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Samuel Butler and George Frideric Handel

I

Although Samuel Butler dedicated his mature years to writing, painting and scholarship, the most important general influence in his life was exerted by the composer George Frideric Handel. When about twelve years old, Butler became an ardent admirer of his music, very likely in the course of taking piano lessons, and from that time onward, he tells us, not a day passed without his thinking of Handel "many times over".¹ As an undergraduate at Cambridge he tried to share the cultured enthusiasm and respect for J.S. Bach and Beethoven, eventually gave up the attempt, and after the age of thirty never again wavered in his belief that Handel was indeed the greatest of all composers, and his music "the serenity and unselfconsciousness of health itself".² Of Butler's three idols — Homer, Shakespeare, and Handel — the latter held the position of honor, and remained the "ground bass" of all his thoughts (*Works*, XX, 428), while the virtues of his music became the chief touchstones of Butler's aesthetic. The *Messiah* he considered one of the "crowning glories of the world", fit to take its place next to the *Iliad*, the *Odyessy*, and *Hamelt* (*Works*, XX, 172). Butler was fond of quoting or referring to musical phrases from Handel's works as a means of illustration, and did so in *Erewhonn*, *The Way of All Flesh*, *Alps and Sanctuaries*, and in his Notebooks. About 1883 he and his friend and future biographer Henry Festing Jones began composing little gavottes, minuets, and fugues in imitation of Handel and collaborated on a "dramatic cantata" in the Handelian manner, *Narcissus* (1883), on the subject, oddly enough, of the stock market. Before he died, Butler completed his half of a second work, the

oratorio *Ulysses*, which Jones published with his contributions in 1904. These compositions, Butler explained, were the result of a deliberate attempt to return to Handel's principles "and take them up where he left off".³

Butler has since become the best-known English Handolator of the nineteenth century because of the encomiums, occasionally quite effusive, that are scattered for the most part throughout the Notebooks and that have made a modest contribution in defining the present-day English attitude toward the composer.⁴ Butler's enthusiasm, however, is but one individual instance of a general and most peculiarly English worship of Handel that originated even while "the Saxon giant", as he was then referred to, was still active. The Victorians considered his "the sublimest imagination which has ever appeared among the sons of men",⁵ and F.J. Crowest, in discussing the oratorios, wrote that Handel, the one composer truly universal, "commands reverence from mankind, and were it not profane, men would bow the knee to his name."⁶ For Butler as for many of his contemporaries, Handel could do no wrong; his plagiarisms, which came to light during the nineteenth century, were excused; his coarse behavior and profanities overlooked or justified; comparisons with Shakespeare, that great touchstone of literature, abounded, thus transforming Handel into an English standard of musical excellence. Butler stands out from this general trend only because of the exceeding narrowness of his idol-worship, for he virtually cast from his Pantheon all significant post-Handelian composers, permitting only the direct precursors of Handel to remain — Purcell, Corelli and the early Italians (*MSNB.*, II, 123-125: March, 1885).

That Handel's choral music should gain such prominence in England can be explained by the course of Handel's career. It is well known that he did not capture the heart of the English general public until he had abandoned Italian opera and had concentrated on providing oratorios for principally middle-class audiences with little taste and probably much contempt for what Johnson described as that "exotick and irrational entertainment".⁷ Most of Handel's efforts between 1711 and 1741 were directed primarily toward entertaining audiences, drawn chiefly from the nobility and fashionable world (who had rather "continental" tastes), with almost fifty operas and numerous other secular works, for by inclination and training he was a dramatic

composer. However, after waging unsuccessful wars against those fashionable cliques who supported his rivals, and suffering in consequence severe financial set-backs, he finally gave up what he loved so well and turned his full attention to the oratorio, and thereby gained for himself a different, far more loyal audience. As early as 1720 he had written a successful oratorio, *Esther* (and others were to follow), but the failure of the opera *Deidamia* (1741) and the successful Dublin premiere in April of the following year of his oratorio *Messiah* apparently persuaded him to concentrate almost exclusively on this form.⁸ In his hands it became English, so to speak, though still essentially dramatic, better suited than "foreign" opera to appeal to the sobered classes.⁹ Since he chose Biblical and religious themes for his subjects, rather than themes derived from pagan mythology as he had done for his secular works, he no longer composed music for the delineation of the exaggerated sentiments and passions to which Puritans, for example, objected, and by thus dissociating himself from the often undignified extravagances of staged operatic entertainment, Handel gave vigorous and dignified expression to the broad "religious faith and feeling of the English nation".¹⁰ Because of his heavy reliance on the chorus, he expressed this faith in a manner familiar and accessible to everyone, since choral music was part of the formal education of all classes. Few places of worship at that time banned music altogether, and the influence of the evangelical movement had already stimulated communal singing and thereby, in a sense, had helped form a taste for the grand but unsectarian choral dramas Handel was to provide.¹¹

It is important to stress this connection between the religious atmosphere of the time and Handel's new reputation, for almost from the start his oratorios were associated in the popular mind with moral edification.¹² Elizabeth Heywood, in her *Epistle for the Ladies* (1749), for example, insisted that frequent performances of the *Messiah* "would have an Effect over the most obdurate Minds, and go a great Way in reforming an Age, which seems to be degenerating equally into Irrespect for the Deity, and a Brutality of Behavior toward each other."¹³ In fact, during the eighteenth century performances of his oratorios came to be regarded practically as supplements to formal worship, even though performed in a theatre, and were defended against the objections of religious purists as conducive to a general

strengthening of the public's religious devotion. The Victorians even more insistently linked sacred and other serious non-dramatic music to moral improvement, and this attitude informed their love of Handel as well. The *Messiah*, wrote Dr. O.G. Gregory, gives listeners the feeling of having shaken off their "dirt and dross" and having their hearts elevated and yet subdued as if "the grace of some noble principle had passed over us."¹⁴ The journalist George Augustus Sala thought that even worldly listeners left Exeter Hall, after the performance of a Handel oratorio, feeling "better and wiser men" because of it.¹⁵ During the first half of the nineteenth century great efforts were made to train the working classes in elements of singing, resulting in the establishment of numerous choral societies in the provinces. The impulse behind such education was to allow people to participate in "innocent enjoyment . . . pregnant with moral and social benefits."¹⁶ John Curwen, a well-known music educator who popularized the tonic sol-fa system of vocal training, wished to provide thereby an indirect means of "aiding worship, temperance, and culture, of holding young men and women among good influences, of reforming character, of spreading Christianity."¹⁷ Handel's oratorios, of course, were ideally suited to the aims of such educators, as well as of the amateur choral societies, and became quite naturally the mainstay of their repertoire. On the other hand, Handel's operas were completely eclipsed by the success of his choral works and sank rapidly into complete oblivion. Consequently, during the first half of the nineteenth century, Handel clearly emerged as a composer of sacred music and a musical preacher of sorts, "whose art was consecrated exclusively to the service of a Protestant evangelical bourgeoisie."¹⁸ In short, he was deified for the inspirational character of his music, and for his musical power alone, a fact which suggests that he was transformed into the quintessential Englishman because his music corresponded to, and touched, a deeply rooted love for loftiness and moral strength in the general public.

