latrobe, a nineteenth-century Church of England priest and writer on music, gave a rather vehement conservative reformer's view of the state of music just before the advent of the Oxford Movement in his book *The Music of the Church Considered in Its Various Branches*.[73] Though he conceded that by the time of writing some improvement was beginning to be apparent, he lamented the fact that more churches did not have organs: 'The smaller churches, unable to command the "full-breathed volume of sound," wherewith the organ regulates and mellows the harsh tones of wealthier congregations, are content to repose upon the mercy of a set of singers, who have no idea of instrumental music beyond noise, or of vocal beyond vociferation.'[74] For those churches which did have organs, Latrobe had a detailed

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[71] Temperley, *Parish Church*, 197.

[72] Ecclesiologist priest and scholar John Mason Neale spoke disapprovingly of west-gallery choirs in his tract *Church Enlargement and Church Arrangement* (Cambridge: Cambridge Camden Society, 1843), 15: 'Nothing, too, can be worse as respects the singers themselves. Removed too great distance from the clergyman's eye, having a separate entrance to their seats, possessed of strong *esprit de corps*, and feeling or thinking themselves indispensable to the performance of a certain part of public worship, and too often, alas! privileged to decide what that part shall be, -- what wonder if they generally acquire those feelings of independence and pride, which make the singers some of the worst members of the parish.' Another description of the bad behaviour of parish choir members is found in Lucy Cameron's anonymously published tract *The Singing Gallery* (London: Houlston, 1823), in which the author despairs at the argumentative, flirtatious, and distracting behaviour of the young men and women in the choir. The most vivid literary depiction of the village band/choir is in Thomas Hardy's novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (London: Penguin Classic, 2012).

[73] Latrobe, *The Music of the Church Considered.*

[74] *Ibid,* 2.

description of how best to use them, including the recommendation of playing organ fugues as the middle voluntary: a fugue will 'carry [the mind] forward through [its] regular, though intricate movements, flowing uninterruptedly with the tide of thought, and sustaining it unimpaired.'[75] Latrobe, then, had specific ideas about organs in that they could raise the tone of worship, and elevate the mind and spirit of the congregation. There were other reasons for churches to acquire new and larger organs however: the population explosion and growth in the non-conformist denominations in the nineteenth century meant an increase in number of new or newly-renovated churches, particularly from mid-century, and in urban areas in both the north and south.[76] Congregational hymn-singing, pioneered by the Evangelicals, was becoming increasingly robust, and instruments were needed that could support large, singing congregations. Even by the 1820s it was assumed (especially in the wealthier cities) that new churches that could afford organs would have them, and as a result, the number of organ-building firms in England increased exponentially. Though at first organ provision lagged in the nonconformist churches, by the late 1830s that was beginning to change, with some of the largest instruments in the country being built for Methodist churches.[77]

The Oxford Movement, born in the 1830s, was the watershed in the

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[75] *Ibid*, 370.

[76] The religious surveys of 1851, 1886, and 1901, as cited in Chap. 1 fn 57, show that the percentage of people attending weekly church services decreased over that time. However, the raw numbers of new churches and people attending services increased; also, there was considerable growth in non-conformist churches. Precise numbers for comparison are difficult to obtain owing to the different parameters used in each survey and other variables, and indeed such a study is outside the realm of this dissertation. However, access to these documents and a starting-place for interpretations of them can be found at the website British Religion in Numbers: <http://www.brin.ac.uk> (accessed 11 December 2012). Also see McLeod, *Religion and Society in England 1850-1914.*

[77] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* discusses the nuances of the gradual increase in church organ provision, including in the non-conformist denominations. Of particular relevance to the building of 'trophy' organs in nonconformist churches is an 1838 report (W. White, *History, Gazetteer, and Directory of the West-Riding of Yorkshire*, Sheffield: 1838, 1870) about a Wesleyan Methodist church in Leeds, St. Peter's Methodist Chapel, which had the largest organ of any in England (excepting York Minster and Birmingham) (p. 69).

improvement of church music and the widespread adoption of organs in the established church: the Anglican Church was fundamentally altered with this call back to catholic principles, the re-focusing on the Eucharist, and the demand for ritual and solemnity in worship.[78] Notwithstanding the fact that in ideal Tractarian worship there was no role for organs at all-- the music being properly led by a choir of ordained men who chanted the service--congregational singing was too powerful a part of English Protestantism to be abandoned, so as Tractarian principles were added and adapted to the practical situation of the parish church, organs became the perfect tool for unifying congregational singing, providing a solemn and dignified atmosphere, and focusing the listener's thoughts on lofty ideals.

For the most part, country parish churches lagged behind their urban counterparts in music provision, and the tradition of country psalmody and church bands continued in rural parishes in many cases through the middle and even end of the nineteenth century. Barrel organs were often the replacement, if one was sought, and they remained in common use in some churches through the end of the century.[79]

By mid-century it is clear that some organs, particularly in some of the wealthier city churches, were on a new path, as the organs in the Great Exhibition of 1851 show. Full pedal divisions with large compasses and independent stops, full-compass swell, C-compass Great, powerful reeds, fully-developed choir divisions including a range of upper work—these were now characteristics of the new English organ which made them wholly different from their relatives of the recent past. Even

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[78] John Keble's Assize sermon of 1833 in Oxford is usually credited to be the launching point for the Oxford Movement. It was also called Tractarianism, after the publication *Tracts for the Times*, which ran from 1833-41.

[79] For more information, see for example Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* and Christopher Turner, 'Barrel Organs', *BIOS Reporter* 21, No. 2 (April, 1997), <http://www.npor.org.uk/Reporter/apr97/a497.htm>.

the case was revolutionary: about the Gray and Davison organ in the Great Exhibition which was subsequently installed in St Anne Limehouse, Bicknell writes, 'Gone is the superstructure of towers, flats, and cornices that marked all large cases before this time: above the console and wooden substructure of the organ rise pipes and pipes alone, a semi-functional display of the very machinery that makes an organ an organ, inviting comparison with the chimneys of a factory or steam engine. In 1851 this was an instrument with a truly modern look: few builders would now build traditional cases with any sense of confidence.'[80]

A writer in the *Musical World* in 1838 also identified the sea-change in organ building:

> The character of our instruments is changed—the taste of the public has changed. The light and brilliant tones of a Snetzler have receded before the massive diapasons and reeds of an Elliott and Hill; and to these builders, and the Grays, our amateurs owe an acquaintance with the might and omnipotence of the pedal organ….[81]

With the rise in tourism to the Continent and the flood of English travelogues, an increasing number of English travelers saw and heard the huge and impressive organs that were so obviously different from the more modest English instruments. Among the organists and builders in the first half of the nineteenth century who made the pilgrimage to see European organs were Camidge (organist at York Minster in the 1820s), Joseph Moore (1766-1851; Birmingham industrialist and benefactor; director of the triennial Birmingham Festival), Josiah Pittman (1816-86; London organist and composer), George French Flowers (1811-72; composer, organist, and music critic), and Edward Holmes (1797?-1859; writer and organist);[82] to this list can be added the

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[80] Bicknell, *History*, 243.
[81] *MW* 9 (1838), 208, quoted by Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 86.
[82] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* 178.

names of non-musicians such as Thomas Frognall Dibdin (Dibdin was a prolific writer and bibliographer, who wrote, among other works, *A bibliographical, antiquarian, and picturesque tour in France and Germany*, 'an amusing three-volume account of his travels, full of follies and errors', in the words of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).[83] Dibdin, doubtless typical of many lay-writers, was mainly impressed at the size and grandeur of the huge Continental instruments. Nonetheless, a change from Burney's somewhat chauvinistic attitude of only fifty years earlier is evident.

By mid-century German organs were being welcomed into England, partly as an answer to criticism about the lack of power and standard of workmanship in English organs. The organ building firm of Schulze, from Thuringia, was to be of primary importance in this new tide, and the influence of the firm was critical to the subsequent development of the English organ. The founder of the firm, Johann Friedrich Schulze, was first invited to exhibit an organ in the Great Exhibition, reportedly by Prince Albert himself, who was from the same part of Germany.[84] While this organ was small in size (fifteen stops), it was much admired for both its strength of tone and its sweetness,[85] and led some eleven years later to the building (by J.F.'s son Edmund) of the famous organ in Doncaster Parish Church. The Doncaster organ, completed in 1862, was considerably larger at 94 stops and five manuals, and inspired superlatives from critics. A writer in the *Ecclesiologist* said it was 'the noblest work of organ-building art that England has ever heard or seen';[86] and

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[83] (London: Jennings and Major, 1829).
[84] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* 383.
[85] *Ibid,* 384-5.
[86] *The Ecclesiologist* 25 (1864), 22. Bicknell suggests that the writer may have been organbuilder T.C. Lewis, who was in subsequent years highly influenced by Schulze's work.

William Spark (writer, organist, and biographer of Henry Smart) called the flue-work 'truly superb, and I have never heard -- not even from the finest of Silbermann's famous instruments in Germany-- a finer variety, beauty, and rich distinctive character of tone'.[87] Others comparing it favourably to the famous pilgrimage organs on the Continent, in its quality of workmanship, materials and voicing:

> There is no longer any question of how much faith should be given to travellers' tales about Haarlem and Rotterdam, and the like. Here, within a four-hours' ride of London, is a great big German fact to say for itself what a fine German organ is reputed to say.[88]

The Doncaster organ was the catalyst for a number of other Schulze organs, particularly in the north of England. Thistlethwaite considers it 'one of the two most influential organs built in England during the second half of the century',[89] and traces Schulze's influence on subsequent specific organs by Walker, Hill, T.C. Lewis, and many others. The vitally important innovations of Schulze, both aural and technical (at least with regard to quality of workmanship, if not innovation), thereby introduced a new ingredient to the ultimate successes of the late-nineteenth-century English organ.

The Organ in the Nineteenth-Century Press

When one considers the paltry number of column-inches devoted to the organ and its music in the press today, it is extraordinary to note the amount of ink devoted to the organ, its improvement, its wonders, and its role in raising the standards of church

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[87] William Spark, *Musical Reminiscences, Past and Present* (London: n.p., 1892), 187.
[88] *MW* 41 (1863), 733.
[89] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* 386.

music in the early 1800s. It is clear that the organ was in some ways at the centre of musical life in the period. One cannot imagine a mainstream music periodical today leading off an issue in the same way as the *Musical World* did in March 1838: the first article was a congratulatory one lauding the appointment of four particular Lay Vicars to the choirs of St Paul's and Westminster Abbey; and the second was called 'Cultivation of Church Music the Peculiar Duty of Protestants'.[90] Not surprisingly, the changes in attitude toward church music and the organ, as well as the changes in organs themselves, are reflected in articles such as these. The writers of the earlier articles which I shall consider here focus on particular features of specific organs that are noteworthy for their excellence; but as the years unfold, relatively few articles remain simple reviews of organs or gossip about organists: most are calls to action in one form or another. For example, the appointment of the four new singers to the Cathedral and Abbey choirs mentioned above was, in the eyes of the author, to be taken as a sign that the clergy had finally taken responsibility for the quality of music, after often sitting 'like an incubus, on the Improvement of an art, which it was his [the Dean's] bounden duty to protect and cherish.'[91] It is striking to note how few writers were behind these calls-to-arms, for they numbered not more than a half-dozen or so; and they were all Bach advocates. These activist writers were encouraging changes in organ design and attitudes toward the instrument at the same time as Wesley and Mendelssohn were championing the organ music of Bach, and together they were extraordinarily powerful messengers. An overview of the writing on organs and organ music will suffice to convey the amount of material as well as its tone.

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[90] *MW* 8 [n.s.1] (22 March 1838), 193.
[91] *Ibid,* 194.

A first example illustrates the confidence a writer could have in writing technically about organs in a general musical journal. In the *English Musical Gazette*, a journal intended for educated amateurs and professionals, which ran monthly for only seven issues in 1819, there were five articles about the organ in the first issue alone—which was only about eighteen pages long. Of these, two were lengthy articles about the organ in St Paul's cathedral, in which the merits of Father Smith's voicing of diapasons is hailed over others' voicing; others were reports and descriptions of three new or repaired organs; and there were a number of reviews of new organ music.[92]

The *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* was the first of the long-running English music journals, starting in 1818 and running for ten years. Its avowed intent was to 'raise the standards of musical education in Britain', by including biographical sketches of composers, and studies of Anglican church music, acoustics, musical instruments (especially organs and pianos), performance practice, and pedagogy. Over the course of its run, there are forty articles on the organ, including many reviews of organ works, arrangements, and accompaniments. The call for the raising of standards in church music was strong in this journal, and in an excerpt from one review, sounded like a call to arms: 'We do not go to hear Mass only, like the Romanists, nor like the Dissenters to listen to long prayers, uttered only by the Officiating Minister; but we are called on to take an active and prominent part in the Divine Office; and the Priest himself, in his addresses and adjurations, seems hardly more necessary than the people who reply to him.'[93] In a long letter (quasi article) in

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[92] The article about the St Paul's organ is discussed in detail in Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* 6.
[93] *QMMR* 3/10 (1821), 188.

the same issue, called 'On the music of our churches', the author says, 'religious harmony should be moving but noble withal; grave, solemn, and seraphic; fit for a martyr to play and an angel to hear'; and then goes on to decry the 'ludicrous contrast afforded by the "religious harmony" of many of our places of worship at this day…'[94]

The organ's role in church music was crucial. In a different issue from the same year an article 'on the cathedral service…at Winchester Cathedral' laid the blame for bad church music at the organist's feet, in spite of the fact that the service in question was 'for voices alone': the organist had trained the singers poorly, and rushed 'hurry-scurry' through the chant, and encouraged them to 'bawl' owing to his poor choice of organ stops, and so on.[95] A few issues later, a letter five pages long, single-spaced, entitled 'Organists, Voluntaries, and Psalm-Singing' blames the poor state of church music on bad organists who fail to 'inspire our congregations with the flame of devotion, [and instead] inspire the sensible part of them with disgust'.[96]

Further articles in the *QMMR* featured the story of 'a country organist';[97] a 'Sermon, preached at the opening of the New Organ, city of Bristol, by the Rev. John Eden';[98] a diagram of the Church Tones;[99] and further calls for the raising of standards in church music, involving keeping organs in good repair, and making sure they are supplied with pedals, octave diapasons, together with claims that the piano had led to the trivialising of church music: it was 'the greatest enemy church music has ever had

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[94] *QMMR* 3, no. 11, 289-92.
[95] *QMMR* 3, no. 12, 452.
[96] *QMMR* 7, no. 25 (1825), 15.
[97] *QMMR* 4 (1822), 427.
[98] *Ibid*, 449.
[99] *QMMR* 5 (1823), 198.

(excepting the Puritans)'. The author also decried a 'light and wanton style of church playing', relating it to influences of the theatre. The common manner of hymn playing was condemned as 'disgraceful'.[100] In 1827 a report on the organ at St John's Church, Lambeth, says that the 'general increase in numbers of organs are grateful proofs not only of increasing prosperity but also… piety' and that 'private individuals in their zeal and liberality have supported the [organ's] acquisition'; it also refers to the 'astonishing grandeur' of pedal pipes (one 16' rank).[101] The writer of another article maintains that professional ability as well as moral character ought to be the criteria for hiring organists.[102] Thus as early as the 1820s the organ (and a good, morally upright organist) are consistently portrayed as the solution to the problem of the bad state of church music: they could keep congregations together, singing the right notes at the right time, and covering up the bad notes; and their sustained tone gave them an appropriate air of dignity and solemnity.

These articles on the moral benefit of organs ran alongside articles about the history and construction of the organ, and reports on organs around Europe. There are scores of letters to the editor arguing about winding systems, composition pedals, stop lists, tuning and temperament and on and on. These letters demonstrate that the organ was by no means attractive only for its musical capabilities.

The single most prolific writer on organs in the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* was Edward Hodges. Hodges was an English church musician, composer and essayist, and an early advocate for full-compass pedal boards well before they

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[100] *QMMR* 6 (1824), 457.
[101] *QMMR* 7 (1825), 7.
[102] *Ibid,* 14.

were common in British organs. He was also an early Bach proponent, and even named his son John Sebastian Bach Hodges. His writings for the *Review* were under his real name, as well as 'Minimus', and his style was laudatory and persuasive. For example, in 1822 he wrote about 'that noble instrument, the organ, which is universally acknowledged to be the most majestic, and is undoubtedly the most beautiful, musical instrument which the wit of man has hitherto devised…it is, as if by common consent, almost exclusively devoted to the service of the sanctuary'.[103] As an early organ reformer Hodges foreshadows the Victorian fascination for the mechanics of the instrument. Not only was he the inventor of an unusual set of brass pedals for the organ (installed in his own church in Bristol), as well as an innovator of other original 'improvements', but he also praised the cleverness of English engineering with regard to the organ.[104] In 1826 and 1827 Hodges wrote a series of articles on the Improvement of Organs, referring to the superior mechanical skill of the English, while at the same time praising the German style of organ building: German pedals 'afford room for the employment of both toe and heel, [and] are therefore much more convenient to the performer, and lead to the legitimate, viz. the legato style of organ playing'.[105]

But for all the organ content of *Quarterly Musical Magazine*, it was nothing compared to the *Musical World*, a journal that began in 1836, the year before Mendelssohn's triumphant Birmingham Festival appearance, and the beginning of his public organ playing. The *Musical World* was full of articles and reviews of organs, organ music, organists, and J.S. Bach. It has already been mentioned that in a single

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[103] *QMMR* 4 (1822), 33.
[104] Thistlethwaite discusses Hodges' innovations in detail in the *Victorian Organ,* 150-59.
[105] *QMMR* 9 (1827), 4.

issue, April 1838, thirty different publications of Bach's music were reviewed, and the organ is discussed on 27 pages out of 213—more than ten per cent.

