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Auteur(s)	Dr Adèle COMMINS, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland
Titre de la revue	<i>Imaginaires</i> (ISSN 1270-931X)
Numéro	22 (2019) : « How Popular Culture Travels: Cultural Exchanges between Ireland and the United States »
Pages	29-59
Directeur(s) du numéro	Sylvie MIKOWSKI et Yann PHILIPPE
DOI de l'article	10.34929/imaginaires.vi22.5
DOI du numéro	10.34929/imaginaires.vi22

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Éditions et presses universitaires de Reims, 2019
Bibliothèque Robert de Sorbon, Campus Croix-Rouge
Avenue François-Mauriac, CS 40019, 51726 Reims Cedex
www.univ-reims.fr/epure

Watchmen on the Walls of Music Across the Atlantic: Reception of Charles Villiers Stanford and his Music in the American Press



DR ADÈLE COMMINS 
Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland

Introduction



Irish born composer Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924) is a central figure in the British Musical Renaissance. Often considered only in the context of his work in England, with occasional references to his Irish birthplace, the reception of Stanford’s music in America provides fresh perspectives on the composer and his music. Such a study also highlights the circulation of culture between Ireland, England and the USA at the start of the twentieth century and the importance of national identity in a cosmopolitan society of many diasporas. Although he never visited America, the reception of Stanford’s music and reviews in the American media highlight the cultural (mis)understanding that existed and the evolving identities in both American and British society at the turn of the twentieth century.

This article presents a brief introduction to Stanford and focuses on a proposed visit to America in 1914, the reception of some of his musical output as reflected in the media in America at the turn of the twentieth century and the significance of Stanford’s national identity for American audiences. Two works are significant when considering the reception of Stanford’s music in America: his comic opera *Shamus O’Brien* and the “Irish” Symphony. Stanford’s “Irish” Symphony (1887) provides a significant case study for examining and understanding the circulation of popular culture between Ireland and the USA during the *fin de siècle* with an

emphasis on constructing identities and negotiating Irishness in a post-colonial and diasporic context. For the purposes of this paper I have decided to omit an examination of *Shamus O'Brien*, although there is passing reference to this work and related source material.¹

The methodology for this article primarily involves archival and newspaper research drawing upon a large collection of American newspapers. Such quotation from an extensive range of newspaper reviews allows for an evaluation of American musical tastes by assessing the opinions of the music critics of the time, while also providing a thorough review of the critical reception of Stanford's music in America. Newspapers, traditionally have been viewed as calendars, as windows or mirrors of society.² However, these views can often be biased. Music criticism was important in shaping musical history in the nineteenth century, and newspapers, pamphlets and journals were a central medium for the expression of artistic ideas with numerous music journalists giving clear and vivid accounts of musical events. Critics played a crucial role in the reception history of a composer and his music. In the case of Stanford's works considered herein, such an understanding must be developed utilising the journalist as "surrogate for actual attendance at performances".³ Meirion Hughes has noted that critical opinions and journalistic opinion helped shape the opinions of the public.⁴ The use of such a methodology is not without challenges. As noted by theatre critic Jocelyn Clarke, such reviews are not an exact science, are written in a short period of time for a particular audience and rarely reflect considered reflection.⁵ Thus, an examination of this source material must be balanced with further musicological analysis through an examination of the score and, where possible, performances and recordings, all informed by the recent literature concerning Stanford,⁶ the British Musical Renaissance,⁷ and the performance of Western Art Music in

1. The study of the American reception of *Shamus O'Brien* goes beyond the scope of this article and will be the focus of a later article. Initial findings on the reception of *Shamus O'Brien* was the subject of a conference paper: Adèle Commins, "The Reception of Charles Villiers Stanford and his Music in America", Paper Read at the 14th Annual Conference of the Society for Musicology in Ireland, St Patrick's College Drumcondra, Dublin, 2016.
2. Rosamond McGuinness, "How to Read a Newspapers", *Revue de Musicologie*, 84 (2), DOI: [10.2307/947379](https://doi.org/10.2307/947379), 1998, p. 290.
3. Patrick Lonergan, "Druid Theatre's *Leenane Trilogy* on tour: 1996–2001", in Nicholas Grene & Chris Morash (eds.), *Irish Theatre on Tour: Irish Theatrical Diaspora Series*, Dublin, Carysfort, 2005, <http://hdl.handle.net/10379/5445> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 208.
4. The term watchmen on the walls was first used by Fuller-Maitland to describe the role of the critic. See John Alexander Fuller-Maitland, *The Musician's Pilgrimage: A Study in Artistic Development*, London, Smith, Elder, & Co., 1899, p. x. It was subsequently taken up by Meirion Hughes in his study entitled *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press: 1850–1914: Watchmen of Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002.
5. Jocelyn Clarke, "(Un)Critical Conditions", in Eamonn Jordan (ed.), *Theatre Stuff: Critical Essays on Contemporary Irish Theatre*, Peter Lang, 2000.
6. Jeremy Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford: Man and Musician*, Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2002; Paul Rodmell, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002; Adèle Commins, "From Child Prodigy to Conservative Professor?: Reception Issues of Charles Villiers Stanford", *Maynooth Musicology: Postgraduate Journal*, 1, <http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/9455> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 28-58; and A. Commins, *op. cit.*, 2012.
7. Meirion Hughes & Robert Stradling, *The English Musical Renaissance, 1840–1940: Constructing a National Music*, New York, Manchester U.P., 2001.

