

John Stainer

Author(s): F. G. E.

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## THE MUSICAL TIMES

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR.

MAY 1, 1901.

## JOHN STAINER.

'I THINK you must tell Mr. — that if he will be so good as to wait till I am dead, you will give him a few facts about my life from authentic sources in THE MUSICAL TIMES within a black border! Also if he will wait a little longer, he may perhaps hear a lot of utterly impossible and grossly untrue legends; such rubbish seems to spring up on the grassy graves of sinners as rapidly as on those of saints.'

These words formed part of a letter written by Sir John Stainer to the present writer as recently as January 28 last. He and Lady Stainer were then staying at Dover, preparatory to taking a long tour in the South of France and Italy. Free from any pressing claims upon his time and energies at home, he looked forward to the enjoyment of a leisurely holiday. He was in the best of health and spirits during his wanderings in the sunny south, journeying here and there, writing the usual cheery letters to his friends, and making plans for the future. On the last day of March (Palm Sunday) the travellers were at Verona on their way to Venice. A visit to the ancient Amphitheatre had occupied part of the morning, and after lunch at the Hotel de Londres, Sir John retired to his room for his usual afternoon nap. On the return of Lady Stainer from church she found him in a shivering condition, and suffering severe pain in his chest. Remedies were applied, but, alas! to little purpose. In a few moments the music-loving soul of John Stainer was calmed in death.

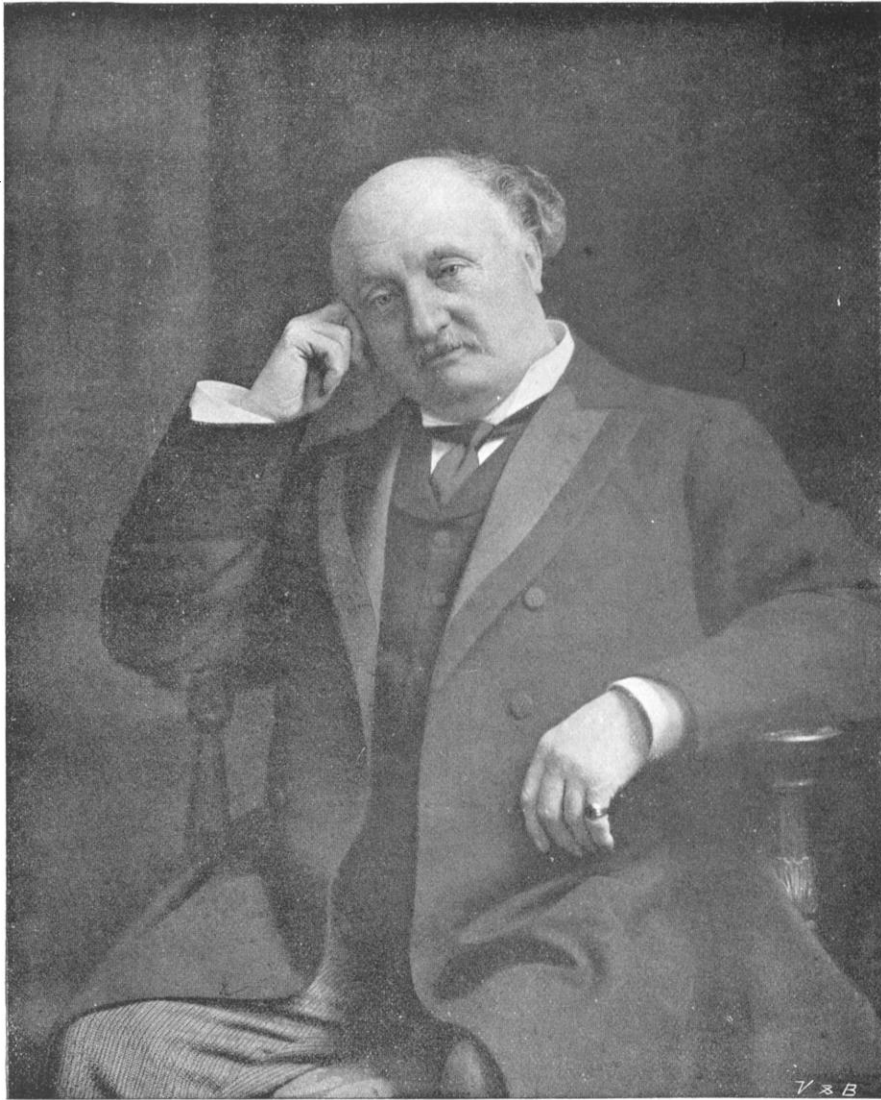
Farewell, dear brother! We shall miss thy genial presence and sunny smile; but the memory of thy sympathetic, warm-hearted nature we shall ever cherish.

John Stainer was born on June 6, 1840, at 2, Broadway, a little thoroughfare, that strangely belied its name, which ran parallel to and north of St. Thomas's Street, Southwark. It is impossible to give a photograph of the house, as the street and the habitations thereof have been absorbed in

the maw of London Bridge Railway Station—the southern portion of the great terminus. His father, William Stainer, was schoolmaster of the parish school of St. Thomas's, Southwark, with which avocation he combined the duties of Registrar of Births and Deaths for the district—in fact, he had the felicity of registering his own son John, as the Registers at Somerset House duly testify. The mother of the infant John, formerly Miss Ann Collier, could claim descent from an old Huguenot family settled in Spitalfields. The family consisted of four girls and two boys. The elder son, the Rev. Dr. William Stainer, who died in 1898,\* devoted his life with self-denying enthusiasm to ameliorating the condition of the deaf and dumb. Like his only brother, John, he was a man of a singularly kind and sympathetic nature. The eldest daughter, Miss Annie Stainer, held, from the year 1849, for fifty years, the post of organist of the Magdalen Hospital Chapel, Streatham, and during the whole of that half-century she never missed a single service—probably a unique record!

In the course of an interesting conversation for the purposes of this article, Miss Stainer, the organist above referred to, recalls some interesting incidents connected with the childhood of her brother, John. 'I was fourteen years his senior,' she says. 'He was the sweetest, most darling little mite in the world, and he had a singularly affectionate disposition. He was very delicate as a child, and he became my constant care and delight. We had an organ in our house which had a fine polished mahogany case and gilt pipes. Our friends thought a good deal of it, but we young people used to turn up our little noses at it. At one time we had five pianos in the house; one of them had pedals—full compass. My father was a most enthusiastic lover of music. Passionately fond of children, he was a patient and very clever teacher, who made everything attractive and interesting to his pupils and his children. He was my brother John's first teacher of music, although he could not play very much himself, his performances being of the slow and sure kind. John used to watch him as he played the organ, and at the slightest indication of any hesitation he would say, "Five shillings for a wrong note, dad!" My father always instilled into us that "duty was the first thing," and this we have tried to carry out. As for my dear brother John, I cannot say anything too good about him.'

\* See THE MUSICAL TIMES of May, 1898, p. 341.



John Stainer

## EARLY EFFORTS.

'There was no organ in St. Thomas's Church (of which parish school my father was the master), but there was a small chamber organ in my home on which I played as soon as I was tall enough to reach the keys when *standing!*' The foregoing thread of autobiography is contained in a letter Sir John wrote us on January 21. Strangely enough, during his recent and fatal tour in Italy he one day asked Lady Stainer to buy him a sketch-book. This she did, with the result that on the first page he sketched the identical organ of his childhood, with himself as the *standing* performer! It is with peculiar pleasure that we are enabled to furnish our readers with a reproduction of this interesting sketch, by the special and kind permission of Lady Stainer, to whom it is a very precious relic of Sir John's last days. This is the only sketch in the book; but he evidently intended it to be the first of a series, as on a later page we find the following notes: 'First steps,' 'After a successful solo,' 'Pursuit of art under difficulties,' 'The book-closet,' 'Praise ye, &c.' 'C. Lockey and the solo.' Then under the heading of Oxford: 'The gentleman's tired,' 'Corfe's Knocker,' 'After the Dead March,' 'A walk with the V.P.' But—the remaining pages are blank.