In the first public homage paid to his memory, the 1784 Centennial Celebration of his birth, Handel was already commemorated as a composer of chiefly sacred music. It was held, with Royal approval significantly, in Westminster Abbey in May of that year, and served as a stimulus for the Choral Festival which ultimately was to become an English institution, to be held periodically in London and other large cities. In its massiveness, this homage became the prototype for future

Handel commemorations: the *Messiah* was the focus of the Celebration, performed with a "band" of 250 instrumentalists and a chorus of 275 voices. The size of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, the site of the Triennial Handel Festivals, allowed for an even greater massiveness: the first of them in 1859 — they always featured the *Messiah*, *Israel in Egypt*, some brief excerpts from secular works, and miscellaneous selections from other oratorios — utilized 2,765 voices and 460 instruments. By 1882, the chorus had grown to 4,000, the band to 500. Attendance at both festivals exceeded 80,000.¹⁹

The use of such overwhelming musical armies is an unmistakable measure of the public devotion to Handel, and Butler, as may be surmised, attended several of these festivals,²⁰ and other more modest performances of Handel's music as well. But if he fully participated in this worship of Handel, he did not do so because of the music's appeal to the religious sense, or its devotional and inspirational character. He had his own reasons. In fact, Butler, as is well-known, had not only relinquished his Protestant faith, but had developed a thorough dislike (so clearly dramatized in *The Way of All Flesh*) for the very moral earnestness that was largely responsible for Handel's Victorian reputation.

In great art, Butler believed, it is the artist behind the work and less the work itself that we value (*Works*, XX, III; *MSNB.*, II, 134). Consequently, the image of a sublime but evangelical Handel could have little appeal for him. But because of his broader knowledge of Handel's secular and sacred works, Butler discovered a man quite congenial to his own irreverent sympathies; rather than being a reflection of Mrs. Grundy, this Handel was indeed of a lofty and noble nature, yet with a healthy zest for life and sense of humor; he was a fiercely independent bachelor (like Butler), possessing not a little sympathy for the pagan view of things. As in the case of Milton, Butler wrote, the opportunity for a little paganism is to Handel "like the scratchings of a mouse to the princess who had been born a cat." Off they both go — "under some decent pretext" certainly — as "fast as their art can carry them." And yet, he concluded, "who can doubt the sincerity and even fervour of either Milton's or Handel's religious convictions?" (*Works*, VII, 169). What attracted Butler was Handel's evident ability to celebrate with equal vigor the joys and sorrows of this world, and the devotion inspired by a confident and uncomplicated religious faith. In other

words, he believed Handel's religious sublimity had not been achieved at the price of rejecting the "dross" of this world, or of soaring into solemn and mystical regions: instead, his broad Christian faith appeared firmly rooted in a full appreciation of the concrete and sensual of ordinary reality, and his music as a whole consequently symbolized for Butler that very balance between seriousness and riotous indulgence he so much admired as an ideal, and which he found practiced only among the nicest²¹ Catholics in the northern provinces of his beloved Italy — where, he recalled, Handel too had gone to school. They also, he felt, indulged spontaneously in an unconscious paganism during their religious feast-days, a healthy practice which, he noted with some bitterness, unfortunately seemed "to have become impossible to Protestants since the time of Dr. Arnold" (*Works*, VII, 160-70). In short, his reasons for admiring Handel were not those of the general populace. He was shocked when he discovered in 1893, in one entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, that his then friend, J.A. Fuller Maitland, chastized Handel for his plagiarisms, and his music for its lack of artistic power and debilitating influence on English music in general, while in another entry, Dr. Thomas Arnold, the very symbol of earnest and single-minded reformatory zeal, was praised uncritically as a firm and pious man who had bred manliness and a sense of duty into his scholars.²² Such attitudes probably were for Butler symptoms of the mania for conventionality and moral propriety of a too self-conscious age, and of a wrongheaded blindness to the naive charms of Handel's uncomplicated style. But the facility with which Handel could set music to both pagan and Christian strains was for Butler precisely the "unselfconsciousness of health itself", the quality of a mind not painfully introspective or zealously single-minded, in fact the very opposite of that kind of Victorian sensibility which found the theatre or opera immoral or lewd.²³ Thus, Handel reflected admirably Butler's deep-seated belief that it is only "by pulsation of goodness, naughtiness, and whatever else we effect that we can get on at all" (*Works*, VII, 50). It is understandable, consequently, why he could feel justified in associating, in *Narcissus*, his somewhat pedestrian music done up in the Handelian manner, with a flippant libretto about the dangers of financial speculation:²⁴ it was an amalgam which would reflect his own view of Handel the man.

This image of Handel, if more accurate, was of course at odds with the one peeping from behind popular anecdotes depicting the composer furiously writing the score of the *Messiah*, shedding tears of rapture over it, and explaining later that his intention in composing it had been to make his audience better.²⁵ R.A. Streatfeild, Butler's literary executor and the author of what is now considered a significant English biography of Handel (1907), claimed that Butler's and Edward FitzGerald's assessment of Handel were in their time like voices in the wilderness. FitzGerald, in 1863, had declared bluntly that Handel had been a "good old Pagan at Heart" who, until forced to yield "to the fashionable Piety of England" wrote operas and cantatas "where he could revel and plunge and frolic without being tied down by Orthodoxy."²⁶ An extreme view, certainly, but reflecting the light that musical scholarship by the second half of the century had shed on Handel's career and work. It became more generally known, for example, that Handel frequently used music originally set to a secular text for accompanying a sacred one: in the *Messiah*, the duet "O death where is they sting", is essentially an aria from one of his early amorous madrigals (*Se tu non lasci amore*, 1712) which describes the sentiments of an unhappy lover. The peaceful Pastoral Symphony is based on a bagpipe tune played by the *pifferari* of Naples and Rome during Christmas. Some of the airs from secular works had been refurbished in the earlier part of the century with devotional texts, and the originals came to be known again.²⁷ In general, it became clear that there was little difference between Handel's sacred and secular styles, and Butler, who knew a great deal about Handel's working habits — he possessed full scores of almost all his major works — would only have been confirmed in his assessment by such discoveries. In any case, these almost forgotten facts provided the basis for a refashioning of Handel's image more appropriate to the tastes of the less reverent though equally enthusiastic admirers of the later Victorian period. Streatfeild in fact insisted that the *Messiah* could no longer be considered a mere "digestive" for Nonconformists, but "the mighty drama of human redemption from an artistic standpoint", a drama in which Handel had "released Christianity from the bondage of fact"; Handel the preacher, he declared, was now (1907) dead, and (echoing his friend Butler) "Handel the artist, with his all-embracing sympathy for human things

and his delight in the world, lives forevermore."²⁸ Thus, Handel was reinterpreted by a new generation of worshippers, but with a devotion almost as onesided as that of their more solemn elders.

