

Bigamy Scandal Sinks Sacred Music Group! A Case-Study of the Rise and Fall of the Church Music Association, 1869-1874

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1 Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to speak. In the interests (1) of setting a general tone of reverence for High Art, (2) of keeping the “Music” in “Musicology,” and (3) of rescuing my personal ethos as a Cultured Person from whatever damage has been done by my sensationalistic headline, I begin by

playing a brief passage from Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*, a work that is at the center of my tale from American music history. Let’s enjoy the first 20 or 30 seconds of the “Benedictus” movement, with its gorgeous violin obbligato gliding in graceful descent like an angel bearing a blessing from heaven...

**Beethoven:
Missa Solemnis,
“Benedictus”**

2 [click icon to play opening of this track... right-click to pause music after 30 seconds...]

My curiosity about the American premiere of the *Missa Solemnis* led me to an unusual story, which I frame as a case-study of a socioeconomic experiment in musical

infrastructure. I’ll suggest that New York’s Church Music Association failed prematurely when its artistic director and “star,” Englishman James Pech, was found to be a prodigal and a bigamist. [left-click to next slide.]

The infrastructure for “classical” concert music in 19th-century USA took time to emerge...

NY Philharmonic – 1842, musicians’ cooperative

PT Barnum’s Jenny Lind tour – 1851, media hype

Civil War “Sanitary Fairs” – charitable benefit events in major cities; philanthropy

Boston Symphony – 1880, ownership & micromanagement by millionaire music-lover H Higginson

Metropolitan Opera – 1883, private boxes for the conspicuously *nouveau riche* (no strings attached!)

Chicago Symphony – 1891, wealthy guarantors

3 The production of classical concerts, requiring large ensembles of professionals was a risky proposition in 19th-century America. They were economically unfeasible. There was neither Europe’s long tradition of patronage that enabled orchestras to form and develop, nor was

there a relatively-knowledgeable bourgeois and upper-class audience of paying customers whose emergence was made possible in Europe by that patronage.

Throughout the century, American performing institutions and audiences for their work developed side by side in fits and starts, embodying several models.

These experiments included the **New York Philharmonic’s** beginnings as a musicians’ cooperative in 1842; **P.T. Barnum’s** relentlessly publicity-driven management of Jenny Lind’s entourage in 1851; the northern wave of **charitable benefit concerts** known as “Sanitary Fairs” which raised money for wounded Civil War soldiers; the 1880 founding of the **Boston Symphony** under the total control of millionaire Henry Higginson (the “orchestra as personal toy” model); the opening of the **Metropolitan Opera** in 1883 specifically as a clubhouse for newly-rich glitterati who bore no financial responsibility whatsoever for its productions; and the pragmatic philanthropy of the Chicago businessmen who enticed conductor Theodore Thomas to the Windy City in 1891 by financially-guaranteeing a **full-time professional symphony**.

**George Templeton
Strong (1820-1875)**

Wealthy Wall Street attorney

Connoisseur of great music

Vestryman at Trinity Episcopal

Host of large musical soirees
in the music room of his "Palazzo"

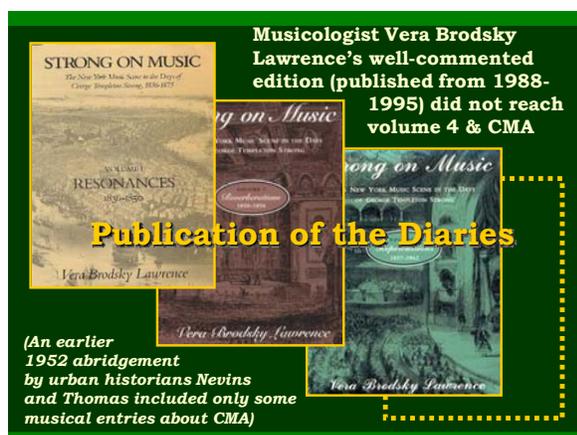
Meticulous diarist and observer, from a young age,
of Manhattan life, culture, politics, and music



4 The Church Music Association arose shortly after the civil war, founded by Wall Street lawyer George Templeton Strong. Strong had a privileged upbringing in a wealthy Manhattan family that moved in the highest social circles. As a youth he had a voracious appetite for music, which

became more discriminating and passionate as he grew older. At age 22 he was a charter subscriber to the Philharmonic and participated in gatherings of sacred-music aficionados to sing masses by Haydn and Mozart for recreation. He married socialite Ellen Caroline Ruggles, an enthusiastic pianist who shared his love for great music; they produced three sons (two of whom were musicians) and lived in a palatial Gramercy Park mansion with a music hall that accommodated over one hundred guests at private concerts.

