## Mozart's String Quartet K. 465: The History of a Controversy Julie Anne Vertrees

Mozart's string quartet in C major has been the subject of criticism and controversy since its composition in 1785. The debate has centered upon the opening measures of the introduction to the first movement, with the method and thrust of the argument shifting from one generation to the next. Despite the stature of the composer and the existence of a carefully written autograph, which indicates that only two changes were made as the introduction was copied, Mozart's intentions have been questioned. Much of the discussion has revolved around possible errors of harmony and counterpoint and attempts to correct them. The following pages chronicle the time in which the introduction was controversial, although a detailed discussion of the respective analyses is beyond the scope of this article.

While visiting Vienna in 1785, Haydn heard the quartet performed and expressed his deep respect for Mozart's gifts as a composer.<sup>2</sup> Mozart returned the compliment by dedicating the set of quartets to Haydn; the first edition, published by Artaria in the same year, carries the dedication in Italian.<sup>3</sup> Artaria's advertisement in the 17 September 1785 issue of the Wiener Zeitung (no. 75, 2191) is indicative of the status of Mozart's reputation: "Mozart's works call for no special praise, so that it should be quite superfluous to go into details; it need only be affirmed that here is a masterpiece." Franz Xaver Niemetschek, in his Leben des K. K. Kapellmeisters Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart . . . (Prague, 1798/1808), praised the quartets as ". . . a treasure-house of the finest thoughts" and deserving of Haydn's acclaim.<sup>5</sup>

The controversy began when the Vienna correspondent for Carl Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* expressed his reservations in a report which appeared in the issue of 23 April 1787:

He is the most skillful and best keyboard scholar I have ever heard; the pity is only that he aims too high in his artful and truly beautiful compositions, in order to become a new creator, whereby it must be said that feeling and heart profit little; his new Quartets for 2 violins, viola and bass, which he has dedicated to Haydn, may well be called too highly seasoned—and whose palate can endure this for long? Forgive this simile from the cookery book. . . . 6

A letter printed in the July 1789 issue was more enthusiastic:

... his six quartets for violins, viola and bass dedicated to Haydn confirm it once again that he has a decided leaning towards the difficult and the unusual. But then, what great and elevated ideas he has too, testifying to a bold spirit!

The 11 September 1799 issue of the Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung (AmZ) reported two anecdotes about Mozart's "Haydn" quartets which have been

frequently quoted. According to that journal, the parts were returned to Artaria from Italy because of so many "errors," and in Hungary Count Grassalkowich angrily tore up the parts after first accusing the players of making mistakes and then concluding that the parts were full of misprints.<sup>8</sup>

Giuseppe Sarti was apparently the first to scrutinize the introduction to K. 465 closely and to offer specific criticism. In a disparaging essay, probably written while he was *Kapellmeister* of the Russian court from 1784 to 1802, Sarti berated Mozart for composing cross-relations in the introduction to K. 465 and also in the development of the first movement of K. 421.9 When Sarti left Milan in 1784 to join the Russian court in St. Petersburg, he stopped in Vienna on his way. Mozart wrote his father on May 8th that "Sarti is expected here any day on his way through to Russia," and on June 12th:

Tomorrow Herr Ployer, the agent, is giving a concert in the country at Döbling, where Fräulein Babette [Barbara Ployer] is playing her new concerto in G [K. 452] and I am performing the quintet [K. 453]; we are then playing together the grand sonata for two claviers [K. 448]. I am fetching Paisiello in my carriage, as I want him to hear both my pupil and my compositions. If Maestro Sarti had not had to leave Vienna today, he too would have come with me. Sarti is a good honest fellow! I have played a great deal to him and have composed variations on an air of his which pleased him exceedingly [K. 460].<sup>10</sup>

It is puzzling, then, that Sarti referred to Mozart in parentheses as one "whom I neither know nor wish to know," and that, after lambasting the quartets, he concluded his essay by asking "... will any one be found to print such music?"11 As for cross-relations, Sarti recognized only two kinds—those that should be avoided and those that were intolerable. The first, Apotome, "... also called a minor semitone, or false unison, is the succession of two notes bearing the same literal name, as F, F#; E, Eb," and the second, Minimo, is ". . . an interval [enharmonic interval] taking the name of two contiguous degrees of the scale, the lower of which is #, the upper b; as D#, Eb; F#, Gb." The latter created the worse effect when not concealed and, in fact, Sarti felt that "whoever is guilty of them [both kinds of cross-relations] must possess ears lined with iron." Sarti referred vaguely to the "old masters" as his source of authority and claimed that while they were guided by sensitive ears, the "barbarians" of today compose "... passages which truly make us shudder." His analysis, in an impatient, arrogant tone, is laced with snide references to Mozart as a mere pianoforte player with "spoilt ears," incapable of distinguishing between Eb and D#12 (Ex. 1).

One can only speculate about Sarti's reasons for attacking Mozart. According to Dieter Lehmann, the chamber music of Haydn and Mozart and Mozart's operas (*Die Zauberflöte* in particular) were very popular among Russian music lovers in the late 18th century. Sarti perhaps resented Mozart's

popularity and was able to vent his frustrations in letters and at court, where he could exert his influence upon the musical taste of its members.<sup>13</sup>

According to the AmZ's Milan correspondent, Dr. Peter Lichtenthal, Sarti's essay was suppressed by the Milanese composer and theorist Bonifacio Asioli. Lichtenthal briefly described the "Osservazioni critiche sopra un



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quartetto di Mozart' in a communication to the AmZ in  $1824^{14}$  and two years later published his  $Dizionario\ e\ bibliografia\ della\ musica$  (Milan, 1826), which contained an Italian translation of the AmZ communication (vol. 4, p. 481). It is interesting to note that the title specifies "un quartetto," whereas the essay examines two quartets. (For a further discussion of this, see below.) In the AmZ article Lichtenthal revealed that Karl Mozart had read the essay and felt it to have been written in "einem grausamen [inhuman] Tone." Asioli refused to grant Lichtenthal permission to publish the "Osservazioni," but upon Asioli's death in 1832 Lichtenthal secured a copy and printed excerpts, translated into German, in the 6 June 1832 issue of the AmZ. 15

In the meantime, a heated debate took place during the years 1829–32 between the Franco-Belgian critic and musicologist François-Joseph Fétis and an unknown correspondent writing in German under the pseudonym "A. C. Leduc." Fétis took up where Sarti left off by offering an article in his own periodical, La Revue musicale (Rm). While conceding that beyond a small number of objectionable measures the quartet was truly a masterpiece, he described the introduction as "bizarre" and accused Mozart of taking "pleasure in tormenting a delicate ear." After closely examining the harmony, he was struck by the ease with which he could eliminate such "objectionable" places by making minor changes, and in such a way that the introduction would conform to the rules of all schools of counterpoint. Fétis based his "corrections" on a rule in his 1821 Traité du contrepoint et de la fugue, 17 which stated that in an imitation consisting of alternate entries at the fifth and fourth, there should always be a greater distance between the second and third entrances than between the first and second.

