



THE HANDEL INSTITUTE
NEWSLETTER

In the last issue Donald Burrows reported the recent appointment of Terence Best as one of the two joint general editors of the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe*. In light of his new duties and responsibilities, Terence has decided to step down as editor of the *Handel Institute Newsletter*. The latter will now be edited by the undersigned, who in turn is relieved of the secretaryship of the Institute by Elizabeth Gibson. We thank Terence for passing on a healthy publication and Elizabeth for taking on a potentially challenging rôle.

The *Newsletter* will continue to include reviews of important Handel festivals and opera productions, together with occasional short news items and feature-articles on subjects of interest to Handelians, and announcements concerning conferences and awards. Much of the *Newsletter*

will continue, inevitably, to be written by members of the Institute's Council, but proposals for publication are invited from all quarters: anyone wishing to contribute should contact me via the address at the end of this issue.

In the following pages Terence Best reports on the 22nd London Handel Festival, which recently came to a close; Winton Dean reviews the production of *Lotario* that formed part of it; Duncan Chisholm discusses the social and moral formation of young adults in Handel's day; Anthony Hicks and Donald Burrows review some performances of unusual Handelian interest; and there is news of two recordings of rare 18th-century music and a further notice about the forthcoming Handel Institute conference.

Colin Timms

The London Handel Festival 1999

The London Handel Festival, founded by Denys Darlow many years ago, is a major event on the London music scene every spring. If a festival's success can be measured by its ability to pack in the crowds, then this year's event must rate very highly in this respect: every performance I attended had a near-capacity and very appreciative audience. Handel, accompanied by a few of his contemporaries, is being well served and kept before the London public - a very important matter.

The major event was a performance of the 1757 *Triumph of Time and Truth* in St George's, Hanover Square, on 15 April, and there was not a spare seat to be had. This was the last in a series of concerts, begun two years ago, devoted to Handel's three versions of this

allegorical oratorio. In interest it could not quite match last year's offering, the first performance of the 1737 version since Handel's time, in a new edition prepared by Anthony Hicks. From the musical point of view the 1757 work is in various ways rather less successful, and the sententiousness of the English libretto becomes tiresome. Nevertheless, with a strong team of soloists - Emma Kirkby (not on her best form), Joanne Lunn, Catherine Denley, Ian Partridge, James Rutherford - and the excellent London Handel Choir, there was much to enjoy. Joanne Lunn, as Beauty, gave a heart-stopping account of the gorgeous final aria 'Guardian angels', one of Handel's loveliest creations.

The vocal and instrumental concert on 8 April in the



pleasing surroundings of St Andrew's, Holborn, featured orchestral works by Handel (the Concerto grosso in A, op. 6, no. 11), Telemann and Wassenauer, and two of Handel's Italian cantatas - the remarkable but rarely-heard *Ero e Leandro* and the duet cantata *Aminta e Fillide*. Jeni Bern, who sings better than ever, was radiantly grief-stricken in the first of these: tricky to bring off the sad story of Hero lamenting over her lover's drowned body on the shore of the Hellespont, but she did it beautifully; her voice is powerful and richly expressive. She was joined by Joanne Lunn for *Aminta e Fillide*, of which they gave a stylish and well-paced account. The London Handel Orchestra accompanied sensibly, and played the instrumental works with a good deal of panache, though I felt that in the last movement of the concerto they succumbed to the tendency of most period bands nowadays to indulge in over-rapid tempi: it was particularly unfortunate in this building, where the acoustic reverberates mightily, and was also unkind to the balance between the soloists and tutti.

The final concert, in St George's on 21 April, gave us two more cantatas - *Ah, crudel, nel pianto mio* and *Splenda l'alba in oriente* - and some duets for soprano and alto. The singers were Nancy Argenta and James Bowman. The former seemed rather unfocused and ill at ease in *Ah, crudel* and failed to convey the emotional power that the work needs; Bowman did much better with the Cecilian cantata. In the duets that formed the remainder of the programme - movements from *Solomon*, *Giulio Cesare* and *Jephtha*, and the Hanover chamber duet *Tanti strali al sen mi scocchi* - the two singers hit it off beautifully with one another, and there was some joyous music-making; we even had some energetic balletics and eye-rolling from James

Bowman, as he put dramatic expression into the text (all to good effect). It was a pity that this concert was so short - another cantata would have been very satisfying: apparently the show was to have been *Deborah*, but there were not sufficient funds.