Strong and family were upstanding members of Trinity Church, flagship of New York Episcopalianism, and he served as its comptroller and legal advisor for nearly two decades- a good match for his legal specialty in wills and estates. Strong developed the discipline, beginning at age 15 and continuing throughout his life, of keeping a detailed and literate journal of his observations on life around him; at approximately four million words in four volumes, the diary provides an unparalleled glimpse of the history of Manhattan.



5 Of interest to us are his references to musical life. An abridged edition of the diaries published by urban historians in 1952 treated only some of the musical references. The publishing project *Strong on Music* begun by the late Vera Brodsky Lawrence to extract, contextualize, and

comment on ALL of his musical observations remains incomplete—she died before editing a final volume would have covered the CMA years.

Strong had definite opinions on which music was “great” and which was “trash.” Bach, Handel, Haydn, and Mozart were the former, and the sophisticated music of Beethoven become an acquired taste over the decades of the diary, while polkas and quadrilles, Jullien’s ‘music for the millions’ concerts with their stage gimmicks, and the vulgarly emotional music of Verdi and Liszt, were the latter. He had an intense dislike for New York concert audiences, whose casual, ignorant, and rude behavior at public performances irritated him and sabotaged his attention. As an alternative, Strong and wife regularly hosted soirees for dozens of like-minded music connoisseurs in their “Palazzo,” regularly hiring 20 or more German immigrant musicians to play orchestral classics for their attentive guests.

**James Pech (1830-?),
“Mus. Doc. Oxon.”**

English organist, choral director,
composer of songs & small piano
pieces, essayist

By accounts, a remarkably
knowledgeable and gifted
conductor, active throughout
Manhattan

Also remarkable for his writing of copious
analytical program notes

Still in London late in 1860; by 1865, in Montreal;
by 1866, in New York, hired by Trinity Church



6 In 1866 Trinity Church hired a remarkably talented Englishman by the name of James Pech as organist and music director. Pech was a virtuoso pianist and organist, a knowledgeable and charismatic choral director, an appreciator of the finest

in music, and an articulate analyst of music's details, as would be demonstrated in learned lectures and his writing of copious program notes. He quickly won not only the musical admiration of his congregation, but the attention of music aficionados throughout the city. Determining his whereabouts between 1860 and 1865 is difficult; he was known to be still in London in late 1860, then surfaced in Montreal by 1865.

Strong, upon first acquaintance with Pech, wrote, "He seems so unexceptionable and admirable, of so high a grade of thought and culture, and of accomplishments so various, that he must have some grave faults that will appear in due time"—words that would prove prophetic. In Pech, Strong saw the key to the accomplishment of a long-time dream: the establishment of a musical organization of serious, talented, and committed amateurs dedicated to fully-mounted performance of masterpieces of choral literature, both sacred and secular—performances only for the musically cultivated, unblemished by disruption from cruder audiences!

Church Music Association

- Established in 1869; prospectus mailed in June
- GT Strong, president (finance & operations); Dr. James Pech, musical director and conductor
- Membership in chorus by audition only; performances to include paid "ringers" and a full-size hired orchestra
- Performances (three, in Steinway Hall) are for subscribers only! 80 subscribers purchase 20 tickets each, to share with personal guests
- Rules for proper concert behavior will be enforced!