## REMINISCENCES OF HIS BOYHOOD.

At the age of seven Stainer could play Bach's Fugue in E major ('The saints in glory fugue,' as old Sam. Wesley called it) and the Overture to 'Acis and Galatea.' An interesting glimpse of the home life of the Stainers during Johnnie's boyhood period has been kindly furnished to us by his old friend the Rev. Arthur Whitley, M.A., head master of Witton Grammar School, Northwich. Mr. Whitley writes under date of the 4th ult. as follows:—

By that wondrous and subtle 'divinity which shapes our ends,' the late Sir John Stainer and myself were, at a very early age, brought into close friendship with each other. Though for half-a-century I have never failed to keep in touch with him, yet my most intimate knowledge dates from the 'little Eton jacket' days. I was a Foundation Scholar of St. Paul's School, then opposite the Cathedral, and Johnnie was a chorister at the Cathedral Choir School—so our acquaintance was 'out of school.' On being let out of afternoon school I invariably rushed across to the Cathedral to hear the 'Anthem,' which for six years I do not think I ever missed. I sometimes came in for the Psalms, but always for the Anthem. After one of the services I waited for Stainer and, waylaid him, said: 'Do you know you sang that verse most magnificently.' (It is not often boys of ten years of age compliment each other.) He replied: 'You are very kind to say so. Which way are you going?' I replied: 'Down Cheapside.' 'Then may I accompany you?' 'With pleasure.' And thus it was that our lasting acquaintance began. After that, it was a very rare thing for us to miss each other in walking home, the little beloved disciple, as I thought him, always

instructing me in some musical mystery. Once when my little friend Johnnie asked my opinion as to the 'root' of the first chord of Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March,' I 'squared' my ignorance by purchasing a pennyworth of apples!

All this ended in our visiting each other's homes. Many opportunities therefore presented themselves of seeing Stainer's home-life. It was very humble, very sweet, very instructive. At a very modest house in St. Thomas's Street the boy, who was destined to become the great musician, passed his boyhood—no green grass, no budding trees, no sound of singing birds about that neighbourhood! And yet, inside that humble dwelling-place, perfect love, perfect harmony, and exuberance of mirth existed. It was a perfect holiday for me to go to tea with Stainer. His father was a schoolmaster of the old type. Wearing with his work among the unruly lads of that locality, he would come in, snatch up his violin and solace himself with playing a hymn tune! Little Johnnie frequently came in at such a time, and would sit down at the pianoforte and accompany the good old father with his evening hymn. Of course there was plenty of merriment over it; but I could see clearly enough that the old man was led by the influence of the little beloved disciple. Full of fun himself, a clever punster even at that early age, he nevertheless was the little child that seemed to lead them—his loving and devoted parents. His dear mother was devotedly fond of her boy, and it would be difficult for me to name amongst my acquaintances a more devoted, loving family than the Stainers. To know them made you better.

The one great topic of conversation, as a mere boy, was Church music. Johnnie's whole soul seemed to be entirely wrapped up in that.

I also had the pleasure of frequently meeting at the Stainers' the late Sir Arthur Sullivan, in his boyhood. Both these embryo musicians were bashful. Sullivan's bashfulness, as a boy, seemed to me to avoid the chance of being asked to play. Stainer was always ready to sit down and give you his harmony to some old hymn tune or chant; his bashfulness was what I may term simply domestic modesty. While little Johnnie was always the ladies' man at home, he never allowed himself to be spoilt. Here is an instance:—

Stainer's eldest sister was an accomplished musician and organist. It was her custom after tea and before we had the usual round game of cards, with nuts for counters, to get us boys to sit down and play something, never mind—she would insist upon it—however simple. I had played a new hymn tune, Johnnie came next with a Fugue, and when Sullivan was called upon he was nowhere to be found. Search was made for him everywhere—upstairs, downstairs, behind doors, but all in vain. We then all sat round the table and began our game. Before very long someone uttered a shriek and jumped up, and the truth was then revealed: Master Arthur had quietly crept under the table and bided his time to pinch the legs of someone who had urged him to play! Needless to say Johnnie dragged him out and made him sit down to accomplish his appointed task. I remember that his contribution on that occasion was a song he had written—the title of which he called 'The dying stag.' He was full of fun, and the title *may* have been a ruse.

As I look back on the early home-life of John Stainer, I can now see what an inspiration its influence gave him for such tunes as his settings of 'There's a Friend for little children,' 'The Saints of God,' 'Jesu, gentlest Saviour,' and many others of deep religious feeling. His life was a pure, devoted, and consistent one, whose

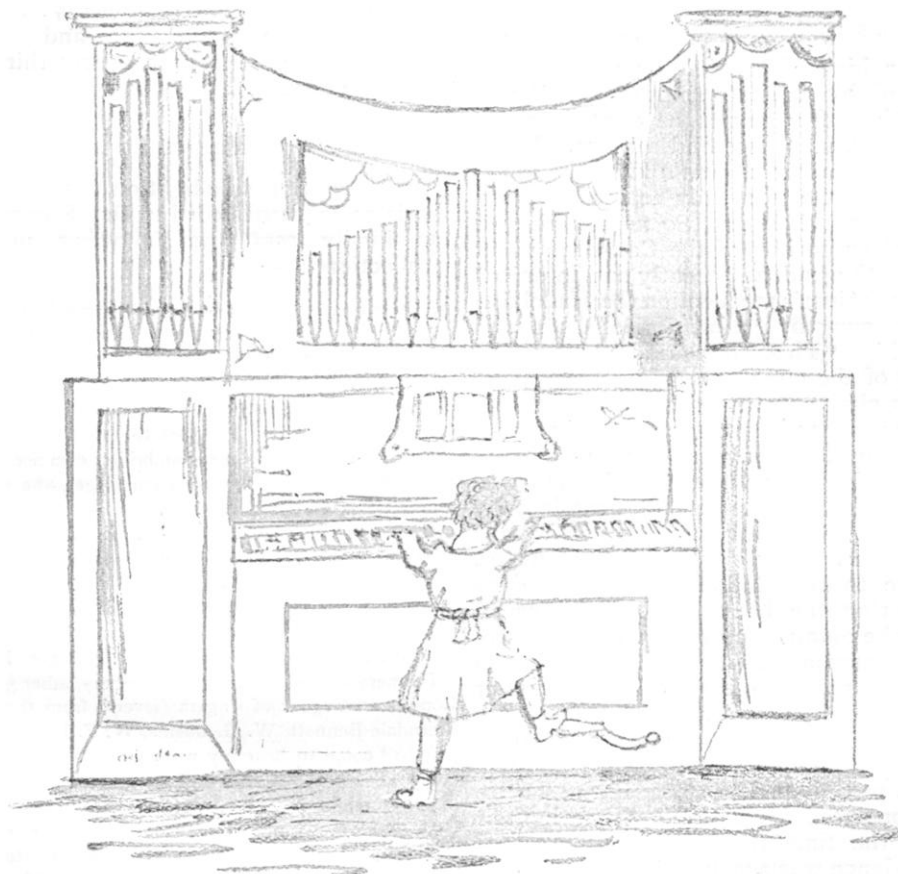
aim from boyhood to manhood was to elevate Music, to bring our choral services to a level in some degree worthy of the Creator of all good things. I shall not look upon his like again.

MR. HENRY GADSBY'S RECOLLECTIONS.

In April or May, 1848 (when he was 'nearly eight'), Stainer became a probationer in the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, and a year later

he was 'admitted a full chorister in the Dean's vestry—June 24, 1849.' Among his fellow-choristers was Mr. Henry Gadsby, who has very kindly sent us his recollections of his friend in the following interesting communication:—

I have much pleasure in acceding to your request. As there have appeared in several papers one or two inaccuracies, I should like to state that Sullivan and



*Early efforts*

PENCIL SKETCH OF HIMSELF MADE BY SIR JOHN STAINER SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH.

*(Reproduced, full size, from the original by the kind and special permission of Lady Stainer.)*

Barnby were never his fellow-choristers, and that it was Stainer and I who were caught jumping over the chairs in the Cathedral, and that on another occasion we were very nearly caught in the pulpit, which at that time stood in the Choir.

