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# The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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## ENGLISH MUSIC.\*

Dr. Walker has set out to write a history of English music from the standpoint of the musician rather than that of the antiquarian or biographer. A book of this kind was much wanted, and the author has produced a work which will be valuable to the scholar without losing its interest for the amateur. Dr. Walker is, inevitably, deeply impressed with the salient facts of his rather melancholy story. He sees England, under John Dunstable, the pioneer of Europe in the creation of modern music at the beginning of the fifteenth century. He sees after a temporary lapse the great names of Tye, Whyte, and Tallis, to which succeeds the extraordinary efflorescence of the Elizabethan madrigal writers and the splendid achievements in ecclesiastical music of Byrd and Gibbons. After that comes the Renaissance of the Restoration, which saw the emergence of the art into the full air of secularity and publicity, and the rise of the supreme and versatile genius of Purcell. Here, one would think, was the foundation laid for a great and rapid development of an English school of music, but instead of this the historian is confronted with the alien despotism of Händel, which dominated musical England for, one may say, a century and a half, only to be succeeded by an equally sterile subservience to another great foreigner, Mendelssohn. After this comes, like a ray of sunshine, the birth of the modern English school. The story is, it has been said, a depressing one, and the contemplation of it has to some extent prejudiced Dr. Walker's exposition. His narration of the history previous to Händel is wonderfully full and sympathetic.

Händel himself, though Dr. Walker is too good a musician not to recognise his obvious genius, is less fairly treated. His instrumental music is dismissed in half a page, only a few pieces being deemed worthy of specific commendation. The wonderful violin sonata in A-major is, for instance, just mentioned as "music that arrests and fixes the attention." Again, the duet, "The Lord is a man of war," is dismissed as conventional, without any consideration of such finely dramatic phrases as the setting of "His chosen captains," etc. So, too, Arne is "a somewhat small man possessed of one special talent, by which alone he lives... the gift of pleasant, fresh tunefulness." It is the same with all the composers of these two lamentable intermediate centuries. Practically the only two who come in for any positive appreciation are the Wesleys, the elder of whom was a strenuous opposer of Händel, and is not without resemblance to the early ecclesiastical composers. Attwood's music is "quite enjoyable in its mild way." Bishop had some slender talents, but only squandered them. Hatton has a "slight but pleasant talent." "To Anthea," though greatly overrated, is "quite pleasant, cleanly written work." Sterndale Bennett is put very little higher. Sullivan plainly had a vitality and technical equipment which might have done something to raise English music to the level of the real masters; but it seems doubtful if he ever achieved anything likely to be permanent in the higher branches of his art. A pardonable irritation at this failure leads Dr. Walker to the most palpable injustice in the whole volume—his treatment of the Savoy operas. When, however, we come to the modern English school, gratitude and hope quicken the historian's sympathies once more, and he writes with an insight as ardent and true as that which marks his treatment of the pre-Händelians. For adequate reasons given in the preface, he deals only with five living composers, Mackenzie, Cowen, Parry, Stanford, and Elgar. His criticism is in every case admirable, the appreciation of Parry being especially welcome at a time when the real value of that composer's work is in danger of being obscured by the pretensions of a younger and more clamorous generation. That of Elgar (though his faults are clearly noted) is perhaps a little coloured by the writer's general bias.

The book ends with a careful chapter on Folk-music, and one on general characteristics. It is profusely illustrated throughout with musical quotations, and is full of much new and useful matter. In particular, one may hope that Dr. Walker's indication of the disgraceful amount of work by England's greatest composers remaining unpublished may bear fruit.

\* A History of Music in England, by Ernest Walker. (Clarendon Press.)

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## NEWS OF THE WORLD.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday.—Further details of the Secretary of the Treasury's annual report on the state of the national finances for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1909, are now available. The report states that since the Treasury has not at present, either in the banks or in its vaults, materially more than a working balance it will be necessary to sell either bonds or certificates of indebtedness to meet the total deficit for the year of 73,000,000 dollars.

In due course it would seem that some flexible factors in the annual taxation would require to be introduced to provide for the annual rise or fall of the receipts. The hard rigidity of the present revenue system, with its recurrent economical agitations, cannot always satisfy the government of the nation. The opinion is expressed that it would be unfortunate if the current impulse towards true and real economy should seek to curtail any of the wise instruments of the Government demanded by the interests of the people. Departments are advised to scrutinise every opportunity for reduction of expenses of administration.