The owner of the journal, Charles Cowden Clarke, was not himself an organist, but he was a member by marriage of the Novello family, having married Vincent Novello's oldest daughter Mary. (Vincent Novello was an accomplished organist himself, as well as a Bach supporter, and one of the early 'pedalists', according to Pearce and others.) The most important writers and editors in the *Musical World* were organists of the Wesley/Mendelssohn circles—staunch Bach advocates, all.

First was none other than Henry John Gauntlett. Gauntlett, earlier mentioned as the compiler and editor of *Choral and Instrumental Fugues in continuation*...as well as the one chiefly responsible (with organ builder William Hill) for developing the 'German system' in organ building, was strongly influential during the *Musical World's* first years, from about 1836-38, and though the ownership and editorship of this journal is quite convoluted, appears to have served as editor for a short while.[106] Gauntlett seems to have nearly single-authored the entire *Musical World* during its first years, and the journal reveals his interests with many articles on Beethoven, Bach, organs, and hymnody. After Gauntlett left the *Musical World* he continued writing in other journals. According to Temperley, he contributed articles to the *Sun, Morning Post, Morning Chronicle, Christian Remembrancer, Notes and Queries, Orchestra* and *British Quarterly Review*, and in 1850–51 he founded and edited a

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[106] See Langley, 'The English Musical Journal', 574.

monthly called the *Church Musician.* In the last year of his life he was writing articles for the newly founded *Concordia.*[107]

A brief accounting of the *Musical World* after Gauntlett's departure in 1838 has already been given in Chapter 2. His successor Edward Holmes had written his book *A Ramble among the Musicians of Germany* about ten years earlier, in which he expounded on the benefits of the magnificent German organs, and the grave style of German music, especially fugues. Here is a sample of his work, about a visit to Passau, a town 'remarkable for its cathedral, its very pretty maidens, and its old contra-puntist Seytl, a scholar of Albrechtsberger':

> [Seytl] is the organist of the cathedral in this town, and one of the remnants of the Bach school of organ-playing, which is nearly extinct in this quarter of Germany. In the southern parts of the empire there is no one who is so highly famed for the readiness and flow of his ideas in extempore fugue, though he is now long past the zenith of his powers, and has turned over much of the duty of his office to his son. The houses in Passau are so strangely constructed, that I had to ascend to the apartments of M. Seytl by a long staircase, leading out of the street; and on being introduced to his chamber, I found an old gentleman as eager to hear musical news from England as I was willing to relate it. The face of this organist seemed to me to be cast in that large and liberal mould in which the features of Handel, Bach, and Graun are shown by their portraits to resemble each other, as if certain corresponding bodily endowments led to a certain similarity of ideas; and I could easily imagine, in looking at M. Seytl, that one of the three sat before me. He seemed greatly pleased at my anxiety to see the structure and hear the tone of his organ, and said that though he had been visited by many foreigners for that purpose, I was the first Englishman who had done so….As the low prayers and confessions in a Catholic cathedral are hardly ever finished, there was some difficulty in our getting to his instrument, but we at last ventured, and the unlocking of doors and the traversing of great vaulted passages that led to it, looked more like the entrance to a fortress or a prison than to a musical instrument. The organ is vast: one gazes upwards and contemplates the immense pipes with astonishment. The absence of professed bellows-blowers prevented me from hearing the full power of the enormous instrument, but I heard the foundation stops singly, which satisfied me of its goodness. The touch is neither so deep nor so heavy as we have heard of the German organs in England. It is however much encumbered by solo stops, which are seldom in order. The manner of supplying the wind is so extremely strange to us, that it is worth record: two or more persons place themselves alternately on four large projecting logs, two of which belong to the manual and two to the pedals, and partly by their own weight, and

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[107] Nicholas Temperley. 'Gauntlett, Henry John' in Grove Music Online <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/10750> (accessed March 20, 2010).

> partly by using considerable force against a bar, descend as colliers do on the river Thames in raising colas, but without one fiftieth part of their rapidity When the logs are depressed they quickly raise their heads again, so that the labour of keeping in the wind is arduous. Our incipient bellows-blower, M. Seytl, jun. and a friend, who had volunteered their services for my gratification, came round to us after one diapason movement, with glistening faces, or, to express the thing delicately, exuding their sudorific secretions, and declared the impossibility of their continuing their employment.[108]

In other passages Holmes describes the moving experience of hearing a huge German congregation singing a chorale, and maintains that Germans are most associated with fugue, and that sequences are associated with grave music, and are especially suited for the organ. Needless to say, Holmes tried to raise English musical tastes in the *Musical World* by strongly advocating the music of Bach and organs on which his music could be played, and later continued doing so for the *Spectator; Fraser's Magazine*, and *The Musical Times,* among others.

After Holmes came another active organist and Bach advocate: Henry Smart (1813-1879). Smart, who also wrote for the *Atlas*, was not only a Bach advocate and fine organist, but was also fascinated by mechanics and engineering. He became an apprentice in a prominent engineering firm, and was later articled to a solicitor. He continued to nurture his fascination with engineering partly through spending time at the Flight and Robson organ factory.[109] His biographer William Spark says he made his career as an 'improver' of organs, visiting the innovative and successful organ builder Cavaillé-Coll in France, and bringing back his 'newest improvements'. He is credited with the invention of adjustable composition pedals, as well as crescendo and diminuendo pedals (Leeds Town Hall, Gray & Davison organ, 1859).[110] Like others of

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[108] Edward Holmes, *A Ramble among the Musicians of Germany, by a Musical Professor* (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1828).
[109] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 275.
[110] William Spark, *Henry Smart; His Life and Works* (London: [n.p.], 1881).

his generation, Smart was a man of conviction who was driven to invention and improvement, for which he found focus in the organ. Though Smart's tenure was not long at the *Musical World*, the impact of organists and Bach advocates who were editors of this intelligent and energetic journal continued, and journals of all kinds in nineteenth-century England gave an ever-increasing proportion of space over to the organ, with articles by such eloquent writers as Leigh Hunt, Henry Chorley, George Hogarth, and Charles Dickens. A subtle change in writing occurs: while reviews of performances and music continue, there are new articles that treat the organ as an icon of morality, religion, and the uplifted life. There is also a noticeable increase in articles about the organ as a focus for technological innovation. These areas will be explored in Chapter 5.

In summary, a small army of powerful advocates for the organ and Bach, often writing anonymously or nearly so, made a persuasive and eloquent case in journals of all kinds in favour of the new style English organ. The organ fitted the requirements of the age: it was a focus for technology, a machine of great power increasingly able to be operated by a single player, and a force for moral good. Its link to the church grew stronger than ever, and it became a powerful tool in efforts to improve society.

Organ tutors and pedal playing

More organs in churches meant a need for more organists, and the first English organ tutors were written expressly with the aim of raising standards in church music

through better organ-playing.[111] In this section I will consider organ tutors available in England (whether or not written by English musicians) in the first half of the nineteenth century, to c. 1850.

Pedal divisions were a feature of some organs for about twenty years before the advent of the German System, in a span of time Thistlethwaite calls the Insular period,[112] but they were not suited to fast-moving independent pedal lines; instead, they were more fit for underpinning harmonies with ponderous and booming bass notes. Thistlethwaite names some forty-six organs with pedals up to the year 1837, when the first public performances of Bach's *pedaliter* works began taking place. While most of these pedal boards were of a narrow compass, practising on pedals was clearly possible to some degree. Thus the question of how English organists learned to use pedals is not as puzzling as it might have seemed. Once the German-System organ began to be established in the late 1830s, it is no surprise that German organ tutors also began arriving, and it would have been unusual for an ambitious and conscientious organist not to have had Rinck's *Practical Organ School*[113] or Schneider's *Theoretical and Practical Organ School* in his library.[114]

In his study tracing the evolution of the pedal organ in England, Charles William Pearce identifies the best early nineteenth-century 'pedalists' as John Purkis (1781-1849: blind organist, who as a recitalist was especially known for his

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[111] Jonas Blewitt, *Complete Treatise on the Organ to Which Is Added a Set of Explanatory Voluntaries...* (London: Longman & Broderip, 1795), John Marsh, *Marsh's Eighteen Voluntaries for the Organ Chiefly Intended for the Use of Young Practitioners...To Which Is Prefix'd an Explanation of the Different Stops of the Organ and of the Several Combinations That May Be Made Thereof...* (London: Preston & Son 1791).

[112] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ,* 96.

[113] Christian Heinrich Rinck, *Praktische Orgelschule* op. 55 (Bonn and Cölln, 1818-21; trans. J.A. Hamilton as *Rinck's Complete Practical Organ School* (London, 1844); trans. S. Wesley as *Celebrated Practical School for the Organ* (London: Coventry and Hollier, 1837).

[114] Schneider, *Theoretical and Practical Organ School,* trans. J.G. Emmett (London: Novello, 18--?).

exhibitions on the Apollonicon), Vincent Novello (1781-1861), Thomas Adams (1785-1858: another recitalist particularly famous for his Apollonicon programmes), Edward Sturgis, and Josiah Pittman (1816-86).[115] The word 'pedalist' must be taken cautiously: for example, in Adams' own organ pieces there is very little use of the pedal, and there is no evidence that he played any Bach other than the '48', including that which he played on the Apollonicon organ (see below).[116] The need for wariness for the claim of excellent pedal skills is echoed by F.G. Edwards in his 1896 articles in the *Musical Times*, when he quotes Benjamin Jacob as saying that the 'execution [of the pedal part to the E-flat fugue] is very difficult.'[117] It will be remembered that similar claims were made when Mendelssohn began playing the *pedaliter* organ works in England, though he himself said that his pedal skills were quite overrated by the English.

The case of Elizabeth Stirling (1819-1895) is worthy of mention, as it illustrates one particular path to pedal proficiency. Judith Barger writes at length about Stirling and her Bach performances in the late 1830s.[118] Stirling was a pupil of Edward Holmes, who as we have seen was a Bach proponent, and Holmes wrote about her in his article 'Organ Performance at St Katherine Church, Regent's Park', extolling her talents as an organist with a brilliant pedal technique.[119] Stirling, age 18 when she gave the first public performance of Bach's organ works in 1837 (two

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[115] Charles William Pearce, *The Evolution of the Pedal Organ: And Matters Connected Therewith* (London: Musical Opinion, 1927).
[116] Nicholas Temperley. 'Adams, Thomas (ii)', in Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/00173> (accessed March 21, 2010).
[117] F.G. Edwards, 'Bach's Music in England', 723.
[118] Judith Barger, *Elizabeth Stirling and the Musical Life of Female Organists in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).
[119] Edward Holmes, 'Organ Performance at St. Katherine's Church, Regent's Park', *Atlas* 12 (1837), 538.

weeks before Mendelssohn's own first public performance in Birmingham), was 'her own instructress in Sebastian Bach's works, profiting now and then by the occasional hints of a friend who has heard the best German masters' (doubtless Holmes himself). Holmes comments further that the 'compass of the pedals at St Katherine's differs materially from the organ on which she practices', thus alluding to the fact that pedals were considerably different from church to church. Stirling's theoretical studies were led by another Bach advocate, James Alexander Hamilton of the Royal Academy. Hamilton wrote *Catechism for the organ* (first edition, 1838),[120] and other instruction books which incorporated pedal exercises. Stirling was clearly strongly self-motivated to master the pedals, but she also had guidance from teachers who encouraged her to do so.

In a comprehensive study of the use of English organ pedals in the organ repertoire in the first half of the nineteenth century, the first mention of pedal playing in an English tutor has been shown to be as early as 1800: Francis Linley in *The Organ.*[121] Linley says only, 'It may not be improper to observe here, that there have been pedals introduced, which extend as far as an octave below double C or G on the Stop Diapason: this produces a very awful and sublime effect when introduced at intervals; but continually to grovel on the lower tones is by no means elegant or proper.' A more comprehensive first instruction in England on how to play pedals is John Whitaker's *Twelve Pedal Exercises for the Organ…* (undated, but probably early 1830s). For the first part of the nineteenth century however, it was the German tutors which held sway, unsurprisingly: a short article in the *Musical World* in 1840 names

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[120] (London: R. Cocks & Co., 1838).
[121] Francis Linley, *A Practical Introduction to the Organ* (London: J. Bland, c.1800), as quoted by Christopher Kent, 'GG Compass Pedals and the British Organ Repertoire before C.1850', *BIOS Journal* 12 (1988).

the following as 'good instruction books for the organ', all German: Dreschsler, Hering, Knecht, Rinck, Vogler, Türk, Schneider, Werner, and C. Güntenberg.[122] The *Praktische Orgelschule* (1818-21) of Rinck was advertised particularly widely in the music journals. Boosey acquired the plates for it and translated it,[123] and as mentioned earlier, in 1837 Coventry and Hollier came out with an English translation by Wesley.[124] Frederick Schneider's *Complete Theoretical and Practical Instruction for playing the organ,* from the same period, was also widely available in English translation.[125]

Of course pedal exercises feature heavily in Rinck's volume, and he refers to J.S. Bach in tones that make it seem as though knowledge of Bach's *pedaliter* works was a foregone conclusion. However, no Bach works appear among the extensive pieces in the collection.

Immediately following the half-century mark organ tutors using Bach's works as exercises began appearing. George Cooper's *Introduction to the Organ* (London: Addision and Hollier, 1855) is important to mention in this connection because it was among the first to include comprehensive pedal exercises illustrated with reference to Bach's organ works. This tutor and others such as those by W.T. Best[126] represent the first of a number of such books, and the very fact that there were so many with substantial sections on pedal-playing after 1850 indicates that English organ building, playing, and music had entered a new phase.

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[122] 'On Organ Playing', *MW* 13, N.S. Vol. 6 (1840), 381.
[123] Christian H Rinck, *Rink's Practical Organ School* (London: T. Boosey & Co., [182-]. The original (engraved) German edition of the *Praktische Orgelschule* (Bonn und Cöln, N. Simrock [1819-1821]) was retained, with added material in English. The German title-pages, preface and dedication were used. By kind communication from William A. Little.
[124] See fn 113, above. There is some doubt that Wesley actually made the translation: see Kassler, *English Bach Awakening,* 194.
[125] This book, cited in fn. 114 above, was reviewed in the *MW* 10, N.S. 3 (12 April 1838), 255.
[126] *Modern School for the Organ* (London: R.Cocks and Co., 1853?); *The Art of Organ Playing* (London: Novello, Ewer, & Co., 1896).

The Organ as a Focus for Technology

One of the hallmarks of the nineteenth-century view of the organ is the way it came to be viewed as a focus and opportunity for technological innovation. The Victorian age was characterised by inventions that were meant to improve the quality of life, and musical instruments were not exempt: the piano comes immediately to mind as a musical instrument that was improved (or at least changed) by the application of clever engineering. Organs were in another realm altogether, however. Technological innovation offered possibilities for vastly increasing the size of the instrument, moving the keyboards to a remote location from the pipes, adding gadgetry which enabled the instantaneous changing of stops, and allowing the player to control an ever more vast array of sounds and dynamics. At the same time he could be a visible virtuoso in the style of Liszt or one of the other travelling musicians, since organ consoles no longer had to be hidden in church galleries or at distant remove from audiences. Organists could conjure thunderstorms or days at the seaside, sometimes one after the other; and watching an organist do this was sensational in itself.

Flight & Robson's Apollonicon was an excellent, early example of the pride that the British people could take in the ingenuity of its organ builders. Built in 1817, the Apollonicon was a massive entertainment organ that could be played both by a barrel mechanism and by hand, and was likely intended for the Apollonian Museum, a musical annexe to the National Institution at the Pantheon building in London, 'whose aim was to promote trade and industry, and to celebrate "our National genius".'[127] The

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[127] Rachel Cowgill, 'The London Apollonicon Recitals 1817-32: A Case-Study in Bach, Mozart and Haydn Reception', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 123, No. 2 (1998), 193.