One of our chief diversions on our way home from school was to dance about on the timber logs seasoning in the river by Southwark Bridge, and allow ourselves to be rocked

on them by the wash occasioned by the river steamers—and it was a miracle that we did not end our career in a watery grave.

Stainer and I were the only choristers who accepted the offer of Mr. William Bayley, the music-master of the boys, to learn harmony—a thing we never regretted. So Stainer and I plodded through Hamilton (the *superfluous* 2nd man) and dear old Goss's Harmony.

I well remember the happy musical evenings we used to spend together as boys at his father's house in St. Thomas's Street; little Johnnie playing the Inventions and easy Fugues of John Sebastian on the pianoforte. We also used to play pianoforte duets—one of the favourites being the 'Hailstone Chorus.'

We entered the Cathedral together, but Stainer went to Tenbury before I left the choir. The last time I saw my dear old friend was at our mutual friend Sullivan's funeral, and as we walked down the Nave, I little thought that I should never see him again.

#### ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL FIFTY YEARS AGO.

Sir John himself has left on record a few incidents of his choristership at St. Paul's, which, with a few stories he related to the present writer, may here find a place. When he entered the choir he was told by the senior choristers that he was fully entitled to spurmoney, if he could get it! So neglectful were the clerical authorities of the Cathedral about having 'all things done decently and in order,' that within Stainer's recollection the Hallelujah chorus was sung by 'a handful of boys and two men!' 'This,' he said, 'is strongly suggestive of the clergyman who, finding that he and his clerk constituted the whole congregation, commenced the exhortation with 'Dearly beloved Roger, the Scripture moveth you and me in sundry places, &c.' He well remembered that the rain used to percolate the dome, and he frequently saw men with pails and sawdust mopping up the pools of water. Admittance to the Cathedral in those days (except during the hours of Divine service) could only be obtained on the payment of twopence each person. It was in the interest of the vergers to speedily clear the Cathedral after Morning or Evening prayer in order to secure all the 'tuppences' they could. The Minor Canons had a share in these admission and other fees, providing they attended the service on their appointed days. If they were in their places by the time the Venite was reached their attendance was accounted good. At that time the Choir was enclosed by the organ screen, and Stainer used to tell how he would often hear a *prestissimo* rush of footsteps down the Nave, soon to be followed by the scene of a Minor Canon struggling with a corpulent verger at the entrance of the Choir in order that he (the Minor Canon) might squeeze himself in before 'The Lord's Name be praised!' Happily all this is changed, and St. Paul's Cathedral is now a model of order and decorum.

As a chorister Stainer attended the choir school, of which the Rev. Minor Canon Coward was the master, at No. 1, Amen Court, the house in which he afterwards resided as organist of the Cathedral. The choirmaster at that time was William Bayley (the composer of a once popular 'Cantate Domino' and 'Deus Misereatur') and, of course, John Goss held the post of organist. Stainer sang at the funerals of Turner (1851) and the Duke of

Wellington (1852), both of whom are buried in St. Paul's. In regard to the latter event, he has recorded the rehearsal at Store Street music-room of that noble anthem 'If we believe that Jesus died,' written by Goss for that impressive occasion. 'When the few bars *pianissimo* had died away,' he says, 'there was a profound silence for some time, so deeply had the hearts of all been touched by its truly devotional spirit. Then there gradually arose on all sides the warmest congratulation to the composer—it could hardly be termed *applause*, for it was something much more genuine and respectful.' These words were written nearly thirty years after the event.\*

#### DR. STEGGALL'S REMINISCENCES.

An interesting side-light on Stainer as a boy chorister is furnished by Dr. Steggall, who has kindly sent the following interesting recollections:—

I am afraid I cannot help you very much in the way of 'Staineriana,' for circumstances have prevented a very close social intercourse during the adult period of my dear friend's life.

The occasion of my first acquaintance with him was when, in the year 1851, I went to St. Paul's to get a boy for the treble solos in my Cambridge exercise (they had not then a good solo boy at Cambridge), and one of the Minor Canons—the Rev. Mr. Coward—introduced him to me. Not only his beautiful voice, but his general personality and manner, made a great impression in the University town, and I remember Professor Walmisley being much taken with him. Looking at him admiringly during lunch after the rehearsal, he turned to me with: 'What a sweet child it is, and what a pretty little pipe it's got!'

I remember, too, that at the dinner my father gave to the London contingent of singers (several from the R.A.M.), Sterndale Bennett, W. G. Cusins, W. F. Low, and others, who had come to hear my work, how he was noticed by everyone and how readily he answered a question in Latin, jokingly made by an undergraduate, who, by-the-bye, showed his appreciation by handing half-a-crown across the table. From that time I took the greatest interest in the clever boy who, till he went to Tenbury, frequently visited me. He had—even at that early age—a remarkable facility in extempore playing in the style of Bach, and very wonderful it was. It is probable that later on the trammels of a knowledge of counterpoint and of the correct treatment of fugue may have affected this facility—but I do not know. It is with these earlier days that I am best acquainted, and—as I told him only a very short time ago—I have always loved to think of him as a boy; but no one has watched his subsequent career with more affectionate interest than I.

I may add that in the 'Fifties' (and after) I often lectured both in London and in the country, and when the subject was church, or other choral music, Stainer almost invariably assisted in the vocal illustrations. He was also at that time a constant and zealous attendant at the rehearsals and concerts of the Bach Society under Sterndale Bennett.

\* From the obituary notice of Sir John Goss, in THE MUSICAL TIMES of June, 1880. It need no longer be a secret that this article—excellent in taste, literary merit, and warm appreciation of the life-work of his distinguished predecessor at St. Paul's—was written by Sir John Stainer.

Dr. Steggall modestly refrains from mentioning the fact that he gave Stainer some lessons in counterpoint, also that in his (Dr. Steggall's) degree exercise the St. Paul's boy with 'the pretty little pipe' sang a long sustained high B flat. The reference to Stainer's assistance at the rehearsals and performances of the old Bach Society furnishes an opportunity of re-printing the 'card of thanks,' encircled by a Gothic border, which the youthful chorister received.\*

THE BACH SOCIETY  
Instituted 1849.

The Committee beg gratefully to acknowledge the services of

MASTER JOHN STAINER

on the occasion of the 1st Performance in England under the direction of W. Sterndale Bennett of the

GROSSE PASSIONS MUSIK  
by

John Sebastian Bach  
Hanover Rooms, April 6th, 1854.

During his choristership Stainer received some organ lessons from George Cooper, sub-organist of St. Paul's, to whom, by the way, he dedicated his fine anthem, 'The morning stars sang together.' On one occasion when Stainer and Arthur Sullivan were with Cooper, the latter remarked: 'How I should like you two boys to race one another in life.' Stainer was entirely self-taught, however, in regard to composition. In one of his letters to us he said: 'I never had a *lesson* in the art of composition in my life, and have never had anyone to whom I could go for advice, so it is a marvel that I have not made even a *greater* fool of myself!' Apparently while still a chorister he was appointed, at the age of fifteen, organist of St. Benet's and St. Paul's, Upper Thames Street, a Wren church, of which the Rev. Minor Canon Coward was the rector. It is now the Welsh Church.

#### TENBURY.—THE TURNING-POINT.

The turning-point in Stainer's career came in a very remarkable way. The incident which led thereto cannot better be told than in his own words:—

It was soon after Ouseley's appointment [in 1855] as Professor [of Music at Oxford] that he came to examine the chorister boys of St. Paul's, of whom I was one. I shall never forget the nervousness with which I approached this musical and clerical dignitary when summoned to meet him in the drawing-room of our master, the Rev. J. H. Coward. But I played a Prelude and Fugue by Bach, from the 'Forty-eight,' from memory, and, at its conclusion, Sir Frederick gave me a few words of good advice and much kindly encouragement. . . .