The festival had kicked off with *Israel in Egypt* in St George's Chapel, Windsor; I was unable to be there, but my spies tell me that it was a fine performance. This year's opera was *Lotario*, which had not been seen on the London stage since 1729 and is reviewed below by Winton Dean. I also failed to make it to the *St Matthew Passion* on Good Friday, now a traditional feature of this festival, but I have it on the unimpeachable authority of the *Sunday Times* music critic that it was excellent and even, in his opinion, preferable to the performance by another distinguished group whose regular Easter offering it is. All in all, this was another splendid festival. All power to the elbow of the London Handel Society: long may it flourish!

Terence Best

LOTARIO AT THE BRITTEN THEATRE

Of Handel's 39 operas, every one of which has now reached the modern stage, *Lotario* has been among the least favoured. Before this revival by the London Handel Society (23-25 March) it has received only one production (by the pioneer Alan Kitching in 1975) since the original run in 1729. Up to a point one can see why. It belongs to the same heroic dynastic type as *Radamisto* and *Ottone*, a mix of amorous and political intrigue and military skirmishing, but lacks their passionate conviction.

The libretto deals with political events in North Italy during the tenth century. Berengario (a tenor role) has

usurped the throne after murdering the rightful king, and besieged his widow Adelaide in the city of Pavia. He and his consort Matilde, a veritable dragon, try to force a dynastic marriage between her and their son Idelberto, who indeed loves her but has scruples about their methods. They enter the city by subterfuge and imprison Adelaide. Lotario, historically the German king Otto I, comes over the Alps to her rescue, having once been attracted by the sight of her before her marriage. He defeats Berengario in battle, storms the city and brings the miscreants to heel after Berengario has got cold feet and quarrelled with his wife. Lotario wins Adelaide's hand and everyone forgives everyone else to produce the statutory happy end.

This is no worse than many similar plots. Unfortunately the recitatives in Antonio Salvi's original libretto, which had already passed through several hands, are so cut down that much of the motivation is obscured or removed. Many arias are simile pieces that bring the action to a halt; instead of developing smoothly along with the characters, it moves in a series of jerks. Handel was writing for a new company of singers, only one of whom had sung in London before, and that many years earlier, and was clearly anxious to show off their voices to the most advantage, so much so that he often seems to be thinking more of them than of the characters they were portraying. Most of the arias are show pieces with long ritornellos and a great deal of flashy coloratura; slow movements revealing inner thoughts are at a premium.

None of the characters has the vitality one expects in an opera of Handel's maturity. Lotario is a conventional hero, Adelaide a rather pale heroine. Berengario, a potential equivalent of the vacillating Grimoaldo in



Rodelinda, begins the opera with a fine cavatina and ends with a heart-rending aria of remorse, but lets off a lot of empty fireworks in between. Even Matilde, full of venom in the recitatives, has only one first-rate aria out of five, besides a magnificent accompanied recitative in the last act. Idelberto is potentially more interesting, but his role is a passive one. Nevertheless the score contains a handful of superb arias, notably Adelaide's prison scene in B flat minor, the key that Handel reserved for such occasions, and the lovely serene night piece for Lotario at the end of Act II, and many examples of Handel's subtle workmanship in detail – enough to justify this revival, quite apart from the opportunity it afforded of hearing unfamiliar music.

