

Hindu Music

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hardness! A fig for the objection that Mr Sawyer's chief aim would be to get together a lot of people likely to spend money at his counters. Of course he would, and why not? Why not, even if he copied the present managers of the Westminster Aquarium, and turned the place into a music-hall? That is nothing to us as landlords. If the public get what they like best, if Mr. Sawyer makes a profit and we receive a dividend, the handsome thing is done all round." We are far from sure that it is worth while to answer this gentleman, especially as the present refreshment contractor to the Palace has withdrawn his offer, and nobody is likely to renew it. Let us, however, remind the Materialist party, at the risk of being sneered at by the *Saturday Review*, that the Crystal Palace is, and must ever be, something more than a commercial enterprise. It came into the world saddled with responsibilities not to be got rid of without shame. To it, in fact, we may strictly apply the maxim *noblesse oblige*; while some of us venture to think that even the present managers, in their "grubbing for dividends," as the reviewer puts it, have given just cause for regret, if not for offence. But to farm the enterprise to a speculator in return for a money payment would be to sound the lowest depths of degradation. Much better sell the materials of the building, and put the land in the market as an "eligible site for villa residences." This, no doubt, would be a bitter end, but no disgrace; and a manful death is at any time more desirable than a humiliated life.

Dismissing the Materialist with an emphatic assurance that we have done with him, the Revolutionist comes next. It is hard to gather from the report of Mr. Hughes's speech exactly what this man wants, or why he bears such a formidable name. But we are told that he would have the Company take all its business into its own hands—in other words, we suppose, dispense with a refreshment contractor and pocket his profits, if haply they might be made without his skill and experience. Assuming this to be Revolution, very few outside the ranks of dividend-grubbers will go with it. In the first place, it is open to grave doubt whether the Directors would succeed in a line of business which demands special aptitude and a freedom of action unobtainable where there is a sense of responsibility to others. In the next place, such a body ought not to be in a position which would tempt them to do for themselves all that is objected to as probable in the case of a speculative lessee. Under present arrangements the Company's position is beyond cavil. Where the public are accustomed to resort, refreshments are essential, but it is one thing to give facilities for their provision and quite another to become caterer in person with a necessarily keen eye to all the means whereby consumption may be promoted and profits increased. We shall, no doubt, hear this distinction laughed at as sentimental. Be it so. We have not the smallest objection in the world, if sentiment wins and it is never said that the Crystal Palace Company kept their beautiful edifice open mainly as an eating-house.

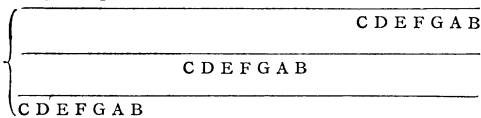
Without professing a perfect comprehension of the Revolutionist, we know enough now to send him away and to call for the Sentimentalist, who appears with a *Saturday Reviewer* at his heels. The Reviewer is in a great rage. He objects to "sentimental showmen." They are humbugs, who want to make money by trading with a gullible public on other than "sound business principles." But he dislikes this one in particular, and accuses him of wishing to support the Crystal Palace by a "system of gambling for

