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THOMAS AUGUSTINE ARNE: A BICENTENARY APPRECIATION.

By FRANK KIDSON.

What was the state and condition of English music in the year 1710? I do not ask what was the appreciation of music in England, but how it was regarded as an English national art, when, on March 12 of that year, was born, as son of Thomas Arne (the genteel upholsterer of King Street, Covent Garden), that little mite of humanity that was destined to add to its highest lustre.

To answer our question we may say that, on the whole, it was in rather a poor way. Purcell had been dead nearly fifteen years, though happily not quite forgotten. Dr. Blow had died a year and a half before. Jeremiah Clarke had, in December, 1707, shot himself, and John Eccles, though still alive, had retired from active work. Of the older school of composers, Daniel Purcell was alive, John Weldon also; and Leveridge and Carey were composing, with some other minor lights. Besides these there were sundry English vocalists, and performers on the organ, viol, violin or flute, for the hautboy had scarcely become popular. Many of these found some difficulty in getting a hearing among the crowd of foreigners that thronged London.

William Boyce was a baby, a month old, and was probably mostly in evidence as a vocal performer when his contemporary was born.

Purcell's operas were shelved in favour of the Italian operas brought from Italy by Thomas Clayton. Some of these operas were composed by Italians and others by Clayton himself, and it must be confessed that he made rather a sorry figure in his work.

Handel had not yet brought out his first English work, 'Rinaldo,' though it came in less than a year's time, and a further spell of Italian opera reigned until Master Thomas Arne grew old enough to show that something might be done musically with native talent and theme.

We need not enter very fully into the Arne biography. The details of this have been industriously collected by the late Mr. F. G. Edwards, and the reader has but to turn up the November and December numbers of the *Musical Times*, 1901, to get some very interesting particulars. Briefly it may be said that his father, Thomas Arne, was an upholsterer in a large way of business in King Street, Covent Garden, and that he had determined that his eldest son should have a professional instead of a tradesman's career. He therefore sent him to Eton, and ultimately young Arne became a lawyer's clerk. Dr. Burney heard from Arne's own lips how, at an early age, music possessed his soul. How he played at Eton on a cracked flute, and attended the opera in the servants' gallery, in borrowed livery. How, also, he played the spinet, with muffled strings, while the rest of the family were a-bed; and how he studied the violin under Festing. The father at last discovered the lad's determination to become a musician, and wisely gave in. Free to make music his profession, he taught his sister and his brother the art, and with much success. The former, Susanna Maria Arne, who married the brutal Theophilus Cibber in haste, had, perhaps, leisure to regret her matrimonial choice: she became a singer and an actress of great merit. She made her second stage appearance in her brother's first opera, and was frequently an exponent of his music.

Arne possessed great originality with a tunefulness that never left him. The stilted Italianized opera was yet in evidence, though the 'Beggars'' and the host of ballad operas that followed it had made vigorous protest. The music in these productions was supplied by the nondescript street tunes, selected without a particle of consideration as to appropriateness, and but lamely fitted with verses written to be sung to them. Addison's opera 'Rosamond' had been absurdly set by Clayton, and it was here that Arne got the chance to show what musical stuff he was made of. He wrote fresh music and his sister took the title-rôle in its first performance; this was at the Lincoln's Inn Theatre in 1733. The song that survived the opera was the one by which she made fame for herself and him, 'Was ever nymph like Rosamond.'

But 'Comus' was yet to come, and here Arne reached, in 1738, a high place. Two years after, in 1740, 'Rule, Britannia,' and those exquisite Shakespearean songs from 'Twelfth Night' and 'As you like it' at once raised Arne to the highest rank of lyric composers. No need to repeat the oft-told tale of the occasion which brought forth 'Rule, Britannia,' or to again refute the alleged crib from Handel; no need to enter into discussion whether Mallet or Thomson was responsible for the high-falutin nonsense that Arne wrote his music to. The 'Ode,' as it was called, did not immediately 'catch on,' and it was ultimately—when published 'by particular desire' by a second-rate music-seller —sandwiched between the music for his 'Judgment of Paris' and 'Sawney and Jenney,' a familiar dialogue in 'ye Scotch stile.'

It was at this period, say 1738 to 1750, that Arne was at his brightest, and most winning in his tunefulness. He led the way with dainty and charming airs for Marylebone, Ranelagh, and Vauxhall audiences. The songs themselves were artificial enough, of course. Damon and Philander were false to Chloe or Belinda, or vice versa. Peggy was happy with her rustic-lover, Roger, and discoursed of meads and cows, and so forth, and as a matter of fact the airs followed the lead thus set. They were, however, just suited to the songs, and were perfection for the jingle of the spinet or harpsichord. Some fall into a groove easily, but we have but to compare the unknown imitators of the Arne manner to see how superior the genuine article is. If we accept the little 'curly' character of the tune fitted to the 'Dresden shepherdess' kind of words, we can find a great deal that pleases in the periodical books of songs which Arne published himself, or through John Walsh. His son, Michael Arne, was one of the few to rival the Master in

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his own craft, as 'The lass with the delicate air' can sufficiently testify.