The two casts, consisting of students from the opera departments of the Royal College and Royal Academy, were very evenly matched, and the standard of singing was encouragingly high. The countertenors who took the part of Lotario, William Towers and Clint van der Linde, displayed well-focused voices and a good command of the style. Of the two tenors, Darren Abrahams shone particularly in the early scenes, while Matthew Beale was more convincing and very eloquent in his Act III aria. Best of all perhaps was the Adelaide of Natasha Marsh, the single soprano in the cast of six, who combined a full pure tone, especially at the top, with a moving stage presence. Tim Murfin gave a firm account of the subsidiary bass role of Clodomiro. The orchestra played well under both conductors, Paul Nicholson and Denys Darlow. There were however some regrettable cuts. No doubt time had to be saved, but to emasculate eleven arias and the one duet was going a bit far. It would have been better to omit four or five of the weaker, less dramatically focused arias altogether.

The sets and costumes were a won-

derful muddle of styles and periods, from swords and breastplates to the silhouettes of four-engined bombers, but that was a minor drawback. Much more disturbing was the misconceived production. In Handel's operas the entire drama is carried by the singers. Anything that distracts the attention of the audience during the arias is worse than a nuisance; it devalues the music. Robert Chevara seemed to go out of his way to interpose physical obstacles of every description, some of them at variance with the plot. Lotario and Adelaide at their first meeting were kissing and cuddling like nobody's business. Others were tired clichés: pointless activity during the overture (a particularly good one; why were we not allowed to enjoy it in peace?), a drinks party throughout the first scene, chairs used as missiles and pulpits and left lying about at all angles. The two singers of Matilde were so grossly mis-directed that it was next to impossible to assess their performance. Matilde is indeed a disagreeable matriarch, but she was made to behave like an inebriated fishwife, punctuating not only her own arias but those of other characters with inane cackles and kicking the queen of Italy around like a football. She was allowed to ruin Adelaide's fine aria at the end of Act I by a series of physical assaults when she has no business to be on stage at all, and likewise undercut the most expressive of Berengario's arias. None of this is necessary to clarify the plot, which can be done much more effectively by gesture.

Winton Dean

THE 'CHANDOS' TE DEUM AT OXFORD

A rare opportunity to hear a live performance of Handel's 'Chandos' Te Deum (HWV 281) was provided by the vocal group Magnificat and

The Band of Instruments, directed by Philip Cave, on 20 February in the University Church, Oxford. (The concert was supported by a Byrne Award from the Handel Institute.) As its nickname implies, the work dates from Handel's stay with James Brydges, Duke of Chandos, at Cannons from 1717 to 1718, and the consequent peculiarity of its vocal scoring (for STTTTB) makes it unattractive to normally-constituted choirs. The probability is that the tenor and bass lines, at least, were intended for solo voices. By using just those forces, and a solo soprano on the top line, Mr Cave made a convincing case for the work. He minimised its other difficulty - Handel's tendency to over-extend the musical material in some of the contrapuntal choruses - by adopting fast tempos, with exhilarating if occasionally precarious results, though the more reflective moments were appropriately expressive. Two of the Chandos anthems (*O sing unto the Lord* and *As pants the hart*), together with the C minor trio sonata, completed an evening effectively evoking the intimate splendour of that brief and extraordinary period at Cannons.

Anthony Hicks

HANDEL CONFERENCE

Great among the Nations

The next Handel Institute conference takes place on 20-21 November 1999, at King's College London. It begins on the Saturday afternoon and ends on Sunday in the early evening. Abstracts of papers, a timetable and booking form will be published with the next issue of this *Newsletter*. For further information in the meantime, please contact the Honorary Secretary, Dr Elizabeth Gibson, 15 Pyrland Road, Highbury, London, N5 2JB (email: gibsons@attmail.com).



A BOOK IN HANDEL'S LIBRARY

Letters of parental advice were a popular form of instruction and entertainment in the 18th century. The most famous are those of Lord Chesterfield to his son, but among many others the letters of the Marchioness de Lambert to her son and daughter (Paris, 1727) were immensely popular. Fénelon praised them and encouraged their author, and Thomas Carte's English translation reached a third edition in 1737.