Not merely content to criticize with words, Fétis went on to present an "improved" version of the opening measures. He delayed the entrance of the first violin one beat in measure two, and in measures two and three he substituted the dotted-quarter-eighth figure for the quarter notes in the viola and violins, thereby delaying the lower neighbor tones and softening the dissonance (Ex. 2)<sup>18</sup>:



The peculiarities of the introduction may have first come to Fétis's attention when he read Lichtenthal's communication of 1824 in the AmZ. Although he may have been advised by Luigi Cherubini, who at one time was a student of Sarti, <sup>19</sup> Fétis's references to Sarti and to the "Osservazioni" reflect a knowledge of only the limited information contained in the AmZ's brief description. Fétis's first impression was that Mozart could not possibly have composed so carelessly and that undoubtedly "some ignorant copyist" was at fault. However, a pilgrimage to London to consult the autograph convinced him that the cross-relations were carefully notated in Mozart's own hand. In his closing remarks he rather half-heartedly agreed with Haydn that ". . . if Mozart wrote it so, he must have had his reasons for doing it." <sup>20</sup>

Fétis recorded the reaction of the Paris Conservatory community to his article on several occasions. In his second response to Leduc, Fétis claimed that Cherubini, Catel, Boieldieu, and Reicha would support his analysis.<sup>21</sup> Ten years later he described their initial response:

The day the issue which contained this article appeared, the faculty met at the conservatory. Cherubini, Catel, Paër, Boieldieu, and Reicha, meeting one another there, spoke at length about the question that I had discussed [in the article], and, surprised at the simplicity of the solution which I supplied to the objections, they were astonished that it had taken so long to be discovered.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, in 1884, Fétis revealed that there had been, in fact, considerable debate:

The affair caused some emotion at the Paris Conservatory, and during a meeting of the examination board which met at the same time, and when Cherubini, Boieldieu, Paër, Le Sueur, Reicha, Berton, and the author of the article met with one another, diverse opinions on this subject were debated. Le Sueur remained silent, but Boieldieu, Paër, and Berton condemned the harmonic progressions of the passage. Reicha undertook their defense, but Cherubini settled the question by exclaiming: "You don't know what you're saying; Fétis is right. His rule is that of the proper school: it condemns this passage." 23

François Louis Perne, Fétis's esteemed predecessor at the conservatory library, was the first to speak out in public against Fétis's presumption to correct Mozart's music as if it were merely a student exercise. In a letter to Fétis, written the week after Fétis's article appeared and published in the following issue of Rm,<sup>24</sup> Perne accused Fétis of unjustly reprimanding Mozart for employing the same modulations that were universally extolled in the works of Bach and Handel. He lashed out at Fétis's bland conservatism and at composers who strove to be innovative yet lacked the courage to risk disapproval from the Old Guard.<sup>25</sup>

Appended to Perne's letter was an editorial rejoinder in which Fétis pointed out that ever since the quartet was published, amateurs and professionals alike had rebelled against the passage without knowing why.

Having perceived the underlying factors creating the bad effect, Fétis adjusted the imitation to improve the harmony according to the rules of counterpoint. He vehemently denied he had been pretentious, retorting, "Had I had the intention of correcting all that is shocking in the passage, I would have had a great deal to do."<sup>26</sup>

Alexandre Oulibicheff was singularly delighted with Fétis's corrections, since:

... there probably is not a violinist who upon playing the A-natural of the second measure in the first violin, has not thought that [either] his comrades or himself were playing incorrectly; but this dissonance is in the composition, and it returns one step [lower] on a G in the sixth measure.<sup>27</sup>

Oulibicheff—no longer thwarted by cross-relations and improper imitation—looked forward to playing the quartet secure in the belief that Fétis most probably had restored Mozart's true intentions to the score.

"A. C. Leduc" entered the dispute with a lengthy polemic article in the AmZ, which appeared six months after Fétis's first article. Leduc immediately took the offensive and derided Fétis for not taking into account the fact that Mozart had dedicated this and five other quartets to Haydn and therefore "... would not have permitted the smallest careless mistake which could have been criticized." He defended Mozart's right to exercise free will in composing but inferred that Mozart could have composed better harmony had he wanted to. Leduc then presented a revision of his own which retained Mozart's sequence of entries (the A-natural in the first violin was shortened to conform with the melodic contour of the viola and second violin) but drastically altered the bass line and harmony—under the pretense of demonstrating what a travesty Fétis had committed (Ex. 3). Leduc's unstated assumption was that he could correct Mozart better than could Fétis.

The identity of A. C. Leduc was a well-kept secret. Undoubtedly a French name was chosen to gall Fétis as much as possible. As a group, the German



authors who contributed articles to the controversy seemed reluctant to have their names connected with the dispute. Fétis confessed that the name A. C. Leduc was totally unfamiliar to him in his reply to Leduc's article,<sup>30</sup> but eventually he became convinced that it had to be his rival, the Austrian musicologist Raphael-Georg Kiesewetter, an assumption he was to reiterate whenever possible; for their part, the Germans remained silent. The 19th-century music historian August Wilhelm Ambros did mention the dispute between Kiesewetter (who was his uncle) and Fétis over the Mozart quartet on at least two occasions but never actually made a connection between Kiesewetter and Leduc.<sup>31</sup>

In 1826 both Kiesewetter and Fétis had entered the Royal Belgian Academy competition for historical essays. The topic was:

What merits have the Netherlanders, particularly of the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, acquired in the area of music composition? And to what extent could those Netherlandish musicians of the time who went to Italy have had an influence on the music schools that shortly afterwards arose there?<sup>32</sup>

Kiesewetter won first prize and Fétis second, touching off a lifelong rivalry between the two.<sup>33</sup> The competition was evidently difficult to judge because the secretary of the competition noted that:

Kiesewetter's essay presented a general study of the history of the music of the period under consideration, but Fétis supplied more precise details and was more thorough on a certain number of specific musicians,<sup>34</sup>

and both essays were published in a single volume.