Arne took himself seriously when he produced 'Artaxerxes.' I am afraid modern audiences would not stand this opera in its fullness. It gradually faded until only 'In infancy our hopes and fears,' 'The soldier, tired of war's alarms,' and 'Water parted from the sea,' were the sole remnants of that once famous production. That the last-named was considered 'genteel' we have the bear leader's testimony in 'She stoops to conquer,' for it shares with the minuet from 'Ariadne' the honour of supplying the music for the bear's dancing. Arne was an English musician—a thoroughly English one—and if we are to believe many people, we never had much native talent that lay in that direction. Still, it seems to me that with all Arne's faults and with all his limitations, and these were but of his age, he should be far dearer to us than many of those foreign composers who supply our concert programmes with lyrics that are either, in translation, sickly sentimental or deadly dull, and whose music cannot have the same appeal to our English temperament. Yet beyond the three Shakespearean songs, 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind,' 'Where the bee sucks' (both more frequently used as test-pieces for children's singing, rather than as concert items), and 'When daisies pied,' what does the average person hear of Dr. Arne's music except 'Rule, Britannia'?

Arne is probably the most representative of English composers of the 18th century, save for Church music. It is true he did little instrumental work that is now known, though Mr. Moffat has resuscitated a Violin sonata of great merit* and it is more than likely that other buried work might be brought to life with advantage. Yet Arne is neglected, and shamefully so. His work has to be culled from old copies, published during the composer's lifetime, and this is accessible only in such storages as the British Museum, or the private libraries of musical antiquaries.

It will be interesting to note how many arrangers of concerts will remember the musician's two-hundredth anniversary, or, having remembered, will make a feature of Arne's music? I fear but few. Yet among the constantly-repeated items there could surely be a little room spared for some of his best music, vocal and instrumental, to let this generation know that worthy music could, at times, come from the brain of an Englishman.

* 'Trio Sonata in E minor' in 'Old English Violin Music' (Novello).

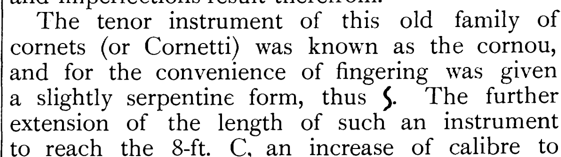
HOW A TRUMPET IS MADE.

By D. J. Blaikley.

III.—Trumpets and Horns with Side-Holes.

It has been demonstrated in the foregoing articles that trumpets and other kindred instruments of fixed lengths are limited in intonation to the natural harmonic scale, and that although from the eighth to the sixteenth harmonic many notes agree with those of the diatonic scale, yet the agreement is far from being complete. But if we reject the various attempts that have been made to derive the diatonic scale from any one root, we can plainly see that from two roots standing a fourth apart, as from C to F (doh to fah), elements may be chosen, some of them being common to both harmonic scales, which give the diatonic scale in its completeness. Thus if we take a horn in C, the 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 15th and 16th notes are correct for C, D, E, G, B and C, and the 11th, 13th and 14th notes are incorrect. But supplementing this horn by one in F, a fourth higher, we obtain F, G, A, as its eighth, ninth and tenth harmonics, and thus from two instruments of fixed length we are able to produce the accepted diatonic scale, which may very reasonably be regarded as being derived from two roots or generators. This arrangement, requiring two instruments and two players to produce a scale of only one octave, though scientifically correct, is manifestly inconvenient, and the difficulty would be increased if we endeavoured to fill up the lower intervals of the harmonic scale; for more and more tubes of different lengths, giving different fundamental tones, would be required.

The art of wind instrument making is therefore to a large extent the art of treating a tube of fixed length in such a way that it virtually becomes many tubes of different lengths, giving different fundamental tones, and consequently different series of harmonics. From mediæval days to the time of Bach and Gluck the family of instruments known as Zinken or Cornetti were much used, and these instruments afforded one means of attaining the desired end. They were usually made of wood, with a conical bore, and were played with cup-shaped mouthpieces. By the use of side-holes closed by the fingers, the different lengths referred to above were obtained; these holes were usually seven in number, six for the fingers and one at the back for the thumb. The finger-holes enabled the player to produce a diatonic scale, and by over-blowing the compass could be extended to two octaves or rather more. From accounts by Mersenne (*Harmonie Universelle*) and others, the cornetti appear to have been much appreciated, but as they now have only a historical interest, it will be sufficient to say that they were made of various pitches, covering a range from tenor to soprano. The chief defect of the larger ones was due to the fact that the finger-holes were neither so large nor spaced so far apart as requisite for good intonation. Theoretically a side-hole should be large enough to act as if it were the open end of a tube, but when the finger-holes are small in comparison to the diameter of the instrument, this condition is impossible, and many complications and imperfections result therefrom.

The tenor instrument of this old family of cornets (or Cornetti) was known as the cornou, and for the convenience of fingering was given a slightly serpentine form, thus . The further extension of the length of such an instrument to reach the 8-ft. C, an increase of calibre to

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