7 With a core group of similarly-minded connoisseurs, Strong formed the Church Music Association, out of Trinity Church, with Pech as its conductor and artistic director. Strong preferred to work inconspicuously as de facto finance & operations manager of the enterprise,

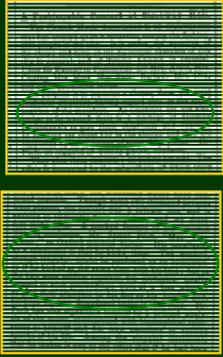
entrusting musical decisions and public relations to Pech, who claimed an Oxford doctorate and keyboard study with Czerny and Chopin. In Strong's scheme, the performing group would consist of by-audition-only amateur talent augmented by a small core of professional vocalists from among the city's musical immigrants,

with principal singers and full symphony orchestra of fifty players to be hired for the concerts and dress rehearsals. The ensemble's supporting infrastructure, the Association itself, would produce an annual series of three private concerts at Steinway Hall, open only to its own upper-class membership of approximately 80 high-paying subscribers and the twenty-or-so guests each was entitled to invite. Singers in the choir were each allotted two comps. Thus, the socioeconomic support model can be seen as an extension of Strong's domestic soirees. Instead of one wealthy family providing quality chamber music for a hundred appreciative guests in its home, four-score wealthy families could provide choral masterworks to two thousand guests in an upscale music hall.

Thus, little-known works of great music—indeed, American premiere performances—could be presented as the composers intended “without risk of pecuniary failure,” as Strong and Pech phrased it—not subject to market forces which might otherwise require distasteful Barnumesque “hype” and the inclusion of sentimental selections. Concerts would feature first a major work from the sacred repertoire, then a secular cantata or an unstaged, abridged opera. Members and guests agreed to abide by then-novel rules of audience behavior, chief of which were the insistence on quiet in the hall and the refusal to seat late-comers after the music had begun. Music was to be the focus of the audience's **silent** attention. More controversial was the complete ban of common newspaper reporters from attendance: these Strong deemed musically ignorant, too preoccupied with name-dropping and the describing of attire, and vilely expectant of bribes in return for favorable reports. Pech later had to clarify this policy in a press release: those few legitimate and knowledgeable music critics who were sincerely interested in reviewing the music itself, rather than any inadequacies of performance, were encouraged, to attend—**if invited by a subscriber**.

On June day in 1869 that Strong mailed out his first proposals to prospective subscribers, he noted in his diary “if this plan could be carried out, it would have a civilizing effect.” He quickly secured the required level of financial participation by enthusiastic subscribers—\$5,000 total for Year 1—and the Church Music Association was born.

- Rehearsals begin in late fall, 1869 at Trinity Church for CMA's debut in January, featuring Mozart's Twelfth Mass and the 1st act of Weber's *Oberon*
- The concerts are acclaimed successful among the music lovers attending (perhaps more as high-society events than as aesthetic experiences?) and the CMA fiscal model proves to be sustainable through three seasons...

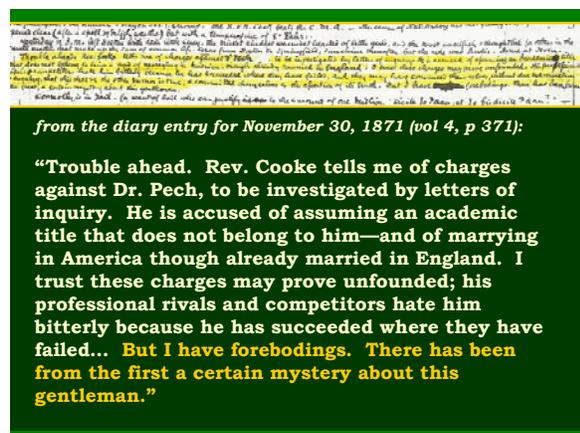


8 Choir rehearsals began in late autumn for the debut concert in January, 1870; these were held at Trinity Church, which congregation naturally supplied most of the amateur singers. The first full season of three concerts was successful beyond expectations, featuring

performances of large works by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, and Mozart, as well as overtures by von Weber and Meyerbeer. There were cynics who mocked, as in this unnamed informant's report in *Dwight's Journal*, who wrote “As amateurs are not altogether to be trusted, there is a nucleus of German professionals to give them steadiness and courage” and further, “[Pech] kicks time. This method... might be pardoned as an eccentricity if he kicked at the same time as his beat...his orchestra... were at a loss whether to give attention to his hands or his feet.”