In his documentary biography of Kiesewetter, Herfrid Kier produced letters from the former which indicate that Kiesewetter was not Leduc.35 In a letter of 27 March 1830 to Georg Pölchau, Kiesewetter declared that had the mysterious A. C. Leduc not published his article, he would have been compelled to vindicate Mozart himself.36 In July Fétis's second article appeared, and when by September Leduc had not responded, Kiesewetter became impatient enough to write an open letter (in the form of analysis and commentary) to the editor of the AmZ, Gottfried Wilhelm Fink, who finally published it as a supplement to the 27 July 1831 issue; Kiesewetter signed it "C. M. Balthaser."37 In it he declared that Mozart had outgrown student exercises long before he composed the quartet, and, unlike composers "today," he was unaccustomed to explaining his work according to theories he himself formulated.<sup>38</sup> In another letter to Pölchau, dated 23 September 1832, Kiesewetter admitted having written the Balthaser article without mentioning the pseudonym itself. According to Kier the Balthaser article is listed in both Kiesewetter's "handschriftlichen Verzeichnis" and in the "Schriftumsverzeichnis" of his autobiography.39

Kiesewetter often wrote anonymously or under a pseudonym, whereas Fétis always signed his own name. Unlike Fétis, who devoted his life to

musical endeavors, Kiesewetter divided his time between music and government service. Officially, he was a privy councillor ("Hofrath") in Vienna, and in 1843 he was made "Edler von Wiesenbrunn" by Kaiser Ferdinand. Leopold von Sonnleithner described Kiesewetter as "jovial, charming, humorous," and perhaps the combination of professional conscience and wit account for Kiesewetter's habit of concealing his identity when taking Fétis to task. At any rate, Fétis soon saw Kiesewetter's presence behind every article bearing an unfamiliar signature. Ambros conjectured that "... were Fétis to have had the misfortune on the way home to be assaulted and robbed on a lonely path by a tramp, he would have asked: Might that bandit have been perhaps Kiesewetter in disguise?" 42

When Kiesewetter died in 1850, a necrology by Aloys Fuchs appeared both in the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik (NZfM) and in the conglomerate periodical La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris (R&GmP).<sup>43</sup> Fuchs provided a list of Kiesewetter's works, which followed the biographical data and tributes. The German version included the Balthaser article, but when the necrology appeared in Paris, the first Leduc article had been substituted,<sup>44</sup> no doubt by Fétis. Kier contends that Fétis made the switch and calls it "a malicious insinuation."<sup>45</sup>

In his articles written in the 1830s, Fétis identified Leduc only as "...a German disguised by a pseudonym," 46 but by 1850 he had apparently decided that Leduc was Kiesewetter and altered the necrology accordingly. This is confirmed by the second edition of volume 5 of Biographie universelle, published in 1863, which included an entry for A. C. Leduc, identifying him as one of Kiesewetter's pseudonyms. In 1884 Fétis, recounting the controversy again, connected Kiesewetter with Leduc in a footnote of his Biographie universelle article on Gottfried Weber, who had entered the Mozart controversy in 1832. 47 Despite Fétis's emphatic endorsement, there is reason to doubt that Kiesewetter was Leduc.

Leduc (whoever he was) was more intent upon discrediting Fétis than defending Mozart. Fétis was at the distinct disadvantage of not knowing the identities of his assailants, whereas Leduc and Balthaser could capitalize on Fétis's reputation as a conservatory pedant. Leduc depicted Fétis as a preceptor, mechanically correcting Mozart's *Schulböcke* (bloopers) without concern for creativity or beauty. 48 The Beethoven biographer Wilhelm von Lenz observed that Fétis did not exempt anyone from the tyranny of "the rules," but by seeing what was unique as a violation of rules (albeit formulated after the fact), Fétis restricted his ability to perceive why a composition such as this introduction was unique. "The Mozart text is somewhat piquant, but somewhat shocking it is not." 49

Balthaser expressed general dismay over the inadequacy of the harmony instruction at the Paris Conservatory and found it "... hardly the Athens of Counterpoint" that Fétis seemed to imagine it.<sup>50</sup> Leduc attributed at least part of Fétis's lack of insight to the fact that "... Fétis probably demonstrates with Rossini scores so often that his ear has become pampered and no longer

is accustomed to serious harmony."<sup>51</sup> In addition, as Balthaser pointed out, German ears had had the benefit of hearing Bach and Handel for the last century and therefore were not shocked by Mozart. Leduc's attitude toward Fétis was always condescending, and Leduc seemed to feel he possessed a close affinity to Mozart by virtue of nationality that would enable him to interpret and represent Mozart more accurately than Fétis could: "We are convinced that had Mozart lived, Fétis's reproach would have caused [him] no anger."<sup>52</sup>

What irked Leduc the most was not Fétis's treatment of Mozart but rather Fétis's misrepresentation of Leduc's own remarks. Leduc's arguments depended upon a meticulous rendition of the content and design of Fétis's articles; on the other hand, distortion and omission were Fétis's only weapons against Leduc. In his second article Leduc criticized Fétis's command of the German language and hastened to add that if Fétis could not comprehend his carefully constructed logic, it was not Leduc's fault.<sup>53</sup> Leduc charged that since few Frenchmen read German periodicals, their perspective was prejudiced by Fétis's suppression and perversion of adverse criticism. In exasperation Leduc asked, "In what light would Fétis appear before his public if I chose to publish my articles in the French language?"<sup>54</sup>

In contrast to Fétis's short expositions Leduc's two articles are excessively long-winded and encumbered by a profusion of musical examples—an indication that he took the matter far more seriously than Fétis had ever intended to do. In his second article Fétis exploited the German penchant for extended rhetoric:

I will not present a long analysis of the meaning of Mozart's composition because it is something which each is free to see as he wishes, and everyone knows the Germans make great use of this liberty. As the proportion of decadence of true knowledge in your school becomes more imminent, more importance tends to be placed upon aesthetics. . . . . There are still skillful musicians in Germany, but they do not write much. <sup>55</sup>

It is ironic that Fétis failed to realize that he himself was to no small degree responsible for the rise of music criticism in France.<sup>56</sup> Both Balthaser and Leduc denied Fétis's accusations and attempted to turn the tables by comparing the state of German counterpoint with that in France and by casting further scorn upon Fétis.