Apollonicon was described in *The Engineer's and Mechanic's Encyclopedia* thus: 'A musical machine, on the principle of the organ, which…produces an excellent imitation of the tones of all the most admired wind instruments; the combined effect of the whole being similar to that of a numerous and well-chosen orchestra. This magnificent contrivance, unrivalled in this or any country, is the invention of Messrs. Flight and Robson, who spent five years in its completion.'[128] Rachel Cowgill notes that the barrel exhibitions of the Apollonicon received most coverage in the technical press, and therefore 'the repertory heard at barrel exhibitions given by the "state of the art" Apollonicon must have seemed inextricably linked with progress, innovation and the ultra-modern.'[129] The music of Bach was often featured at Apollonicon concerts: for example, in the *English Musical Gazette, or Monthly Intelligencer* in 1819 the following announcement appeared of a concert on the Apollonicon: 'The Performance was conducted by Mr. Adams. It consisted of a selection of music from Sebastian Bach, Haydn, and Mozart. Among the pieces …were two Motetts of the great Sebastian Bach.'[130]

Tuning systems were also a focus for scientific enquiry and debate, and were a frequent topic of articles in music journals, including by Bach advocates like Samuel Wesley, who used the *Well-Tempered Clavier* as his reason for the preference of milder temperaments as contrasted with the modified mean-tone tuning of most

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[128] 'Apollonicon', in Luke Hebert, 'The Engineer's and Mechanic's Encyclopædia Comprehending Practical Illustrations of the Machinery and Processes Employed in Every Description of Manufacture of the British Empire', (London: T. Kelly, 1836).
[129] Cowgill, 'Apollonicon', 203.
[130] *English Musical Gazette, or Monthly Intelligencer (*1 January 1819), 16.

English organs[131] (The argument that equal temperament was ultimately the way of the future was one more point in favour of the Bach cause, since the 'wohl-temperiert' was widely thought to be equal temperament.)

The technological focus meant that a striking number of influential organists and organ builders had at least some training in engineering or architecture (or both), particular as the century advanced: H.J. Gauntlett, organ builder William Hill, Henry Smart, James Watt (important in the development of the steam engine), and W.T. Best himself ('he abandoned a career as a civil engineer')[132] can all be counted in these ranks. Henry Smart's background as an engineer and subsequent career not only as a player but also as an 'improver' of organs has already been mentioned. The establishment of huge manufactories for organ building was another sign of progress, and the late-nineteenth century the biggest organ building companies housed their works in immense buildings spanning acres of land. Thistlethwaite examines the growth and change in organ manufacture:

> Delight taken in novelties, admiration for innovations justifying the epoch's view of itself as an age of improvement, desire to extend the range of musical possibilities by increasing the power and proficiency of individual instruments: all these characteristic preoccupations of the mid-nineteenth century fuelled this activity. It contributed to the organisation of musical instrument manufacture along factory lines… The organ was particularly susceptible to innovation. In an age fascinated by acoustics, mechanics, and engineering it offered more scope than any other single instrument for experiment and investigation.[133]

Industrial advancement was a sign of the best organ building, as reflected in

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[131] See for example Peter Williams, 'Equal temperament and the English organ, 1675-1825', in *Acta Musicologica* 40, Fasc. 1 (Jan-March 1968), 53-65; also Philip Olleson, '"The Perfection of Harmony Itself": The William Hawkes Patent Organ and its Temperament', *British Institute of Organ Studies Journal* 21 (1997), 106-26, and 'The Organ-builder and the Organist: Thomas Elliot and Samuel Wesley', *BIOS Journal* 20 (1996)).

[132] E.D. Mackerness, 'Best, W.T.' *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02965> (accessed 8 January, 2013).

[133] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 340.

Grove's assessment of Henry Willis as 'one of the great artist-engineers of the nineteenth century'.[134] As with almost all the most prominent organ builders of the nineteenth century, his technical skill and innovation was as much reason for his success as his production of fine instruments, if not more, and to some degree, his value was reflected in the large number of patents in his name. As mentioned before, William Hill, the builder of the huge organ in Birmingham Town Hall, had some training as an engineer, and in fact the brilliant high-pressure reeds on that organ were his innovation, modified from his work on railway signaling devices. Confirming the fascination with the engineering of organs, this particular instrument was written about in journals such as *The Practical Mechanic and Engineer's magazine,* and statistics were reported about it: how much it weighed (45 tons); that it had a pipe with an interior measurement of 224 cubic feet; 5 miles of trackers, and so on. It was a 'landmark in engineering and mechanical terms', and when it was declared complete in 1834, 'the public was suitably impressed by the "grandeur and sublimity" of what it heard'.[135]

The union of progress and the ultra-modern with artistic achievement received no greater endorsement than at the Great Exhibition (1851), which was a highpoint for the nineteenth-century British organ in several ways. There were fourteen organs in the Exhibition: eleven English, one French, one German, and one Italian. They ranged in size from very small to very large (the 70-stop Willis organ was eventually bought by Winchester Cathedral). In his monograph, *The Musical Instruments in the*

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[134] Nicholas Thistlethwaite, 'Willis, Henry', in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/30364> (accessed March 21, 2010).
[135] Nicholas Thistlethwaite, *A History of the Birmingham Town Hall Organ* ([Birmingham]: Birmingham City Council, 1984), 12.

Great Industrial Exhibition William Pole lays out a defence of why he believed the organ to be a perfect medium for exhibiting Victorian achievement:

> It is in the 'first rank among musical instruments'
> It is the only instrument consecrated exclusively to the service of religion
> It is the largest and most powerful instrument
> It requires the greatest amount of skill and labour in its construction and is the most expensive
> It has a compass far beyond any other
> It is most comprehensive in its variety of tone; its stops comprise both the loudest and softest sounds , and greatest variety in tone.[136]

Pole's account of the organs at the Exhibition reveals his fascination with the organ as a vehicle for technological progress. He concentrates heavily on descriptions of the recent innovations that had taken place in organ building and playing in recent years, and thereby reflects the widespread Victorian attitude toward the organ, in which the marvels of its mechanical complexity occasionally (or often) overrule its significance as a musical instrument. Even the claim that the Great Exhibition fostered a new style of organ music as well as the new profession of concert organist,[137] has technological achievement at its basis: the story is told of W.T. Best demonstrating the Willis organ in the Crystal Palace, where the chief marvel and selling point (as it turned out) was the fact that gadgets on the large instrument enabled him to make rapid registrational changes without stop-pulling assistants.[138]

After the Great Exhibition, the sensation surrounding the substance became the focus for development: builders and players focused on the technical ingenuity—the more gadgets, the greater the size, the louder, the bigger the factory, the better the organ. Among the many innovations in nineteenth-century organ building were composition pedals, electric action, the pneumatic lever, tubular pneumatic action,

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[136] (London, n.p., 1851).
[137] Nicholas Temperley, *The Romantic Age, 1800-1914: Music in Britain* (London: Athlone Press, 1981), 445.
[138] This story is recounted in 'Henry Willis', *MT* 39, No. 663 (1 May 1898), 300.

improvements and developments of winding systems, swell boxes, sforzando and crescendo pedals, and various other console gadgetry.

As an influential composer, writer, and advocate of Bach, C.H.H. Parry is worth consulting for his views on the organ of the nineteenth century. Parry was not swayed by the marvels of technological advancement evinced by the nineteenth-century organ, but was in fact a conservative, in that he believed in the organ's virtues as a musical instrument more than as a platform for technological display. In his book *The Art of Music*, Parry hardly mentions the organ without including Bach's works in the same breath. He regards Bach's organ pieces, and particularly the fugues, as the high point of writing for the instrument. While he concedes that occasionally Bach touches on the dramatic, usually 'the style of the organ works is always eminently serious, as befits the character of the instrument'.[139] He praises Bach's usage of regular dance rhythms for his fugues, and his 'figures which have a natural animation without too much lilt'.[140] Bach knew best of anyone how to take advantage of the particular characteristics of the organ: 'Everything that has been written since is but the pale shadow of his splendid conceptions; and though the modern attempts to turn the organ into a sort of second-rate orchestra by means of infinite variety of stops are often very surprising, they certainly cannot compare with his work for intrinsic quality or direct impressiveness.'[141]

Conclusion

In surveying the English organ and its role between 1800 and 1900, it is apparent that

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[139] Parry, *The Art of Music,* 198.
[140] *Ibid.*
[141] *Ibid*, 199-200.

the instrument not only responded to the changing requirements of the church, but also enabled and in some ways even led the charge. We have seen, for example, how larger instruments were required for growing congregations, and also how big instruments with orchestral-style stops became desirable for accompanying oratorios. In the specific area of Bach reception, organs with independent pedal divisions, complete choruses within divisions, and full-compass keyboards were required to play his music. These elements undoubtedly represented some of the most significant changes in English organ building in the century. But the organ also was a means for development of certain key characteristics of the Victorian age: in its complexity and power it was a focus for engineering ingenuity; in its range of colour and dynamics, controllable by a single person, it was expression and encouragement of the empowered individual; in its ability to play the music of a composer who embodied all the virtues so highly valued in the period, it made attainment of an important goal possible.

Chapter 5

Bach in Nineteenth-Century England

In Chapter 1 several areas were flagged as possible reasons behind the Bach awakening in nineteenth-century England. In this chapter I hope to draw the threads together and explore the reasons behind the enthusiastic adoption of Bach by the English.

The music of Bach clearly forms a vitally important part of the Western canon. If membership in this category is determined by the importance and influence of the music in shaping Western culture, by its highest artistic merit, and by the belief in its enduring pertinence, then there can be no doubt that Bach's music is worthy. The idea of a musical canon has been explored in depth in recent years by numerous writers, including Joseph Kerman, William Weber, Reinhard Strohm, and Lydia Goehr.[1] Weber's discussion of the formation of the nineteenth-century integrated musical canon in his article 'The History of the Musical Canon' is particularly useful in understanding Bach's reception in England, and I therefore use it as a convenient template in this chapter to organise an otherwise unruly topic.[2]

I begin this chapter with a discussion of how the adoption of Bach as I have laid it out in previous chapters fits the description of the musical canon as defined by Weber. Into this discussion is enfolded the areas of historicism and Ancients and Moderns. Next, I deal with the elements unique to the English reception of Bach. These include the popularity of Handel, which is certainly connected with the subject of the musical canon, but also relates

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[1] For example, Kerman, 'A Few Canonic Variations', *Critical Inquiry* 10, No. 1 (Sep., 1983), 107-125; Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics*, [same author], 'The Eighteenth-Century Origins of the Musical Canon', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association,* 114/1 (1989), 6-17; Reinhard Strohm, 'Looking Back at Ourselves: The Problem of the Musical-Work Concept', in Michael Talbot (ed.) *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000); Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[2] In Cook and Everist, *Rethinking Music*, 336-355.

to the question of German influence. Finally, as we have seen, the music of Bach is often described as sublime in the nineteenth century, and because that word carried specific connotations beyond the popular modern meaning of 'very good', a discussion of that word in connection with Bach's music, and particularly the organ music, is also included. Taken in the aggregate, it is clear that Bach was valued for more reasons than that he simply wrote great music, and that his music both represented and inspired qualities that were fundamentally important.

Bach and the Musical Canon

In 'The History of the Musical Canon',[3] Weber identifies several major types of canon, and maintains that in the nineteenth century these types were integrated into a repertoire that became central to musical life, and which still resonates today. Weber's major types of canon are scholarly, where music is studied and appreciated in theoretical terms; pedagogical, where musical works are used and emulated for teaching purposes; and performing, where musical works from earlier times are presented as authoritative repertories. Underlying these categories are certain principles: craft, repertory, criticism, and ideology. Bach's music, as I have shown, unite all three of these types in nineteenth-century England, and displays Weber's principles to the highest degree.

Weber's first category of canon is scholarly, with respect for the composer's craft as the main principle. He notes that the discipline of contrapuntal technique was a consistent ingredient in the bestowal of authority.[4] We have seen that this was the single most important feature of Bach's music for all who knew it from the time of his death well into the first half

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[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid,* 341.

of the nineteenth century. The analytical presentations of his fugues in publications, by people such as Kollmann, Wesley, Horn, and Gauntlett, first brought this to the attention of the English; but Bach's reputation as a master of fugal composition had preceded his music, even in England: Burney's first known mention of J.S. Bach was in 1771, when he said, 'I was no less surprised than pleased to find Mr C.P.E. Bach get out of the trammels of Fugues and crowded parts in which his father so excelled.'[5]

Bach's music fits into Weber's pedagogical canon category through advocacy of his works as teaching tools by Kollmann, Wesley, Horn, and Gauntlett, plus the numerous later musicians, publishers, and writers down through the ages who have presented Bach's works as fundamental for the education of young musicians. It will be remembered that the earliest references to Bach in the press mention the benefit of studying his music and playing it on the piano.[6] Throughout the century, in fact down to the present day, Bach's music has been an integrated, unquestioned step in the formation of classical musicians, whether they study keyboard or other instruments, or singing.

Weber regards the performing canon as the most significant canon of the three. The performing canon is not simply works which have been performed, but also involves 'the presentation of old works organised as repertories and defined as sources of authority with regard to musical taste'.[7] He refers specifically to the importance of the English interest in Ancient Music in the formation of the performing canon. We have already seen that Bach was not generally included in the repertoire of the various ancient concerts organisations. Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven were much more heavily promoted, and were thus

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[5] Burney, letter to Christoph Daniel Ebeling. The letter is no longer in existence, but an excerpt of it made by his daughter is printed in Alvaro Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Charles Burney,* v.1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 101-107.

[6] *La Belle assemblée: or Court and fashionable magazine* 1, no. 10 (Dec. 1806), 600-602; and v.2, no. 1(Jan 1807), 36-38. See Chap. 2.

[7] Weber, 'History of the Musical Canon', 340.

easily assimilated into the repertoire. Bach's music was instead initially promoted by activists largely outside the established main procession of subscription concerts and musical organisations such as the Philharmonic Society: the first concerts featuring Bach's music were organised especially to promote his keyboard works, by Wesley, Jacob, et al. These early proponents were practising musicians employed as teachers by upper-class and noble families: Wesley, Horn, Kollmann, and other Bach advocates all had students from noble backgrounds, including the Royal Family. The ancient music organisations, so much a part of English concert life in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, were vital to Bach reception however because of the imprimatur of authority they bestowed on older music in learned, difficult styles. They encouraged not only reverence for the earlier repertoire, but also concern for the composer's intentions, which can be seen from the earliest involvement of Mendelssohn with Bach, and which had a special resonance in England.

Concern for the composer's intentions meant presenting his music on paper as he had done, using the instruments in performance he himself had at his disposal, and with the same techniques he would have used. With Mendelssohn's editing of Bach's music for publication, we see explicit concern for preserving Bach's written texts as he himself had transmitted them (or as near as possible to that ideal). Whereas Wesley, Jacob, and other early-nineteenth-century musicians seemed to pay small attention to Bach's 'intentions', transposing his preludes and fugues away from awkward keys in order to suit meantone organ tuning,[8] writing new preludes to the fugues, making arrangements of his music for other instruments (see Chapter 2), Mendelssohn was the first to place so much emphasis on the inviolability of Bach's written text. (In performance he was quite liberal with it, as for example with his extensive cuts in the *Matthäus-Passion* in 1829 and 1841 (Chapter 3), and

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[8] See for example Kassler, *Bach Awakening,* 133.

with his performance of the organ works, as discussed in Chapter 4). Mendelssohn's attitude toward the written text was unusual in England in the first half of the nineteenth century, and was intended to remove the music beyond the reach of musicians who might be tempted to tamper with it.

Later in the century MacFarren's preface to the *St Matthew Passion* edition of 1870 also laid particular emphasis on explaining Bach's intentions, albeit while simultaneously justifying certain adjustments to make the work more acceptable to an English audience. The first complete performance of the Passion followed soon after, using many of Bach's 'obsolete' instruments, and the review in the *Athenaeum* spoke about the need to treat Bach's original scoring with reverence, though in practice the performance was a long way from one Bach would have known: 'So far, then, as the architectural attributes of Exeter Hall admitted, the approximation allowing for the increased numbers of the executants, to the execution, heard in the Leipzig church was as close as possible.'[9] In the 1870s and 80s, the increasing number of performances of the Bach choral works led to still greater concern for Bach's original texts. Additional accompaniments came to be regarded as 'excrescence',[10] and complaints about excessive cuts in the text and not using original instruments became commonplace.[11] A review of the *Mass in B Minor* performance in the Albert Hall in 1885 went so far as to call the cuts 'ruthless'.[12] Finally, by 1886 and Sullivan's 'monumental' *Mass in B Minor*, adherence to the composer's intentions (relatively speaking) was the ideal toward which all were encouraged to strive. It will be remembered that this was the first uncut performance of the *Mass* in England, and proper 'Bach trumpets' were used. Sullivan's

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[9] 'Bach's "Grosse Passions-Musik"', *Athenaeum,* n.v./2375 (1873), 574-5.
[10] *MT* 43, No.710 (April 1, 1902), 234; see Chapter 3.
[11] See, for example, 'The Bach Choir', *Musical Times* 26 no.506 (Apr. 1885), 203.
[12] 'Music: The Week', *Athenaeum,* n.v./2996 (1885), 416.

own notes in his edition of the *Mass* seem to make excuses for his dynamic markings: 'the few marks of expression...have been employed very sparingly, so that the breadth and grandeur of the work might not be impaired. They are indications of degrees of force rather than of expression.'[13]

The performing repertory must also have value to critics as well in Weber's formula, and important musical authorities from Burney at the end of the eighteenth century to Fétis nearly 100 years later wrote admiringly of him. Wesley sensed the value of Burney's authority in particular when he worked so hard to change Burney's opinion of Bach, and then crowed so jubilantly about it when he was successful.[14] The Bach performers of the early nineteenth century were also critics however. Persuasive in their skilled performances as well as in their words, they both played the music and spoke eloquently about it, whether with extravagant terminology, as seen in Wesley's letters to Jacob, or Mendelssohn's more reverent tones. Other critics such as Gauntlett (also a performer), Hogarth, and Holmes, worked with extraordinary diligence to promote Bach.