The next interview I had with him was full of moment to me; it constituted a turning-point in my life. I was then between sixteen and seventeen years of age, and was playing the afternoon service at St. Paul's, both Goss and Cooper being absent for a few days. During the

service Ouseley came quickly into the organ loft, and, after greeting me, watched me closely as I accompanied the music from the old 'scores.' On the same evening I had a letter from him to say that the object of his visit to St. Paul's had been to find an organist for St. Michael's College, and he offered me the post. I must apologise for thus introducing myself into this paper,\* but it explains why and how I came to know so much about the character and abilities of my patron and friend. In 1857, after a railway journey to Worcester, and then twenty miles on the top of a coach, I found myself settled in the charming building which he had raised at his own cost for the advancement of church music. . . .

After evening service and a meal in the hall I studied or practised, or, as was frequently the case, was invited by Sir Frederick to pass the evening with him. In the splendid musical library he had collected there was a rich store of pure vocal masses of the Italian school in MS. in the old clefs, including not only the soprano and alto, but often also the now obsolete mezzo-soprano and baritone clefs. At that time he had not found opportunities of going carefully through these, and, most fortunately for me, I was asked constantly to play them through to him, he turning over, and from time to time making critical remarks. I gained much from this almost unique chance of studying the vocal writers from, say, 1550 to 1700.

Miss Stainer, in recalling the day of that eventful visit of Sir Frederick Ouseley to St. Paul's, says (although the details differ very slightly from those related by Sir John himself): 'When John came home to dinner, he said, "Sir Frederick Ouseley came to the organ loft at St. Paul's to-day. He wants an organist for his College at Tenbury." "Then he'll offer it to you, John," I at once said. "No, no," he replied. In the evening he said that Sir Frederick had again visited the organ loft at the afternoon service, at which John, as in the morning, played. "Then he has offered it to you, John," to which he could not say no.'

The present Warden, the Rev. John Hampton, of St. Michael's College, Tenbury, who was Ouseley's right-hand at the foundation of the Institution and who succeeded him, has kindly furnished the following recollections of Stainer's organistship at Tenbury—1857-59:—

Stainer worked hard at the organ and pianoforte and did a good deal of composition—to wit, his Bachelor's exercise and several anthems: 'I saw the Lord,' 'The righteous live,' and others in Ouseley's Special Anthems. He also composed some part-songs and madrigals, afterwards published, I believe, in Oxford. Besides playing at the two daily services, he gave pianoforte lessons to the boys for two hours every day. He was very fond of out-of-door sports, and joined in cricket with the boys and masters. And so his days passed each like the other.

I can well remember our astonishment when he first appeared amongst us, in the month of July, 1857. He looked too young for the post, which we considered to be so very important. However, Sir Frederick assured us that 'he would do,' and we soon found out that was true. All the while he was here I believe he was most sincerely loved by us all, and he was forward to help everyone with whom

\* See a series of articles on 'Bach's Music in England' in THE MUSICAL TIMES, from September to December, 1896.

\* 'The Character and Influence of the late Sir Frederick Ouseley,' by Sir John Stainer, read before the Musical Association, December 2, 1889.

he came in contact. The curate, a first-rate mathematician, read with him and formed a very high opinion of his capabilities. We thought him bumptious, but we soon found that we were mistaken, for he was humble enough and seemed glad to be plainly spoken to by any whom he conceived had a right to speak. We were all right sorry to lose him and sincerely glad whenever he came to visit us.

Sir John was made an Hon. Fellow only last November, and we looked forward to his appearance next Michaelmas, when we were to do a new Anthem or Service with strings and organ accompaniment—'L'homme propose,' &c.

St. Michael's College, Tenbury, was (and is) an ideal spot for a young church musician. Here Stainer had not only leisure for study, but the friendship and advice of so learned a scholar and musician as the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, the Warden of the College.



MASTER JOHN STAINER.  
AGED 12.

Moreover, he had the run of the splendid musical library in addition to daily practical experience in cathedral music. During his Tenbury period he took the degree of Bachelor of Music at Oxford, on June 10, 1859. The more serious side of his work has been mentioned by the Warden in the letter already quoted. But there were humorous incidents not a few. Ouseley played the guitar, and he used to pass the evening singing Italian or Spanish national songs to his own accompaniment, always with admirable skill and good taste. He made Stainer a present of a guitar, which instrument the young organist

assiduously practised. Moreover, Ouseley actually arranged Bach's first Prelude for the guitar, expressly for Stainer! The manuscript bears the following title:—

BACH'S 1ST PRELUDE. Arranged for the guitar and carefully fingered by F. A. G. O.

At the end of the autograph Ouseley has written:—

'Ad usum amici Johannis Stainer aptatum præludium hoc, quo melius quantum organis tantum etiam citharâ præter omnes emicaret D. D. D. amicus citharœda Michaelensis.'

which may be translated—

This Prelude, adapted for the use of his friend John Stainer, in order that he might excel on the guitar no less than on the organ, was presented to him by his friend the guitarist of St. Michael's.

#### GUTTA-PERCHA ORGAN PIPES!

One of Stainer's boy friends in London was Arthur Sullivan, two years his junior, and a chorister of the Chapel Royal. The two young gentlemen used to spend their half-holidays in trips together on the steamboats on the Thames, their enjoyment of those penny voyages being considerably enhanced by a copious consumption of nuts and oranges. Sullivan visited Stainer at Tenbury, at a time when Ouseley was erecting a large organ in the chapel, and indulging in all sorts of experiments—pipes, tubular actions, &c. Stainer and Sullivan conceived the idea that gutta-percha would make cheap and resonant organ pipes. Gutta-percha was scarce at Tenbury, and the young innovators' financial resources were limited; but, nothing daunted, they procured a few old gutta-percha soles and set to work with ardent enthusiasm to carry out their designs. The process, however, appealed so strongly, not to say disagreeably, to Sir Frederick's olfactory nerves that he at once stopped further operations, for obvious reasons. Sullivan always declared that there was a bit of jealousy on Ouseley's part in stopping the development of that important invention!

Sir Frederick Ouseley was very fond of Stainer, and treated him as a son. So highly did he estimate the capabilities of his gifted *protégé* that he wrote to him early in 1865 (before Stainer had attained his twenty-fifth birthday) as follows: 'I have set my heart on resigning my Professorship in your favour, as soon as you are M.A. and Mus. Doc.' With peculiar pleasure does the present writer look back upon the delightful visit he paid to Tenbury last autumn, in the genial company of Sir John Stainer and his eldest son, Mr. J. F. R. Stainer, of which excursion an illustrated account appeared in the issue of this journal of November last.

OXFORD.

The next step in the career of John Stainer was an important one. He became organist and choirmaster of Magdalen College, Oxford.



Although a mere stripling of nineteen, he at once endeared himself to his fellow-workers and made his mark in the University. The *Oxford Chronicle* of July 14, 1860, under the heading 'Magdalen College,' refers to him as 'the newly appointed and highly accomplished organist, Mr. Steiner' (*sic*). A beautiful tribute to his genial personality is furnished by an old Magdalen chorister, who, in writing a letter of condolence to Lady Stainer the other day, said:—

One of the *very* first to see and know 'Mr.' Stainer, at Magdalen, was myself. Directly we choristers saw him and heard him we adored him and did so ever after.

Over and above his unapproachable playing, he was one of the very few touched with the radiance of the inner life of sacred music.

In the year following his appointment to Magdalen he was elected organist to the University of Oxford, a great honour for a youth of twenty. Music did not, however, entirely absorb his intellectual faculties. He went into residence at St. Edmund Hall in order to read for his Arts degree, with the result that he obtained his B.A. in 1864. He worked steadily on, and a more important degree followed on November 9, 1865, after he had satisfied the examiners for that of Doctor of Music. His exercise on that occasion, the oratorio of 'Gideon,' was about to be performed (on November 8) in the hall of Magdalen College, but so great was the audience to hear the work that the Vice-Chancellor moved an adjournment to the Sheldonian Theatre, where the performance took place. The members of Magdalen College presented their organist with his Doctor's robes, accompanied with the following letter:—

Dear Dr. Stainer,

We beg to offer you our warmest congratulations on your recent degree, and to request your acceptance of the appropriate robes, as a mark of sincere personal regard for yourself and high appreciation of your most successful efforts to sustain the musical reputation of this College and of the University of Oxford. With our united good wishes for your future happiness, we remain,

Dear Dr. Stainer,

Yours very truly,

(Signatures follow).