After Leduc's second article, which appeared in two consecutive issues of the AmZ in February 1831, the feud between Fétis and Leduc ground to a halt. Although Fétis later reargued his position in a review<sup>57</sup> and in his *Biographie universelle*, Leduc was never heard from again. He himself said he was necessarily created by Fétis's audacity: "Fecit indignatio versum!"  $^{58}$ 

In each of his articles Leduc offered clues to his identity. In the 24 February 1830 article he described himself as "ein Fremder" while employing the first person plural when speaking of Germany. Preceding the signature at the end of the article is: "Wien, im Jänner, 1830." In the 9 February 1831

article Leduc gloated over Fétis's inability to identify him and offered another hint: "His opponent is indeed a novel [neuer] man, who has never before written with respect to music." However, it is difficult to accept this last clue on face value in light of Leduc's proven ability to put Fétis, a professed music scholar and critic, on the defensive.

Perhaps he would have reappeared had the articulate Gottfried Weber not published the third edition of his Versuch einer geordneten Theorie der Tonsetzkunst in 1832, which included a section entitled "On a particularly remarkable passage in Mozart's Violin Quartet in C."61 This is the only composition discussed in such detail in the four-volume work, and, realizing the topical interest in the quartet, Weber republished the section separately in his own periodical, Cäcilia, in the same year. 62 Five years later Johann Georg Kastner produced a French translation, entitled Essai d'un théorie systématique de la composition, and a year later, a synopsis in R&GmP.63 Fétis undoubtedly became familiar with Weber's treatise through Kastner's translation. The seven-year interim between the Fétis-Leduc altercation and Fétis's publication of a review of Weber's treatise, dealing specifically with the section on Mozart's quartet introduction, 64 suggests he did not read Weber's treatise in German or the extracted article in Cäcilia. The further publication of two English translations, an American edition in 1841-42 by James Franklin Warner<sup>65</sup> and an English one in 1851 by John Bishop,<sup>66</sup> testifies to the popularity of Weber's third edition. It was Warner's intentional and unexplained omission of Weber's discussion and analysis of the introduction to K. 465 which prompted Bishop to reedit and emend the translation for publication in England.67

The flurry of literary activity surrounding Weber's new, expanded edition was an appropriate response to his comprehensive and objective analysis of the introduction. The latter appeared in conjunction with a larger discussion of modulation, although Weber had used the passage in the earlier editions

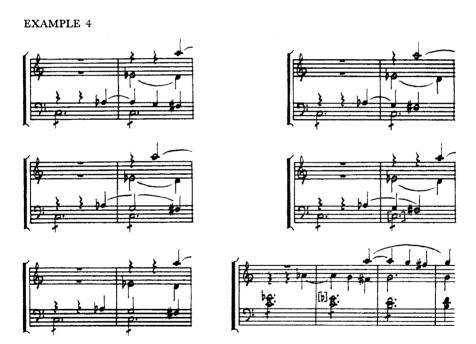
... as an example for the elucidation of this or that theoretical tenet, and consequently, for the most part, had fully analyzed whatever appeared peculiar or remarkable in these combinations of tones.

Before proceeding with the analysis, Weber presented a documented summary of the controversy, based upon the articles of Fétis, Perne, and Leduc. He agreed with Sarti and Fétis that the passage was "strange" but was the first to demonstrate why.

While discouraging his readers from expecting "... a judgment on the frequently disputed theoretical allowableness and irregularity of the passage in question," Weber attempted to examine the passage objectively from both grammatical and "rhetorical" perspectives. Feeling that the dissonance was not wrong, he claimed that such peculiar sounds "... must be employed for the sake of contrast." His irritation with Fétisian dogma was undisguised:

Once [and] for all, music is not a science endowed with mathematical deductions and completeness; it is not a system presenting us with absolute rules of permission or prohibition, the adoption of which can in all cases determine . . . the value or worthlessness, the accuracy or inaccuracy, the lawfulness or unlawfulness of this or that combination or succession of tones; and all the pretensions of those who have imagined they could found the theory of music on mathematics, and from such an assumed foundation deduce and establish absolute precepts, appear on the slightest examination as empty and ridiculous dreams. . . .

But even Weber dared to offer alternatives to Mozart's opening measures. After explaining how the succession of tones produces contradictory expectations and thus confuses the listener, Weber presented six alternatives to the opening measures (Ex. 4).



Furthermore, Weber accused Fétis of misapplying his own rule concerning the imitation and denounced the objections of Leduc as inappropriate.

In an attempt to offer a clever epilogue to the controversy, Weber sought to show that Mozart's passage *did* satisfy Fétis's rule. According to Weber, Fétis simply did not recognize where the imitation began between the second and third entries. Instead of comparing the distances between the entrances of the three upper voices as Fétis had, Weber focused on the dotted quarternotes of measures three and four in the second and first violins and showed

that at that point they were one beat farther apart than the distance between the entrances of the viola and second violin (Ex. 5).

## EXAMPLE 5



Weber intended to include a more detailed discussion in a projected *Theory of Double Counterpoint*, which, however, he never completed.