Weber's principle of 'Ideology' bears particular relevance for Bach reception. In this category, the moral dimension of music is emphasised, as a foil to its potentially nefarious function as a commercial enterprise: it is a force for good on the highest plane. In the nineteenth century (and before), certain music was felt to have a spiritual force, whether it was itself religious or not, and whether or not it was performed in a sacred or secular space. As a force for good, it was encouraged by civic authorities, whether that meant respected leaders in society who supported concerts by subscribing and attending (for example, the governing members of the Ancient organisations), or authoritative and cultured voices in

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[13] 'Editorial note', John Sebastian Bach, *Mass in B minor*, ed. A. Sullivan (London: Novello, 1908), n.p. See Chapter 3.
[14] Olleson, *Samuel Wesley*, 74-5.

newpapers and journals (Richard MacKenzie Bacon, for example, was a well-respected businessman and freeman of the city of Norfolk, who became the editor of the Norwich *Mercury*, and then founded the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review,* which he based on the *Edinburgh Review.* William Ayrton, for another example, was another well-respected and highly-cultured middle-class Briton, who was the editor of the *Harmonicon* from 1823-33).[15] Clergymen also carried civic and moral authority, and there were a number who wrote on the beneficial moral effects of music (for example, John Jebb, William A. Pearson, Charles Abbot Stevens, and late in the century, Hugh Reginald Haweis, all of whom have been cited earlier in this dissertation).

In the nineteenth century, Bach's music was a specific antidote to what many musicians regarded as shallowness and the 'frippery' of modern music.[16] Bach is continually portrayed as holding the highest values: his music was serious, intellectually rigorous, linked to the past, religious, and morally uplifting. The stories told about him portray him as a person with the best of Victorian family values; stalwart and steadfast in the pursuit of the best in music; self-effacing and modest, yet with his eye on the important higher things. The title alone of the article from *Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety* reveals these prized traits:

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[15] For details of Bacon's and Ayrton's lives and careers, and their involvement as editors with the *QMMR and* the *Harmonicon*, see Langley, 'The English Musical Journal', 194-400.

[16] The word frippery was frequently used in the mid-nineteenth press to disparage modern music. For example, from the *MW*, n.s. 4 (January 4 to May 23 1839), 21: 'Though the French taste for frippery in place of solid science, and the Italian instinct for rhythmical and easy melody, so overswept the European schools of instrumental music for a time, that even some among the family of the grand old fuguist did not escape the infection, and his "Well-tempered Clavier" was forgotten but for a time. The honest old organist was, after a period of usurpation and famine, sought for and found—like the Champions of the Swiss superstition—with grave patience, awaiting in his tomb the moment when he should come before us, vigorous, gigantic, and as undamaged by time as the youngest enthusiast who hastens to do him honour.' A second example may be seen in *Musical Reminiscences of an Old Amateur,* by Richard Edgcumbe (Second Earl of Edgcumbe) (London: W. Clarke, New Bond St., 1827), 132: 'The frippery and meretricious style of modern music is to the ear like tinsel to the eye, brilliant, striking, for a moment perhaps captivating, but it will be transitory and speedily lost in the fluctuations of taste…' Hogarth gives us a further example: 'The solemn and majestic sounds of British harmony gave place to the tinkling frippery of Italian sing-song.' from William Hogarth, Thomas Cook, Samuel Davenport, and John Trusler, *The Works of William Hogarth,* Vol. II, 'The Enraged Musician', (London: J. Sharpe, 1821).

'The Amenities and Modesty of True Genius'.[17] The fictional story in *The Argosy* called 'The Cantor's Triumph' also reveals a Bach who seems like the perfect family man: his huge family is made up of clamouring children always listening obediently and delightedly to their wise but authoritarian father, with a good-humoured, tolerant mother providing support in the background.[18]

In sum, the issues cited by William Weber as criteria for entry into the nineteenth-century integrated musical canon are particularly apt for Bach. Bach was a figure associated with moral authority: he was portrayed as a church musician, living in humble circumstances with his large family, enjoying the simple pleasures, eschewing commercial money-making musical culture, always with an eye on elevated musical forms. His music was more than mere entertainment, since it carried religious/spiritual meaning; but it was not linked to any particular English church denomination so it could appeal to all. With performances in both churches and concert halls, and with endorsement from both the Church of England and groups with non-conformist links, for example the Sacred Harmonic Society, it played a role in the 'democratising' of religion, and therefore could answer the need for a moral dimension without being tied down by the specifics of religious doctrine or class distinction. His music also played a role in civic life: in presenting the *St Matthew Passion* to the huge audiences at Westminster Abbey, the Albert Hall, and St Paul's Cathedral, and involving the audiences in the performance by having them sing along with the chorales, Bach's choral works began to join Handel's in the communal choral-music culture. Since he was not English, Bach's image in England was not bound by geographical or ethnic or other constraints, as he was in Germany where he was hailed (first, by Forkel in his biography) as a German national

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[17] Issue 10 (Saturday, December 16, 1837); see Chapter 2.
[18] *The Argosy: a magazine of tales, travels, essays, and poems* (May 1 1869), 392-98. Reprinted in the Appendix; see Chapter 2.

composer. Further, because he had never visited England, no one had known him personally as they had known Handel, and therefore Bach could not be criticised or faulted personally, and was able to make an easy transition to mythological or legendary status. The passage quoted from *The Analyst* (1837) in Chapter 2 is relevant here, even though it seems at first glance to be a contradiction: the author chastises Handel-lovers by saying that the only reason Handel was held in such high esteem by the English was because he actually lived in England. His characterisation of Handel however is of a beloved personality: 'He is *our* Handel, belonging, we fondly imagine, to none but ourselves.'[19] He is also able to take a somewhat disdainful tone: Handel stooped to popularity, and because of that 'lowered his claims to rank as a great artist'.[20] The author further disparages the authorities who have elevated Handel to such popularity, suggesting that those authorities are not worthy of being regarded as such; presumably the author himself is more authoritative, at least in his own mind. Bach, in contrast to Handel, possessed the 'essence of true genius' which left him no option but to try and reach a perfection which he knew he could never attain.[21] Handel is reduced to a beloved personality, and Bach raised to the status of tragic genius.

Finally, in a parallel with Palestrina's reception, Bach's vocal music could be seen as absolute music because it was in a foreign language.[22] When Wesley performed *Jesu meine Freude* (BWV 227) in 1809, he translated it from German into Latin, not English.[23] He evidently found the German language unpleasant, but he might have avoided its harshness just as easily by rendering the text in English. Perhaps by choosing Latin he removed any

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[19] 'Sebastian Bach and His Works', *The Analyst* 7 (June 1837), 3-4.
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] The argument that Palestrina's vocal works were like absolute music for those people who could not understand Latin was suggested by James Garratt, *Palestrina,* 54. Garratt was himself expanding an argument of Schleiermacher; see his footnote 76.
[23] Letter from Wesley to Jacob, c. 15 May 1809. See also Olleson, *Samuel Wesley: The Man and His Music*, 94.

specific connotations that the German had, and at the same time kept a distance from specific religious ideology by avoiding an English translation. It is perhaps relevant that not until the twentieth century was the *B Minor Mass* translated into English (see Chapter 3).

The fact that Bach was German however was not a problem, and indeed was in some ways an advantage. His German heritage carried weight in terms of seriousness, lofty outlook, moral rectitude, and Protestantism, as we have seen from the high regard in which German culture was held. With regard to Bach's choral music, if there were any doctrinal or cultural differences between the Lutheran and Anglican churches, they could be translated or paraphrased away, as was done with the early *St Matthew Passion* performances. Indeed, Bach was not an English composer, nor did his music exhibit specific characteristics that could be called 'English'; but the persona created by his proponents exemplified highly-valued ideals broadly important to English society.

Bach beyond Handel

Bach reception took on a unique cast in England, not only because of the English importance laid on historicism, antiquarianism, the Ancients and Moderns debate, and the English admiration for Germany, but also because of the important role Handel played in English musical life. Part of the delight in discovering the music of Bach in the early nineteenth century lay in the idea that more music like Handel's might be found. This is confirmed by passages such as the one quoted above from *The Analyst*, also by the altering of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* text to make it sound like *Messiah*, and even by calling the *Passion*

'Messiah'.[24] Later in the nineteenth century, Bach was to overtake Handel, at least in the minds of some critics.

By the late eighteenth century, Handel had been invested with a role far greater than just that of a wonderful composer. As several writers have shown, Handel played an important role in the establishment of the belief in England as the New Jerusalem, with the concomitant implications of national destiny that would go with such a conviction.[25] In his coronation anthems and oratorios, Handel reinforced the vision of England as the new Jerusalem, when he exploited the parallels between Britain and Israel. 'Zadok the Priest' provides a particularly vivid example of the kind of triumphalism at issue. The text is from the biblical account of the anointing of Solomon, and the anthem has been sung at every British coronation since it was written. James Day writes of its 'sheer dignity, occasioned by its massive, slow-moving harmonies in the opening chorus and the rollicking "Hallelujahs" in the closing one.' It is crucially effective in wrapping 'the people' into its embrace, by 'involving them not only implicitly but explicitly as well. It is public and monumental.'[26] Handel's oratorios (*Esther, Israel in Egypt, Judas Maccabeus,* and many more) all feature strong stories of virtuous people struggling with good and evil, in which the heroes of the Old Testament are celebrated and Israel is saved by divinely-inspired leaders. His vision—or that of his librettists— clearly is of an England that was to be saved by the Protestant, Hanoverian dynasty. This view of Britain as the New Jerusalem was 'an apocalyptic interpretation of history, in which Britain stood in for Israel, and its opponents were

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[24] For an example of this, see 'Sebastian Bach and His Works', *The Analyst* 7 (June 1837), 17.
[25] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1994); Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 108-26; James Day, *'Englishness' in Music : From Elizabethan Times to Elgar, Tippett and Britten* (London: Thames Publishing, 1999).
[26] Day, *'Englishness'*, 73.

represented as Satan's accomplices.'[27] Ruth Smith intensifies this argument by drawing specific connections between national events and Handel's oratorios. Her contextualization demonstrates that the oratorios were not just reflective of an overall national confidence, but rather were motivated by uncertainty and insecurity. In drawing connections between Joseph (in the oratorio *Joseph and his Brethren*) and the upheaval surrounding the downfall of the chief minister Robert Walpole (for example), Smith shows not only how strong and pervasive these analogies were, but also how accepted they were. The centrality in the eighteenth century of the practice of Biblical typology—the practice of arguing for the coherence of the Old and New Testaments by identifying a person or event in the Old Testament as a foreshadow of a person or event in the New—renders the substitution of Britain for Israel understandable.[28]

Handel was not the first person to draw parallels between the Israelites and Britain: Isaac Watts published his popular translations of the Psalms in the early eighteenth century, in which he did not hesitate to substitute 'Britain' for 'Israel'. Later, Blake's compelling image of the re-establishment of Jerusalem in England is further evidence of the view: 'I will not cease from Mental Fight/Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand/Till we have built Jerusalem/In England's green and pleasant land.'

With the layers of meaning intrinsic to Handel's oratorios and anthems, it is no surprise that by the late-eighteenth century, performing *Messiah* had become a political statement with triumphalist overtones. The 1784 Handel Commemoration in particular was a political event, even though it was not planned as one.[29] Whatever the specific reasons for these gatherings over the subsequent years, the powerful statement of national identity made

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[27] Colley, *Britons*, 32.
[28] Smith, *Handel's Oratorios.*
[29] William Weber, 'The 1784 Handel Commemoration as Political Ritual', *The Journal of British Studies* 28/1 (1989), 43-69.

by thousands of people united in a single cause, singing in the huge massed choruses, was heroic, awe-inspiring, and even perhaps terrifying.[30]

Handel's message was so powerful that it is no surprise that subsequent generations of composers were crippled by the attempt to replicate it. In trying to conjure Handelian sublimity, nineteenth-century English composers 'often mistook, alas, dull ponderousness for genuine weight and empty academic complexity for inspired craftsmanship.'[31] Bach however was not trying to compete with Handel, and the discovery of his music by nineteenth-century Britons revealed another composer whose music was substantial enough that it could carry all the weight of expectation, hope, and communal solidarity which up to now had been carried by Handel. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, that weight was considerable.

By the mid-nineteenth century Bach was beginning to surpass Handel as a composer, at least for some critics. In an article from 1839, a comparison between the two portrayed Handel in a dim light:

> If we compare the pianoforte music of Bach with the harpsichord lessons of Handel, we shall find how infinitely small a portion of obsolete cadences and passages is to be ascribed to Couperin in the works of the former, compared with the no less obsolete roulades and trills and chains of mechanical sequences which the author of 'Otho' and 'Ariadne' borrowed from his mates of the Italian Opera. Each is a patriarch in instrumental writing; but Handel's periwig is the most obtrusive, and whereas Bach never wearies by his manner of descanting upon and amplifying his themes, Handel's instrumental compositions are often spun to a tedious length by contrivances.[32]

We have noted earlier the disdain for commercialism and popularism. In the early 1850s *Fraser's Magazine* said that tastes had become more cultivated, and that audiences

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[30] For more on this topic, see Suzanne Aspden, '"Fam'd Handel Breathing, tho' Transformed to Stone": The Composer as Monument' in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55, No. 1 (Spring, 2002), 39-90; Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought*; Weber, 'The Eighteenth-Century Origins of the Musical Canon'; [same author], 'The 1784 Handel Commemoration as Political Ritual'; [same author], *The Rise of Musical Classics*; Jourdan, 'Mendelssohn in England'.

[31] Day, *'Englishness'*, 77.

[32] *MW* 11, n.s.4 (9 May 1839).

now merely needed to be 'docile' and let knowledgeable musicians lead the way:

> Handel said of the English public of his day, that good music alone was not enough for them—they could not enjoy it without a story. Even now, in public performances which entail expense, and which must be rendered popular to pay, it is found that a well-arranged libretto is of the highest importance. But cultivation has by this time advanced beyond a tune and a story: certainly among large communities of performing musicians, scattered over the face of the country, who are self-supporting and independent of the favour of audiences. It is the part of musicians to lead the way, and of audiences meanwhile to be docile, not obstructive and opinionated.[33]

Parry echoed these views in his writing, including the disdain for popularism. He also portrayed Bach in a better light than Handel, and added a social/hierarchical dimension to Bach reception. In Chapter 2 it was pointed out that Parry, in his Bach biography, positioned Bach as belonging to a 'higher order'. In identifying 'mechanics and everyday workmen' as 'lower order' he is not only describing what he sees as an evolutionary development, but also reflecting the stratification of the society of which he himself was a member. Further, his hierarchical structure reflects a post-Darwinian cultural hegemony where the system of values and mores of one (higher) class manipulate that of the others. Members of the higher order were 'gifted with the highest faculties and perception of the widest range', and were responsible for leading the way for the rest.[34] These gifts were innate, and not bestowed by reason of social standing. Parry further defines Bach by comparing him to Handel in a binary opposition: while Handel wrote 'for a large public not much concerned with subtleties of detail', Bach wrote

> for a small circle of attentive and earnest people, who will dwell on details at close quarters...The largeness of his conceptions came from innate promptings rather than from external influences; and hence the largeness of conception was not vitiated, as is so frequently the case with men who are in personal contact with large audiences, by the histrionic temptations; by the impulse to make a show on a large scale with any means that come to hand; by the endeavour to induce an audience to believe paste-board to be mountains and mere exuberance

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[33] 'Progress of the English Choir', *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 44/254 (December 1851), 609-18.
[34] Parry, *Bach*, 23.

of rhetoric the profound wisdom of the inspired prophet.[35]

Bach strove in humble circumstances, while Handel was surrounded from the very beginning by the finest musicians and the best advantages. In this vaguely unflattering (to Handel) comparison, Parry imbues Bach with highly-esteemed traits.[36] He is also betraying his own views about class consciousness and social and artistic conscience, and his disdain for the empty culture of the aristocracy.[37] The very fact that so little was known about Bach's own past is turned by Parry to advantage: such details are a 'distraction',[38] and their absence in Bach's case indicate that his achievements were sufficient on their own, 'of the kind that appeals to the higher type of mind...The human mind seeks for the proofs of human origin in the works themselves and not in the accessories. The lesser minds are baulked, but those who are capable of communion with the highest manifestations of the human spirit are fortified.'[39] The few stories he related about Bach reinforce the characteristics which forge a person of a higher order: the persistence and doggedness of a young boy copying music by candlelight week after week; the recognition on the part of a young boy that he can 'gain insight into the methods and principles of art in order to apply them to the higher purposes which his finer insight and more richly endowed disposition suggested.'[40] Parry thus portrayed Bach as someone who was great almost in spite of himself: unlike the apparently self-aggrandizing Handel, Bach was self-effacing and worked for greater reward. He achieved greatness because of the convergences of circumstances, personality traits,

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[35] *Ibid*, 24.
[36] Parry does not always describe Handel in these terms: in the *Art of Music*, for example, he compares their writing styles in equally favourable, though very different terms. See *Art of Music*, p. 180ff.
[37] See Dibble, 'Parry as Historiographer', 40.
[38] Parry, *John Sebastian Bach*, 21.
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] *Ibid*, 31.

historical narrative, and even racial (Teutonic) superiority.[41] By Parry's description, Bach was humble, modest, persistent, intelligent, inordinately talented. He could not help being great; but he was selfless enough to do the best he could to live up to his gifts and role in the evolutionary continuum. Those who appreciated him were discerning, intelligent, unimpressed by outward trappings and showmanship, and able to grasp profound ideas. These gifts of a higher order, and the ability of others to discern them, were not related to class.