The absence of anything like a Budget has undoubtedly led to a great deal of extravagant appropriation. The indebtedness of the Panama Canal to the Treasury General Fund amounts to 97,000,000 dollars, and the continuing outlay for construction adds to the drain upon general revenues, and it is desirable that the settlement of the account should be begun.

Dealing with the demoralisation of the Customs, the Report states that it is clear that the widespread disposition of returning American travellers to evade the payment of legal duties has greatly helped to create the conditions which have become intolerable.

The demoralisation is accentuated by the frequent willingness of responsible citizens to specifically corrupt the Government servants.

The necessity for banking and currency reform is universally recognised, and whatever may be the change when it does come it must be fundamentally right, and not another makeshift. It must at least be the beginning of a permanent system. At present there is neither an adjustable currency nor trustworthy surplus reserves, two absolutely essential features of any banking system upon which the finances and the commerce of the great American nation can se-

curely rest. To secure these essentials the looked-for reform must deal with fundamentals.

WASHINGTON, Thursday.—To cover the deficit of \$73,000,000 of the fiscal year now ended, Secretary of the Treasury McVeagh proposes, in his annual report, the issue of Panama Canal Bonds at a higher rate of interest than the present two per cent Bonds, which serve the banks only as a basis for their note circulation. Simultaneously with the taxation of banknote currency guaranteed by deposited United States Bonds, certain measures will be taken to prevent a depreciation of the present two per cent Bonds which might otherwise occur as a result of the issue of the new three per cent Panamas. This new issue, in Mr. McVeagh's opinion, is further desirable for assessment purposes, and the introduction of the requisite elasticity in money circulation would be greatly accelerated thereby.

BOSTON, Thursday.—Mr. McVeagh, Secretary of the Treasury, delivered a speech here last night on financial and tariff matters. He defended the Republican party's attitude towards the tariff, which was in favour of revision and a reduction of many duties. This attitude has made itself felt in the Aldrich Tariff Law, which embodied many notable reductions. The Republicans did not get sufficient credit for their endeavours in this respect. The movement in favour of reduction did not end with the 1909 Tariff Law, however, since the Tariff Commission anticipated in that measure would propose a series of amendments and reductions as a result of their investigation into international tariff conditions.

(From our correspondent.) NEW YORK.—There are plenty of signs that we are not at the end of the tariff controversy. By the tone of many of his recent speeches President Taft is evidently preparing the way for a rupture with the Aldrich-Cannon coalition. The probable imminence of protection in Great Britain, the uncompromising attitude of Canada towards protests from the United States regarding the high Canadian tariff, and Germany's disposition to retaliate on American imports,—all these factors are pressing heavily on the whole-hoggers on this side of the Atlantic. There is a growing recognition that America cannot much longer afford to play on the principle that "heads we win, tails you lose." It is quite on the cards that sweeping tariff revisions will have to be made without delay if our export trade is not to meet with severe rebuffs. Republican spokesmen are busy assuring the country that the G.O.P. preserves an open mind on the tariff,—a sure sign of a coming climb-down. The party will undoubtedly meet its Nemesis in 1912 if it allows two or three autocrats to much longer dictate the nation's commercial policy regardless of future contingencies.

NEW YORK, Thursday.—A despatch from Puerto Cortez has just been received here stating that martial law has been proclaimed in Honduras. This is understood to connote a recrudescence of the revolutionary agitation of last year, which was officially stated to be suppressed, but has revived as a result of the Nicaraguan conflict.

HONGKONG, Thursday.—It is reported from Macao that a number of Chinese soldiers have landed on the island of Sao Jao, contiguous to the frontier of Macao, ostensibly to compel the payment of taxes, which, as a matter of fact, are due to Portugal. The Chinese troops forcibly carried off several natives and killed and wounded many who protested that they were under the protection of Portugal.

GIBRALTAR, Thursday.—The British cruiser Donegal collided yesterday with the Hull steamer Malaga and sustained a gash in her hull sixteen feet long. The warship immediately cast anchor and will proceed to dry dock for repair.

BRUSSELS, Thursday.—For some days past King Leopold of Belgium has been suffering from muscular rheumatism owing to the damp weather, and can only move with great difficulty. Contrary to reports published in the foreign press, it is officially stated that the King's general condition of health is so good that he is able to confer with his Ministers for hours at a time. All alarmist reports are exaggerated. In spite of his Majesty's great age, there is no immediate cause for anxiety. The best proof of this assertion is that all bulletins have been stopped, and that the Heir Apparent is at present in Munich.