II

Butler derived his sense of Handel from a specific characteristic of his music — its descriptiveness. Both Handel and Purcell, Butler explained, when writing “what is commonly called imitative music”, made it illustrative rather than strictly imitative (*MSNB.*, IV, 70). He believed that Handel’s music was not as much constructed according to formal principles as moulded to evoke certain sounds, sights, or moods, described in the text. For example, Butler praised the air, “Thus cheers the sun”, in *Joshua*, as “the finest description of a warm, sunny, refreshing rain” that he had ever heard, “and one of the most wonderfully descriptive pieces of music that even Handel ever did” (*MSNB.*, I, 193). Again, the overture to *Alexander’s Feast* pictured for him “the hurry and bustle of servants going to and fro with plates and dishes” (*MSNB.*, I, 98). Jones once pointed out, Butler recalled, that the overture to the *Messiah* ends in E minor while the following air, “Comfort ye”, begins in the cheerful key of E major, “as though it was all quite right again” (*MSNB.*, II, 76). In short, in a manner common to his time, Butler enjoyed Handel’s music for its programmatic suggestiveness, and this explains why he quoted musical phrases in some of his books: obviously, a musical phrase could more palpably than words evoke for him the ambience of an experience. And so we find, for example, that the phrase, “of them that sleep” from “I know that my Redeemer liveth” in the *Messiah*, suggested to Butler (in *Alps and Sanctuaries*, 1881) the peace he once felt at Calpiogna, and the *Andante non presto* from the *Dettingen Te Deum* evoked the happy satiation of Italian peasants eating cherries while seated in the branches of the cherry trees at Primadengo.

Butler was not being fanciful in this insistence on Handel’s musical realism. Handel exhibits in his music a fondness for strong dramatic contrasts, in rhythm as well as mood; in fact, the musical effects, such as the excited echoings in the Hallelujah Chorus in the *Messiah*, are designed to give direct expression, the theatrical immediacy, to well-defined emotions arising from situations described in the text; and

these broad effects, usually of a descriptive nature, were loved by the Victorians and gave them that much-praised sense of Handel's robustness and "manliness". In other words, his vocal music never stands alone but is directly linked to dramatic incident, sufficient reason, indeed, to suggest extra-musical associations to a listener. But Handel's compositional technique reveals that he was "highly susceptible to the pictorial and symbolical imagery of even single words", and in fact resorted to what is essentially tone painting,²⁹ in the modern sense. The Hailstone Chorus in *Israel*, for example, actually does create the onomatopoeic effect of falling hail and rolling hailstones. In the more lyrical *Messiah*, the phrase "And the government shall be upon His shoulders", from "Unto us a Child is born", is sung on an ascending line which falls on "shoulder", giving the listener a sense of lifting, and such examples of tonal painting abound everywhere in his works. The practice was common to Renaissance composers and well-established by Handel's time. Most Baroque composers portrayed emotions, ideas, even single words, with musical figures variously suggestive of them. One music theorist, writing in 1744 to demonstrate music's power to "imitate Motion and Sounds", chose a passage from Handel's *Acis and Galatea* which describes a giant's (Polyphemus) cumbersome walk (Act II, "Wretched Lovers").³⁰ Sir John Hawkins, on the other hand, complained in 1776 of Handel's efforts to imitate literally (in *Israel*) the hopping frogs and buzzing flies.³¹ Butler thought that some of the melodies were derived from the natural intonation of the spoken word (*Works*, XX, 114-15).

By employing such theatrical and often charmingly naive devices in his oratorios, Handel did not express a religious faith (as in the case of his contemporary Bach) nurtured by a spiritual and Pietistic inwardness or other-worldliness, but a robust faith objectified, so to speak, in terms of concrete and dramatically realized events.³² It is consequently not at all incongruous that Butler should associate cherry-eating with a selection from a *Te Deum*, or why he sensed behind such sacred music a man firmly rooted in the sensible world. Butler, for example, loved Homer's gods because they were, despite their super-human dimensions, earthy, amorous, cunning and proud, like the mortals whose fates they ruled (*Works*, XX, 26), and in a similar manner, Handel's achievement in sacred music remained by virtue of his musical concreteness and endearing simplicity (as in the Hailstone Chorus) linked to common

experience. For this very reason in fact Butler felt moved to compare Handel to Shakespeare as no "less a master of expression and illustrator" of the estate of men (*Works*, VII, 1).

Butler's love of Handel's descriptiveness also explains his dislike for Bach's music — then represented chiefly by the *St. Matthew Passion*, the *B Minor Mass*, the chorales, fugues, and the *Well-tempered Clavier*. Bach, of course, was a composer of sacred music and not a musical dramatist. In a sense he was not a vocal composer at all, for even in the choral works the musical texture is dictated by the polyphonic technique of the organ,³³ and his music is more strictly imitative, contrapuntal and, therefore, though he too practiced a somewhat less apparent musical symbolism, more independent of the texts which, in any case, are almost exclusively devotional and less susceptible to descriptive or dramatic treatment. Hence, Bach's music does stand alone and is more severe, shaped as it is by a more rigorous and strictly musical logic. Bach's greatest difficulties, Butler maintained, unjustly, were Handel's opportunities, namely, the rendering of human emotions. That Bach did excel in formal and contrapuntal complexity meant to Butler that he was a master of tonal gymnastics which, precisely because they seemed not to be in the service of human drama, rendered the music mechanical and unpoetic.³⁴ Bach, he quipped, was fugue-ridden, whereas Handel had succeeded in making this fundamentally imitative form subservient to descriptive and dramatic ideas (*MSNB.*, IV, 9).

In fact, musical complexity created apparently for its own sake disturbed Butler. He knew that Handel's comparative simplicity was being compared unfavorably with Bach's polyphony by professional musical critics, such as his friend Fuller Maitland. Hence, in his own assessment of Bach, Butler displays, as he does everywhere in his writings, his characteristic suspicion of the professionally established verdict. Bach's music, which "wiggles", could be appreciated, he felt, only by the educated few: "the cultured vulgar" have always preferred Bach's technical gymnastics to Handel's "reticence" and the graceful movements "of a man of birth". To him it seemed Handel had been "profound enough to eschew such wildness of counterpoint" (*MSNB.*, I, 45). Butler considered himself as a man in the street "as regards music", and therefore felt that the true artist does not go over the heads of the masses, but rather takes them by the hand, since his

“instinct is towards the man in the street rather than the Academy” (*Works*, XX, 118). The definition would sit well with Handel, for his fame did rest on popular enthusiasm, and, as we have seen, Handel had indeed been aware of his public’s tastes. It is said that he told Christoph Willibald Gluck (whose *La Caduta dei Giganti* was a failure during the 1746 London season) that opera was a waste of time in England, that the English instead preferred something to which they could beat time, “something that hits them straight on the drum of the ear.”³⁵ The remark reveals a measure of contempt for English musical taste of the day, yet without really compromising his style he did with his oratorios offer the audiences what he thought they desired.