The above letter was signed by forty-six members of the College, including the Rev. H. R. Bramley and the Rev. L. S. Tuckwell, both of whom were afterwards editorially associated with the recipient of this gratifying testimonial. Very soon after he had taken his Doctor's degree Sir John Stainer married Miss Eliza Cecil Randall, only daughter of Alderman Randall, of Oxford. The ceremony took place at St. Aldate's Church, Oxford, on December 27, 1865, the chief officiating clergyman being the bridegroom's attached friend, the Rev. Sir Frederick A. Gore Ouseley.

#### EARLY MADRIGALS AND SIR HUBERT PARRY.

A practically unknown publication belongs to the Oxford period of Stainer's career—a collection of eight madrigals, issued by subscription, and published by Messrs. Houghton

and Tuke, Oxford, in 1864, and of which, by the way, there is no copy in the British Museum Library. One of these madrigals is written for two choirs of five voices, the remainder being for 5, 6, or 8 voices. In 1867 he proceeded to his M.A. degree, and in the same year was appointed a University Examiner in Music. One candidate in the first batch who came before him was Hubert Parry, then an athletic Etonian. Concerning this event Sir John wrote us (June 6, 1898): 'I was one of his three examiners (Dr. Corfe and Sir F. Ouseley being the other two) when Parry came here [to Oxford] as a lad from Eton to take his degree of Mus. Bac. Of course we all thought him bright, intelligent, and talented. While he was an undergraduate of Exeter College, I was



SIR JOHN STAINER  
AT THE AGE OF 21.

conductor of the Exeter College Musical Society, and Parry played occasionally pianoforte solos and accompanied songs and other things admirably. It may interest you to know that I adapted Schumann's "The Luck of Eden-hall" to English words for performance by that Society and that Parry accompanied (of course excellently) and I conducted the first performance of that cantata in this country.' Sir Hubert Parry dedicated to Sir John Stainer his *Te Deum* in D, a product of his Eton days.

Another candidate in the same year (for the doctor's degree) was the late William Pole. It was on this occasion that Stainer first broached

to Pole the subject of a learned society for musicians, which seven years afterwards came into existence as the Musical Association—the conception of the Society is undoubtedly due to Stainer. In addition to the conductorship of the Exeter College Musical Society, he held similar posts in connection with the University Amateur Musical Society and the Oxford Orpheus Society. He not only took a very active part in, but exercised a highly beneficial influence upon the musical life of the University and the city of Oxford. He founded the Oxford Philharmonic Society and conducted its first concert, June 8, 1866. His services were constantly in demand for every important function—*e.g.*, the conduct of the music at the laying of the foundation stone of Keble College (April 25, 1868), and so on.

#### SOLO ORGAN PLAYING AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

It may not be generally known that as far back as 1868 Sir John Stainer began to play organ solos at the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts—an innovation due to Sir George Grove. On the first occasion, November 7, 1868, when he was announced as 'Dr. Stainer (of Oxford),' he played Bach's G minor Prelude and Fugue and Mendelssohn's Fourth Organ Sonata. Mr. J. W. Davison noticed the performances of the Magdalen organist in the following appreciative terms:—

The experiment of an organ performance was entirely successful, thanks to the admirable playing of Dr. Stainer. The organist of Magdalen College is a master of his instrument. Neither the Sonata of Mendelssohn nor the Fugue of Bach presented any mechanical difficulties that were not conquered with perfect ease; while in point of style and finish there was nothing of which hypercriticism could complain. We may especially instance the *Allegretto* in the Sonata, and the whole of the Fugue as examples of that pure *legato* execution which is the *sine quâ non* of organ playing. The works themselves are well known enough not to require description, and it therefore only remains to be said that Dr. Stainer was applauded with marked emphasis at the close of his task.—(*Musical World*, November 14, 1868.)

During several seasons Stainer played solos at the Saturday Concerts and assisted at oratorio performances. In this way he introduced, by playing the solo part, two organ concertos by native composers—one by Professor Prout, in E minor (October 19, 1872), and the other, in F, by his old fellow-chorister at St. Paul's, Mr. Henry Gadsby (January 24, 1874).

#### LONDON—ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral never acted more wisely than when they invited Dr. Stainer to become organist of the noble sanctuary committed to their charge. Up to this time (1872) that clerical body had persistently neglected the musical service, with deplorable results. The repeated protests of Sir John Goss were fruitless. With the infusion of new blood into the powers that be

a thorough reformation of the choir and the entire services became possible. Stainer was the very man for the post. He was young (only thirty-one), energetic, of acknowledged ability, a diplomatic organiser as well as a first-rate organist, and last, but by no means least, he had plenty of tact. In a very short time his influence and genius made the service at St. Paul's a model for cathedrals and churches throughout the land. His masterly accompaniments—always devotional and in perfect taste—no less than his remarkable extemporizations were listened to by organists from all parts of the world with delight and benefit to themselves, and to others through them.

In the management of such ideally beautiful services as the Passion Music of Bach, 'St. Paul,' the 'Last Judgment' (which he accompanied throughout on the organ with such wonderful skill), the Sons of the Clergy Festival, &c.—in all these the administrative faculty, no less than the musical all-roundness of Stainer, was supremely in evidence. The same high level of reverent excellence characterised the daily services, guided as they were by that master hand. During his *régime* the splendid Choir School was erected and equipped in 1874. (An illustrated account of the school appeared in our issue of May, 1900.) Thus were the foundations of those traditions which we associate with the music of St. Paul's Cathedral laid, and the superstructure raised and maintained by John Stainer. All honour to his memory! He had an able lieutenant in his old Oxford pupil, Sir George Martin, who, succeeding to the office of chief musician on the retirement of Stainer in 1888, worthily carries on the good work in our Metropolitan Cathedral. It may not be without interest to mention that the last composition written by Sir John Stainer was a six-part unaccompanied Communion Service in C, which he composed expressly for the choir of the Cathedral he had served so well for sixteen years.

#### VERSATILITY.

Although the subject of this sketch is primarily regarded as a church musician, he possessed versatile gifts. For instance, one who speaks with authority says that he was one of the finest readers of a full score in this country. He had an acute sense of absolute pitch. He could play the drums on an emergency at an oratorio performance and at children's parties at the Deanery of St. Paul's he delighted the little folks with his extemporaneous quadrilles, with their brilliant runs *à la* street piano-organ! His great hobby was his fine library of between 2,000 and 3,000 books, of which he was very proud. It is specially strong, both in rareness and extent, in English song books, of which Sir John was an assiduous collector. A catalogue of this section of the library was printed for private circulation in 1891, but the collection has since

been doubled. The preface to the catalogue—a presentation copy of which, containing many additional entries in his own hand, is before us—concludes with the following pathetic sentence :

‘I must express my gratitude to my children, J. F. R., E. C., and C. L., for having compiled this for the press, and I can only hope that the collection will be still thought worthy of their care in the not far distant time when it will have the additional value of being a memorial of bygone days.

‘OXFORD, May, 1891.’

Campanology was another of his interests and his library contained a varied collection of books on that subject. He had not a little to do with the erection of the fine peal of bells in St. Paul's in 1878, during the period of his organistship of the Metropolitan Cathedral.

#### VARIOUS APPOINTMENTS.

The career of Sir John Stainer subsequent to his appointment to St. Paul's is so well known that a brief record is all that is necessary to complete the strictly biographical portion of this article. Mention, and worthy mention, must be made of his work in London beyond the walls of the Cathedral he loved so well and which had the first claim upon his energies. From 1873 to 1888 he held the important post of organist of the Royal Choral Society—important by reason of the task of accompanying the weekly rehearsals of that huge body of singers. It was a great treat to sit in the semi-gloom of the Albert Hall on those Monday evenings and listen to those organ accompaniments of Stainer's which he played on Father Willis's gigantic instrument with such unerring facility and technical attainment. And how he seemed to enjoy it! As conductor of the London Male Voice Club he was, for thirteen years, the life and soul of those pleasant and informal music-makings held at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street.