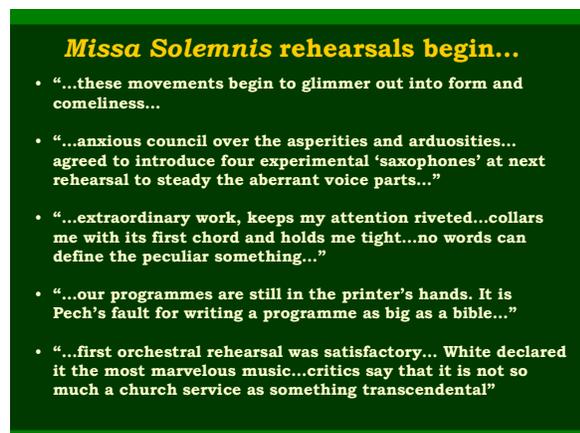
Invitations were highly sought after by envious plutocrats who felt left out of the Steinway Hall events, each filled to its 2,000 capacity. Likewise, the second season, 1870-71, evinced similar success—the scalping of tickets now preceded each concert—and many were suggesting that the performances be made public and moved to a larger venue. Some even saw the organization as a potential rival in quality to the Philharmonic, of which Strong was then president. At the close of

the season Strong wrote, “Besides giving thorough training to our best amateurs and introducing a new and notable school of music, it has done something towards teaching good manners... the vile habit of talking and giggling [at Philharmonic concerts] is much less...”



9 All seemed well as the chorus began rehearsals in its third season; however, on November 30 Strong wrote an ominous note in his diary, seen here in facsimile: “Trouble ahead. Rev. Cooke tells me of charges against Dr. Pech, to be investigated by letters of inquiry. He is

accused of assuming an academic title that does not belong to him—and of marrying in America though already married in England. I trust these charges may prove unfounded; his professional rivals and competitors hate him bitterly because he has succeeded where they have failed... But I have forebodings. There has been from the first a certain mystery about this gentleman.” Within the musical subculture of Trinity Church, slanderous rumors were beginning to swirl.



10 It was four months later that Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*, never before heard in America, was attempted. Chorus rehearsals were well underway at Trinity Church by March, 1872. Some clues to the progress of the rehearsals, the impressions they made, and the external

interest they generated, can be gleaned from Strong’s diary entries:

March 7. CMA rehearsal tonight... satisfactory... [Kyrie and Quoniam] were worked very hard and in detail... These movements... begin to glimmer out into form and comeliness as one knows them better...

March 25. ...a rather anxious council...over the asperities and arduosities of the Beethoven Mass. Agreed to introduce four experimental 'saxophones' ...at the next rehearsal, to guide and steady the aberrant voice parts...

April 12. ...first public [choral] rehearsal ...satisfactory beyond expectation... an extraordinary work. portions of it ...keep my attention riveted... hard and unmelodic as it is [it] collars me with its first chord and holds me tight... no words [can] define the peculiar something which distinguishes Beethoven's second [mass] from all other compositions...

Apri. 24. Much vexation of spirit about our programmes, which are still in the printers' hands. It is Pech's fault for writing a programme as big as a family bible, and including whole pages of musical notation...

April 26. yesterday's first public orchestral rehearsal ...was satisfactory. [Essayist] Richard Grant White, to whom the Mass is new, declared it the most marvelous music he ever heard... critics ... say that it is not so much a church service as...something transcendental...!

Performance: Thursday evening, May 2, 1872

The New York Tribune said:

 "When the orchestra is imperfectly trained and the chorus weak, ragged, and uncertain, there is no music more disappointing. Whether to praise the Church Music Association for their zeal, or to blame their rashness in attempting a task for which they were so obviously unfitted, we find it difficult to decide."

But Strong wrote:

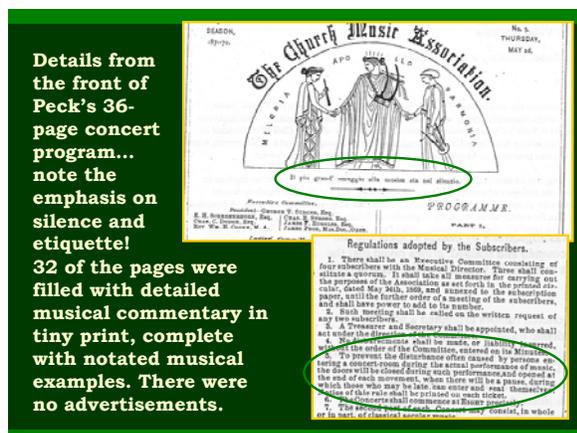
 "Chorus and soli were admirable, considering! Audience large, interested, silent—Applause after every choral movement—People were excited by the fiery and magical orchestration—It is the greatest of musical works..."