profits," which is "substantially the same as that devised for the Alexandra Palace, and consists in tempting people to take guinea shares for the sake of securing prizes 'of money to be spent, according to the option of a prize-holder, either in objects strictly of fine art,' or in household furniture, silks, satins, poplins, and other fabrics for ladies' dresses, or, 'in fact, any article in any kind of material which in form and colour is entitled'—or perhaps may be pretended—'to be considered a work of art.'" In all this we cannot see anything to warrant the Reviewer's anger. But let the "sentimental showman" speak for himself. He says: "I am charged by my friend here—who was never guilty, as far as I know, of a generous feeling—with importing sentiment into business, and no doubt he is right if that be to desire, apart from commercial considerations, the continued existence of the Crystal Palace. Even he grants, though with characteristic superciliousness, that 'the place is, no doubt, on the whole, a useful accommodation to certain classes of the public, and it would be a pity that it should be shut up.' That is precisely my idea. I want the 'useful accommodation' kept open, and the 'pity' avoided for their own sake, without reference to business principles, sound or unsound. Thus far I am sentimental, but no further; and I don't even ask the public to be sentimental at all. I want their money, for which I offer a substantial return. Here is my plan: Form an association on the Art Union principle; purchase the Crystal Palace; apply the profits each year as prizes, the allotment of which extinguishes a certain number of shares, while those not so extinguished in course of time come in for the property itself. The Tontine system is no new discovery, and nobody ever yet charged it with the drawback of sentiment. My plan is a Tontine and Art Union combined, according to which each subscriber sooner or later receives a *quid pro quo*. What objection, pray, can be made to it?" We certainly have none to offer. The proposal is businesslike and straightforward simply as a form of money investment, while it offers advantages with regard to the Palace itself such as open up a prospect of rare usefulness. With it there would be an end of grubbing for dividends, and the enterprise could be managed in view of the results its founders had in mind. We should secure, as Mr. Hughes remarked, a "real Palace of Art," free from the necessity to lower its character in order to raise its returns; the distinction even now enjoyed in the matter of music becoming the rule of the place, not the exception. With such a result in prospect the friends of the Crystal Palace will hardly be deterred by sneers from wishing well to the scheme of the so-called Sentimentalists. It is the only one before the public worthy of a moment's consideration, because the only one that unites to entire feasibility a guarantee that the original purpose of the enterprise shall be worked out.

HINDU MUSIC.

OUR readers need not be alarmed at the title of this article: we have not the least intention of entering into a learned discourse on the many subtle intricacies of Hindu music. All that we wish to do is to call attention to the remarkable interest which is springing up among Europeans in India with reference to the character and merits of this native art. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the Asiatic origin of music is a fact on which many learned men have insisted. Even if it be granted that Greece

obtained its notions of the theory and practice of music from Egypt, it is more than probable that Egypt itself might have been indebted to far Eastern sources for its own basis of the art. There is much in the nature of Hindu music to lead to some very interesting thoughts in this direction, although, unfortunately, the Hindus have the true Eastern habit of stating facts in such misty metaphor that even musical residents in India find it a hard task to give a simple sketch of the outlines of the native music. This being so, it can hardly be expected that we in England can have much chance of mastering the subject. But the visit of the Prince of Wales to India called up the latent musical enthusiasm of the natives, and no less than three books of the interesting "odes" and verses set to music at the time have been published and have reached this country. They are: "Fifty Stanzas in Sanskrita in honour of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales," "Victoria-Gitika; or, Sanskrit Verses celebrating the deeds and virtues of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Victoria and her renowned predecessors," and "English Verses set to Hindu Music in honour of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales." All of these works are from the pen of Sourindro Mohun Tagore, President of the Bengal Music School, a native gentleman whose learning and talents have raised him to the leading position of influence as a Hindu musician. Each work is preceded by a very concise and clear account of Hindu notation, which may thus be roughly described. The alphabet and lines are both used to represent the scales. As they have three distinct heptachords (*saptakas*), so they may have three lines on which to place the notes; thus:—



These are called by the very sensible and self-evident names of low (*udārá*), middle (*mudārá*), and high (*tārá*) *saptaka*. They can be also represented thus:—