For many years he was professor of harmony and composition at the Crystal Palace School of Art. At the inauguration of the National School of Music in 1876 he became professor of the organ, and at Easter, 1881, he succeeded his old friend Arthur Sullivan as Principal. He was a juror at the Paris Exhibition of 1878, when he was created Chevalier of the Legion of Honour of France. In 1882, on the death of John Hullah, he became Inspector of Music in Training Colleges for the Board of Education, a Government appointment which he held at the time of his death. In 1889 he succeeded his early friend Sir Frederick Ouseley as Professor of Music in the University of Oxford—thus the desire of Ouseley, expressed twenty-four years earlier, was fulfilled. He resigned the professorship in 1899, when he was succeeded by Sir Hubert Parry. Upon his retirement from the organistship of St. Paul's

Cathedral, when he went to reside at Oxford, he was knighted at Windsor, July 10, 1888, by Queen Victoria.

Other offices held by and distinctions conferred upon him may be summarised as follows:—

Hon. Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and of St. Michael's College, Tenbury; Hon. Mus.D. (1885) and Hon. D.C.L., Durham (1895); sometime Member of the Board of Musical Studies, Cambridge University; and Examiner for Musical Degrees in London University; Hon. Member of the Royal Academy of Music; Member of the Council of the Royal College of Music; Member of the Philharmonic Society; Hon. Fellow of the Tonic Sol-fa College; Vice-President of the Royal College of Organists; President of the Plain Song and Mediæval Music Society; President of the London Gregorian Association; President of the Musical Association, which he practically founded; and Master of the Worshipful Company of Musicians for the present year.

Before enumerating his compositions, reference may be made to the cordial relations which existed between him and his publishers, Messrs. Novello. Beginning with the late Mr. Henry Littleton, and continuing with his sons and successors, this friendly connection remained unbroken to the time of Sir John Stainer's death and covered a period of thirty years; moreover, he was always ready to give his valuable counsel and advice whenever an opportunity for doing so arose.

The following list is a sufficient proof of Sir John Stainer's industry in regard to the creative achievements of his busy life:—

#### COMPOSITIONS.

##### ORATORIOS, &C.

Gideon (his exercise for the degree of Doctor in Music); The Daughter of Jairus, Worcester Festival, 1878; St. Mary Magdalen, Gloucester Festival, 1887; Crucifixion, first performed at St. Marylebone Church, February 24, 1887.

##### ANTHEMS.

Antiphons, The Seven Greater.

And all the people saw the thunderings. Composed for the London Church Choir Association Festival, St. Paul's Cathedral, November 8, 1883.

And Jacob was left alone.

Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion. Dedicated to Rev. J. R. G. Taylor (Hereford).

Behold, God is my Helper.

Behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation.

Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above.

For a small moment have I forsaken Thee. Dedicated to Dr. Corfe.

Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.

Honour the Lord with thy substance.

Hosanna in the Highest.

I am Alpha and Omega.

I desired wisdom openly in my prayer.

I saw the Lord. Double choir.

It came upon the midnight clear.

Lead, kindly Light. Dedicated to Herbert A. B. Wilson.

Leave us not, neither forsake us.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.

Composed for the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, 1887.

Let not thine hand be stretched out to receive. For Hospital Sunday.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

ANTHEMS—*continued*.

Lord, Thou art God. (With orchestral accompaniment.) Festival of the Sons of the Clergy, St. Paul's Cathedral, 1887. (Jubilee year.)

Lo! summer comes again. (With orchestral accompaniment.) Dedicated to the Rev. F. H. Hichens.

Mercy and truth are met together.

O bountiful Jesu, O sweet Saviour.

O clap your hands. (With orchestral accompaniment.)

Composed for the Eleventh Annual Festival of the Richmond and Kingston Church Choral Association, 1873, and dedicated to Captain Malton.

O Saving Victim, slain for us. Composed for the Baptist Church Hymnal, 1900.

O Zion that bringest good tidings. Dedicated to the Rev. Dr. Sparrow Simpson.

Sing a song of praise.

The hallowed day hath shined upon us.

The Lord is in His holy temple.

The morning stars sang together. Dedicated to George Cooper.

The righteous live for evermore. Dedicated to the Rev. W. C. F. Webber, Sub-Dean of St. Paul's.

The Story of the Cross.

There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. Composed for the Wedding, in St. Paul's Cathedral, of the late Mrs. Paget and the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, March 28, 1883.

They have taken away my Lord. Dedicated to the Rev. Dr. Troutbeck.

They were lovely and pleasant in their lives.

Thou, Lord, in the beginning.

Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts.

What are these that are arrayed in white robes? Composed for the Dedication Festival of All Saints' Church, Lathbury, Bucks, 1871.

Ye shall dwell in the land.

## SACRED MUSIC, VARIOUS.

Services; Office of the Holy Communion (in various keys); 158 hymn tunes (collected in one volume and published in 1900); Carols (various, including the collection edited in collaboration with the Rev. H. R. Bramley, M.A.); twelve sacred songs for children (originally published as 'Holy gladness,' and illustrated); Editor of St. Paul's Cathedral Chant Book; one of the Editors (the last of the five) of the Cathedral Psalter, and of the Cathedral Prayer Book, with the Rev. W. Russell; a Choir Book of the Office of Holy Communion; the Seven-fold Amen, &c.

## SECULAR VOCAL MUSIC.

Madrigals, including the Triumph of Victoria and Flora's Queen (the words by his son, Mr. J. F. R. Stainer), the latter of which he contributed to 'Choral Songs by various writers and composers in honour of Her Majesty Queen Victoria,' edited by Sir Walter Parratt; part-songs; a book of seven songs; six Italian songs; and various single songs.

## ORGAN MUSIC.

Twelve pieces (in two books); Jubilant March; The Village Organist, edited in conjunction with Mr. F. Cunningham Woods; Organ arrangements (five numbers); and Organ Primer.

## PROFESSORIAL LECTURES DELIVERED AT OXFORD.

- Nov. 13, 1889.—Inaugural Lecture. 'The present state of Music in England.' (Published.)
- Feb. 27, 1890.—The characteristics of Schumann's Songs.
- May 5, 1890.—Mendelssohn's Oratorio, 'Elijah.'
- Nov. 19, 1890.—Carols, English and Foreign.
- Feb. 12, 1891.—Origin and Development of the Ground-Bass.
- May 6, 1891.—The styles of composers as exhibited by various settings of the same lyric.
- Nov. 30, 1891.—Mozart's 'Requiem.'
- March 15, 1892.—Canons as a form of vocal composition.
- June 8, 1892.—Music in relation to the Intellect and Emotions. (Published.)
- Nov. 12, 1892.—Lute, Viol, and Voice.

- Feb. 1, 1893.—Palestrina's Mass, 'Æterna Christi Munera.'
- May 4, 1893.—Composer and performer.
- Nov. 29, 1893.—Song and Dance.
- Feb. 28, 1894.—Mendelssohn's Oratorio, 'St. Paul.'
- June 6, 1894.—Composer and hearer.
- Dec. 5, 1894.—The Choral Responses of the English Liturgy.
- Feb. 19, 1895.—Handel's Oratorio, 'The Messiah.'
- June 12, 1895.—On the influences which affect melodic form.
- Nov. 19, 1895.—Purcell.
- March 11, 1896.—Tye's Mass, 'Euge Bone.'
- May 4, 1896.—The secular compositions of Dufay.
- Nov. 21, 1896.—Italian song-writers of the classical period.
- March 10, 1897.—Early harmonisation of Psalm-tunes, and their treatment in Motet form.
- June 16, 1897.—Music as a branch of education.
- Dec. 8, 1897.—Morley's 'Plaine and easie introduction.'
- March 9, 1898.—Hans Leo Hassler.
- June 8, 1898.—Our Cathedral music.
- Nov. 9, 1898.—Psalm and hymn tunes (*continued*).
- March 8, 1899.—Madrigalian composers of the Gallo-Belgian School.
- May 5, 1899.—The influence of fashion on the art of music.