Weber deemed Mozart's own "musically cultivated ear" the best judge of his work but admitted that he himself had reservations:

As regards my own ear, I frankly confess that it does not receive pleasure from sounds like these;—on this subject I can freely speak as I think, and, in defiance of the silly and envious, dare even take up the haughty words and say: I know what I like in my Mozart. 68

It was to be expected that upon reading Weber, Fétis would feel compelled to justify his theories in public once again. He did so, of course, in his review of Kastner's translation.<sup>69</sup> Fétis's tenacity led him to challenge Weber to a debate in the presence of a bipartisan jury. He offered to present a history of music theory and unlimited demonstrations proving the infallibility of the natural doctrine of tonality—all of this in the course of five or six sessions of two hours each—upon the request of Monsieur Weber. He ended his review by describing Weber's treatise as an "... excellent collection of analytic observations, [although] it is not a theory . ."—contrary to what the title implied.<sup>70</sup>

As stated earlier, Lichtenthal published excerpts from the Sarti MS. in 1832, which were translated a second time into English and published in *The Harmonicon* in the same year.<sup>71</sup> In the 1824 communication Lichtenthal referred to Sarti's *Streitschrift* as "Osservazioni critiche sopra un quartetto di Mozart."<sup>72</sup> Other than a bibliographic description, the incipit of the introduction, and the closing line ("si puó per far stonare i professori?"),<sup>73</sup> no details were given. In 1832 Lichtenthal published the excerpts under the title "Esame acustico fatto sopra due frammenti di Moazrt" but offered no explanation for the switch.<sup>74</sup> The editor of *The Harmonicon* commented upon the title "Acoustical Examination of Two Fragments of Mozart" as follows:

The word acustico is here most improperly employed: the examination is into the practical effect of the passage in question, and does not concern the philosophical nature of the sounds introduced by the composer. The term esame is, unintentionally, very apt, for it signifies also a swarm of bees. The assailants of Mozart were not deficient in stings, though poor enough in honey; and their impotent attacks only caused his works to be sooner known and more widely circulated.<sup>75</sup>

Instead of the Italian question the "Esame" concluded with a quotation in French from Rousseau: "de la musique à faire boucher ses oreilles."<sup>76</sup>

There is reason to believe that Lichtenthal fabricated the earlier title. Prior to the 1824 communication, no one had associated theoretical works with the successful opera composer and Kapellmeister. Neither the 1792 nor the 1812 edition of Gerber's Lexicon der Tonkünstler mentions any essays, although several pages were devoted to Sarti's career and compositions. The 1824 communication and the index to Lichtenthal's Dizionario e bibliographia della musica (1826) list two theoretical works in manuscript: "Théorie de l'Harmonie simultanée et successive" and "Osservazioni critiche sopra un quartetto di Mozart." Between 1824 and 1832 every article and book mentioning Sarti's Mozart criticism spoke of the "Osservazioni" and usually quoted the closing line, thus indicating that their probable source was the 1824 communication rather than the manuscript itself. All books and articles written after the excerpts appeared referred to the "Esame." In his preface to the excerpts Lichtenthal spoke of his vain attempts to see the manuscript while Asioli was alive,<sup>78</sup> and Lichtenthal's knowledge of what the manuscript actually contained was probably sketchy at best, which may account for the fact that the "Osservazioni" were allegedly only about one quartet.

The Harmonicon published the Sarti excerpts in English because "... the subject is interesting in a theoretical point of view and may induce some of our native artists to enter into a critical inquiry of the question at issue." To Unfortunately, The Harmonicon ceased publication the following year without having issued any rejoinders. The journal did, however, improve upon the typographical format of the article. In an apparent effort to make the analysis more concise, Lichtenthal had occasionally summarized Sarti instead of quoting him. Whereas the AmZ made no typographical distinction between Lichtenthal and Sarti, The Harmonicon set off the Sarti quotations in apostrophes.

Lichtenthal appended a postscript to his translation, which also appeared in the English version:

The whole thing smacks of envy. Like every Italian maestro, who knows a little more than another Italian maestro, Sarti is inflated with pride and considers himself great and famous. Mozart's memory was still alive in Milan, where he had created a brilliant era as a twelve-and fourteen-year-old opera composer, when those six quartets dedicated to J. Haydn arrived there and transported everyone into a totally new,

previously never suspected world. And in order to diminish the light of this great German genius, Sarti (then Kapellmeister at the Milan Cathedral) searched for so-called sunspots, [and] wrote down (they say for a Milanese lady), [in] a so-called "Esame acustico," those nineteen errors in thirty-six bars listed by him. As for the other thousands of heavenly bars in those six quartets—how did the Kapellmeister like them?

(Lichtenthal erred in stating that Sarti wrote the essay while *Kapellmeister* at the Milan Cathedral, however, since Sarti left that position the year before the quartet was composed.)

In 1833 a series of unsigned articles on cross-relations appeared in the AmZ.<sup>81</sup> They represented a thorough account of the evolution of the function of cross-relations as revealed in treatises from the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical eras. The final article, entitled "Anhang: Ueber Sartis Streitschrift gegen Mozart," reveals the purpose of the series. By elaborately demonstrating how earlier composers and theorists resolved the problems of cross-relations, Sarti was cast in a ridiculous light: "One might think, upon reading this, that Sarti was about one hundred years too late. . . ." The author underscored the fallibility of Sarti's accusations by systematically taking each of the supposed errors in both quartets and showing with numerous musical examples why they would no longer be considered errors of counterpoint. Lichtenthal's excerpts of Sarti were quoted almost verbatim but were shuffled to suit the author's purposes.

The tone of this final article is reminiscent of the sarcastic and vindictive tone which characterized Lichtenthal's postscript. The anonymous author claimed that since consonant harmony makes no allowance for the interval between Eb and D\$\pi\$, the listener will perceive it as faulty intonation. Nature, we are told, ". . . bestowed such a sensitive ear upon Sarti that he could hear grass grow."82

There is reason to believe Lichtenthal may have written this series of articles. However, to entertain such a theory means one must take into account a further tantalizing piece of evidence: although the articles are unsigned and the index for 1832 lists them anonymously, the cumulative index of the AmZ lists them under A. C. Leduc. There is substantial evidence for the case that Lichtenthal was Leduc and the author of the cross-relations series.