11 Performing forces included professional soloists, a chorus of 200 voices, and an orchestra of 75, including Strong's oldest son John in the cello section. By this time, newspaper music critics—those ignorant, bribery-susceptible name-droppers—are being admitted to

rehearsals and concerts, and perhaps they have never forgiven Strong's and Pech's

arrogant elitism. The public dress rehearsal on May 1, the afternoon before the formal performance, was disconcertingly erratic; the *Times* critic called it “a trial of our musical faith,” noting that “the addition of orchestral parts increased the complexity... toward the end of the Credo, while the anxious conductor beat time, as if under a spell, and the instruments went on and on remorselessly... the voices began to sound in that muffled way which is common when people are uncertain of their whereabouts. Faint shrieks came, from time to time, from the exhausted sopranos, the tenors [being] inaudible...” The writer did commend the actual performance, however, as finer than expected. The *Tribune*’s writer, on the other hand, considered that the performance faltered, remarking, “when the orchestra is imperfectly trained and the chorus weak, ragged, and uncertain, there is no music more disappointing. Whether to praise the Church Music Association for their zeal, or to blame their rashness in attempting a task for which they were so obviously unfitted, we find it difficult to decide.”

Strong himself, ever the aesthete, was ecstatic about the performance, writing in his diary: “May 4. ...**It was an event—the first production of this transcendental composition in America... chorus and soli were admirable, considering! Audience large, interested, silent—every other person had a copy of Novello’s piano score. Applause after every choral movement, a novelty in CMA concerts and not to have been expected... I suppose people were excited by the fiery and magical orchestration... It is the greatest of musical works... I cannot even try to write anything definitive about it... I am somehow checked, like one who has been taken up into the seventh heaven...** [the entry ends-] I got today the proofs of a circular for a possible fourth season...”



12 I pause here to draw your attention to details of the front page of the 36-page program. Notice under the Association's classically-inspired logo appear its motto: "Il piu grand' ommagio alla musica sta nel silenzio" (roughly "the greatest honor to music is to be silent before it") and

Regulation No. 5, about closing the auditorium's doors to keep out latecomers after the performance begins. Notice under executive committee the name of "James Pech, Musicae Doctor Oxoniensis." Although the directors had offered him a salary, he refused it, preferring to spend the money on music, and claiming that the success of the performances would be his reward; consequently he was named to the committee rather than hired as a contractor. He would later contend that he hadn't been paid, and the committee would unsuccessfully demand the return of thousands of dollars' worth of music. Investigation will reveal that his name was originally spelled P-E-C-K—he had 'germanified' it for more musical credibility.

Investigation will also reveal that he had only a bachelor's degree from Oxford; however, the academic tone of his voluminous remarks in the booklet do demonstrate a scholarly command of purple prose. I have a photocopy of this program booklet, the only extant copy of which resides in the Music Archives of the NYPL for the Performing Arts. Strong's diary, bound into four thick volumes of spidery, miniscule handwriting, reposes at the New York Historical Society's Library, which loaned me a microfilm version.

The problem with Pech...

- Overspent Year Three's budget by 35%
- Did not really earn an Oxford doctorate
- Did indeed abandon a wife and children in England, then remarried in Canada

From the diary, May 14:

"Pech called last evening... gave me his unfortunate story with seeming frankness and in full detail. In 1849 he ran away with [an older] woman... and married her clandestinely, he then being 19. She proved vicious, false, cantankerous, and incorrigible... after seven years of torment he abandoned her. ...he must change his base and leave New York..."

13 The quality of this particular performance notwithstanding, a milestone in America's musical reception and canonization of Beethoven had been reached. This monumental performance was also the zenith the Church Music Association's trajectory as a performing

institution, as subsequent events would reveal.

