

Tempered and Untempered Intervals

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Finale to "Loreley" (Mendelssohn). Conservatorium Concert (March 7): Octett (Gade); Fantasia, F sharp minor (Mendelssohn); Andante and Scherzo for Violin (David); Trio, D minor (Mendelssohn), vocal soli. Last Euterpe Concert (March 11): Overture, "Sturm und Drang" (Bolck); Violin Concerto (Beethoven); Symphony, C minor (Gade).

Berlin.—Concert of the Symphoniecapelle (February 27): Music to "The Ruins of Athens" (Beethoven); "Wotan's Abschied" and "Feuerzauber" from "Walküre" (Wagner); Choral Fantasia (Beethoven). Bilse Concert (March 1): Overture, "Dimitri Donskoi" (Rubinstein); Spanish Dances (Moszkowski); Septett (Beethoven); Overture, "Les Huguenots" (Meyerbeer). Concert of the Symphoniecapelle (March 5): Overture, "Faust" (Wagner); Symphony, C major (Schubert); Clarinet Quintett (Mozart); Scherzo (Cherubini); Overture, "Oberon" (Weber). Bilse Concert (March 8): Overture, "Zauberflöte" (Mozart); Violin Concerto, No. 1 (Bruch); "Phaëton" (Saint-Saëns); Symphony, No. 1 (Brahms); Overture, "Egmont" (Beethoven).

Heidelberg.—Historical Lecture and Concert by Dr. L. Nohl (March 20): Subject: The Development of Choral Music from the Oldest Times to the Present Epoch. Musical Programme: Homer's Hymn to Demeter (?); First Pythian Ode of Pindar (fifth century B.C.); "Der Wald hat sich erlaubet," for three voices (fourteenth century); "Alla Trinità beata," for four voices (fifteenth century); "Impropria," by Palestrina (1520-1594); Four-part Chorale, by Bach (1685-1750); Air, "O Isis und Osiris," by Mozart (1756-1791); Prisoners' Chorus from "Fidelio" (1770-1827); Four-part Song, "To the Forest" (Mendelssohn) (1809-1847); "Ave Maria," by Liszt (born 1811); "Wach auf," from "Die Meistersinger," by R. Wagner (born 1813).

Boston, U.S.—Concert of the Apollo Club (February 19): Hymn to Music (Lachner); Movements from Septett, D minor (Hummel); Duet, "Non fuggir," from "Guillaume Tell" (Rossini); "Evening's Twilight" (Hatton); "Song of the Spirits over the Waters" (Schubert); Songs and Glee (Rheinberger, Evans, Bishop).

Salem, U.S.—Concert of the Salem Oratorio Society (February 17): Verdi's "Requiem."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### TEMPERED AND UNTEMPERED INTERVALS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—I do not propose troubling you with any further remarks upon the German sixth. We all know how to use the chord, and that is, after all, the essential point.

Two of your correspondents, however, having referred to my first letter, I will, with your permission, address a word to each of them.

To J. F. I would point out that much smaller musical difficulties than are involved in a new signature for the minor key, have proved insuperable. My contention was that, taking our notation as it is, the relative signature is not obligatory upon any one; and I pointed out a way in which it may be, and frequently has been, avoided.

And to J. L. I would reply that I have throughout taken the tempered scale for granted. In pleading for untempered intervals, I think he has forgotten one circumstance. When violinists do make a distinction between, for example E♭ and D♯, they, in most cases, make it in an opposite sense to that demanded by theory. Such a passage, for instance, as the following—



is executed by them as if written—



E♭ being, as we know, theoretically the higher pitch of the two, it is the pitch demanded in this case by the ear of the performer.

A great player on a very poor instrument—unendurable in any hands but his—once showed me this necessity very

clearly. The concertina possesses separate reeds for E♭ and D♯, and although the pitch of these sounds is now identical (the instrument being equally tempered), there was in the earlier instruments a perceptible difference between them. Until the change was made, at his own suggestion, Regondi always, in passages of this nature, substituted the flat for the sharp. If he will make the inquiry, J. L. will find that solo violinists do the same.

The study of acoustics is most interesting, and so is the theory of colours. But I cannot perceive that musicians and painters are directly concerned with these sciences. Modern music being based upon the tempered scale, we must needs sacrifice either pure intonation or the greater part of our musical literature. And if pigments reflecting impure colours suffice for the needs of the greatest painters, the musician may well be contented with such an approach to pure intonation as is not incompatible with the higher aims of the composer.

I am, &c.,

C. W.

Dover, March 5, 1879.

### THE DIAPASON NORMAL IN SPAIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—Your readers will be interested to learn that by a Royal Decree of February 21st the adoption throughout Spain of the Diapason Normal (a=870 vib. per second) has been ordered.

The preamble *inter alia* recites: that a series of measures are proposed, which, having due regard for all interests, if they do not bring about the immediate general adoption of the Diapason Normal (and this result has not, in other countries, been attained all at once) will tend sooner or later to place Spanish lyrical art on a uniform footing with that of the most advanced countries of Europe.

The decree provides that the National School of Music, the Academy of Fine Arts, and all normal schools for elementary instruction where music is a compulsory subject, shall use the Diapason Normal. No subsidies shall be granted for any theatre, concert, school or society which does not adopt the same.

Measures shall be taken to supply military bands with instruments adjusted to the new pitch, and as far as practicable to introduce it into all churches.

No public moneys shall be employed in the purchase or renewal of instruments for hospitals, churches, &c., except upon proof that the said instruments are of the reformed pitch.

Such national funds as are at present available for the propagation and protection of music may be employed in the assistance of such orchestras, &c., as shall satisfy the authorities that they are without the funds necessary to make the change.

Standards of pitch are to be provided for public use at the Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, and the National School of Music, as well as at all provincial government offices.

A subsequent Royal Order appoints a commission of seven members to see that the above decree is duly carried out.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

10, Rushmore Road,

CECIL BURCH.

Clapton Park, E., March 17, 1879.

### THE MONOTONE AND SPEAKING VOICE IN CHURCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In his valuable Primer on "Church Choir Training," the Rev. J. Troutbeck gives it as his opinion that the "Speaking Voice" rather than the Monotone is suitable for the Church's prayers. Allow me to make a few remarks on this subject. The chief objection to the "Speaking Voice" is this, that so few of the clergy find themselves able to "speak" the prayers with sufficient simplicity. And what more trying to the worshipper than to listen to an unctuous, well-mouthed delivery, in which the minister gives, what he imagines to be, the right emphasis to certain sentences and expressions of joy or sorrow. In using the "Speaking Voice" for praying, one who is somewhat of an orator finds it difficult to avoid vanity and display, while a bungler, by his wrong emphases, &c., distresses the congregation. On the other hand, by saying the prayers on