Until 1810 Lichtenthal lived in Vienna, where he had become a friend of Mozart's widow and family<sup>88</sup>; this is confirmed by the intimate account of Karl Mozart's reaction to Sarti's criticism in the 1824 communication. Lichtenthal, a medical doctor by profession, took a life-long interest in music—especially that of Mozart: he published a short biography of Mozart<sup>84</sup> and adapted *Idomeneo* for the Italian stage in 1843.<sup>85</sup> His position as Milan correspondent for the  $Am\mathcal{Z}$  could have enabled him to conceal his identity. His residence in Italy may explain how he could refer to himself as "ein Fremder" as well as a German; however, the first Leduc article was

dated "Vienna, January 1830," which would have meant Lichtenthal was visiting there, although no such trip can be documented. Part of Leduc's success in the confrontation with Fétis was due to his command of French and his knowledge of the compositions of the Renaissance masters. Lichtenthal demonstrated both capacities in his Estetica ossia Dottrina del bello e delle arti belle, published in 1831.86 Finally, with regard to the cross-relations series in particular, after impatiently seeking the opportunity to make the Sarti MS. public, Lichtenthal would hardly have contented himself with the brief commentary contained in his postscript.

The C-major string quartet has continued to capture the interest of theorists, historians, and critics. But the era in which theorists found it possible to suggest that Mozart did not know what he was doing and to "correct" his music has long since ended. Jacques Chailley has interpreted the introduction in terms of the Masonic rites in which Mozart had taken part exactly one month before the quartet was completed.<sup>87</sup>

Heinrich Schenker discussed the introduction in several places in his Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien. In volume 1 of Harmonielehre he examined it with respect to mixtures of major and minor mode and concluded that

... the A-flat and the A approach each other so closely that the ear is tempted to hear them together, and it becomes difficult to make an immediate and clear distinction between the different functions of these two tones. This difficulty, as is well known, has drawn upon this quartet the misleading name "Dissonance Quartet." 88

Schenker, speaking in 1906, referred to the quartet's nickname as if it were in common usage as it is today. This is curious since neither critics Sarti, Fétis, Perne, Leduc, Balthaser, and Ambros, Mozart biographer Jahn, nor theorists Weber, Riemann, and Schreyer ever referred to the quartet by that name. In volume 3, *Der freie Satz*, Schenker presented a schematic analysis, illustrating the large-scale motion. 89 Like Schenker, Hugo Riemann, Johannes Schreyer, and Rudolf Gerber discussed K. 465 in terms of their own methods of analysis, but without questioning its propriety. 90 Before presenting his own analysis Antoine-Elisée Cherbuliez summarized the other 20th-century interpretations in a 1931 congress report. 91

From their respective vantage points Lichtenthal, Weber, Lenz, Ernest Newman, Cherbuliez, and Deutsch narrated the controversy.<sup>92</sup> Weber and Lenz, in particular, demonstrated remarkable insight, proximity in time and national biases notwithstanding. The articles by Weber, Cherbuliez, and Deutsch contain extensive, though not comprehensive, bibliographic material.

Ernest Newman's censure of the introduction is unique among 20th-century commentaries:

I am convinced that if it were put before us without any hint that it was by Mozart we should be pretty severe with it. I venture to say that this

introduction is *not* good Mozart, that it has an uncertainty about it—not so much harmonic as aesthetic—that we do not often find in him; that the men of his own day were conscious that it was not good Mozart; and that they were quite justified in saying so.

Newman was especially intrigued by the Sarti MS.; he noted that historians often coin clichés which distort the author's original meaning and in turn are taken up by younger historians. He expressed a desire to locate the MS. in order to reevaluate Sarti's role in the controversy and included the AmZ extract and commentary in his discussion:

Sarti is not attempting an aesthetic appreciation of the quartets as a whole; he is simply subjecting certain bars of them to a technical examination. And is not a good deal of his criticism justified from the technical point of view, especially of his period?

Newman concluded that ". . . Sarti turns out to have been mostly right and Mozart wrong." 93

Unlike most of Mozart's compositions, the six quartets dedicated to Haydn were not tailored to a commission. Mozart described them in the dedication as ". . . the fruit of long and laborious endeavor." They reflect his experimentation with forms, dynamics, chromaticism, and dissonance. Mozart must have anticipated they would be misunderstood, and by entrusting them to his acclaimed colleague he hoped to insure their credibility. His pride in them is apparent when he calls them his "children": ". . . I flatter myself that this offspring will serve to afford me some solace one day." He entreated Haydn to ". . . look indulgently upon the defects which the partiality of a father's eye may have concealed from me. . . . "94 Today, despite past onslaughts of criticism, analysis, and revision, the music retains its elusiveness and beauty.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> B. Mus. Add. MSS. 37763-5 contain the "ten celebrated quartets." They have also been made available in facsimile edition by the Robert Owen Lehman Foundation (Netherlands: L. Van Leer & Co., 1969). A facsimile of the introduction to K. 465 is included in the Newe Ausgabe sämtliche Werke, ser. 8, group 20, pt. 1, vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962), p. xiv. It appears from the facsimile that the two changes are in measure two, where the second violin part was rewritten, and in measure sixteen, where the first violin is supposed to be a quarter-note instead of an eighth. André Mangeot pointed out the discrepancies between the MS. and the first edition in his article "Le Manuscrit autographe de dix célèbres quatuors à cordes de Mozart," La Revue internationale de musique 1, no. 4 (October-November 1938): 625-27. The history of the autograph is recounted in the introduction to Alfred Einstein's W. A. Mozart. The Ten Celebrated String Quartets (London: Novello & Co. Ltd., 194-), and in A. Hyatt King's article "The Mozart Autographs in the British Museum," Music & Letters 18 (October 1937): 343-54.

<sup>2</sup> Emily Anderson, *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, vol. 2 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966), pp. 885–86 (letter 522). Leopold Mozart mentions the January 15th and February 12th performances and quotes Haydn in letters to his daughter.

<sup>3</sup> Otto Erich Deutsch, *Mozart. A Documentary Biography* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 250. The set contains K. 387, 421, 428, 458, 464, and 465.

- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 252.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 505. For other notices, see pp. 253, 255, and 259-61.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 290.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 349.
- 8 "Anekdoten," AmZ 1 (11 September 1799): 855. Georg-Nikolaus von Nissen edited the AmZ anecdotes and included them in his Biographie W. A. Mozarts. . . . (Leipzig, 1828, reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), p. 490.
- <sup>9</sup> See Dieter Lehmann, "Zwischen Sarti und Rasumowsky," Acta Mozartiana 3, no. 4 (1955): 48. Although the essay as we know it (see note 15) deals with nineteen "errors" in two quartets, the present discussion is restricted to K. 465. William J. Mitchell discussed the D-minor quartet's development section in his article "Giuseppe Sarti and Mozart's Quartet, K. 421," Current Musicology 9 (1969): 147–53.
  - <sup>10</sup> Anderson, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 876 (letter 512) and 880 (letter 515).
  - 11 "Sarti versus Mozart," The Harmonicon 10 (1832): 246.
  - 12 Ibid., pp. 243, 246.
  - 13 See Lehmann, "Zwischen Sarti und Rasumowsky," p. 44.
- <sup>14</sup> "Théorie de l'harmonie simultanée et successive, écrite par Sarti. M.S.," AmZ 26 (12 August 1824): 540.
- 15 "Auszug aus dem Sarti'schen Manuscripte, worin Mozart bitter getadelt wird," Am 2 34 (6 June 1832): 373-78.
- 16 "Sur un Passage singulier d'un quatuor de Mozart," Rm 5 (2 July 1829): 601-02. All translations in this article are by the author. Under Fétis's editorial leadership La Revue musicale began publication on 1 February 1827 and became the first serious music journal in France. In 1835 it merged with the year-old Gazette musicale de Paris (R&GmP).
  - <sup>17</sup> See rev. ed. (Paris: E. Troupenas & Cie., 1846), p. 75.
  - 18 "L'Introduction d'un quatuor de Mozart," Rm 7 (17 July 1830): 327, 327b.
- <sup>19</sup> Roger Cotte, "Cherubini," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1950), cols. 1170-71.
  - <sup>20</sup> Fétis, "Sur un Passage," p. 605. The Haydn quotation cannot be documented.
  - <sup>21</sup> Fétis, "L'Introduction," p. 327.
- 22 "Essai d'une théorie systématique de la composition (de la musique), par M. Godefroid Weber," R&GmP 28 (7 July 1839): 219.
- <sup>23</sup> "Weber (Gottfried ou Godefroid)," Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique, vol. 8, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie., 1884), p. 426.
  - <sup>24</sup> Letter of 1 August 1829, Rm 6 (1830): 25-31.
  - <sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 29.
  - 26 "Note," Rm 6 (1830): 32.
  - <sup>27</sup> Nouvelle Biographie de Mozart. . . , vol. 2 (Moscow: August Semen, 1842), pp. 254-55.
- <sup>28</sup> "Ueber den Aufsatz des Herrn Fétis (In dessen Revue Musicale Tome V, Nr. 26, 1829), eine Stelle Mozart's betreffend," AmZ 32 (24 February 1830): 117-30.
  - <sup>29</sup> Ibid., insert no. 1, ex. 4.
  - <sup>30</sup> Fétis, "L'Introduction," p. 321.
- <sup>31</sup> See Ambros's "F.-J. Fétis," Berliner Musik-Zeitung Echo 16 (17 April 1871): 175, 178. See also note 42 of this paper.
- <sup>32</sup> R. G. Kiesewetter and F. J. Fétis, Verhandelingen over de Vraag: Welke verdiensten hebben zich de Nederlanders vooral in de 14e, 15e, 16e Eeuw in het Vak der Toonkunst verworven; en in hoe verre kunnen de Nederlandsche Kunstenaars van dien Tijd, die zich naar Italien begeven hebben, Invloed gehad hebben op de Muzijkscholen, die zich kort daarna in Italien hebben gevormd? . . . vierde klasse van het Koninklijk-Nederlandsche Institut van Wetenschappen, Letterkunde en schoone Kunsten (Amsterdam: J. Muller en Comp., 1829).
- <sup>33</sup> Kiesewetter and Fétis disagreed publicly from time to time on such subjects as Orazio Vecchi (1831), Compère (1837), Gregorian chant (1828–45), Fétis's Resumé philosophique de l'histoire de la musique (1838), and Kiesewetter's Die Musik der Araber (1846).
  - <sup>34</sup> Robert Wangermée, Francois-Joseph Fétis (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1951), p. 126.