Another version was published in 1749 by M. Cooper of Pater-noster Row: *The Marchioness De Lambert's Letters to her Son and Daughter on True Education, etc. ... Translated by Mr. Rowell*. The book (British Library, 722. f. 7) was dedicated to the Right Honourable Lady Betty Cecil and contains a long list of subscribers. Among the many names of interest we find:

Capt. Geary of the Cullede
Capt. Scroop of the Ferret
The Hon. Edward Wortley Montague
Lord Vane
The Rev. Stephen Duck
Mr. John Walsh, 2 Books
His Grace the Duke of Manchester
His Serene Highness Prince
Lobkowitz
The Earl of Sandwich, 2 Books
Mr. William Hogarth
The Right Hon., the Earl of
Gainsborough
Matthew Dubourg, Esq.
George Frederick Handel, Esq.

Handel took an affectionate interest in his niece and god-daughter Johanna Friderica Floercke (born Michaelsen in 1711), who was given one of his names and inherited the larger part of his estate. When she married, in 1731, he sent her a diamond ring and her husband two seal rings and a gold watch. He may

have thought of her or her daughters when reading Mme de Lambert's letters, with their emphasis on real substance in the education of females, instead of mannered superficiality – a sentiment with which his friend Mrs Delaney would happily have agreed.

Lambert's letter to her son, who was embarking on a military career, evokes incidents in Handel's life and preoccupations of his opera and oratorio librettos. By 1749 the composer was securely re-established in London society, but he must have cast his mind back to the previous decade. As Lambert writes of her husband (page 43):

In those wretched Days when he was opposed by Fortune, when others would have sunk under the Misfortunes he endured, with what Magnanimity did he not bear up against the ill Treatment he met with, and by persevering in his Duty, made Fortune seem to be in the wrong, not himself. It was his Opinion, that true Ambition consisted much more in obtaining a Superiority of Merit, than Dignity. There are certain Virtues attainable only while People are in disgrace; we know not what we are, till we have been tried.

Several times in his career, Handel was 'tried' by opposition or illness. During the 'Opera of the Nobility' struggles he must have felt like Mme de Lambert in her legal battles (52):

... I had a Cause to maintain against very powerful Antagonists which was to determine my Fortune; Courage, and the Justness of it, was all I had to depend upon; and I gained it at last, without borrowing, or any Sort of Baseness: In short, I made all that possibly could be made of my ill Fortune ...

Handel was known for his frank and direct approach. Mme de Lambert offers a variation on this theme (60): 'Though it may not be proper always to say what we think, yet we ought always to think what we say; the right Use of Speech is to be subservient to Truth'. She also lists the duties of an honest man (49):

... to know how to live with your Superiors, your Equals, your Inferiors, and with your own self. To know how (without Meanness) to please your Superiors, to treat your Equals with Friendship and Esteem, not to appear haughty or assuming to your Inferiors; to keep up your own Dignity, and let no Man despise you.

Handel was charged with haughtiness by his critics. The idea of 'pleasing' is of interest, and Lambert returns to it a few pages later:

In subordinate Employments, to render yourself agreeable, so as to be able to please, will be a most necessary Qualification; for Masters are like common Mistresses, whatever Services you may have done them, they cease to like you the Moment you cease to please them (52-3) ... I have already told you, that in Inferior Employments you cannot maintain your Ground, but by the Art of Pleasing; when you cannot do that, you will be held very cheap (61).

Those extracts call to mind Handel's dignified letter in the *Daily Advertiser* of 17 January 1745, after the failure of *Hercules*:

I have the Mortification now to find, that my Labours to please are become ineffectual, when my Expenses are considerably greater. To what Cause I must impute the



loss of the publick Favour I am ignorant, but the loss itself I shall always lament. In the mean time, I am assur'd that a Nation, whose Characteristick is Good Nature, would be affected with the Ruin of any Man, which was owing to his Endeavours to entertain them.