## PAPERS READ BEFORE THE MUSICAL ASSOCIATION AND PUBLISHED IN THEIR PROCEEDINGS.

- April 5, 1875.—'On the Principles of Musical Notation.'
- Jan. 3, 1881.—'The Principles of Musical Criticism.'
- Dec. 2, 1889.—'The Character and Influence of the late Sir Frederick Ouseley.'
- July 16, 1895.—'Address of Welcome to American Musicians.'
- Nov. 12, 1895.—'A Fifteenth Century MS. Book of Vocal Music in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.'
- Nov. 13, 1900.—'Musical Directions in early English Psalters.'

Sir John's Professorial lectures at Oxford were no mere pedantic monotonous mumbings, delivered to a handful of somnolently inclined listeners. On the contrary, they were most interesting and instructive. With their admirable musical illustrations, and delivered in his bright attractive manner, large audiences eagerly flocked to the Sheldonian Theatre—even deaf Dons were to be seen in the front row with their hands to their ears in order that not a word should be lost.

## VARIOUS PAPERS AND ARTICLES.

- 'Church Music.' Church Congress, Leeds, 1872.
- 'On the Progressive Character of Church Music.' Church Congress, Brighton, 1874.
- 'Music considered in its effect upon, and connection with, the Worship of the Church.' Church Congress, Exeter, 1894.
- 'How can Cathedrals best further the Culture of Church Music?' *Quarterly Church Review*, January, 1879.
- An Address to the Scholars of the National Training School for Music, Kensington Gore, September 27, 1881, by J. Stainer, Principal. (Printed.)
- 'Technique and Sentiment,' in the *Monthly Journal of the Incorporated Society of Musicians*, February, 1893.
- 'Does Music train the Mind?' A paper read at the Tenth Annual Conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, Dublin, January, 1895.
- 'On the rhythmical form of the Anglican Chant.' *MUSICAL TIMES*, January, 1872.
- 'Sir John Goss.' (Obituary Notice.) *MUSICAL TIMES*, June, 1880.
- Julian's 'Dictionary of Hymnology.' (Review Article.) *MUSICAL TIMES*, April, 1892.

## LITERARY MUSICAL WORKS.

Sir John Stainer rendered excellent service to the literature of the art of music. He had a pleasant style and sought to interest his readers rather than display his own erudition, which was by no means superficial. First and foremost must be mentioned the valuable publication entitled 'Dufay: and his contemporaries,' in the compilation of which he had the invaluable co-operation of his eldest son and daughter. A very interesting letter written by him on the 'fifths' in this work may be quoted from—it is dated 'Antibes, Jan. 11, 1898':—

The consecutives open up a most interesting historical fact, not hitherto suspected, namely, that Organum and Diaphony (movements in 4ths and 5ths) must have held complete control over the music of church and *people* for a couple of centuries at least. All historians touch lightly on Diaphony, as if it were a mere *passing phase* of musical evolution, whereas, our book will prove that up to the very threshold of modern music consecutive triads were *loved*. If you heard the Dufay examples at the Musical Association played on three violas, or on four, you must have been struck with a certain weird charm when the old man crosses the parts in order to obtain the 5ths, in which he and his hearers *delighted*.

Another very important and large volume of Bodleian transcripts (similar to the Dufay book), and entitled 'Early Bodleian Music,' Sir John has left quite completed. The work is in the press and will shortly be issued by Messrs. Novello.

Next in importance is the 'Dictionary of Musical Terms,' which he compiled in collaboration with his old fellow-chorister, the late W. A. Barrett. 'A Theory of Harmony' (1871), dedicated to his friend, Max Müller, aroused much hostility amongst the dry-as-dust theorists. How amused he was to learn that a copy of the treatise, purchased at a second-hand book shop, contained such annotations as 'stuff,' 'vile,' 'nonsense,' and so on. 'The Music of the Bible' showed his deep reading in that subject and is a book full of interest to the student. Smaller, but useful literary productions are 'Music in relation to the intellect and the emotions' and 'A few words to candidates for the degree of Mus. Bac., Oxon.' In collaboration with Mr. G. Phillips Bevan he wrote an interesting 'Handbook of St. Paul's Cathedral.' To the foregoing must be added his editorship of the 'Church Hymnary' (1898), for use in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Ireland. He not only threw himself heartily into this task—a very congenial one to him—but wrote several tunes for this widely-circulated hymnal.

Sir John Stainer was the original editor of Novello's Music Primers and Educational Series, Sir Hubert Parry being subsequently associated with him. The quartet of primers which he contributed to the series were 'The Organ,' 'Harmony,' 'Composition,' and 'Choral

Society Vocalisation.' Of these four educational works by Stainer nearly 320,000 copies have been sold—'Harmony' leading the way with 186,000! Do not these figures speak for themselves?

## PERSONALITY.

It is exceedingly difficult to portray the personality of a man in cold print, especially a man of so genial, so sympathetic, so loving a nature as our departed friend. Generous to a degree, he never paraded his liberality. He was always ready to help any worker in the cause of music with his advice, his sympathy, his kindly words of appreciation, and, if necessary, his substance. He took a special interest in his Inspection work for the Board of Education because his father had been a schoolmaster, and because he regarded the influence of those young men and women on the musical education of the children to be committed to their care of supreme importance.

Three recently received tributes to his memory may be quoted. The first is from a veteran amateur, who writes:—

If, as I doubt not, there should be an obituary notice of the late Sir John Stainer in your paper, will you allow me to contribute a few supplementary words?

Years ago, when I was honorary secretary of a Church Choral Association, Stainer not only wrote for one of our Festivals his fine anthem, 'O clap your hands,' and a grand Processional hymn, but volunteered to come down from London to conduct, the result being most successful and striking. Independently of his great erudition, musical and otherwise, a more unostentatious, genial, and kind-hearted man I never expect to meet.

The next is from an organist and choirmaster of a London suburban church:—

Dear Stainer! What a lovable man—always ready to do a kindness, and a valuable service, to those (like myself) who hadn't an atom of *claim* upon him, in any sense of the word. What must he have been to personal friends?

The last, which furnishes an exceedingly interesting and valuable sidelight on his personality, has been kindly sent us by one of his old Oxford friends, Mr. Edward Chapman, M.P., Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, who writes as follows:—

My lifelong friendship with John Stainer began when I joined Magdalen College, Oxford, as a tutor, about 1869. He was organist and the life and soul of several musical societies among the members of the city and university. Two memories stand out pre-eminently—one, his musical exercise for his degree, 'Gideon,' arranged to be performed in the College Hall, which rapidly became so overcrowded that we had to adjourn and join in a stampeo rush up the High to the Sheldonian Theatre, where it was successfully executed before an enthusiastic audience; the other was the manner in which he revived and brought to perfection the singing of madrigals at the annual Commemoration Concert, held in the College Hall by members of the choir and college, past and present, which for the selection and execution of madrigals and part-songs became unique.

As a keen lover of music, without much technical knowledge of the art, though he always called me a musician, I shall never forget my many sittings with him in the organ loft of the College Chapel during evening service. His accompaniment of the Psalms and his impromptu before the anthem were the like of which I have never heard before or since, and I do not hesitate to say that many of these impromptus exceed in beauty any of his written compositions. With bowed head and closed eyes he would on the soft stops seem gently to unfold the theme of the coming anthem, working out and expanding its ramifications with exquisite delicacy, then coming to the end, his face would light up as though emerging from a far off dreamland, and, with head erect he would conclude, and glide into the anthem. It is most difficult to describe his accompaniment of the Psalms. The chant first simply played through, say, on the choir organ, would then become a wonderfully harmonized interpretation of the words, no brilliant or dashing execution; but if I may call it an inverted and dispersed harmony on the solo or choir organ, no two verses alike, but sustaining and truly *accompanying* the choir, ending with a cathedral custom on which he always prided himself—viz., the introduction of the lower pedal notes in the verse before the *Gloria Patri*.