The problem, or problems, for there were three of them, revolved around the musically brilliant and charismatic James Pech.

First, he consistently and carelessly overspent his budgets for hiring musicians, purchasing music, and printing programs by huge amounts, and had by now run up a \$3,000 deficit, a 35% cost over-run that made him a managerial liability to Strong and the other executives, who ended up paying out-of-pocket. Then, the rumors of academic fraud and worse, bigamy, turned out to be true. The Rector of Trinity Church was informed by his trusted investigator that notices inserted in the *London Times* late in 1860 had marked him as "wanted" for desertion of wife and children, and offered a reward of five pounds for his apprehension. Such a fiscally-irresponsible and morally-deficient person could no longer be allowed to continue in musical service to Trinity Church, nor in leadership of the Church Music Association. A week after the concert, Strong, commenting first on the financial irregularities, then alluding to the morals charges, wrote,

[May 9] Pech must be thrown over and the beloved CMA will probably perish, for I don't believe we can find so efficient... a conductor... [it] will be a fearful blow to P. – but there is something much worse that awaits him...

[May 11] The Rector has moved at last in P.'s case... with great discretion... He wholly ignores the graver charges... and invites his resignation on the grounds that his duties... have been grossly neglected... the graver charges therefore need not be made public... Painful business... This will be a painful blow to him... and these shocks... [come] just after the culminating triumph of his artistic life in NY.

[May 14] Pech called last evening... gave me his unfortunate story with seeming frankness and in full detail. In 1849 he ran away with [an older] woman... and married her clandestinely, he then being 19. She proved vicious, false, cantankerous, and incorrigible... after seven years of torment he abandoned her. ...I gave him a great deal of advice... he must change his base and leave New York...

I have not discovered the 1860 “wanted” poster, but I did find, in the debtor’s court column in the London *Times*, that in July of 1860 Pech was sued for non-payment of debts related to his directorship of opera productions at Drury Lane Theatre the previous spring. Part of the testimony, which took two days, reveals that Pech apparently gave some of the rented furnishings to his mother-in-law, a Mrs. Noble, to liquidate for the support of the wife from whom he was then separated. Although Pech later advertised himself as a former conductor and impresario at the fabled London opera house, it seems that his short experience there bankrupted him... no wonder he jumped at the chance for a boardroom full of Manhattan millionaires to pay the bills for his new ensemble.

Pech refuses to step down from the CMA and is forced out. The public wonders why. The church insiders probably know.

An... unspectacular... conductor is obtained for Year Four.

Singers begin to defect. Some subscribers do not renew. The CMA is crippled without Pech.

14 Pech duly resigned from his musical positions at Trinity, citing the cliché of poor health in his letter to Trinity, but he resisted the pressure to quit his direction of the Church Music Association, first in personal meetings with Strong, then through the threat of legal proceedings.

Strong and the churchmen were successful in keeping Pech's scandalous history away from the press, although it is probable that insiders whispered about it *sotto voce*. By fall 1872, as subscriptions were coming in for the CMA's fourth season, but before rehearsals had begun, Strong noted:

[October 8] I dealt with him very plainly... I had to go into our reasons for making a jettison of him. He... put forth a volume of arguments and dodges. I never knew a man more deficient in moral sense or more illogical and slippery...

[October 14] We threw Pech overboard finally ...and elected Horseley of St. John's as provisional conductor.... Whether there will be any more CMA is doubtful...

Rehearsals began under the competent, but apparently unimaginative and uninspiring, new music director. Defections from the chorus began, and subscription funds became harder to raise. Interest and participation in the CMA were beginning to wane. In reviewing the December 1872 concert, the *Times* wrote, "The concert... dispelled some fears... as to the continued existence of the Association... [although] scanty was the audience.... The chorus is less numerous than in former years... Some changes in personnel have taken place..."

Strong, in the intimacy of his diary, comes to see Pech as a scamp, swindler, thief, and humbug; admits to being blinded by Pech's musical gifts.

For his part, James Pech tries to sue the CMA for non-payment of salary—which he had clearly declined; back-room wranglings take a year.

At the outset of Year Five, the CMA is rapidly abandoned by its backers and Strong, demoralized, resigns its presidency.