A noble attitude at a time of great pressure is typical of Mme de Lambert's heroic or honest man. She discusses the true hero in terms that bring to mind both Handel and many of his protagonists (78):

To oppose Anger by Patience, Injustice by Moderation, are Things becoming a Man of Honour. By an outrageous Hatred you put yourself beneath those that hate you. Don't go about to justify your Enemies, nor any ways to absolve them; they hurt you less than a Consciousness of your own Failings. Little mean-spirited People are generally cruel: Great Souls are always merciful. Caesar said the sweetest joy he had in conquering was to give life to those who had attempted his. This sort of Revenge is of all others the most glorious, and it is the only one that Men of Honour allow themselves to take. The Moment your Enemy repents and is sorry, you that Instant lose all Right to Revenge. In short, let me advise you to put the best Construction upon every Thing, wish every Body well, pity Ignorance, and despise ill Usage.

How many of Handel's protagonists exhibit such a heroic magnanimity? One of his earliest operas is *Vincer se stesso è la maggior vittoria* ('To conquer oneself is the greatest victory'). Jennens put this succinctly in Jonathan's air in Act II of *Saul*:

From cities storm'd and battles won
What glory can Accrue?
By this the Hero best is known:
He can himself subdue.

The magnanimous pardoning of an errant character opposed to the hero's interests is often cited as a weakness in Handel's operas, yet it is fundamental to several. Lambert's letter gives a contemporary view of the motivation. That the composer himself could be forgiving of wrong is clear from his treatment of De Fesch, Cuzzoni and, near the end of his life, the older Smith.

Mme de Lambert - in Rowell's translation - echoes Pope's *Essay on Man* (1733) in her recommendation of study (88):

The first Science of a Man, is Man.
Leave Politics to Statesmen,
Grandeur to Princes; study the Man
in the Prince, observe him in the
Course of common life; see how he
debases himself when given up to
his Passions. Unhappy Events are
always the Consequence of an
irregular Life.

This leads naturally to a model for drama, and would certainly provide a rationale for much of the musical and spoken theatre of Handel's period (89):

Look upon Princes in History and elsewhere, as Persons acting their Parts upon the Stage of a Theatre; you will not be interested in their Favour, but by finding in them those good Qualities you have in common with them; for this Reason our Historians please more by painting the Man, than the Monarch, shewing them to us in their domestic Life; there we behold our own Characters, and like to see our own Foibles amongst the Great; 'tis some Sort of Consolation to us in our low Condition, for it raises us up in some Degree to them. In fine, look upon History as a Witness of the Times, and a Picture of their Manners; there you may see yourself, without hurting your Vanity.

Mme de Lambert recommends (to her daughter) Corneille's 'fine Tragedies, for very often in those which are best, you will find excellent Lessons of Virtue', but she also observes that 'they sometimes leave Impression of Vice behind'. She would probably have approved of Handel's highly serious *Rodelinda*, scrupulously following the moral stance of Corneille's *Pertharite*, but what would she have made of *Flavio*, which highlights and even ridicules the unsatisfactory ethics of *Le Cid*?

She also had definite ideas on intoxication (78):

Nothing is more shameful than for Men in their Cups to lose the Use of their Reason, which ought to be the Guide of their Actions; for a Man to give himself up to Sensuality, is to degrade the nobler Faculties of the Mind; the best way therefore to prevent it, is to stifle the first Inclination.

Jennens has Gobrias speak of the Babylonians' feasting in much the same terms: 'Behold the monstrous human beast/Wallowing in excessive feast'. Handel may have agreed with the theory of abstinence or moderation, but such admonitions are unlikely to have weighed much against an evening at the local inn.

Lambert's comments on social status are liberal and fit well with the prevailing tone of Hanoverian England: 'Merit is the genuine Superiority amongst Mankind; this alone ought to distinguish them, not Birth, nor Fortune; and is a very different Sort of Grandeur than that which proceeds from Authority' (54). As Jonathan says in Act I of *Saul*:

Birth and Fortune I despise!
From Virtue let my friendship rise.
No titles proud thy stem adorn,
Yet born of God is nobly born.



This liberal view - Whig, in England - was very different from the conservatism of George III's reign as exemplified by Johnson's comments (18 July 1763) on duty to established power. Lambert continues:

An honest Man, is a Title greatly superior to any that Fortune can bestow. In inferior Posts where People are dependant, they must make their court to Ministers of State; but let it be done with Dignity: My Advice to you is, never to play the Sycophant, never to do any thing that is servile or base; not to trample upon a Worm, nor cling to an Emperor; it must be your Services that must speak for you, not a mean Submission.