Handel’s grand and simple effects of course are not found in Bach’s music; furthermore, in Handel’s music, even in the non-dramatic works, the German polyphony that characterizes Bach is blended with Italian homophony and is, thereby, simplified, made essentially *galant*, that is, graceful, elegant, with the emphasis on clarity of form and the mellifluous melody or cantilena.³⁶ The individual numbers of the oratorios are concise, rarely drawn-out, frugally orchestrated (this Butler particularly appreciated), and almost always firmly diatonic in their progressions, a characteristic that also accounts for the feeling of straightforwardness and “manliness” the Victorians and Butler admired. Dr. William Crotch (1775-1847), for example, the first Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, admitted that other composers may be grand and powerful, “but they lack the *simple* grandeur with which Handel can bring forth his ideas.”³⁷

But this simplicity of technique was in fact for Butler the certain sign of Handel’s genius, or of any artistic genius for that matter: Handel, he wrote, possessed *gnosis*, the knowledge of higher mysteries and a vision of genuine loftiness; but he possessed *agape* as well, a desire to steal men’s hearts, to lead them by the hand and put his gifts in the service of a common humanity (*Works*, VII, 1). In painting as in literature, *agape* was Butler’s touchstone for greatness. Michelangelo and Titian did not possess it, for both had no eye for the ordinary and commonplace in life (such as a “street-arab”): their colossal conceptions were too “high-falutin” for him and lacked the attractive naivete and stylistic simplicity of Giotto, for example; in Butler’s mind, what the latter lacked in executive skills he made up by sincerity of effort and honesty of emotion. “The result of this neglect to kiss the soil — of

this attempt to be always soaring," Butler maintained, has been to render artists like Michelangelo forbidding, stern, and hence, uninteresting (*Works*, VII, 122-23): the *gnosis* of Michelangelo's grand conceptions not only lifts his work out of the common man's reach, but also gives the impression of the struggles of an imperial and humourless genius. Handel, however, was the affectionate friend: his "ploughman near at hand, whistling o'er the furrowed land" was, Butler felt, a sympathetic, comprehensible creation, as were the crude votive pictures in North Italian wayside chapels, and the terra cotta statues of Giovanni Tabachetti (the 16th century primitivist sculptor whom Butler undertook to save from oblivion), with their painted features and glued-on hair.³⁸ That is why he loved Homer as well, for Butler had decided that his two epics were essentially "The Three Bears" composed on a grand scale.

It becomes clear now why he disliked Beethoven, in whose symphonically grand conceptions Butler detected a pretentious *gnosis*, "a sickly thing" compared to Handel's unselfconsciousness and simple tenderness (*MSNB.*, II, 177). Even Mozart and Haydn belonged to the fellowship of Michelangelo, for they, like Beethoven, might have "surpassed everything that has been done either before or since" in their art, but for that very reason were decadent, as is all perfection (*Works*, IX, 181). He felt Haydn, who actually came closest to giving him a sense of a Handelian presence, was, despite his Baroque formality, a kind of Horace — that is, a talented, polished and therefore facile man: presumably, Haydn's skill and inventiveness as a symphonic composer was to Butler mere facility, lacking the depth only sincerity can bring (*MSNB.*, II, 124). He characterized Wagner, whose music "writhes", after the performance of excerpts from *Parsifal*, as an "able heartless failure, a compact of *Yvwois* [*gnosis*] as much as any one pleases, without one spark of either true pathos or true humour;" and he noted the learned critic — again his friend Fuller Maitland — had called Wagner "the crowning achievement of dramatic music", which could, of course, be fully understood by the intelligent only (*MSNB.*, IV, 146: December, 1891). Wagner's striving after the grandiose (and hence, in Butler's sense, *insincere*) pathos was evidence of a great, albeit heartless, ability because what it created could be justified only by sneering at popular taste, and by a self-righteous appeal to the *cognoscenti*. Even so, Butler was echoing a dislike, common during the

earlier Victorian era, of all German "romantic music" by such composers as Schumann, Liszt, and Wagner: one critic, for example, objected to the distortion of harmoniousness and form in such music, created for the sake of expressing "metaphysical definitions" and "inner meaning" that could be comprehensible only to initiates.³⁹ Butler, like this critic, preferred the English Handel to foreign imports:⁴⁰ Handel was, Butler wrote, English in respect to all the best and distinguishing features of Englishmen, and claimed (not without truth) that he had chosen to come to England because it was then the most musical land and had produced the finest musical school in the world. Butler advised composers and listeners alike to stick with Purcell, Handel — and Sir Arthur Sullivan (*Works*, XX, 125). Cultured defenses of foreign music, such as Fuller Maitland's, irritated him, and he declared that unless "a man write in the exotic style of Brahms, Wagner, Dvorak, and I know not what other Slav, Czech, Teuton or Hebrew, the critics are sure to accuse him of being an anachronism" (*MSNB.*, IV, 63: March 25, 1891).

In praising Giotto's simplicity as a sign of sincere effort, Butler of course implied that the grandiose (because it was uncommon) could only be a pose. His judgments about Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner can be dismissed for showing his lack of understanding of orchestral music; but his concept of *gnosis* obviously also expressed his dislike for what he considered the self-righteous stance of the contemporary artist with a presumptuous mission to the Phillistines and the characteristically romantic insistence on being understood rather than with the desire (as in Handel's case) to make himself understood, and liked to boot. In such a stance Butler no doubt sniffed out the vice of earnestness. For Butler associated yet another quality with the poet he linked to Haydn: Horace he considered an exception to Roman literature because he displayed the unclassical characteristic of "sanctimoniousness", that is, of self-righteous superiority, a quality he assigned, incidentally, to Raphael, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Dante, Goethe, and Beethoven (whom Butler numbered among the Seven Humbugs of Christendom) (*Works*, VII, 135). Hence, in praising Handel's appeal to the common man Butler may very well have been expressing his reservation about the artist who has lost touch with his audience or who no longer exercises a truly practical function. Handel had not been a self-conscious artist, half on the side of the demonic as