Parry's views at the end of the nineteenth century were evident earlier in attitudes toward Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn was not only charming, discerning, and talented, but also wealthy and high-born, and was highly feted for these qualities in England during his lifetime. He travelled in elevated social circles and received the approbation of the highest classes up to and including the Queen and Prince Consort. His *Musical Times* obituary, quoted extensively in Chapter 2, amply illustrates the attitude of the English toward his persona: 'Here was no uncouth, obscure man – no vulgar enthusiast from the plough, opposing the opinions of elegant society – but a gentleman as cultivated in mind, as polished in manners, as fashionably caressed [*sic*], and fortunate as could be desired.'[42] Mendelssohn was a delightful, charming, and self-effacing guest at elegant parties, and this, combined with his unmatchable talent, was irresistible. (Handel too was feted in the highest realms of society even though he does not appear to have courted society to the degree that Mendelssohn did; nor was he as delightfully personable.)[43] In considering the actual social

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[41] This last criteria, perhaps troublesome to the modern reader, is a direct result of Spencer's views on race and culture. See Dibble, 'Parry as Historiographer', 49.

[42] 'The Late Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular,* 2, No.44 (1848), 153-59.

[43] For a focussed discussion of Handel and London society, see William Weber, 'Handel's London--political, social, and intellectual contexts', in *The Cambridge Companion to Handel*, ed. Donald Burrows (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

standing of Mendelssohn in nineteenth-century England, and comparing his most-admired traits with those Parry attributes to Bach, it is plain that being accepted as a great musician in nineteenth-century England was tightly wrapped up with qualities that would earn standing as a gentleman.

Bach as Centrepiece for the Sublime

In Chapter 1 I explored the background of the sublime as described by Burke, Crotch, and others. In the nineteenth century reaching for the sublime included striving for moral betterment and trying to achieve a level of spiritual or religious experience. Using one of Burke's formulas, it was often felt that these things could be achieved by emphasising vastness which served to dwarf a single human being.[44] Many British cities sought to inspire sublimity in their massive Town Halls, factories, statues, and rail stations. In these and other expressions of physical space, the quality of immense size that makes a person feel tiny in comparison was an overriding feature: examples are seen in the Albert Hall, the Albert Memorial, the Crystal Palace, and other Victorian building projects.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century engravings of interiors of churches and cathedrals also often emphasise this sense of space: the perspective is frequently skewed to make the interiors seem even more vast than they really are, so that humans are portrayed as tiny dots within a cavernous universe. Musically, we see this in in the huge choruses that gathered to sing *Messiah* and other Handel works, and, later, in the forces assembled to sing the *St Matthew Passion* in St Paul's, Westminster Abbey, the Albert Hall, and other halls and

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[44] See Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 66.

churches.[45]

There were other ways of achieving sublimity besides emphasising vastness. In the church, where the object was to raise the tone of worship (see Chapter 1), sublimity could be invoked by anything that quieted the mind and raised the eyes and spirit upward. Fugues, especially in the serious *stile antico*, were especially effective. Sublimity could be similarly used to invoke the sacred in secular situations, and the boundaries between sacred and secular were easily and frequently crossed in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A concert in a Town Hall could easily be a religious experience via the sublime, and music in church could similarly take on concert performance overtones. As noted in Chapter 1, concert programmes routinely contained sacred and secular works, plus hymns. In a review of a hymn sung at the 1823 York festival, a trumpet strikes a note of 'terror', or sublimity.[46] In 1835, Abraham Mendelssohn himself said in a letter to Felix (quoted in Chapter 4), 'Your aphorism that every room in which Sebastian Bach is sung is transformed into a church, I consider particularly appropriate.'[47] Sometimes services were held in a concert hall: we read a review of a service of worship held on the first morning of the 1825 Birmingham Festival, where the organ and trombones accompanied voices in chants. The music was 'sublime…we have rarely if ever been so rapt by the power of music exalting the worship of the Supreme Being.'[48] Other writing about Bach from the nineteenth century makes a subtler connection between Bach and the Divine: Parry's biography of Bach (perhaps unwittingly) conveys the

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[45] Monumentalism has much in common with the sublime, but the two are not always in perfect alignment. Sublimity does not always mean huge, and as the meaning of the word changes throughout the nineteenth century, we discover that it can also be found in supreme quietude in a church, for example. The impulse for sublimity might often result in monumentalism, but monumentalism does not always equate with sublimity. For a discussion of monumentality, see Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[46] Temperley, *Parish Church*, 245.

[47] Letter of 10 March 1835, from *Felix Mendelssohn: Letters,* ed. G. Selden-Goth.

[48] *QMMR* 8 (1826), 286.

impression of sacred scripture: his frequent usage of short declarative sentences, his use of words like 'manifest', and his syntax (for example, beginning sentences with conjunctions 'and' and 'but', and avoiding people as the subjects of sentences) cause his text to sound vaguely biblical or at least epic. The following paragraph (quoted in an earlier chapter) serves as illustration:

> But circumstances had combined to prevent their expressing themselves fully in music. For a time the call for deeds was more urgent than for words. And when the terrible wars, in which the old Church endeavoured to suppress the impulse to break away from her domination, wore themselves out and the turmoil died down, great manifestations of art followed, which presented themselves, not in the countries or among people who had submitted or had been coerced into acquiescing in the old order of things, but among those who had established their right to liberty of thought and to the exercise of those kinds of religion which were more consonant with the progress of enlightenment and complete spiritual sincerity.[49]

Genius and the sublime were closely linked: Longinus wrote that knowledge and skill may be enough to create beauty, but genius, which cannot be taught, must be present to transport the beauty to sublimity.[50] Writings on Bach in the nineteenth century frequently make explicit the link of his music with the concepts of genius and the sublime, and one example here will supplement those already given in earlier chapters (chapters 2 and 4): an 1830 review of the full score and piano reduction of the *Matthäus-Passion* in Berlin (reprinted in translation from an unidentified journal in Berlin, in the English journal *The Harmonicon*) emphasises the revelation of the 'genius' Bach in the humblest of circumstances:

> Genius has always something to surprise and astonish; its history is composed of inexplicable prodigies; it confounds all the calculations of sober reason, anticipates the march of time, and attains by intuition what mediocrity is forced to arrive at by painful study. In the example before us, we have a fresh proof of the power of its conceptions--nay, more, a most miraculous display of its power. A man who passed his whole life in the inconsiderable towns of Germany; who traveled for

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[49] Parry, *Bach*, 4.
[50] *Longinus,* tr. T.R.R. Stebbing.

> the sole purpose of listening to organists, in the hope to find models, and who could meet with none but performers whom his native talent had already left far behind in the race of excellence; who never dreamed of making a fortune, and lived happy in his mediocrity; who had a numerous family, whose musical education formed the principal occupation of his life, while the rest of his time was consumed in inconsiderable occupations, which yielded very trifling advantages; -- this man, I say, in a position so little favourable to the development of talent, alone, without master or advisor, was not only the most able performer on the organ and harpsichord that ever existed, or perhaps will ever exist, but succeeded, by the publication even of a small portion of his instrumental compositions, in exciting the enthusiastic admiration of all Europe, and in attaining the front rank among the greatest musicians of Germany. Need we add the name to the portrait, and say that this man was Sebastian Bach?[51]

In its role of expressing citizenship and communal identity, the oratorio performance itself becomes a sublime enterprise. We have seen already that Handel's music was the first to be called sublime, and that over the course of the nineteenth century the performance of his oratorios became political statements, enfranchising new sections of society in the huge choruses, and promoting the union of art, Protestantism, and nationhood. 'Monster' performances of Messiah were 'pleasurable Oases of Wonder, ecstasy, and religious awe combined.'[52]

On the other side of the equation, solo organ concerts in churches began to be given in the early nineteenth century in England for the first time, when thousands turned out to hear Benjamin Jacob and Samuel Wesley play Bach in the Surrey Chapel. Mendelssohn's closing voluntaries at St. Paul's took on the aura of a recital in their attraction of huge audiences who would not be 'played out' (as the vergers complained), and his organ sonatas—concert pieces—also blurred the boundaries of sacred and secular by incorporating chorale tunes. Mendelssohn not only played Bach organ works in churches, but also took his music into the public concert halls—Birmingham Town Hall, Exeter Hall, Hanover Square Rooms. Paul Jourdan notes that 'in creating a fluidity between the two spaces (church

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[51] *Harmonicon* (1830), 420.
[52] 'The Handel Festival', *MW* 35/25 (20 June 1857), 388-91.

and concert hall), the one public and commercial, and the other ecclesiastical and sacred, Mendelssohn reinforced the spiritual dimension of the concert hall, co-opting the sacred tone for it, but devoid of the doctrinal encumbrances'.[53] The contemporary press also refers to 'Mendelssohn's blurring of public and sacred spaces'.[54]

It was noted in Chapter 1 that comparisons to Handel were many and (mostly) favourable from the beginning of the nineteenth century. For example, Crotch, quoting Forkel, said, 'Handel may be preferred, because his vocal music and choruses are superior to Bach's, and for the vast variety of his excellence; while for science and elevation of style (particularly in the composition of fugues), for the power of abstracting the mind from all surrounding objects, and so relieving it from care and sorrow itself, Bach is unrivalled.'[55] Better music education was at least partly responsible for the adoption of Bach as Handel's successor: in the 1851 *Fraser's* magazine cited earlier, Handel is shown to have prepared the way for Bach, since we now live in 'a more advanced age, when music, having become imbued through early training, and as part of general education, shall have prepared the ear of audiences for the highest efforts of the art.' Inevitably, Bach occasionally began to be viewed as superior to Handel. The reasons given are not always strictly musical. In comparison with Bach's texts, Handel's are 'trivial and unmeaning'. The writer then goes further: 'Handel's advantage over Bach is in the popularity of a genius cultivated in every clime of Europe; Bach's strength was derived from his meditative loneliness…Bach's music begins and ends with itself…Bach addresses the more advanced musician…'[56] Handel wrote

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[53] Jourdan, 'Mendelssohn in England', 57. It should be noted that organ concerts in churches were extremely rare before 1850, which is one of the reasons why the Jacob-Wesley and Mendelssohn performances were so celebrated. Church concerts were usually restricted to the openings of new organs, and even then the authorities often insisted on oratorio performances or concerts of sacred music, to ensure there was no question of the event turning into entertainment. (Nicholas Thistlethwaite, by personal communication).

[54] Birmingham *Gazette* (2 Oct 1837).

[55] Crotch, *Substance*, 119.

[56] *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 43 (1851), 590.

for popularity; Bach for posterity and the future. If Handel was sublime because of the way he broke 'the rules of strict and thoroughly developed counterpoint and freedom of modulation', because of his 'bold strokes' and 'daring flights', and his 'truly great and heroic style',[57] Bach was sublime because of his amazingly complex and perfect counterpoint, which was less about the terrifying and more about the Divine. In a review of the *St Matthew Passion* performance in Exeter Hall on 6 April 1870, with Barnby conducting, the writer said, 'the artists became priests in a faith which their God-like nature enabled them to glorify and ennoble.' He refers to the 'sublimity of the work' in contrast to the 'sensation' school of composition, 'to which modern music is rapidly drifting.'[58]

It is easy to see how Bach's music would have resonated with energetic nineteenth-century musicians and clergy who had a vision for improving culture and society, given these criteria. Specific characteristics of his music—as well as of his personality and life— struck strong chords with these people, and in turn, the wider public. The fact that he was Protestant was important: England, with Germany, were the two largest bastions of Protestantism in Europe. His many similarities to Handel (for example, they shared the same birth year and native country, and both composed long sacred choral works) were certainly an advantage. The complexity of his music appealed to musicians who believed that difficult music was worth striving to understand, and his fugues, whether for the organ or choir, were especially popular.

Bach and Handel were not the only composers whose music was described as sublime in the early nineteenth century: Beethoven is the other name whose works frequently inspired the word. In the hands of E.T.A. Hoffmann, the Beethoven sublime sounds quite different from that evoked by Bach, whose works are described as sublime because of their

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[57] Johnson, '"Giant Handel", 518-19. See Chapter 1.
[58] *MT* 14/327 (1 May 1870), 459.

'science and elevation of style (particularly in the composition of fugues), for the power of abstracting the mind from all surrounding objects, and so relieving it from care and sorrow itself', as seen in the above quote from Crotch, quoting Forkel. In the following passage, Hoffmann emphasized the huge, incomprehensible, and overwhelming nature of Beethoven's music:

> Beethoven's instrumental music…opens to us the realm of the gigantic and unfathomable. Glowing rays of light shoot through the dark night of this realm, and we see gigantic shadows swaying back and forth, encircling us closer and closer, destroying us, but not the pain of infinite longing in which every delight, rising up in joyful voices, sinks and drowns, and only in this pain, consuming love, hope, joy, but not destroying it and aiming at bursting our chests with its unison of all passions, do we live on and are we rapturous seers of the realm of spirits![59]

Hoffmann was not only a composer and writer about music who valued Beethoven above all other composers, but also an author of fantasy and horror, and thus his descriptions of Beethoven are especially evocative. Nonetheless, the above quotations illustrate the differences between the two sublime ideals: the Beethoven sublime seems physically overpowering and even at times harrowing, while Bach's music was more cerebral and benignly transcendent. That indefatigable promoter of Bach, Henry John Gauntlett, similarly differentiates between the sublime of Beethoven and that of Bach. He describes Beethoven's style as encompassing best all the elements which Crotch had identified as hallmarks of the sublime: simplicity, contrast, power, obscurity, uncertainty, and infinity. Bach's music in contrast 'demonstrated consummate skill in counterpoint… It sounds on the ear like a disembodied spirit. The highest order of the sublime is found in those compositions which disclose the greatest development of thought and imagination in the use of the most profound

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[59] *Musikalische Novellen und Aufsätze von E.T.A. Hoffmann,* trans. Ingrid Schwaegermann (Leipzig, Insel-Bücherei) <http://www.raptusassociation.org/hoffmann_e.html> (accessed 30 December 2009).

modulations, or remote dissonances.'[60]

Finally, Bach's keyboard music—especially the fugues—was seen as the ideal style for church music from the 1830s. The attraction in particular of the composer's *stile antico* fugues is confirmed when one looks at the favourite fugues of Wesley, Horn, Crotch, and Benjamin Jacob. The fugues played most from the *WTC* by these musicians were indeed in this style. Programmes featuring Benjamin Jacob and William Crotch on the organ in the Surrey Chapel from 1810, 1812, and 1814 for example show that all three fugues which could be described as in this style from the *WTC II* were played at least once.[61] The popularity of another *stile antico* fugue, the E-flat organ fugue ('St. Anne', BWV 552ii) was also striking, as has been discussed.

Parry also saw the Bach organ fugue as one of the highest points of musical art, and explains it rationally as the end result of a steady forward march of progress. In his book *The Art of Music* (1893), discussed in Chapters 2 and 4, he describes contrapuntal music, and especially the fugue, as the highest point of development for instrumental music derived from vocal models. Characteristic of his portrayal of the development of music, Parry traces the fugue in a straight line from its origin in vocal music where the primacy of the text superseded the melodic interest of the lines, on to the increasing importance of coherence and interest of subject matter when the choral works were transcribed to instrumental media, to the increasing interest of theorists who then created rules for fugal writing, to the point finally where the art was brought to a high point just as Bach was entering the picture.

Because of the association of the organ with sacred music, the organ was the focus, at least

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[60] Gauntlett gives a number of examples of this sort of music, beginning with Bach, but also including Mozart, Beethoven, and S.S. Wesley. *MW* 1(1836) at 56-57.