How far Handel was from 'a mean Submission' can be seen in the amusing series of letters on the scoring and rehearsal of the *Fireworks Music* in 1749.

Mme de Lambert is single-minded in her pursuit of Virtue, and this leads her to a discussion of charity that seems very close to Handel's ideals (56):

Despise the Follies of the Great; guard against their Influence, for fear of imitation; let the bad Use they make of their Fortunes, give you a proper Contempt for Riches; and teach you how to regulate your own Conduct: Virtue has no share in the Management of their Expences.

How comes it to pass, that amongst an infinite Number of Pleasures, which are invented by Luxury and Ease, they have never yet thought of one to comfort the Afflicted? Does not Humanity make us sensible we ought to succour our Fellow-Creatures? Good People feel the Obligations they are under of doing Good, more than the other Exigencies of Life.

This was certainly true of Handel, whose enthusiasm for charitable ventures had been shown in his *Messiah* concerts in Dublin, for the relief of debtors, and in his work for the Society for Decayed Musicians. Lambert's delight in this theme is very evident:

How happy is that Man who has it in his Power to please and oblige others! it is a Pleasure, when enjoyed, superior to all others: But this is a Felicity the Generality of the Sons of Fortune are Stranger to; they do not acquaint themselves with this supreme Happiness. Riches was hardly ever known to make a Man virtuous; but Riches has often been the Reward of Virtue. What use do most great People make of their Riches? 'Tis spent in outside Shew and Equipage; they make Use of their Power only to debase and oppress others; and yet, to be truly great is to be humane (56-7) ... The most sensible Pleasure that a worthy Man knows, is the doing Good and relieving the Unfortunate and Afflicted ... Be your own Almoner and distribute your Liberality yourself; this will go a great way in raising your Character and getting you a good Name (81).

It was in 1749, the year of Rowell's translation, that Handel was prominent in the opening celebration of the charity most associated with his name, the Foundling Hospital in Coram Fields. If Mme de Lambert had lived to see his generosity, she might have used him as an exemplum of her concern.

Her letter to her daughter includes a passages that reads almost like a synopsis of Handel's career (124):

Establish your Reputation while you are young, increase your

Credit then, and regulate your Affairs properly; as you grow older you will find it more difficult. Charles the Fifth [presumably Emperor Charles V (1500-58)] said, that young People were Fortune's Favourites. In Youth you have the Assistance of every body, every thing is tendered for your Acceptance. Young Persons have a Dominion which they themselves are ignorant of; on the contrary, in a more advanced Age every Thing will forsake you, you will have no longer those seducing Charms which gave a lustre to all your Actions; Truth and Reason (which the World is very little governed by) will be all that you have then left you.

In Handel's case, 'reason' itself seems to have left him for a while. Lambert's consolation depends once again upon themes that the composer was attracted to explore in his art. The following thought informs many of his oratorio librettos (95):

You may depend upon it, there is no State or Condition whatsoever that is exempt from Troubles; it is the State of human Life, nothing pure and perfect, all is chequered. It would be to be freed from the common Law of Nature to expect to enjoy a constant uninterrupted Happiness.

These words are strongly echoed by the final chorus in Act II of *Jephtha*:

No certain bliss,
No solid peace
We mortals know
On Earth below.

Mme de Lambert recommends to her daughter the consolation of religion: 'Religion alone will calm all, and afford us Matter for Consolation;



by uniting yourself to the Almighty, you will be reconciled to the World, and to yourself' (103). Some anecdotes of early vintage indicate that religion was some consolation to Handel, particularly in his later years; whatever the reason, he ended his life in a less turbulent and more benign state. As Lambert observed, 'when one knows how to live with one's self and with the World, these two Pleasures will sustain each other' (92).