Extra dots have precisely the same effect as leger lines in our staff notation. The sharp (*pátáka*) is a sign (∩) placed over a letter-note, the flat is represented by Δ; thus, ∩_F (F sharp), Δ_D (D flat). But in consequence of the existence of enharmonic intervals in their scale, of which we may have more to say by-and-by, other signs are used representing *very sharp* and *very flat*. The time-measures (*mátrás*) are equally simple in their character, for a short upright line represents a single pulse, two of the same lines two pulses, and so on; thus, $\begin{matrix} | \\ | \\ | \end{matrix}$ C $\begin{matrix} | \\ | \\ | \end{matrix}$ C $\begin{matrix} | \\ | \\ | \end{matrix}$ C are called respectively single time, double time, triple time; if more lines are added, they are called *multiple* time. Perhaps it is hardly fair to call these *pulses*, as the standard of time is the *duration of speaking a short vowel*, and this is what is meant by the single upright line. Then, of course, there are other simple signs for the subdivision of pulses. The office of our *bar* seems to be included under the sign *bandhani*, which is nothing more or less than a bracket placed over several notes properly marked with a *mátrá*; thus, $\overline{| \quad | \quad | \quad |}$ C D E. A rest is very plainly exhibited by placing the sign *mátrá* where no letter is under it; thus, $\overline{| \quad | \quad |}$ F. The rhythm of music is

represented by *tálas*, that is to say, groups of *mátrás*, and *tálas* are named after the number of *mátrás* which form them. Lastly, a double bar is represented by the sign ∞, to which is given the highly poetic name of *padma chinha*, the lotus-flower.

Thus far it seems that nothing could be simpler than Hindu musical notation, combining as it does some of the salient advantages both of the letter and the staff systems. Of course our readers will not fail to remember that the letter notes C, D, E, &c., have been introduced for the purpose of rendering explanation easier, the real names of the Hindu notes of the heptachord being *sá, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ní*, which are the initial syllables of longer words which it is wholly unnecessary to quote.

But as yet we have not mentioned the great wonder of Hindu music, namely—its *ragas*. It seems impossible to describe a *raga*. English writers have been very severely handled by Hindu critics for describing it as a *mode*; they say no one word exactly expresses it. But there can be no doubt that "mode" is the nearest name to be found for that system which enables a vast number of permutations of scale-sounds to be constructed. How numerous the *ragas* are to the true Hindu may be gathered from the following quotation:—

"KRISHNA, enchanted by the music of his flute, began singing, and the GÓPIKAS (sixteen thousand in number) followed him one by one, and thus are produced sixteen thousand *ragas*."

Certainly, sixteen thousand varieties of scale-form or mode, or whatever it be right to call a *raga*, are enough to alarm the boldest student; but that a *raga* is a variety of scale-form is plain from the following:—

"There are three classes of *ragas*; that class which is produced by a *grama* of five tones is called *odava*, and that produced by a *grama* of six tones is called *shadava*, while the third, produced by a *grama* of seven tones, is called *sampurna*."

In the above quotation a *grama* is evidently what we should describe as a scale with unequal and mixed grades.

The next ingredient of Hindu music which presents difficulties to the European is the *srooti*. We are told that a *srooti* is formed by the smallest intervals of sound, and that they are of *twenty-two* kinds! These are evidently small subdivisions of the interval of a tone, irregularly arranged; for it is stated that there are *four srooties* between G and A, and *three* between A and B. Therefore a *srooti* is sometimes a quarter-tone, sometimes a third part of a tone.

Having charged Hindus with an undue use of metaphor in stating musical facts, it is time we should bring the charge home. The following occurs as an explanation of *srooti*, as given in *Sangit Ratnavali*, quoted in the *Hindu Patriot* of Sept. 7, 1874:—

"It is a *srooti* because it is to be heard by the ear (!). Tones are produced by *srooties*, and the places from which *srooties* arise are three in number, namely, *heart, throat, and head*."

The meaning of this is slightly obscure, but it is surpassed by the following extract from a treatise entitled "Ækatana":—

"Three Saptacas or Heptachords are commonly used in Hindu music. They proceed from the three different organs, *Navel, Throat, and Skull*."

This is novel, though doubtless very ancient. We commend it not only to teachers of singing, but also to concert reporters of the daily press, to whom any shred of new musical phraseology is a real blessing. Imagine the sensation which would

be caused in town by the appearance on our breakfast-tables of a paragraph somewhat as follows: "Mr. So-and-so produced the finest effects in his song by the judicious use of skull-tones," &c., &c.