I must mention here how much I was impressed by his deep piety and devotion. The organ loft was no place for conversation or criticism. If at any time when two or three of us who had the privilege of sitting with him began to talk, immediately was the finger raised for silence and a look which said this is a place for silent prayer and praise only. I sat with him on the last night he played the organ on leaving for St. Paul's, in March, 1872, and turned out the light as we left the loft, he rushing through with moistening eyes a row of choristers and friends to say good-bye. I closed the door to the loft and could not bring myself to pass through it again for more than ten years.

His return to us in Oxford as Professor of Music was hailed with delight by all. His ruddy, merry face had lost none of its brightness, nor his manner its freshness, while his interest in the progress of his art was as keen as ever. What I specially noticed in him as Professor was his unique power of welding men together and the total absence of professional jealousy. The petty quarrels of rival societies he would ignore, and no differences or difficulties between individuals could long survive an interview with him, disarming as he did by his acute yet genial and sensible manner the difficulties which rival interests brought up before him. Once he said to me in his laughing way, 'If certain officials cannot be brought into line and agree, I shall run them all round the Parks together in a wheelbarrow.'

His total absence of professional jealousy was seen in the way he was ever ready to give a helping hand to young men, giving them opportunities of playing on the Albert Hall or Crystal Palace organs, to encourage and bring out latent talent, when many another less eminent man would have found an excuse to play himself.

If I may add to the above characteristics a simplicity and reverence of character, combined with a geniality and humour, ever ready to show a kindness and meet the advances of a friend, I feel I have drawn a picture of the most lovable of men. Those who had the privilege of *entrée* to his library will treasure the memories of the Sunday afternoon cigar, when, let a musical question be started, instantly some rare book would be taken down from the laden, yet admirably arranged shelves, to illustrate it, and then another and yet another brought to bear upon it until

one could not tell what most to admire, the splendid collection of authors or the erudition and enthusiasm of their beloved owner. With this I close my tribute to an old friend whom I first saw in Magdalen more than thirty years ago, and whom I at last saw laid to his rest in the beautiful Garden Cemetery at Holywell, his grave hard by the stately elm trees which line the Grove of Magdalen.

He would go out of his way to do a kindness and he would spare no pains and grudge no time in order to give pleasure to anyone. A college friend of his son's and a great admirer of Sir John's once asked for an autograph. 'I found my father in the library,' says his son, 'constructing a musical puzzle and in a great state of delight at the difficulties it gave rise to. "This will do capitally for your friend," he said, in handing it to me as soon as it was completed. I don't know what put the idea into his head, but he used occasionally to amuse himself in that sort of way—witness the hymn "Per Recte et Retro," No. 381 (second tune) in the "Church Hymnary." Through the kindness of Mr. Julius Bertram, of Stevenage, for whom Sir John wrote the musical puzzle above referred to, we are enabled to print the amusing topsy-turvyism.

J. STAINER. April, 1892.

If turn'd top-si-tur-vey you'll find I shall go, If you



doubt it, the proof of the pudding the eat-ing will show.

doubt it, the proof of the pudding the eat-ing will show.



If turn'd top-si-tur-vey you'll find I shall go, If you

He was very fond of children, for whom he wrote some of his most attractive hymn tunes, such as, for instance, 'There's a Friend for little children,' which he wrote in five minutes in the bedroom (at the Langham Hotel) of the Rev. Sir Henry Baker, one of the compilers of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern'; and his sweetly simple setting of 'Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me' (No. 601 in the 'Scottish Hymnary'), an ideal evening hymn for a wee bairnie on the verge of slumberland. Once, in his capacity as President of the Royal College of Organists, he addressed his brother organists in these words:—

'I was one Sunday walking at some seaside place, and on turning a corner I heard a number of Sunday School children singing a hymn I had composed. I thought to myself, "I want no higher reward than this for all my work." I can only tell you that I would not exchange it for the very finest monument in Westminster Abbey.'

The man who can give utterance to such sentiments as these is a *great* man: he is one who calls forth our esteem, our respect, our love.

And then he was so full of fun. How he would stop short in those country lanes about Tenbury last year in order to finish his laugh at some story that had been told him, or that he would tell himself! His letters, too. How interesting and charming they always were. Humour was by no means their least characteristic feature. Here are some extracts. The first speaks for itself:—

‘If ever you see the ghost of Matthew Wilkins, butcher and hymnodist, please run a sword through him and pin him to the wall. I have just bought a “Wilkins” hoping to find “Bedford,” but it is nowhere to be seen. He seems to have turned out various unpagged, unindexed books when not employed in chopping meat.’

This, contained in an invitation to lunch with him in passing through Oxford after a Croft expedition in Warwickshire:—

‘We can then discuss Tate and Brady after taters and bread—eh?’

In response to a request for his photograph:—

‘Be content; take *two*. (Not that I have the least wish to compare you to Gehazi.)

‘J. S.’

Lastly, he was so essentially *poetical*. Would that there were more musicians similarly endowed! His own words in this important connection may be quoted. They are from a preface he wrote to ‘Music in Song,’ compiled by L. L. Carmela Koelle (1883):—

The true poet must ever be attracted by the charms of Music; he must sing of her; he must perforce chant her praise. For he cannot but realise how much the two arts, Poetry and Music, possess in common. Both reach their highest excellence when they are characterised by lofty thought, graceful rhythm, and melodious diction: the thought which teaches and edifies; the rhythm which appeals to our love of regularity; and the melody which gives emotional pleasure. . . .

The elements and characteristics of the two arts are so interwoven that they can with difficulty be unravelled. Has a man no Music in him? he will never become a poet; has he no Poetry in him? he will never become a musician.

And was he not a poet in the versifying sense of the term? To this we answer, ‘Yes’—a poet imbued with deep religious feeling. In looking back to that Palm Sunday when our dear friend drew his last breath, and when we think of the circumstances attending his translation, it seems that no more fitting conclusion to this imperfect sketch of his valuable and useful life could be found than these

lines, his own beautiful and soul-steeped words:—

Thou art the Way; how sweet the thought  
That I by Thee, on Thee, through Thee,  
Am safely to the Father brought!  
O Way so straight, and yet so passing wide!  
So spanless, though it seem to me,  
By dark’ning hedge my onward path to hide.

Thou art the Truth: how high! how deep!  
How strong to break sin’s galling chain,  
And in love’s bands the soul to keep!  
O Blessed truth, that we on Truth may feed,  
And by our faith in Truth may gain  
The inward help to hold the truth we need.

Thou art the Life: O sacred breath  
Which from Thy lips did warm this clay!  
I live in Thee and fear not death:  
For Thou, O Life, whose death hath made me live,  
When breaks the dawn of endless day  
To me, with Thine elect, Thy life will give.

The funeral of Sir John Stainer took place on the 6th ult., Easter Eve—the twelfth anniversary of the death of his friend and predecessor in the Oxford Professorship, Sir Frederick Ouseley. The chief mourners were the four sons of the lamented musician, Mr. J. F. R. Stainer, Mr. Edward Stainer, Mr. Charles L. Stainer, and Mr. W. E. Stainer, and his son-in-law, Mr. F. P. M. Schiller. A very large and representative gathering of musicians and distinguished University men were present to show their respect for one who was so greatly esteemed—not only by his professional brethren, but by a wide circle of men having varied interests. The first part of the service was held in the Church of St. Cross, Holywell, Oxford, when the choir of Magdalen College, under Dr. Varley Roberts, sang Spohr’s ‘Blest are the departed.’ The interment took place in Holywell Cemetery, while the birds sang an appropriate Requiem.

F. G. E.

THE KING has been graciously pleased to continue the Royal patronage of the Royal Academy of Music accorded to the Institution by the Sovereign since the granting of its charter by George IV. in 1830. The Duke of Connaught has become President of the Academy in succession to the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE is announced to deliver a course of lectures, at the Royal Institution, on Sir Arthur Sullivan. The three discourses, illustrated with vocal and instrumental selections, will be given on Thursdays, the 2nd, 9th, and 16th inst., at 3 p.m.

THE conclusion of the article on Sir John Goss is unavoidably held over till our next issue owing to the pressure on our space. During the next few months we hope to give biographical sketches (with the usual special portraits) of Dr. Boyce, Mr. Alfred Hollins, Dr. Steggall, Herr Wilhelmj, and Mr. Henry J. Wood.