[61] Preludes and Fugues in E (BWV 878—twice); E-flat (BWV 876—once); B (BWV 892—once). The E Major fugue was hailed by Crotch as 'the finest in all' (Kassler, *English Bach Awakening*, 10). Other preludes and fugues played in these programmes were D, C, and F−sharp, all from *WTC* II.

initially, for the first fugal compositions. Parry then picks up the organ thread, showing how that, too, reached a high point at the convergence of fugue and Bach. In Parry's view, the organ was an instrument

> capable of exercising great emotional effect upon human beings, partly through its long association with feelings which are most deeply rooted in human nature, and partly through the magnificent volume of continuous sound that it is capable of producing…The effect of the most successful works written for it depends in great measure on the manner in which the crises of voluminous sound are managed. The fugue form happens to be the most perfect contrivance for the attainment of these ends.[62]

Bach is the master who understands how to use the organ's best qualities to fullest advantage: 'A great master like Bach is instinctively aware that appeals to sensation must be accompanied by proportionate appeals to higher faculties…The glory of Bach's management of such things is that the intrinsic interest of the music itself is always in proportion to the power and volume of the actual sound.' All organ music before Bach was preparation for the master, and all organ music after Bach 'is but the pale shadow of his splendid conceptions.'[63]

The Ecclesiologists, that group following on the Oxford Movement which focused on applying the lessons of the Tractarians to liturgy, church decoration, and architecture, promoted a 'severe and colourless style of church music.'[64] Hogarth relates these criteria to Bach's music in this mid-nineteenth-century passage:

> All is grave and elevated. The pure ecclesiastical style ought to be kept separate from every other. The music we hear in our churches ought to resemble the edifices themselves, in massive simplicity of proportions, and solemnity of character. It is by a reform in this respect—by introducing, in an English dress, the sublime works of Sebastian Bach that the general taste for ecclesiastical music in this country would be purified and exalted.[65]

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[62] Parry, *Art of Music*, 196-7.
[63] *Ibid*, 199.
[64] W. E. Dickson, *Fifty years of church music* (Ely: T.A. Hills and Son, 1894), 42.
[65] George Hogarth, *Musical history, biography, and criticism : being a general survey of music, from the earliest period to the present time* (London: J.W. Parker, 1835) as quoted in Godman, Stanley, 'Bach's Music in England: 1835–1840', *Monthly Musical Record* 83, no. 944 (Feb. 1953), 32–39.

Late in the nineteenth century Heathcote Statham wrote in his book *My Thoughts on Music and Musicians* of the virtue of inexpressiveness in church music: the 'victory' of the intellect over the 'more partial and poignant human emotions'…'The glory of an organ fugue is above nature—it is an appeal to the perception of metaphysical rather than physical beauty.'[66] (This sentiment is echoed in 'Master Hughes of Saxe-Gotha' and in 'Abt Vogler' by Robert Browning: Browning mentions the divine order of harmony, and uses phrases and metaphors such as 'this loftiest type of impersonal music' and a 'palace of sound'.) Statham continues,

> This communion with the metaphysical may be a fancy only to be fully understood by those who have known what it is to commune alone with Bach's organ fugues at the keyboard of a grand organ in a great empty church or hall, the one light at the organ intensifying the mystery and gloom of the interior, the great pipes towering overhead into the darkness, and the empty spaces of the building echoing the thunder of the pedal notes, as of mighty voices singing in an unknown tongue.[67]

Bach's fugues were not so much entertaining as they were edifying, and as the century went on lent themselves to performances that enhanced their ability to inspire sublimity: larger organs were designed and built with Bach organ works in mind, and organists learned to take advantage of the new design and powerful technology.

The Organ as Icon

Since their earliest appearance in Europe, organs have been more than just musical instruments. Until the nineteenth century they were one of the loudest and most complex

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[66] Heathcote Statham, *My Thoughts on Music and Musicians* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1892), 188.
[67] *Ibid.*

inventions devised by man, and as such were icons of technology, power, and wealth. As instruments primarily located in churches, they have long been identified with religion as well. This short passage from John Latrobe in 1831 shows that the organ in church, with its ability to evoke the sublime through its sound and music, was a powerful force:

> A large and powerful organ in the hands of a master, in one of his best moments of musical inspiration, is inferior to no source of the sublime in absorbing the imagination. The rush and concourse of sound has been not inaptly compared to the full and even volume of a mighty river, flowing onwards, wave after wave, occasionally dashing against some rock, till sweeping with momently increasing vehemence to the brow of a precipice, it rushes down, a wide-spreading and overwhelming flood.[68]

In the nineteenth century, the increase in population and wealth drove technological advancement of all kinds, including organs. Organs continued to reflect the values of society: as showcases for wealth, power, and confidence, they grew larger and louder; and as demonstrations of ingenuity and technology they became increasingly complex, allowing one player to be in charge of vast resources. To be sure, some of the changes were driven by practical necessity, for accompanying the ever-larger oratorio choirs and playing orchestral transcriptions in public concerts, but other developments were driven by the delight in exploring technological solutions for problems in tuning, to name one (the Hawkes-Eliot Patent mechanism is an example).[69] The Apollonicon, discussed in Chapter 4, was another organ whose chief delight was in its clever technology. Modern overtures played on the barrel mechanism of this instrument were presented as 'complex, scientific, challenging music, executed with a precision and accuracy rarely achieved in live performances at the time'.[70] Audiences were drawn 'by the spectacular scale, novelty and technical wizardry of

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[68] Latrobe, *The Music of the Church Considered in Its Various Branches*, 349ff. This quote, and more, is lifted in 1865 by James Alexander Hamilton and Joseph Warren, *Catechism of the Organ* 4th edn. (London, 1865).
[69] Philip Olleson, 'The Perfection of Harmony itself': the William Hawkes Patent Organ and its temperament', *JBIOS* 21 (1997), 108-28.
[70] Cowgill, 'Apollonicon', 222.

the organ itself.'[71] Ultimately however, the clash of values and ideology between the commercial venture of the Apollonicon and the classical, lofty music of Bach and others perhaps led to its demise. Cowgill quotes a telling passage from *The Times* in 1827: 'We should mightily like to hear the Apollonicon in a cathedral. The effect would be magnificent. Its powers are too mighty for the extent of the theatre in which it is at present exhibited.'[72]

Writing about the organ from the first half of the nineteenth century tended to focus on the technological aspects of the instrument, especially calling for the reform of church music via larger instruments with pedals. About mid-century a change becomes noticeable. Reviews of organ music and new organs continued, of course; but essays begin to appear where the organ is presented as a symbol of morality, religion, and life uplifted, even when located in a secular hall. A description of what an organ could do for a community is expressed in this article from 1853, about the importance of the new instrument in the Glasgow Town Hall:

> We rejoice that the organ may be the means, along with other things, of aiding the cause of social improvement. Music in itself cannot do anything to elevate the people any more than it can demoralize them… In itself it is neither good nor bad, but, by association, it may be made to subserve the cause of truth, it may be made to awaken the imagination—to inspire great and heroic deeds—to advance the cause of virtue and morality, and in this way we hope the organ will become a powerful agent in helping to rescue numbers of the debased and vile from their habits of wretchedness and immorality.[73]

Town Halls and the organs within were prominent public symbols of the wealth, power, sophistication, and moral rectitude of the communities in which they stood. During the Lenten season, when concerts of secular works were frowned upon, they were turned into quasi-sacred spaces where sacred oratorios and other works could be performed to

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[71] Cowgill, 222.
[72] *The Times*, 24 July1827.
[73] *MW* 31/44 (29 Oct.1853), 691.

reverent audiences. Thus Town Hall organs had a purpose greater than mere entertainment: they offered cultural and spiritual opportunities to people from all walks of life and corners of society.

The lending of a sacred aura to secular spaces such as Town Halls was not a new role for the organ. In the mid-seventeenth century during the English Civil War, organs were removed from churches as symbols of popery, and given a secular/domestic role in houses and other secular public gathering places.[74] (Oliver Cromwell himself famously removed the Dallam organ from Magdalen College Chapel, taking it to Hampton Court Palace for his own use, where according to legend it was played by John Milton.) Indeed, this was the only way the organ was able to survive in England during the Commonwealth period, and meant that the mixed role of the instrument in the nineteenth century had an antecedent that was perhaps significant.

The extraordinary energy and ingenuity that went into making the organ more sophisticated as well as easier to play also allowed it to become an impressive power: loud, deep and booming, able to fill a huge building and make it tremble, controlled by a single man, it was an instrument that spoke directly to the Victorian love of sensation. Playing the organ was an undeniable exercise of power: a single man could have at his fingertips control over the widest range of musical sounds, the widest variety and quality of sound, and the loudest sounds of any instrument. The anonymous writer in *Fraser's magazine* (most likely Holmes) in 1851 recognized this and connected it to Bach:

> [Bach] first, with the profound bass of thirty-two feet pedals, enabled a single man to surpass the most potent orchestra, and to command the whole realm of sound. What joy that power has given ere now to the German musician shut up with his organ in some vast and gloomy minster, can scarcely be conceived. Cold, solitude, and the images of death which surround him while practicing, are nothing in comparison with his object of directing the homage of thousands of hearers towards the majesty and

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[74] See Nicholas Temperley, et al. "London (i)." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/16904pg5> (accessed November 21, 2011).

> sublimity of the art. For this acquirement, the poorest men have given away their substance; and even the daily toil of practice has been sweetened by that sense of improvement which is perhaps the highest satisfaction in life.[75]

Over the centuries the organ has had a long association with the church, and in the nineteenth century that association became stronger than ever. (This does not contradict the notion that the organ became a prominent part of the Victorian Town Hall: indeed, the idea of blurring boundaries between sacred and secular was all the more compelling precisely because organs were so strongly associated with churches.) The veneration of Milton in the late-eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, coupled with Edmund Burke's own view of Milton as the perfect expression of sublimity seemed to confirm that the organ was the perfect instrument to express sublimity in the church.[76] William Mason, writing in 1795, was another writer who used Milton as endorsement for the suitability of the organ in church. He regarded Milton as the greatest authority on organs, and wrote, 'The pealing organ, in Milton's time and previous to it, was properly, what it ought ever to have been, a sacred Instrument, ordained almost exclusively to blow "To the full voic'd choir below/in Service high, and Anthem clear…"'[77] For Mason, fugues were the best kind of ecclesiastical music, and he again quotes Milton to bolster his opinion: 'the resonant fugue' is the 'dance of angels about the sacred hill' (Paradise Lost Bk. V, 620-627).

In 1854 a long two-part article by Leigh Hunt ran in the *Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, entitled 'An Organ in the House'.[78] Hunt's article presents the organ as an ideology rather than a mere musical instrument, and as such, a means for bringing the

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[75] *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 44 (December 1851), 614.
[76] For a discussion of Burke and his inclusion of Milton in the Sublime, see Bill Beckley (ed.), *Sticky Sublime* (New York: Allworth Press, 2001), 63.
[77] William Mason, *Essays, Historical and Critical, on English Church Music* (York, 1795). Mason was Precentor of York.
[78] *MT* 6/130 (1 Sept.1854), 159-162 (Pt. 1); and *MT* 6/133 (15 Nov. 1854), 207-210 (Pt. 2).

loftiness, seriousness, and holiness of the church into the home. Not only is it capable of inspiring the sublime, it is itself a 'divine instrument.' Hunt invokes Milton, Aristotle, Bacon, Dante, Chaucer, and even Shakespeare in his long and rambling exposition, (though he can find only a short allusion to an organ in *The Tempest*—but 'how grandly Shakespeare would have written about the organ!'). That such a respected author wrote so extensively extolling the organ, and that his article was featured as the lead piece in one of the most prominent music journals, is unimaginable today.

Another view of the organ as ideology is in its image as medium for a divine message, through the mad genius improviser, who functions almost as a conduit through which the Divine speaks. The image of the lone improviser, eyes cast heavenward, taking inspiration from some unseen divine source, is a theme with a certain frequency in nineteenth-century literature. Browning's famous poem *Abt Vogler* is but one example:

> But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
> Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!
> And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
> That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.
> Consider it well: each tone of our scale in itself is nought;
> It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said:
> Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my thought:
> And, there! Ye have heard and seen: consider and bow the head!
> (from *Abt Vogler*, Robert Browning, verse VII)

Many organ recitals in the late nineteenth century included an improvisation of a picnic interrupted by a thunderstorm or other dramatic scenario, something for which in fact Vogler was particularly celebrated.[79] It was not only the capability for colour, variety and dynamic range that the organ was particularly suited: through its association with the church, the organ was connected with the divine in a way that no other instrument was. (It is true that Paganini on the violin and Liszt on the piano both were portrayed as diabolical geniuses; but

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[79] Floyd K. Grave and Margaret G. Grave, *In Praise of Harmony: The Teachings of Abbé Georg Joseph Vogler* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987). See Chapter 6 for accounts of Vogler's organ improvisations.

organists with this 'gift' far outnumbered them.) The idea of the half-aware, ecstatic state of the creating artist as he received divine inspiration was well-suited to those who played the organ.

From Sublime to Sensational

Once the sublime was connected explicitly with music by Crotch and the other writers discussed in chapter 1, it was natural to use those specific definitions as prescriptions in how to induce the sublime in the listener through music. Eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century English writing on the sublime were enquiries not only in what the sublime was, but also what happened when it was encountered. When Burke, Crotch, and other writers described what happened when, for example, a very loud sound was suddenly made—'excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror'[80]— the next step was obviously to try and inspire the overpowering of the soul by making an excessively loud sound. In this way the sublime was easily confused with sensation.[81] If sitting in a cathedral inspires a feeling of awe because of its overwhelming size, then a bigger cathedral will be even more inspirational. With their eyes opened to the possibilities of the large German-style organs, plus the insatiable zest for innovative engineering, the organ was readily able to provide sublime sensations. Nicholas Thistlethwaite maintains that the 'craving for sensation led to extremes of tonality, pitch, dynamic, especially when two extremes could be contrasted.'[82] Sudden changes of dynamic were made possible easily at the organ by the application of ingenious Victorian technology:

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[80] Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry,* 75. See Chapter 1.
[81] See Matthew Sweet, *Inventing the Victorians* (London: Faber, 2001), for discussion about the particular Victorian love for sensation and sensationalism.
[82] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 88.

W.T. Best is said to have caused a sound which 'seemed to shake the hall like an earthquake shock' when he played the middle section of the Bach Fantasia in G (*Pièce d'Orgue*) BWV 572 rather quietly on 16- and 8-foot Diapasons only, then played the last c-sharp diminished-seventh chord suddenly fortissimo, full organ—something which only could have been possible with some kind of combination system which would have made many stops come on suddenly at the touch of a button.[83] The matter of deep pedal notes making the pews shake has already been mentioned. Thistlethwaite also asserts that by the time Crotch was giving his talks on the Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Ornamental, his words were already old-fashioned and out-of-date:[84] the sublime was already being subsumed by sensation in the 1830s. Ponderousness was mistaken for weight, massiveness for sublimity.

It was not long before the church took over Crotch's prescription for sublimity in music, and co-opted it in a desire to inspire congregants. It became firmly codified as a style. If certain rules were followed, the sublime could be induced in the church, and it became a means for manipulating behaviour. By the 1840s, the term 'sublime style' was institutionalised to the extent that 'Define the Sublime Style' was used as a question in an exam paper at St Mark's, Chelsea.[85] For the most part, the church seemed to remove the horrific element from the sublime style, and retained only what might be termed the beatific: it became more benign and less shocking. Beauty was no longer antithetical to the sublime: it was irrelevant. With regard to Bach, a tamer sublime can be seen in Macfarren's article on the new English edition of the *St Matthew Passion*: the sweetness and beauty of the subject is emphasized. 'The loveliness of the divine character'; 'its resistless attraction to all men';

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[83] Henry Heathcote Statham, *My Thoughts on Music and Musicians* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1892).
[84] Thistlethwaite, *Victorian Organ*, 88ff.
[85] Rainbow, *Choral Revival*, 61. St Mark's College, Chelsea, was founded in 1841 as a teacher-training institute for church schools. Under the leadership of Thomas Helmore (1811-90), it became famous for its church music, and in particular the a cappella singing in its religious services.

and its 'exquisite beauty of holiness' are the terms used to contrast the way the late-nineteenth-century Anglican differed in his thinking from the mid-eighteenth-century German Lutheran.[86] It becomes easier to understand why the English translation of the Passion could end with 'Easter joy'.[87] By the end of the century, the terrifying aspect of the concept of the sublime had receded, and the word was on its way to a milder meaning of something that is very, very good.

While for church the horrific element was removed from the sublime, the other side of the coin may perhaps be seen in the removal of the sense of awe and reverence from the horrific and terrifying, leaving things which were merely sensational, such as roller coasters, freak shows, and the like. Either way, once people had one experience with a sublime sensation, it was natural to want it again, and progressively higher degrees of the given catalyst were necessary. Larger buildings, louder organs, deeper pedal notes, cleverer gadgetry, greater acrobatic thrills—all became more and more necessary and desirable. Inevitably, when the fascination for the organ as a feat of engineering eclipsed its role as a musical instrument, the instrument went into a decline from which it still suffers today.