Beethoven appears to have been, but a craftsman who despite his well-known sense of independence wrote music on demand, for specific occasions and for the pragmatic purpose of pleasing the expectations of a specific audience. And Bach, for example, dedicated his *Orgelbuchlein* significantly "to the glory of the most high God, and for the instruction of my neighbor" — thus expressing the exalted and utilitarian function of the music he had set down.⁴¹ After Beethoven, however, the continuously increasing split between the artist and the society he served apparent even in Handel's time had worked to isolate the composer, and to nurture in him that artistic self-consciousness with which Butler could not sympathize, and which reached its fullest expression in the music of Wagner. One nineteenth-century music historian put the problem in quite Butler-like terms: the practical composers of old, he felt, had been replaced both in England and Germany by artists who think only of their "inner consciousness and publish a work before it has been heard". But a great artist's duty, he insisted, was to master all styles and supply works for all tastes; were he a Shakespeare (the comparison is significant in this context), he would create both a Dogberry and a Hamlet. Yet, he concluded, the best nineteenth-century composers scorn to compose for the general public and "imagine they are elevating the art by holding altogether aloof from the uncultivated", thus practicing a form of "Grundyism" completely inimical to English music.⁴² In any case, there was no evidence of this sort of Grundyism in Handel; he was more the craftsman desirous of making himself accessible to ordinary men by appealing to their ordinary world. In this humbler conception of the artist lay the requisite ingredient of *agape* which makes of his music a joyous communal recreation, rather than a seeming self-indulgence, or a display of "decadent" and gnostic perfection. For Butler at least, Handel's simple craft was certainly a welcome contrast to the bewildering complexity of contemporary music.

III

Butler attempted a theoretical explanation for his preference and what seemed to him the sorry state of modern music. His judgments concerning Bach, Mozart and Haydn are incontrovertibly symptomatic

of a most restricted taste; but he did not always dislike them, and came to distrust them in part because they seemed to be the precursors of the nineteenth-century music he disliked. Butler felt that from the time of John Dunstable (who died in 1483) to Handel's time the tide of music was rising, but that thereafter the decline set in. When Handel died musically (and literally) childless, a great tradition came to an end; Bach, who was not childless in either sense, consequently appeared to him the first great figure in the succession leading to modern developments. These developments followed the direction marked out by Haydn, but his musical predecessors, Butler claimed, were Bach, his son Carl Phillip Emmanuel, and Handel's friend, Domenico Scarlatti: it was the latter in fact who stood between Handel and both Bach and Haydn.⁴³ Handel, however, it seemed to Butler, had consciously rejected Scarlatti's principles, and these were, as Butler deduced them from Bach, the abuse of the appoggiatura (that is, of the suspension of a tone not within the diatonic chord), the abuse of modulation, and the departure ("except on occasion and then not for long") from well-marked rhythms and "measured tread". The music Butler preferred and found in Handel was, by contrast, sparing of the appoggiatura, remained in its modulation close to the tonic and dominant scale-step of the key, and had a well-marked beat and rhythm (*Works*, XX, 108).

That Handel's style should disappear so completely puzzled Butler. With his friend Jones's help, he concluded that it was due to the general decline of counterpoint and the rise, in its place, of harmony. That is, the conception of music as "part-writing", as the horizontal patterning of two or more voices, was in time replaced by the conception of music as a texture of vertically arranged harmonies. And harmony, he thought was in turn encouraged by the advent of equal temperament. "Harmony and equal temperament are excellent things in their way," Butler wrote, "but they opened up capabilities which were dangerously liable to abuse." He noticed that in his own time freer modulation had in great measure replaced the Baroque emphasis on melody and rhythm, and that the "simple, intelligible forms" derived from and nurtured by the art of fugal writing, had been lost sight of. In other words, the clarity of imitative forms and the strict rules of counterpoint gradually gave way to the looser (and to him, unmelodic) and harmonically more diffuse compositions produced during the nine-

teenth-century. Their "colour and romanticism" were to Butler harmony and modulation run riot, "in consequence of the possibilities which equal temperament opened up" (*MSNB.*, II, 123-125).

If Butler's individual judgments are unacceptable, his general analysis remains, however, persuasive. Modulation of course was limited in the days of mean-tempered keyboard instruments (which were utilized during the Baroque era in all orchestral, operatic, and larger choral works): enharmonic tonalities, for example, could not be readily employed, and thus the tuning of the instrument forced modulations into a narrower and essentially diatonic range. However, well-tempered tuning, which became more prominent in Handel's time, eliminated this restriction and allowed composers such as Bach to modulate more freely and thereby to disturb or attenuate the sense of tonal weight associated in diatonicism with the tonic and the dominant scale-step, and this increasing use of non-diatonic progressions led to the rise of chromaticism. Bach, Haydn, as well as Mozart, did indeed rely on comparatively "daring" progressions; Beethoven built on Mozart and Haydn, and made deliberate use of discords. After Beethoven, the use of chromatic progressions did certainly encourage the melodic and harmonic indefiniteness so characteristic of, for example, the music of Cesar Franck, the mature Wagner, and (much later), of Debussy:⁴⁴ there the harmonies are no longer clearly referred to the scale steps within the dominant key, and the music is more clearly the exploration of harmonic possibilities outside the tonal centre defined by that key. Hence Butler could not find in contemporary music the grand euphoniousness (and marked rhythms) that Handel achieved by utilizing chiefly diatonic progressions. However, had there been, after Handel's death in 1759, another Purcell, or a foreigner of his genius, such as Mozart but nurtured in Handel's tradition, there would have been, Butler believed, at least a second lineage alongside these harmonic, or (as he called them) "Wagnerian", developments; but because this had not been so, English musicians transferred their allegiance to foreign models, and the tendency toward chromaticism in Bach, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven remained unchecked and opened the way, so to speak, to Wagner's conquest.

When Butler and Jones began to study counterpoint early in 1890, in preparation for composing their oratorio *Ulysses*, this general analysis must have been confirmed. Their teacher was William Rockstro

(1823-1895), a biographer of Handel and Mendelssohn, a teacher to Joseph Joachim and Mme. Clara Schumann (for which Butler forgave him), and well-known for his contributions to the revival of English music prior to Handel. Butler made use of Rockstro's little instructional manual, *The Rules of Counterpoint* (1882), the exercises of which were in part based on the *cantus firmus* exercises of Joseph Fux's *Gradus ad Parnassum*. This fact is of some significance.