15 Meanwhile, the backroom dealings with the petulant Pech were becoming more exasperating. Strong wrote: **[November 27]** No sign of the CMA music stolen by Pech, worth \$1,000 at least. It is probably pawned. The general detestation of Pech is quite remarkable.

Everybody abominates him: music dealers, philharmonic musicians, members of the CMA chorus, Bohemians of the press... no one stands by the unfortunate scamp.

Then he made an interesting admission:

...at the very inception of the CMA, Schirmer the music seller warned me that Pech was a swindler and humbug... but he was so efficient a choral drillmaster that I studiously ignored his faults...

The crippled Association bravely marched through its fourth season, for the most part repeating, under its unspectacular conductor, successful works from its brief past. Pech tried to sue the CMA for non-payment of past salary. The suit was never argued in court, but did require a year's worth of closed-door legal skirmishing of such unpleasantness that Strong himself, demoralized, lost interest in the Association he had founded on such high principles, and quit its presidency. The group, largely abandoned by many of its financial backers, limped through but one single concert of a fifth season before it "exhaled from the face of the earth" as Strong put it.

CMA, the experiment by a musical purist...

- Raised standards of performance and audience behavior
- Offered an untried model for concert subsidy
- Introduced important classical repertoire to American audiences

**But...**

Was personality-driven and vulnerable to withdrawal of largesse by the “fashionable”

16 The CMA thus expired, less than five years after its inspired founding. However, its impact on New York’s musical life was significant: performance standards generally improved, audiences became more courteous to each other and respectful of the music, a precedent for a

particular form of philanthropic sharing had been set, and little-known monumental works by important composers were introduced. The rise and fall of the Church Music Association also demonstrated the precariousness of personality-driven institutions, and the vulnerability of an economic model dependent on the musical passion and financial largesse of a few wealthy subscribers—who were themselves susceptible to loss of commitment, for whatever reason! George Templeton Strong seemed to be a sincere dilettante and amateur of the arts, truly sensitive to the beauty of music. He had social influence and leadership ability, using his money and social position to promote higher standards of music-making.

“The management was exclusive... the whole interests...depended upon the caprice of a few gentlemen...interested in [this] style of music. It is not strange that its career was brief... Such prestige as comes from social patronage the Church Music Association... had in plenty, and it undoubtedly had the most exclusive and remarkable audiences ever gathered in New York.”

—Henry Krehbiel, *Notes on the Cultivation of Choral Music and The Oratorio Society of New York* (1884)

Maybe so...

But don’t forget that Strong was a true aesthete, and the CMA was an arts incubator!

17 Ten years later, music critic and historian Henry Edward Krehbiel, ignorant of the secret bigamy scandal that doomed the CMA, would summarize the organization with these words: “The management was exclusive... the whole interests...depended upon the caprice of a

few gentlemen...interested in [this] style of music. It is not strange that its career was brief... Such prestige as comes from social patronage the Church Music

Association... had in plenty, and it undoubtedly had the most exclusive and remarkable audiences ever gathered in New York.”

While some would view the Church Music Association as an elitist social institution, I suggest that CMA was less an exclusive musical “club” than an incubator or shelter, subsidized by musical connoisseurs, where significant concert repertoire could be explored and presented without marketplace economic pressures; were it not for the understandable dismissal of its “star” conductor, it might have lasted at least for a few years longer.

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[click 18, reference list] Thus ends my tale from 19th-century American music history, and I thank you again for your kind attention.

Précis.

Regular, series concerts of major choral-orchestral repertoire in 19th-century America were risky ventures, and promoters struggled to develop sustainable entrepreneurial models. Prominent Wall Street lawyer and diarist George Templeton Strong, a music connoisseur, devised an ingenious business plan for his part-volunteer, part-professional Church Music Association in 1869, one that relied on advance sale of private subscriptions to the affluent, who then shared their large allotments of tickets with personal guests.

But after three successful seasons in Steinway Hall, culminating in the American premiere of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, the group lost its “star,” brilliant choral conductor James Pech, when he was found to be a bigamist who had deserted his first family in England. The subsequent demise of the demoralized organization illustrates the precariousness and vulnerability of concert infrastructure at this time.

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Are there any questions?