Conclusion

Parry's biography of Bach frames the advent of the composer as the culmination of many preparatory events. His opening chapter 'Convergences' outlines the various threads that evolved to a meeting point where Bach entered the picture. Thus Protestant Germany is shown to have won out over 'the old Church', earlier music history is thwarted because harmonic developments or other opportunities were not in place for the composers to take

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[86] Macfarren, 'Bach's Grosse Passions-Musik', (Pt. 2), 360.
[87] See Chapter 3.

advantage of, the music of the 'naturally more-gifted Italians' had developed to a degree commensurate with the development of the more rigorous and disciplined style of the Germans. Finally, he says, 'At the end of the seventeenth century things were more or less in a state of preparation; the appliances were ready in plenty, but they needed the gathering together and systematisation--the comprehension which only a man gifted with the highest faculties and perception of the widest range can command.'[88] This description of preparation can be used as a model for the advent of Bach in England in the nineteenth century. In many ways the ground was prepared for his coming with the precedence of Handel, the importance of the Ancient and Modern discourse, the development of technology, the increasing weight placed on the importance of moral and religious behaviour, the close connections with Germany, and the increasing pursuit or at least desire for sublime experiences. In fact, the phrase 'broad cultural readiness' used by Celia Applegate to describe Bach's rediscovery in Berlin in the nineteenth century also refers to the same phenomenon.[89] Another model could also be brought into play at this point as well: the idea that all the technical threads were in place and ready to be used to produce something extraordinary, but that it took an inexplicable talent beyond that, a quality of genius, to produce the final result. This model of course is the sublime, as defined first by Longinus.

> Skill in invention, lucid arrangement and disposition of facts, are appreciated not by one passage, or by two, but gradually manifest themselves in the general structure of a work; but a sublime thought, if happily timed, illumines an entire subject with the vividness of a lightning-flash, and exhibits the whole power of the orator in a moment of time.[90]

It may seem something of a paradox that the music of Bach, with its qualities of structure and mathematical order, was repeatedly called sublime, a word that encompasses

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[88] Parry, *Bach*, 23.
[89] Applegate, *Bach in Berlin,* 45 et al.
[90] Longinus, tr. Stebbing, 4.

the idea of the irrational as a fundamental part of its definition. How can the perfect control evinced by Bach's most complex counterpoint be sublime, when a fundamental definition of the sublime is the idea of being overwhelmed by forces beyond one's control? How can Bach's music be the perfect example of the 'victory' of intellect over emotion, as exemplified in the writing of people like Heathcote Statham,[91] and at the same time be subject to innumerable sentimental arrangements of his music, as the Venetian Boatmen's Evening Hymn? The increasing number of fictionalized accounts about Bach coexist alongside articles framing him as a 'disembodied spirit'; the emotive arrangements of his music stand alongside the fervent protestations of musicians like Mendelssohn, who decried any alteration of Bach's score at all, viewing it as sacrosanct; and the moving accounts of thousands of people joining in the choruses at the annual St Paul's *St Matthew Passion* services stand next to the belief in the virtue of inexpressiveness in church music. If the music of Handel was sublime for its 'bold strokes' and 'daring flights', and his 'truly great and heroic style',[92] how could Bach's music also be sublime for its 'science and elevation of style (particularly in the composition of fugues), for the power of abstracting the mind from all surrounding objects, and so relieving it from care and sorrow itself'?[93] Clearly the concept of the sublime in nineteenth-century England was a constantly shifting one, and embraced many seemingly contradictory ideas.

Though definitive and complete answers cannot be given, it is interesting to speculate on possible ways the concept of the sublime can be reconciled with these different Victorian values. A partial explanation can perhaps be found in the idea that focus on individual response is the other side of the coin to the belief in the importance of sublimating the same

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[91] *My Thoughts on Music and Musicians* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1892), 188.
[92] Johnson, '"Giant Handel"', 518-19.
[93] Crotch, *Substance,* 119.

so that a higher state may be attained: both connect individual emotional response with religious feeling. The common ground is the acknowledgement of the centrality of personal emotion, whether to believe in the importance of sublimating it, or of celebrating it. For many people, sentimentalizing Bach was the route to the attainment of a higher state of spirituality. Another point may be that the complexity and seeming perfection of Bach's counterpoint allowed his music to be perceived as ungraspable. Crotch described sublime music as high, lofty, and elevated, the musical counterpart to the gothic cathedral, where a vast number of intricate parts came together. At the same time, performing this music on an organ which not only excelled in allowing the counterpoint to be followed, but also had the capability of sudden loud sounds, reverberating basses, and tremendous power, meant that his music was also sublime in the sense of fear-inducing, with physical effects. Bach was not all counterpoint and no emotion, of course: the thrill of listening to the dramatic moments in the *St Matthew Passion*—for example, the 'Lightnings and Thunders' chorus, or the rending of the curtain recitative—also meant that his music was tremendously moving as well. In short, the multi-faceted attraction of Bach for the nineteenth-century Briton is striking. On the one hand he was revered for his rigorous counterpoint, and on the other for his expressivity which brought people to tears—or to their knees. Bach succeeds in the highest personal expression while simultaneously striving for the ultimate complexity of form and counterpoint. It might be said that in the nineteenth century personal expression was legitimized as a means to the sublime.

In order to be adopted, Bach's music had to be re-cast in a familiar mould, which reflected the particular hierarchical nature of British society at the time. It became expressive of deeply-felt values of the nineteenth-century Briton: morality, education, hard work, and religiosity. The fact that Bach in England was removed from his home in Saxony in time,

place, and culture (notwithstanding the German royal family), meant that his identity was pliable, and he could be whatever he was needed to be by his English adherents, more so than Handel or Mendelssohn, who were personally well-known in England. His music could be disassociated from its specific church context, yet it retained a sacred aspect that suited it to a nineteenth-century ideal. These were important ingredients in the formation of the musical canon, with Bach at the centre. Mendelssohn's re-introduction of the *Matthäus-Passion* to the Germans echoed Forkel's endorsement, which promoted Bach as a German national figure. In contrast, Forkel's concentration on the organ works was helpful in the introduction of Bach to the English, since they still had a religious association through the instrument, but not necessarily specifically Lutheran. The press of course was also key in shaping the British picture of Bach in the nineteenth century

Bach occupied a place at the top of the cultural and social ladder, his music not only transcending religious boundaries, but also those of class. Practising musicians were the first to spread knowledge of the composer, and that the attraction for them was much the same as the attraction for Ancient Music on the part of their employers. The respect engendered by his music on the part of both professional and educated amateur surely must have helped the resurgence of the music profession seen in the second half of the nineteenth century. Understanding and appreciation of Bach was a sign of an elevated taste, a means of social mobility, and a marker for cultural leadership.

Friedrich Blume, writing in 1964, captured the duality of Bach reception in the nineteenth century, in the way it was adopted into the musical canon but at the same time spoke directly to its listeners of the moment: 'In Bach's works the romantic age learned to recognize the solidity, the permanence, and the eternal law of music; but the manner in which that age grasped Bach's music piece by piece, tried to understand it, rejected it, altered

it, recast it, and finally made it its own affords us a glimpse, in the mirror of Bach, of the familiar traits of Romanticism itself.'[94]

[94] Friedrich Blume, 'Bach in the Romantic Era', *The Musical Quarterly,* 50/3 (1964), 290-306.

APPENDIX A

'The Cantor's Triumph'
Argosy: a magazine
of tales, travels, essays, and poems 7 (1 May1869)

THE CANTOR'S TRIUMPH.*

(*Translated from the German.*)

IT was an autumn evening, about the year 1732, and the town of which I write was called Leipzig. It was surrounded by deep ditches, high walls, and stately lime-trees: the houses were almost all high and narrow, with curiously pointed gables, and little towers on some of the roofs. The lights shone brightly on this October day in the house of the "Cantor" of the celebrated "Thomas School," which was close to the finest church in Leipzig. In a narrow room, furnished with large, dark presses and curiously fashioned chairs, at a massive oak table, sat a man dressed in a decorous suit of black, and a voluminous but somewhat rough peruke. His countenance was fresh and blooming; a grave cheerfulness played round the corners of his firm mouth; his splendid forehead was high and transparent, but the glance of his fiery black eyes had a power—a force—whose influence few men could withstand. This man was the "Cantor," *Johann Sebastian Bach*, celebrated through the whole country for his magnificent organ-playing. But the worthy burghers also said he was a strange fellow, whom nobody could understand; and often they shook their wise heads suspiciously at his intricate vagaries and incomprehensible phantasies on the organ. Still not one of them could leave the church when the Cantor began to play; one shudder after the other thrilled through the souls of the hearers; for the sounds swelled and resounded as if they would burst the church walls and bury the groups of poor, weak men under the tottering towers.

On the Cantor's right hand sat a woman of a comely figure, mild good features, and gentle eyes, snow-white cap, and spotless neckerchief. She held her youngest son, Christopher, on her lap, while some other sturdy urchins nestled close to her, munching roasted apples, and playing with their baby-brother. Bach's eldest son, Friedeman, a manly youth, resembling the father, but without his mild benevolence, stood close to the immense stove, and looked on thoughtfully at the noisy group of little ones. A younger and slighter man had taken his place on the Cantor's left; he was well-dressed and had thick black hair, while his brown, amiable face, bore a strong resemblance to the marked features of the head of the family. This was Bach's second son, Philip Emanuel, who was present only as a visitor, for he had come after a long and tedious journey from the town of Frankfort-on-the-Oder to surprise the

* The office of Cantor, in Germany, is somewhat equivalent to the leader of a choir, but it embraces other duties also, and requires a highly accomplished musician, besides conferring a higher rank than would be understood by the term "Choirmaster" in this country.

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loved ones at home. He had just been telling his father about the new Academy of Music, which he had instituted in Frankfort, and conducted with great success; and about the industry and talents of his pupils. He now timidly drew some manuscript music from his pocket, and colouring, pushed it towards the Cantor. It was a clever sonata, which old Bach scanned carefully: then folding it up, he said in a cheery voice, "We shall make something of you yet, my boy! Continue to work industriously and with God's help! Friedeman also gets on well, plays by no means badly; I shall live to have much joy in you both."

Just then was heard the sound of horses' hoofs, and a loud knocking at their little hall-door. In a few minutes a postillion appeared, exhausted and spattered with mud; he came direct from the Electoral Palace at Dresden, and demanded speech with the Cantor Sebastian Bach, to whom he delivered a letter from the powerful and dreadful Prime Minister, Count Brühl. The Cantor drew the large oil-lamp nearer, and shading his eyes with his hand, read, while Philip Emanuel politely offered the man a chair.

"MY DEAR CANTOR,—Our gracious Elector and Lord, August of Saxony and Poland, desires to hear you, the well-known and celebrated organ-player, Sebastian Bach, at his capital. You are therefore to play in the chapel at Dresden, on Sunday the 24th of October. Two days after receipt of this letter, a royal carriage will convey you from Leipzig to the Capital, where we await you with eagerness. Prepare yourself, my dear Cantor, for the great honour in prospect. Commissioned by my gracious Master, I greet you. BRÜHL."

For some time Bach stood there silently; scorn and indignation struggled in his features, and his eyes wandered uneasily from one dear face to the other; Friedeman and Philip were modestly silent.

"Sir Courier," said the Cantor at last, slowly but firmly, "acquaint the Prime Minister, that I, Sebastian Bach, Cantor of the Thomas School at Leipzig, will obey my Prince's command."

"May I beg for a written document?" interrupted the courier.

"Man!" thundered Sebastian Bach, drawing himself up to his full height, "what do you *dare* to ask? Did you not understand me? have not I, Sebastian Bach, given my word? do you take me for one of those false scoundrels at Court whom, forsooth, a miserable scrap of paper binds more than a man's word spoken in the sight of God?"

"Dear father!" said Philp Emanuel soothingly.

"Silence, youngster! You understand nothing about it," interrupted the father hastily. Then turning to the courier he said more quietly: "You have your answer, and you may repeat every word to the Count, for what I care!"

The messenger started back a few steps, pale and terror-stricken, but Bach drew him forward by his collar and said in a friendly voice:

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"Bah! Won't that be a wholesome lesson for you? And don't forget it when you leave my house. And now it will give me great pleasure if you will sit down and help us with our supper."

But the courier took a hasty leave, and the Cantor resumed his place cheerfully. They all crowded anxiously round him, and Frau Gertrude cried! "Alas! my Bastian!—and you will go into the wide world—away to Dresden, amidst the grandeur and magnificence of that sinful city! My husband, for the sake of your wife and children, do it not!" Here she burst into tears, and the children, seeing their mother weep, began their lamentations, while the two sons found fault with the Count's letter.

At last the Cantor's full powerful voice subdued the tumult, and he cried: "Wife, take those wild boys into the nursery; only Friedeman and Philip are to remain here." Therewith he freed himself by a mighty shake from the screaming throng, while the mother carried the little flock off to the old nurse, and then returned alone.

"You must not torment yourself so much about the long journey, Gertrude," said he gently to her. "You will see that, God willing, I will be back in my old nest in a fortnight. Besides, I intend to take Friedeman and Philip with me to the Capital; they also shall see the Vanity Fair yonder, and, above all things, take care of their father. Yes, children," continued he, "we will for once knock at the hearts of these worldlings with the pure, grand voice of God," so he sometimes called his beloved organ. "Maitre Hasse shall acknowledge that there are higher, holier sounds, than the sweet voluptuous melodies of sunny Italy!"

He seemed almost inspired, while saying these words, and his family regarded him with an expression of unbounded reverence. But soon he looked up cheerfully, and cried: "Now, mother, let the squallers in again, and bring us the soup."

On the following day, the Cantor went to the Rector to procure the necessary permission for an important journey. It was a tiresome task for him, for he always avoided his superior as much as possible. Rector and Cantor were never very great friends. The former complained bitterly of his subordinate's rude behaviour and restless temperament, and Bach used often angrily to call the Rector a godless, withered up old pedant. His soul was as withered and dried up as his body; it was buried and sunk in the thick dust of mouldy book-learning. He could never enjoy even a bright flower, for he counted the petals, investigated the calyx, and then threw it away. He never paid any attention to the merry birds, or other creatures, except to make poisonous experiments on them, which was his greatest delight. All mankind was equal to him, for he cared for nobody. His eccentric Cantor's organ-playing he called diabolical, and shut his heart against its influence, therefore, he never attended the early service, and even spread the report that it was the Fiend himself who blew the bellows when Bach played.

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Bach now entered the tyrant's study in a somewhat excited state, for he had just finished a rehearsal of the choir, at which he had become rather impatient, and, as often happened in such cases, his wig wore a very distracted aspect. The Rector raised himself in his leather arm-chair, and fixing his little grey eyes on the intruder, said majestically: "Well, Sir Cantor, what troublesome business has brought you?"

"Nothing troublesome, Sir Rector," returned Bach; "I wished to inform you that I must take a long journey to-morrow, by the Elector's command: and, therefore, want you to give me a fortnight's leave."

"What do I hear?" cried the Rector, breathless with astonishment and anger. "A long journey?—must—Elector—and *I* am not to be consulted? Bah! Cantor, this is some joke, planned by your imaginative genius. Why should Elector August——"

"I am to play the organ at Dresden," said the Cantor, quietly interrupting the speaker; "the Elector has ordered it so."

"That seems a very improbable story," said the Rector with a sneer. "I must tell you Cantor, in plain terms, that I cannot spare you for the next month; perhaps, later, there may be no hindrance."

During this malicious speech, Bach's expressive countenance showed no signs of anger or excitement; he never took his wonderful eyes off his impish opponent, and an indescribable, pitying smile played about his mouth. At last he said firmly, "Sir Rector! be pleased to give me a decided answer. Will you allow me a fortnight's holiday?"

"No, no, and for the last time, *no!*" screamed the other, furiously.

"Very well! Then I will take it without permission." So saying the Cantor turned and left the room with a firm step, never once looking back at his frantic enemy.

The Sunday afternoon on which Cantor Bach, from Leipzig, had promised to play the organ, such an assemblage of elegant men and women had seldom been seen, as was now gathered together in the beautiful Roman Catholic Church at Dresden. The countless cavaliers in glittering courtier's dress, the brilliant ladies in satins and jewels, or with the still more charming ornament of blooming youth, formed a circle, in whose midst towered the royal form of August of Saxony. The prince's figure was still unbent, his head erect as ever, but age had begun to tell in the sunken cheeks; and the fire of those large eyes was extinguished, while the delicate outline of nose and mouth alone showed traces of former beauty. August was engaged in a whispered conversation with his favourite Brühl, who stood by his side, and seemed to listen with every appearance of respect to his master's words. Unsubdued pride was marked on that wise brow; insatiable ambition gleamed from those restless eyes, and an unbounded love of power palpitated in the thin lips.

"And so the droll Cantor would not on any account come to Court yesterday evening," whispered the Elector, laughingly. "Well, I will

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torment him all the more to-day; when the concert is over, I will send for him."