Handel's private life is largely unknown. He may purposely have shielded himself from the prying eyes of the world around him; nevertheless, he lived in, and was a major influence upon, the society of Hanoverian England. Any clue to his inner life - even a book he may have read - can be helpful. At one time, popular histories of music balanced Handel, the great extrovert, against the introvert Bach. Perhaps Handel aimed for something closer to the ideal eloquently expressed by Mme de Lambert in a memorable passage to her son (86):

To converse with ourselves is little understood and less practised. Very few turn their Eyes inward, but generally look abroad for Objects of Amusement. You must look for Happiness within your own Breast; 'tis there you must establish it, 'tis no where else to be found, and there you may find an Equivalent for what Fortune refuses you; you will be more free. It must be from a Principle of Reason, you are brought to consider yourself, and not by withdrawing yourself from the world.

Mme de Lambert's letters to her son and daughter represent an admired collection of ethical and practical advice popular in London in Handel's day. It is no surprise to find their concerns reflected in his operas

and oratorios. Even if he never opened the pages of Rowell's translation, the presence of his name in the list of subscribers confirms his attachment to the society that fostered and discussed the ideals expounded therein and nurtured their embodiment in his works.

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Why did Handel subscribe to this translation when Carte's was still available? Indeed, why was Rowell's version deemed necessary? Thomas Carte (1686-1754) was a Jacobite historian sympathetic to the Stuart cause. When the Atterbury plot was discovered, in 1722, the substantial sum of £1000 was offered for his arrest. Carte escaped to France and spent the next six years there, gathering material for his historical writings (and, toward the end of his exile, translating Mme de Lambert's letters). It was supposedly the intervention of Queen Caroline that allowed him to return to England in 1728; she probably hoped that the Hanoverians would receive credit for supporting scholarly work.

After his return, however, Carte acted as an (incompetent) Jacobite agent and engaged in a pamphlet war about his interpretation of the documents that he had accumulated. In 1744 he issued *A Collection of the Several Papers published by Mr Thomas Carte in relation to his History of England*, whereupon he was arrested but soon released - a sign that he was still being watched with suspicion. Three years later he published the first volume of his *History of England to 1654*, which includes a reference to the curing of the King's evil by the touch of the exiled Pretender. The broadside battle occasioned by this claim, and Carte's recognition of the Stuart line of succession, form part of the background to Rowell's translation (1749).

This new edition is more lavish than Carte's. It is larger and contains attractive vignettes. In addition to the letters, it includes the marchioness's correspondence with Fénelon, in French and in English translation. After the letters there is a 'Dialogue between Alexander and Diogenes On the Equality of their Happiness', and an essay critical of the idea of older women continuing to be interested in love ('A Dissertation on the Sentiments of a Lady, Who thought Love not unfit for Women, even after their youthful Days are past'). Rowell's translation is also much better than Carte's - more fluid and rhetorically convincing.

But the real purpose of the edition is evident from the list of subscribers, which reads like a 'Who's Who' of Hanoverian supporters. The Duke of Manchester's name counterpoints that of his wife, a well-known Whig, to whom John Lockman had dedicated *New Reflexions on the Fair Sex* in 1729. Prince Lobkowitz was Gluck's patron and companion during his visit to London in 1745-6. Matthew Dubourg was listed as 'Master of His Majesty's Musick in Ireland' - an important Hanoverian appointment - and was a colleague of Handel. Linked to Hanover by loyalty, patronage and personal affection, Handel was doubtless glad to appear among such subscribers, even if the book only sat on his library shelf.

Duncan Chisholm

TWO ANNIVERSARIES

1992 saw quite a few celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the first performance of *Messiah*, but since then there have been remarkably few events marking subsequent anniversaries in Handel's career. There is still time, at least until *Jephtha* in 2001 or 2002. The 250th anniversary of the first performance of *Susanna* and *Solomon*



would be well worth remembering this year, and two other important events in Handelian history have been commemorated in recent months.