- <sup>35</sup> Raphael-Georg Kiesewetter, 1773–1850. Wegbereiter des musikalischen Historismus (Regensburg: G. Bosse, 1968), pp. 113–14. Kier refutes Othmar Wessely's article on Kiesewetter in Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, vol. 7 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1958), cols. 894–96.
  - 36 Ibid., p. 113.
- <sup>37</sup> C. M. Balthaser, "Noch Etwas ueber die von Hrn. Fétis verrufene Stelle in Mozart's VI Quartet," AmZ 32 (27 July 1831): 493–500. There is a curious inconsistency which Kier failed to note: on 19 September 1830 Kiesewetter wrote Pölchau "in the strictest confidence" that he *intended* to "vigorously express his opinion" in writing either under a pseudonym or anonymously; yet the Balthaser communication was dated two days earlier, 17 September 1830.
  - 38 Ibid., col. 494.
- <sup>39</sup> See "Meine musikalisch-litterarische Selbstbiographie," Almanach der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 3 (Vienna and Leipzig: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1853).
  - 40 AmZ 45 (27 September 1843): 702.
- <sup>41</sup> Otto Erich Deutsch, "Leopold von Sonnleithners Erinnerungen an die Musiksalons des vormärzlichen Wiens (Leopold von Sonnleithner, 'Musikalischen Skizzen aus Alt-Wien')," Oesterreichische Musikzeitschrift (1961): 62.
- <sup>42</sup> August Wilhelm Ambros, Bunte Blätter, Skizzen und Studien für Freunde der Musik (Leipzig: F. E. C. Leuckart, 1896), p. 90.
- 43 "Nekrolog. Raphael-Georg Kiesewetter," NZfM 32 (1 March 1850): 89-91; 32 (8 March 1850): 101-02. "Notice nécrologique sur R.-G. Kiesewetter de Wiesenbrunn," R&GmP 17 (24 March 1850): 97-99.
  - 44 See note 28.
- <sup>45</sup> Kier, Kiesewetter, p. 113. Allgemeine deutsche Biographie, vol. 15 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humbolt, 1875–1912), p. 732, attributed the first Leduc article to Kiesewetter but omitted the Balthaser article.
  - 46 Fétis, "Essai d'une théorie," p. 219.
  - 47 See note 23 and pages 105-07 of this article.
  - 48 Leduc, "Ueber den Aufsatz," col. 130.
  - 49 Beethoven. Eine Kunststudie (Kassel: Ernst Balde, 1855), p. 79.
  - 50 Balthaser, "Noch Etwas," col. 500.
  - <sup>51</sup> Leduc, "Ueber den Aufsatz," col. 128.
  - <sup>52</sup> Ibid., col. 125.
- $^{53}$  Idem, "Neue Erörterungen ueber die Einleitung eines Quartetts von Mozart,"  $Am\mathcal{Z}$  33 (9 and 16 February 1831): 103.
  - <sup>54</sup> Ibid., col. 101.
  - 55 Fétis, "L'Introduction," p. 328.
- <sup>56</sup> For critical evaluations of Fétis's role as a music critic, see M. D. Tajan-Rogé (A. M. F. Fétis), Fausses Notes (Paris: E. Dentu, 1862), pp. 7-9; Ernest Reyer, Notes de musique, 2nd ed. (Paris: Charpentier et Cie., 1875), pp. 403-04; Wangermée (note 34); Ursula Eckart-Bäcker, Frankreichs Musik zwischen Romantik und Moderne. Die Zeit im Spiegel der Kritik (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse, 1965), p. 21.
  - 57 See note 22.
  - 58 Leduc, "Neue Erörterungen," col. 81.
  - <sup>59</sup> Idem, "Ueber den Aufsatz," col. 132.
  - 60 Idem, "Neue Erörterungen," col. 81.
- <sup>61</sup> Gottfried Weber, Versuch einer geordneten Theorie der Tonsetzkunst, vol. 3, 3rd ed. (Mainz: Schott's Söhne, 1830–32), pp. 196–226.
- 62 "Ueber eine besonders merkwürdige Stelle in einem Mozartischen Violinquartett aus C," Cäcilia, eine Zeitschrift für die musikalische Welt 14 (1832): 1–49, 122–29.
- 63 Johann Georg Kastner, "Revue critique. Théorie musicale de Gfr. Weber," R&GmP 6 (18 February 1838): 77-78.
  - 64 See note 22.

- 65 The Theory of Musical Composition, 2 vols. (Boston: Wilkins, Carter, O. C. B. Carter, 1841-42).
  - 66 The Theory of Musical Composition, 2 vols. (London: Robert Cocks & Co., 1851).
  - 67 Ibid., vol. 1, title page, p. 389; vol. 2, p. 733.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 736–37 (a footnote on p. 736 lists the sections in which the passage appeared in each edition) and 753–54.
- <sup>69</sup> Fétis, "Essai d'une théorie," pp. 219–21. A report of Fétis's review appeared in the "Feuilleton" column of the 14 August 1839 issue of the AmZ (41:650).
  - 70 Ibid., pp. 220-21.
  - 71 See note 11.
  - 72 See note 14.
  - 73 Lichtenthal, "Théorie de l'harmonie," col. 540.
- 74 Otto Erich Deutsch, "Sartis Streitschrift gegen Mozart," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (1962/63): 7–13. Deutsch included the texts of both Lichtenthal articles but did not discuss the difference in titles.
  - 75 "Sarti versus Mozart," p. 243.
  - 76 Lichtenthal, "Auszug," col. 378.
- <sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, the unexplained change did cause some confusion. Otto Jahn, in W. A. Mozart, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1891), p. 39, combined both quotations and called the document the "Esame acustico."
  - 78 Lichtenthal, "Auszug," col. 373.
  - 79 "Sarti versus Mozart," p. 243.
  - 80 Lichtenthal, "Auszug," col. 738.
- <sup>81</sup> "Vom unharmonischen Querstand und gelegentlich ueber Sartis Streitschrift gegen Mozart," AmZ 35: 625–31, 641–48, 657–68, 693–703 (suppl.: "Ueber Sartis Streitschrift gegen Mozart," 16 October 1833).
  - 82 Ibid., suppl., cols. 701, 703.
- 83 Claudio Sartori, "Lichtenthal," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, vol. 8 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1960), col. 738.
- <sup>84</sup> Cenni biografici intorno al celebre maestro Wolfango [sic] Amadeo Mozart, estratti da dati autentici (Milan: G. Silvestri, 1816), 40 pages.
  - 85 Sartori, "Lichtenthal," col. 738.
  - 86 Estetica ossia Dottrina del Bello e delle Arti Belle (Milan: Giovanni Pirotta, 1831).
- 87 "Sur la signification du quatuor de Mozart K. 465 dit 'Les Dissonances' . . ." Natalicia musicologica Knud Jeppesen septuagenario collegis oblata (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1962), pp. 283–87.
- <sup>88</sup> Harmony, ed. and annot. Oswald Jonas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 346.
  - 89 Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien, vol. 3 (Vienna: Universal, 1956), p. 50.
- 90 Riemann, Grosse Kompositionslehre, vol. 2 (Berlin and Stuttgart: W. Spemann, 1902), pp. 458-59, 468, 491-93. Riemann discussed the relationship between the introduction and the first theme of the Allegro. Schreyer, Harmonielehre. Völlig umgearbeitete Ausgabe der Schrift "Von Bach bis Wagner" (Dresden: Holze & Pahl, 1905): 193-96. Gerber, "Harmonische Probleme in Mozart's Streichquartetten," Mozart-Jahrbuch 2 (1924): 72-74.
- <sup>91</sup> "Zur harmonischen Analyse der Einleitung von Mozarts C-Dur Streichquartett (KV 465)," Bericht über die musikwissenschaftliche Tagung der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum in Salzburg (2–5 August 1931) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1932), pp. 103–11.
- <sup>92</sup> See notes 49 and 74. Newman, A Music Critic's Holiday (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925), pp. 143-51.
  - 93 Newman, Holiday, pp. 149-50, 159-60, 163.
  - 94 Deutsch, Documentary Biography, p. 250.