Brühl bowed silently. "We are all very curious to see this famous organist," continued the Prince; "excitement shows itself in every face; Hasse has his thick eye-brows expectantly raised, and even the bewitching Faustina is looking about the church with as many restless glances, as if she feared to discover a rival. But hush! three figures have just made their appearance in the gallery. Do you see, Brühl? Two very young men are taking their places. What fresh, ingenuous faces they have!"

"Please your Highness, they are the Cantor's two elder sons," returned Brühl.

At this moment, a sound rose up from the organ, like heavenly incense, purifying every heart from vain thoughts; a deep silence reigned around; an indescribable feeling of devotion thrilled through all, and every eye glanced upwards. A splendid prelude, modulating like a golden stream, on whose brink grow heavenly flowers, bore the trembling soul on mighty waves, higher and higher, into the all-powerful, swelling choral, "Our God's a fortress firm and sure." Father Bach made this proud Evangelical psalm swell and resound from the organ-loft, accompanying every note with a beatified smile; for now, in a Catholic place of worship, he celebrated at this moment, the triumph of his own beloved Church. Like a crowned singer, the sublime melody swelled through the aisles, and resounded mightily, as if countless unseen angelic choirs joined in the song of praise. But the harmony still swelled in an unbroken stream; the spirit of Father Bach rose higher and higher; the thrilling sounds became holier, more wonderful. A giant-like, unfathomable voice from above dived down into the ocean of melody; it roared stronger and more powerfully; it beat against every heart and stormed round every head, as if it would o'erwhelm them in its waves. And then the church pillars began to tremble, for it seemed as though the plaintive voices of whole generations had risen up crying for mercy—as if the whole world prayed for forgiveness. But, in the midst, rose again, like incense from pious altars, the melody "Our God's a fortress firm and sure!" And then began again that mysterious roaring, as if in answer to the prayers of believing love. But at last, at last, the imploring voices seemed to sink; softer and lower became their lamentations: more uncertain their petitions; and then, like a miracle, came the sweet pardon. The high church-dome seemed to melt away; heavenly streams of blue and golden light gushed in; an intoxicating incense and the breath of spring filled the lofty aisles; a righteous wonder, a pious rejoicing, trembled in the pure, holy sounds, and, at length, like millions of beatified human voices, interwoven with jubilant angels' hallelujahs, rose, all-mighty, all-powerful the radiant, victorious psalm, "Our God's a fortress firm and sure."

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The tones of the organ were hushed. Johann Sebastian Bach still sat on the organ-bench with clasped hands, a celestial radiance round his countenance. His two sons stood near him, pale from excitement and trembling with delight at the victory won by their adored father.

A subdued murmur rose from the church below, and at that moment the door of the organ-loft opened to admit the Elector, who was followed at a respectful distance by his glittering train. August of Saxony approached, almost hesitatingly, that grand man, who yet sat humbly before him, so sunk in pious dreams as not to have noticed his presence. He scarcely dared venture to break in on that prayerful meditation, but at length he laid his hand gently on Bach's shoulder.

The Cantor started, rose up and looked earnestly at his Prince, with an open, smiling countenance; how powerless was worldly influence, or earthly magnificence, to move the musician's great soul in this moment of inspiration, still filled as it was with the splendour of that Godhead into whose Heaven he had soared on the wings of melody! Words, even, seemed to come to him with difficulty, and after a long pause he said gently, "Gracious Prince, I can see that the blessed 'voice of God,' has also sunk deeply into your heart. Say, is it not a wondrous feeling and yet also a strange fearfulness and trembling? Did it not seem to you as if all around had become sunshine? Did it not urge you on to behold vaster, grander worlds than this little handful of earth, on which we were born? Does not all earthly splendour fall to nothing before the blinding magnificence yonder, and did you not wish to give your whole life and soul to that 'voice of God,' that it might bear you to the source of everlasting light?"

"Bach," answered the Prince, in an agitated voice and coming close to him, "as I listened to your playing, a foreboding of my approaching end came over me. But the thought appeared to my soul in the form of a mild spirit; it had lost all its terrors; I did not tremble at its aspect as formerly, when meditating in the silent hours, on the dark problem of man's dissolution. Master! oh! that I may hear you in my mortal hour!"

Bach answered not a word, but regarded his agitated sovereign with eyes full of tender emotion. His pious heart enjoyed at this moment a greater triumph than that of his art alone. Just then a rustling was heard at the door and a woman pressed eagerly through the throng of courtiers; a woman in the bloom of youth; a voluptuous, proud figure, with the head of a Juno. It was *Faustina Hasse*, the celebrated singer and adored favourite of the entire capital. With the passionate fervour of an Italian, glowing and weeping, she rushed up to the Cantor and falling on his neck, kissed him eagerly on both cheeks amid unbroken sobs. "Blessed, ever blessed art thou, O dazzling Genius!" cried she, her voice trembling with excitement. Bach scarce knew what to do, and the lookers-on smiled; but Hasse came up, and gently drawing his wife

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away, introduced himself; and pressed the great Master's hands with an unfeigned expression of reverence. Even the gay French scoffer and philosopher, Marchaud, stepped forward; but instead of the mocking smile that habitually played round his lips, his eyes showed traces of inward emotion, as he silently clasped the musician's hand to his breast. The Elector's attendants soon followed the favourite's example, and the most charming court ladies were not far behind, but with their beautiful hands, touched the cheeks or even a finger of the Cantor, and the loveliest lips murmured their thanks. But the Master suddenly with a giant's strength tore himself away from them all, and in a voice that thunderingly resounded through the vaulted roof, cried, "Enough! Such soft caresses and trifling should not be the reward of holy, earnest organ-playing! Away from me, ye enticing forms; I will see you no more! I long to be back in my dear, quiet house with wife and children, far from all the beautiful flowers, or serpents, of your voluptuous Dresden! Most gracious Prince," he cried, turning beseechingly to the Elector, who looked on at the scene with a sorrowful smile, "let me go! You can see that old Sebastian Bach is out of place here; he could never swim with this current!"

"I shall not let you go until you ask of me some favour," answered the Prince, kindly.

"You can grant me nothing, my Prince," returned the Cantor, bluntly. "I am richer than you; but I thank you."

"Think of your sons," continued the Prince, gently.

"Well, yes, your Highness, if you could do something for Friedeman" (drawing the blushing youth towards him) "I should be very glad. But not for the next two years; at present the youngster is necessary to myself, for he is a good engraver, and we are working at the Passion Masse. My Philip" (nodding to his second son) "is already provided for by Almighty God; he will be all right. So I thank you with all my heart, most gracious Elector."

The Prince let him go with many brilliant promises for Friedeman's future; and at parting gave his hand to father and sons, assuring them of his protection. The highest noblemen vied with each other in speeding the travellers on their journey, and accompanied the worthy Leipzig Cantor to his carriage with as many marks of respect and reverence as if he had been the mightiest ruler in the world.

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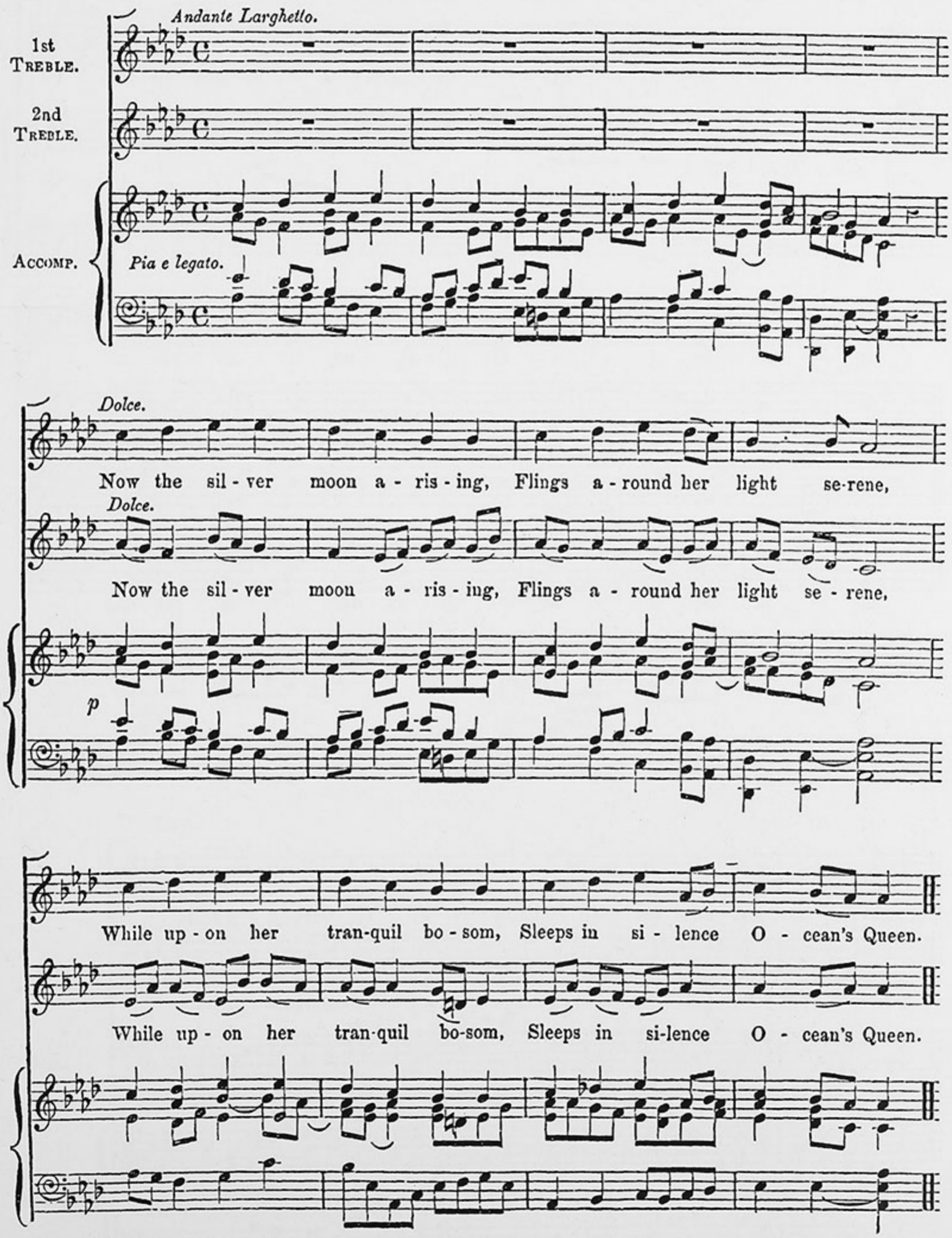
APPENDIX B

'Venetian Boatmen's Evening Song',
by Edward Taylor
The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular
Vol. 9, No. 215 (Jan. 1, 1861)

Venetian Boatmen's Evening Song.

The Words written, and the Music arranged from SEBASTIAN BACH, by EDWARD TAYLOR.

[London: J. ALFRED NOVELLO, 69, Dean Street, Soho, & 35, Poultry: also in New York, at 1, Clinton Hall, Astor Place.]

Dolce.

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi-ne, O - ra - - te pro no - bis, O

Dolce.

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir -gi - ne, O - ra - - te pro no - bis, O

Dolce.

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir-gi - ne, O - ra - - te pro no - bis, O

Dolce.

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir-gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

Dolce.

om - nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro no - bis.

om - nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro no - bis,

om-nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - - te pro no - bis.

om - nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro no - bis

TRIO.

1ST TREBLE. Hark! a - long the cur - rent glid-ing, Boat-men chant their ves - per song,

2ND TREBLE. Hark! a - long the cur - rent glid-ing, Boat-men chant their ves - per song,

BASS. Hark! a - long the cur - rent glid-ing, Boat-men chant their ves - per song,

ACCOMP. *p*

While the ev'ning's tran-quil ze - phyr Bears the swell - ing notes a - long.

While the ev'ning's tran-quil ze - phyr Bears the swell-ing notes a - long.

While the ev'ning's tran-quil ze - phyr Bears the swell - ing notes a - long.

mf *p* *cres.*

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

mf *p* *cres.*

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

mf *p* *cres.*

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

mf *p* *cres.*

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

mf *p* *cres.*

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

mf *p* *cres.*

O sa - cra, pi - a Vir - gi - ne, O - ra - te pro no - bis, O

p *dim.*

om - nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro - no - bis.

p *dim.*

om - nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro no - bis.

p *dim.*

om-nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro no - bis.

p *dim.*

om - nes sa - cri An - ge - li, O - ra - te pro no - bis.

p *dim.*

A Folio Edition is published by J. Alfred Novello, price 1s.

APPENDIX C

Three Abridged Versions of the St Matthew Passion,
by Robert Sterndale Bennett
Music and Letters 37 (Oct. 1956)

THREE ABRIDGED VERSIONS

TABLE OF OMISSIONS

Nos.			*N.B.* The Numbers and Titles are according to Novello's current vocal score (Elgar-Atkins)	Omissions		
				MENDELSSOHN BERLIN 11 March 1829	STERNDALE BENNETT Bach Society LONDON 23 March 1858	VAUGHAN WILLIAMS L.H.M.F. DORKING Present Day
			PART I			
		Chapter XXVI				
8.	Recit.	Narrative	When Jesus understood it.		verse 12	
9.	Recit. }	Contralto	My Master and my Lord.			Out }
10.	Aria }	,,	Grief for sin.			Out }
12.	Aria	Soprano	Break in grief.	Out	Out	
17.	Recit.	Narrative	And He answered, and said.		verses 26–29	
18.	Recit. }	Soprano	Although our eyes with tears o'erflow.	Out }	Out }	Out }
19.	Aria }	,,	Jesus, Saviour.	Out }	Out }	Out }
23.	Chorale		Here would I stand.	Out	Out	
27.	Recit.	Narrative	And He went a little farther		verse 39	
28.	Recit. }	Bass	The Saviour low before His Father bending.		Out }	
29.	Aria }	,,	Gladly would I take.		Out }	
30.	Recit.	Narrative	And He cometh to His disciples.		verse 42	
32.	Recit.	Narrative	And He came and found.		verses 43–46	
34.	Recit.	Narrative	And behold, one of them.		verses 51–56	verses 51–half of 56

R. Sterndale Bennett, 'Three Abridged Versions of Bach's St Matthew Passion', Music & Letters 37, No. 4 (October 1956), 338-39.

			PART II			
37.	Recit.	Narrative	And they that had laid hold on Jesus.	verse 58	verse 58	verses 58, 59
38.	Chorale		How falsely doth the world.	Out	Out	Out
39.	Recit.	Narrative	Yea, tho' many false witnesses.			verses 60–62 and part 63
40.	Recit.	Tenor	He holds His peace.	Out	Out	Out
41.	Aria	,,	Endure! Even lying tongues.	Out	Out	Out
44.	Chorale		O Lord, who dares to smite Thee.	Out		
48.	Chorale		Lamb of God, I fall.	Out		
		Chapter XXVII				
49.	Recit.	Narrative	Now when the morning was come.		verses 1–4	verses 1–4
50.	Recit.	Narrative	And he cast down the pieces.		verses 5–6	verses 5–6
51.	Aria	Bass	Give me back my Lord.	Out	Out	Out
52.	Recit.	Narrative	And they took counsel.	verses 8–10; 13, 14	verses 7–10; 13, 14	verses 7–14
53.	Chorale		Commit thy way to Jesus.	Out	Out	
54.	Recit.	Narrative	Now at that feast.	verses 17–19	verses 17–19	verse 19
55.	Chorale		O wond'rous love.	Out	Out	
58.	Aria	Soprano	For love my Saviour now is dying.	Out		
59.	Recit.	Narrative	But they cried out.			verse 26
60.	Recit.	Contralto	O Gracious God.			Out
61.	Aria	,,	If my tears be unavailing.	Out	Out	Out
63.	Chorale		O sacred Head, surrounded.		2nd verse omitted	
64.	Recit.	Narrative	And after that they had mocked Him.		verses 31, 32	verse 32
65.	Recit.	Bass	In truth, to bear the Cross.	Out	Out	Out
66.	Aria	,,	Come, healing Cross.	Out	Out	Out
67.	Recit.	Narrative	And when they were come unto a place.	verses 33, 34; 36, 37	verses 33–37	
68.	Recit.	Narrative	The thieves also that were crucified.			verse 44
70.	Aria	Contralto, with Chorus	See the Saviour's outstretched Hands.	Out		
71.	Recit.	Narrative	Now from the sixth hour.		verses 45–49	
73.	Recit.	Narrative	And, behold, the veil of the temple.	verses 55, 56	verses 51–53; 55, 56	verses 55, 56
75.	Aria	Bass	Make me clean, my heart, from sin.	Out	Out	2nd section out
76.	Recit.	Narrative.	And Joseph took the body.	verse 61	verses 59–61	verses 61–66
78.	Chorus		In tears of grief.			Orchestral interludes G–H and I–J

NOTE.—In Vaughan Williams's version the *da capo* of Nos. 12, 39 and 58 is not observed; these arias close with a repeat of the opening "symphonies". The chorale No. 21 is sung before No. 17.

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