The following may be termed a very sentimental account of sound:—

"Without sound, singing is impossible; without sound, tone is impossible; and therefore sound (*nada*) is the all-pervading soul of the world."

By a reversed mental process this statement also appears as follows:—

"From *nada* arises *srooti*, from *srooti* comes *swara* (tone), and from *swara* comes *raga*, and from *raga* comes *gita*; therefore the soul of *gita* is sound."

Probably the greatest difficulty which the European meets with in Hindu music is the system of *murchchanás* or graces. These do not include such ornaments as a turn or shake (the latter of which, by the way, has the very odd title of a *gummucka*), but can best be described as *roulades* of diatonic or enharmonic scale-notes, introduced either at a given sign or at the will of the performer. These graces are a "vital principle" of Hindu music, as Dr. Tagore justly observes. The reader must therefore bear in mind that any quotations we may make from the melodies before us are quite inadequately represented by our musical notes, and cannot be judged by the ordinary standard of musical criticism. The interesting analogy between these Hindu graces and the use of the "enharmonic genus" by the ancient Greeks need hardly be pointed out. The first song we shall give appears at first sight to be of a simple, not to say weak character, but in all probability when sung with proper native grace it is far from uninteresting. The words are as these ("Stanzas in Sanskrita," p. 57):—

"Neither the moon, nor the precious pearl, nor the bright camphor, can bear comparison with thy brilliant fame. In the moon there is a spot, in the pearl there is a hole, in the camphor volatility; but thy fame is spotless, solid, and ever-enduring."

This startling series of compliments, which must have much astonished H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, is set to the following music:—

Ka la nka yo gát sá sá lá nchcha no sau,
 ma há rgha mu ktá pi sa ra ndhra tá yáh—
 si tá bhra u dbá yi ta yá hi já to,
 na te nu kí rtte ru pa má na yo gyah.

The next melody is from English verses set to Hindu music, p. 73. The Asiatic form of scale is here much more marked:—

There sat one day in quiet, By an ale-house on the Rhine, Four
 hale and hear-ty fel-lows, And drank the pre-cious wine.

Any musician who can for the moment forget the "scales" of his youth will see at a glance that the above is a very symmetrical melody as regards form,

though it must be confessed that it would be most troublesome to harmonise in our own way. But for difficulty in this respect we commend the following for our readers' consideration. We omit the original words: they are thus translated ("Sanskrit Stanzas," p. 91):—

"Thou art more precious than the most precious gems, and an object of greater regard than the rubies and pearls of the purest ray. Having now embraced thee in her bosom, India has proved herself entitled to the name of Basundhára (the holder of riches), and become a scene of universal joy."

RÁGINÍ ÁSÁ-GAURÍ.

Enough has been said to show that Dr. Tagore deserves warm thanks for the publication of the works lying before us; and notwithstanding the difficulty which a European experiences in appreciating the niceties of Asiatic music it is easy to see that he holds a high rank both as a composer and theorist. We cannot do better than conclude with his setting of our National Anthem:—

God save our gra-cious Queen, Long live our no-ble Queen,
 God . . save the Queen! Send her vic - to - ri - ous,
 Hap - py and glo - ri - ous, Long to reign o - ver us, . .
 God . . save the Queen.

THE ABUSE OF MUSIC.

BY HENRY C. LUNN.

FORKEL says, "The public requires everything to be human, and the true artist ought properly to make everything divine. How, then, should the applause of the multitude and true art exist together?" The more we ponder these lines the more convinced we must be of their absolute truth. As faith in progress is one of the essential attributes of a real artist, so it is impossible for him in creating a work to think for one moment of the manner in which it will be received by those whose knowledge of the subject to which he has devoted his life is merely picked up at intervals snatched from a daily occupation, the nature of which deadens those very faculties which are necessary for the due appreciation of the most subtle poetical compositions. Painting and sculpture appeal with a certain power to the many; for, however ideal