Fux's treatise, published in 1725 in Austria (in Latin), was a systematic and complete formulation of the rules governing contrapuntal writing, or "voice-leading", completely free of harmonic considerations (or "vertical" chord analyses), as deduced from the era of vocal music initiated by Palestrina. The *Gradus*, together with the discipline of figured bass (systematized by C.P.E. Bach) was in fact the basis of Haydn's, Mozart's, Beethoven's, and Brahms's education. These composers, then, regarded music in an essentially contrapuntal manner. But this conception of music was being challenged even before Fux had completed his work, for in 1722, Jean-Phillippe Rameau brought out his *Traite d'harmonie reduite a ses principes naturels*, in which he codified purely harmonic considerations by ignoring the horizontal logic of contrapuntal textures, reducing "any simultaneity of tones to its supposed root position", and dissecting the complex of interdependent individual voices into an arrangement of vertical strips "of more or less closely related chords". Furthermore, unlike Bach or Handel, Rameau thought of the *basso continuo* not as a horizontally composed line, but as the "ground bass" that defined vertically the chord constructed above it.⁴⁵

The appoggiatura will serve as an illustration. If analyzed harmonically, it is a discord: the Baroque composer, however, did not conceive of it as a vertical chord at all, but as a suspension created by a passing note (the appoggiatura itself) moving to another concord and creating by its delayed motion a momentary dissonance. In general, contrapuntal rules insured the proper contextual relationship between concords and discords, the latter being always conceived in relation to the diatonic progression that defined the fundamental tonality. But to regard an appoggiatura as a vertical discord defined by the "ground bass" is to deprive it of its contextual function and meaning; and in much the same way, harmonic analysis deprives concords or discords of their function in a necessarily horizontal unfolding texture. But Rameau's

system of chordal analysis became the foundation of the modern theory of harmony, and eventually the chief basis of musical education in the nineteenth century as the contrapuntal training that had been common to all Baroque musicians was increasingly neglected. The essential effect of this trend was that it did encourage, as Butler quite correctly saw, the chromaticism, and the freer harmonic explorations, to which he objected. As a result, the emphasis fell on the acoustical or sonorous aspects of music in general, rather than on the working out of linear explorations of melodic material in a specific tonality, and this unmistakable trend was fatal to the diatonic style and would eventually undermine the conception of music as the unfolding of tonalities.

There is some historic justification, then, for Butler's conservatism, and it is clear now why he was suspicious of any departure from ancient counterpoint. Handel certainly did think in terms of intervals, not vertical harmonies; his melodies are constructed above a clearly defined *continuo* line, often without any "filling in" of additional harmonies. Handel, Rockstro told Butler, had kept closer to the old rules than Bach, and his more "daring" though thoroughly contrapuntally conceived progressions were therefore to Butler the thin end of the wedge that had opened the way to the abandonment of the diatonic style. Hence his suspicion of the appoggiatura. He no doubt objected to the frequent use of it since this would tend to complicate the clear outline of the music with too many discordant suspensions. Since the appoggiatura, though resolved, is not (like the syncopation) usually prepared for and always falls on the accented beat of a measure, it is a violation of strict counterpoint, and any habitual reliance on it would have seemed to Butler the setting of a dangerous precedent. He noted, for example, that in modern music any discord may be taken unprepared (though it is still resolved), whereas in earlier times it always had to be prepared contrapuntally (*Works*, XX, 127), thereby placing it firmly in a horizontal context as a link between concords. Finally, since the appoggiatura also displaced the accented beat, it would tend to attenuate the broad rhythmic clarity and simplicity to which Butler was partial.⁴⁶ This is a most pedantic and literal understanding of counterpoint, but in his analysis of the problem he was obviously trying to assert that Handel had deliberately avoided the dangerous tendencies fully developed in Bach (and presumably Scarlatti), and that he was in fact a man who shared his own distrust of all but

well-established precedents. Butler regarded Handel as an isolated genius, a living protest opposing the "musical radical tendencies" of his time which would eventually undermine the great English tradition of music begun by Dunstable (*MSNB.*, II, 107).

Butler was of course not alone in objecting to the new emphasis on rich harmonies and acoustical brilliance. One critic in 1883 complained that modern music gained its characteristic color, excitement, and emotional stimulation only at the expense of "form and clarity and classic restraint"; like Butler, he felt "incoherent colour" had replaced coherent form.⁴⁷ The criticism reflects the prevailing taste for tonal massiveness, acoustical excitement, and emotionalism in music.⁴⁸ Even Handel's own scoring of the *Messiah* was replaced during the nineteenth century by fuller, more orchestral accompaniments. But Butler, on his side, was glad to note that Handel had put little stress on the orchestration of his oratorios (*MSNB.*, III, 77), evidence at least that he had been more concerned with the musical conception than with brilliance of effect. Butler had no taste for the sentimental and harmonically rich hymns of the "usual Gounod-Barnby character" of his own time (*Works*, XX, 253), for he disliked intensely any form of sentimentalism in life or art. It pained him to think, for example, that it could seem fitting to bury Dickens, whose hearth-and-home sentiments he certainly despised, "cheek by jowl", next to the urbane Handel, in Westminster Abbey (*Works*, XX, 132). Again, he declared that not even Handel could have set Tennyson to music without spoiling it. "Fancy a symphony by Wordsworth!" he exclaimed. "Fancy having to sit it out!" (*Works*, XX, 112-113). In *The Way of all Flesh* we find Overton wondering how often Mendelssohn, who in one of his letters mentioned having spent two hours before a painting in the Uffizi, "looked at his watch to see if his two hours were up."⁴⁹ In such comments, Butler fully reveals his suspicion of unrestrained effusiveness; he disliked Mendelssohn's music (especially his "Songs without Words"), probably because he detected in it a cultivation of feeling, declaring that the composer who bid fair to rival Handel's fame with his oratorio *Elijah*, to have been "first hairdresser, then musician, and then poetaster".⁵⁰

Music is, however, romantic in its essence, the art closest to pure feeling, and Bach's chorales, for example, cannot be called unromantic or unemotional. But in these, as in Handel's music, even when most exuberant, the emotion is objectified, so to speak, in a clearly realized

imitative form, and Butler, in preferring this sort of expression, reveals his fundamentally eighteenth-century sensibility. He believed that he "excels most who hits the golden mean most exactly in the middle" (*MSNB.*, II, 24), and we can surmise that Handel must have seemed to him the musical golden mean: he is rarely effusive despite his predilection for theatrical effects, and his counterpoint is not labored or complex — a perfect balance, in short, between musical emotionalism and academicism. This explains the technical side of *gnosis*: Wagner's music, because it lacked the *formal* restraint and contrapuntal clarity of Handel's diatonicism could only have impressed him as a striving after acoustical brilliance and mere harmonic excitation. He would not find any other reason for Wagner's seeming "shapelessness" and massiveness. He found little melody in such music, a criticism that seems curious today until it is remembered that Butler was accustomed to the regular, usually four-bar melodic units of which the whole texture of a Handelian piece was constructed. In the new and expansive forms, he could not find such melodic clarity and economy, or such formal logic, and he would consequently have been puzzled by the fullness of expression, the long bridge passages and development sections, and sonorous climaxes characteristic not only of Wagner, but of many of his contemporaries. In Baroque music, on the other hand, the emotional moment rises from purely musically conceived ideas (in terms of counterpoint), and is not primarily achieved by a skillful use of orchestral color or harmonic ingenuity.