The spring of 1749 was a busy time for Handel: having given a Lenten season of excellent oratorios at Covent Garden, he became involved in the London celebrations of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, providing music for the Royal Fireworks on 27 April and for the Chapel Royal service on the national Thanksgiving two days before. Almost immediately afterwards he approached the Foundling Hospital with the offer of a musical performance in aid of their charity, destined to be the first in a series of such events. In subsequent years Handel gave *Messiah* for the Hospital, but in 1749 he put together a programme of diverse music which appeared to follow the three-part format of theatrical convention but was performed as a lunch-time concert in the (as yet unfinished) chapel of the Hospital. Part One comprised repeats of music from the recent peace celebrations – the *Fireworks Music* and the *Anthem on the Peace*; Part Two was a sequence of movements from *Solomon* relating to the dedication of the Temple (and with obvious implied relevance to the Hospital chapel), and for Part Three Handel constructed a new piece, the 'Foundling Hospital Anthem' *Blessed are they that considereth the poor and needy*. After various vicissitudes over the date, he gave the concert on 27 May.

On 19 April 1999 at St John's Smith Square this programme was revived by The Academy of Ancient Music and the Choir of New College, Oxford. The occasion celebrated both the 250th

anniversary of Handel's concert and the 25th anniversary of the Academy's foundation: appropriately, it was both a gala event in aid of the Coram Foundation and a reminder of the artistic achievements of one of Britain's pioneering authentic instrument orchestras. The programme provided an enjoyable evening's music of agreeable length, variety and diversity, and the original contents of the programme were in general accurately presented, including the original version of the Foundling anthem without solo movements. The least-defined aspect of Handel's programme was the extent of his instrumental music at the beginning of Parts Two and Three: the full concerto at the beginning of Part Three seemed to be a little too extensive for its context, but some indulgence was appropriate to the Academy's need to provide a platform for their three directors (Christopher Hogwood, Paul Goodwin and Andrew Manze). The soloists for the evening received one aria each: it was good to see Emma Kirkby and James Bowman among the party. Someone should keep reminding people about this programme for future concerts, so that we do not have to wait another 249 years.

While Handel was preparing for his performances of the *Fireworks Music* in London, another interesting and significant event happened in Oxford. The annual academic celebration there usually took place a couple of months later, but in 1749 the Radcliffe Library was opened on 13 July and the degree-giving celebrations spread over that day and the next. William Hayes, the Professor of Music, received his doctorate and directed three days of Handel performances, of the which principal events were *Esther*, *Samson* and

Messiah. This was arguably the first public performance of *Messiah* in England to be given by anyone other than the composer, and at a time when the work had not yet achieved particular favour. On the precise anniversary date of 14 April Hayes's performance was re-created in the original venue, the Sheldonian Theatre, by Magnificat under the direction of Philip Cave. This was a stylish performance that faithfully followed the scheme of variant movements indicated in the printed word-book from Hayes's 1749 performance; it was diminished only by the regrettable attenuation of 'The Trumpet shall sound'. The presence of a few more string players would have been both aurally welcome and more authentic: Hayes would no doubt have envied the vocal resources that permitted arias to be shared out democratically among the singers.

Donald Burrows

GRAND TOUR AND COUNTRY HOUSE

'Music of the Grand Tour' and 'Music in the Country House' are the titles of two new recordings of 18th-century music performed by *Janiculum* (director Jane Clark). The first presents a programme of music heard, performed, described and collected by travellers; the second is a collection of songs, arias and instrumental pieces played to and by patrons and amateurs. The artists on both CDs are Marie Vassiliou (soprano), Alasdair Elliott and Harry Nicoll (tenors), Leslie Holliday (flute), John Trusler (violin), Marilyn Sansom (cello) and Jane Clark (harpsichord). The recordings are available from the British Library shop at 96 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB.

The Handel Institute is a registered charity (no. 296615). Correspondence relating to the Newsletter should be sent to the editor, Professor Colin Timms, Department of Music, The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK (email: C.R.Timms@bham.ac.uk). All other enquiries should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, Dr Elizabeth Gibson, 15 Pyrland Road, Highbury, London, N5 2JB (email: gibson@attmail.com).