Even so, it is difficult not to regard Butler's comments on Handel and 19th century music as little more than the paradoxical expressions of a quixotic love. In these, as in much of his writing, Butler appears to have organized his almost instinctive distrust of what in his time was touted as authoritative or "advanced" into an unfortunately narrow and embattled dogma, allowing him to praise what he admired only by condemning what stood as a challenge to it. His idolatry of Handel's grand and simple manner has in fact been dismissed as arising from his very limited musical knowledge and ability.⁵¹ But to summarize his preference for Handel's stylization in this careless way is to ignore the force of his assumptions.

In his common man aesthetic Butler not only displays a sometimes reductive strain in his thought (literal-minded as he so often is), but also a consistent suspicion of the academy, that is, of the artistically

self-conscious and cultured habit of mind which has lost the ability to appreciate the beauty of simple, artistic straightforwardness. Handel's greatness in general lay in his ability to express himself in the most direct, transparent, effortless way: his art, as has been shown, consisted in its artlessness, its almost intuitive expressiveness unmediated by theoretic concerns. In his art one could still see the signs of the craftsman solving his problem. *Gnosis*, on the other hand, came from the attempt to intellectualize such artistic endeavor and to transform it into an abstruse and even forbidding profession. Butler, for example, saw art academies as institutions for promoting an art severed from its intuitive sources: they had usurped the older, more practical tradition of apprenticeship. Butler's translation of Homer's epics is an illustration of his belief: his own classical background had made him realize that the simple charm and humor he found in them had become all but inaccessible to the ordinary reader because of the aura of reverence and the forbidding learning that academic tradition had attached to them. Consequently, he translated both into Billingsgate English, a man-of-the-street sort of language, deliberately avoiding the stylistic sophistication of well-established translations in order to place his emphasis squarely on the stories (so to speak) themselves. The scholarly and literary approach to Homer was for Butler but pretensions established and maintained by a self-interested clique.

At the same time, technical brilliance in music could not be for him a substitute for the mastery of the rules of counterpoint with which musical Romantics were so impatient. Butler obviously regarded them as the necessary tools of the art, the understanding of which, rather than stifle the creative urge, would allow it free play within a successful, well-established and graspable tradition. This love for the older, more traditional music is, of course, not without precedent: even in the latter part of the eighteenth century there had been a debate between the moderns and the ancients — Haydn was condemned in the name of Purcell and Corelli, an astonishing argument in retrospect. But Butler was not merely a crotchety antiquarian. He apparently could not think of art in terms of progress: a proven tradition could be furthered only by remaining faithful to its underlying assumptions and rules, especially in the case of music. Music, Butler felt, was the least stable of the arts, resting entirely on an unreasoning and instinctive basis: the modern preference of the major mode, he thought, could be replaced

by preferences for other modes. "Happily," he said, it will "last my time" (*Works*, XX, 126-127). Hence, the necessity of the virtue, as Butler saw it, of Handel's radical conservatism, of rejecting trends that could undermine the foundations of his art without, however, sacrificing the right to take liberties, if fancy so moved him (*MSNB.*, II, 108). The point is that the proportion and greatness of Handel and his music is due to his deliberate refusal to make the "departures" from rules, or the shifting tendencies of his age, the basis for his practice. Hence, in studying the rules of ancient counterpoint and imitating Handel, Butler and Jones tried to revive and practice, at least for themselves, the fundamentals of the great diatonic art that brought them so much joy, and to keep it free from those tendencies which seemed to them to have hastened its decline. It is perhaps not too much to conclude that Butler may even have had an inkling of what was to come: the abandonment, not just of diatonicism, but of tonality altogether.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Henry Festing Jones, *Samuel Butler, Author of Erewhon (1835-1902): A Memoir* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1920) I, 37. Hereafter cited as *Memoir*.
- 2 *The Shrewsbury Edition of the Works of Samuel Butler* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1923-26), VII, 2. Hereafter cited as *Works*.
- 3 MS. Notebooks, IV, 160-61, dated Feb. 16, 1892, when Butler had begun taking counterpoint lessons (see below). Hereafter cited as *MSNB*. I wish to thank Butler's literary executors, Sir Geoffrey Keynes and Brian Hill for their permission to cite from these MS. notes, housed in the Chapin Library, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts.
- 4 The summary of Handel the man and his music in a recent volume (Charles Cudworth, *Handel* [London: Clive Bingley, 1972], 42-43) is often similar to Butler's, though it should be added that such descriptions had become common by Butler's time. A biography of Handel (Cudworth calls it a great classic of Handelian literature [49]) was written by Butler's friend and first literary executor, R.A. Streatfeild (*Handel* [London: The New Music Library, 1907; 2nd edition: Methuen, 1909]), who was influenced by Butler (see Streatfeild, 2nd edition, p. vii and Cudworth, p.49). W.S. Rockstro, Butler's composition teacher (see below) also wrote a biography (*Handel* [London: Macmillan, 1883]) which summarized the reverent attitude toward the composer (Streatfeild, pp. viii-ix), and since Streatfeild's book contains the more "secularized" view, it may be argued that Butler was influential in shaping its expression. See also Robert Manson Myers, *Handel's Messiah: A Touchstone of Taste* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948), pp.85-87. The latter will henceforth be referred to as Myers.
- 5 Robert M. Myers, "Samuel Butler, Handelian," *The Musical Quarterly*, XXXIV, No. 2 (April, 1948), 177.
- 6 "Handel, Man and Musician," *Blackwood Magazine*, CLV (June, 1894), 825. See, for example, also William Bowles's, "On Hearing 'The Messiah' Performed in Gloucester Cathedral" (1855).
- 7 Myers, p.20; pp.50-51. Streatfeild, p.210. The phrase occurs in Johnson's *Life of Hughes*.

- 8 Myers, pp.20, 153. Streatfeild, pp.158, 194. E.D. Mackerness, *A Social History of English Music* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 102. Julian Herbage, "The Oratorios," in *Handel: A Symposium*, ed. Gerald Abraham (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 87-96.
- 9 Operas were often staged extravagantly, sung by Italian star sopranos and *castrati*, frequently in a polyglot mixture of Italian and English. See Myers, pp.3-20; Mackerness, pp.90-95. The notion that this foreign import could never fully take root in England is clearly implied in Victor Schoelcher's *The Life of Handel* (London: Trubner and Co., 1857), of which Butler possessed a copy. However, he felt that Handel had been ignored generally by the English people, and that only his royal pension of £600 a year had saved him from utter ruin. Nevertheless, Butler regarded the later works, that is, the oratorios, as Handel's finest achievements (*MSNB*, II, 195); Butler never refers to the operas.
- 10 Henry Heathcock Streatham, "Handel," *Fortnightly Review*, XXXIII (January, 1880), 53. It was, of course, the age also of Jeremy Collier "and other puritanical opponents of stage entertainment" that was thought to encourage immorality (Mackerness, pp.101, 123-125).
- 11 Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York: W.W. Norton, Inc., 1941), 522-524.
- 12 Mackerness, p.103.
- 13 Quoted in Myers, p.126. See also pp.122-131.
- 14 Quoted in Cyril Scott, *Music: Its Secret Influence Throughout the Ages* (1933; rpt. New York: Samuel Weisser, Inc., 1969), 49.
- 15 *Twice Round the Clock, or The Hours of the Day and Night in London* (London: John and Robert Maxwell, 186?), 294-295.
- 16 Mackerness, p.132, citing an article of 1842. For a discussion of 19th century musical education, see pp.153-165.
- 17 Quoted in Mackerness, p.163.
- 18 Myers, p.236.
- 19 Myers, pp.190-195; 241-244. Henry Davey, *History of English Music* (London: J. Curwen and Son, 1895), 456-457.
- 20 For example, he attended the Selection day of the 1894 Handel Festival (the chorus numbered 3,516 voices), on Jan. 27 (*MSNB*, III, 134).
- 21 "Nice people, in Butler's mind, were symbolized by the Ydgrunites in *Erewhon*, or the Towneleys in *Ernest Pontifex*; they displayed no moral priggishness, excessive moral concerns, or dogmatic overbearingness, though quite respectful of Mrs. Grundy, and could enjoy themselves unabashedly. It was a general characteristic that he first encountered among the casual and often uninhibited settlers of the Canterbury plains of New Zealand.
- 22 *MSNB*, V, 47; Dec. 19, 1893. See *DNB*, IV, 146 and I, 538. J.A. Fuller Maitland (see n.40), music critic of the *London Times* and co-editor of the *Fitzwilliams Virginal Book*, was Butler's friend by this time; they had met in 1890. Two of Butler's last letters were written to him and his wife (*Memoir*, II, 393-394). Typical of the debunking attitude among late Victorian critics (reacting of course to the general and uncritical worship of Handel) is Cuthbert Hadden, "Handel and the Handel Fetish," *Music*, XVIII (August, 1900), 361-367.
- 23 See Mackerness, pp.188-190; the music of the English opera composer Michael Balfe, for example, was praised for its lack of "sensuous swim."
- 24 See Eric Blum, *Stepchildren of Music* (London: G.T. Foulis and Co., n.d.), 189-190. A sample from the libretto: the Chorus sings:
 "No more upon the mountain brow
 We'll tend our tedious flocks;
 'Tis smiling commerce charms us now
 And fluctuating stocks."
- 25 Myers, pp.63-64. Streatfeild, p. vi.
- 26 Streatfeild, p. vii.
- 27 Myers, pp.67-74; 236-237.

- 28 Streatfeild, pp. ix and 285. Cudworth (p.42) expresses a similar sentiment. C.L. Graves, in *Post-Victorian Music* (1911; rpt. New York: Kenikat Press, 1970), reviewing Streatfeild's book objects to this renovation: "Nobody wants to regard Handel as a sort of musical Chadband. But matters are not greatly mended by representing him in the light of a genuine pagan masquerading in the garb of Pecksniff." (P.328). See Paul Henry Lang, *George Frideric Handel* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1966), 707-709.
- 29 Lang, *Handel*, P.624. See Streatfeild, pp.225-283.
- 30 Lang, *Handel*, p.631: James Harris, *A Discourse on Music, Painting, and Poetry*, See also pp.344; 624-625.
- 31 Quoted in Lang, *Handel*, p.627.
- 32 Lang, pp.523-524.
- 33 Alfred Einstein, *Mozart: Sein Charakter, Sein Werk* (Munchen: Fischer Verlag, 1968), 118.
- 34 Butler, however, must have been fond of Bach's Chorales at one time, for he marked many of them as excellent in his copy of a complete collection, now in the Butler Collection, St. John's College Library, Cambridge, England.
- 35 Streatfeild, pp.195-196, and *A Symposium*, pp.113-114. 36
- 36 In this connection it is interesting to note that Butler thought *Theodora* and *Susanna* were not in the usual Handelian manner, but "more difficult and more in the style of Bach" (*Works*, XX, 117).
- 37 Quoted in Cyril Scott, p.49.
- 38 See Butler's *Ex Voto* (1888). The quotation is from Handel's *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, ed Il Moderato* (1740), Part I of *L'Allegro*, "Let me wander not unseen" (adapted from John Milton's poem).
- 39 *All the Year Round*, Oct. 22, 1864, pp.260-267: "A German Festival."
- 40 Fuller Maitland in fact thought Handel's hold on the English public had retarded the acceptance of modern music, and even of the music of Bach. J.A. Fuller Maitland, *English Music in the XIXth Century* (London: Grant Richards, 1902), 63-65.
- 41 See Mellers, pp.135; 90-116. See also Graves, pp.268-269. In an article, "Sonority" (1905), he complains that the intelligent amateur in modern times is "insensibly led" to the attitude "*amo quia difficilem*," which promotes that "feverish activity" in music (p.213).
- 42 Davey, pp.491-492.
- 43 This is an historically doubtful reconstruction: Handel knew Domenico Scarlatti only while in Italy in 1710, when the latter had not yet developed his maturer style. Lang, *Handel*, pp.92-93.
- 44 Cyril Scott, for example, points out that Wagner's critics objected to his music because it was full of "unresolved discords, false relations, and transitions into keys which had no perceptible connexion with the key just abandoned. . ." (p.97).
- 45 From Oswald Jonas's Introduction to Heinrich Schenker's *Harmony*, ed. Oswald Jonas, tr. E.A. Borgese (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), ix-xiv. See also Lang, pp.546-547.
- 46 *Works*, XX, 127. In the Butler Collection in St. John's College, Cambridge, there is a small scrapbook containing a few of Butler's notes on contrapuntal rules which indicate that Butler evaluated the appoggiatura in this manner.
- 47 Edmund Gurney (whom Butler, incidentally, knew, for he was the brother of a Cambridge acquaintance, Henry Gurney), quoted in Graves, p.211.
- 48 Fuller Maitland objects to the performance of excerpts from the sentimental (and operatic) masses of Gounod alongside the more chaste and "glorious" works of Palestrina (Fuller Maitland, p.101). Davey also laments the current taste for sentimental musical phraseology (p.493).
- 49 Chapter 4. See Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Letters from Italy and Switzerland*, tr. Lady Wallace (London, 1862), 36-37. Butler marked other examples of the composer's emotiveness in his copy of the volume.
- 50 *Samuel Butler's Notebooks*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes and Brian Hill (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952), 160.
- 51 Myers, "Samuel Butler, Handelian" (see n.7), pp.193-198.