America at the turn of the twentieth century.⁸ Despite the growing interest in Stanford scholarship, detailed accounts of Stanford and his music in America are limited. While acknowledging the potential bias of reviews, the coverage of performances of Stanford's music in America is important and relevant to Stanford scholars today. Newspaper reviews play an important role in the development of a narrative for a work's reception.⁹ Therefore, the survey of newspaper coverage of Stanford facilitates a critical examination of performances of Stanford's music in America and helps ascertain the tastes of American audiences at that time, while also considering the cultural context.

Although there has been a renewed interest in Stanford and his music with notable studies completed in recent decades,¹⁰ there has been an overreliance on perceptions of his music in the English press with some reference to European and Irish commentaries. While acknowledging that most performances of his music took place in England and that he was based in England, there is a need to consider reception of Stanford and his music in America in order to present a more full and accurate account of the reception of Stanford and his music on both sides of the Atlantic. Although Stanford never travelled to America, examinations of newspaper articles demonstrate a strong interest in his music with significant performances of his music undertaken in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Noteworthy themes are evident upon examination of the variety of writings in the American press, many of which lead back to considerations of his nationality or the perception of Irishness in some of his works.

There was a developing negativity towards Stanford's music in England from performers, conductors and the press in the late nineteenth century up until his death in 1924 and posthumously, and his music featured less regularly on concert programmes. In contrast, it is clear from the research presented in this article that Stanford's music was performed regularly and well received in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The late 1880s through to the 1920s witnessed

8. Catherine Ferris, 'The Use of Newspapers as a Source for Musicological Research: A Case Study of Dublin Musical Life 1840–1844', unpublished PhD, Maynooth, National University of Ireland, 2011 is a useful study on newspaper research (<http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/2577>, last accessed 7/11/2020).
9. Other writers have examined the role of newspapers in the reception history of a composer and their music. See for example Rachel Cowgill, "'Hence, base intruder, hence': Rejection and Assimilation in the Early English Reception of Mozart's Requiem", in Rachel Cowgill & Julian Rushton (eds.), *Europe, Empire and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006, p. 9–28; and Leanne Langley, "Agency and Change: Berlioz in Britain, 1870–1920", *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 132 (2), 2007, DOI: 10.1093/jrma/fkm008, p. 306–348.
10. J. Dibble, *op. cit.*; P. Rodmell, *op. cit.*; Adèle Commins, *Charles Villiers Stanford's Preludes for Piano op. 163 and op. 179: A Musicological Retrospective*, unpublished PhD, Maynooth, National University of Ireland, 2012, <http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/6997> (last accessed 7/11/2020).

numerous references to Stanford's music in concert listings in America with both contrasting and similar perceptions of Stanford by American critics to their English peers. The first two decades of the twentieth century saw a real impetus in an increased presence of mentions of Stanford's music in the American press. Given that so much focus has been given to the role which Stanford and his music played in England there is a need to acknowledge the spread of his music across the Atlantic and recognise the importance placed on him as an Irish composer in America. Despite initial success with the performance of his "Irish" Symphony in England and across Europe, with favourable comments about many of his Irish infused compositions,¹¹ reception of these compositions, like many of his other works, did not continue in England at the turn of the century. Given the decline in interest in his music in England at that time it is worth turning our attention to American perceptions of his music as Stanford reflects the growing globalisation of music and transatlantic consumption of culture.

By stepping outside of the British and Irish cultural sphere, an examination of Stanford through an American perspective removes some of the political and colonial readings of his music but, as this paper demonstrates, the issue of a composers' identity remains central to the promotion and reception of much music in America.¹² This is not surprising given that it is a period when concerts of national music, featuring the work of composers such as the Czech Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904)¹³ and Norwegian Edvard Grieg (1843–1907) are popular in an America still developing its own post-colonial identity. Indeed, highlighting Stanford's national identity, one writer in 1903 noted that 'Arthur Sullivan's nationalism is not as pronounced as is that of his colleague, Dr Stanford. The latter is an enthusiastic Irishman.'¹⁴ Simultaneously, in theatre circles, discussions on the role of national theatres were taking place, and the Abbey Theatre's first tour to America including works such as John Millington Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* took place in 1911, receiving differing receptions from regular American theatregoers and the Irish immigrant sector.¹⁵ Thus, America provides a different context in which to appreciate Stanford's music and critically reflect on the reception narratives presented in the press.

11. P. Rodmell, *op. cit.*; J. Dibble, *op. cit.*

12. For a more in depth discussion about national and nationalist music see Philip V. Bohlman, *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*, Santa Barbara, ABC-Clio, 2014.

13. Irish musicologist Harry White develops a comparison of Stanford and Dvořák in his examination of art music and ethnicity in *The Progress of Music in Ireland*, Dublin, Four Courts, 2005, p. 68-86.

14. Anon., "Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Music Festivals in Canada – Prizes at a Welsh Eisteddfod – Notes and Programmes", *New York Daily Tribune*, 19 April 1903, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83030214/1903-04-19/ed-1/?sp=25> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 9.

15. Christopher Fitz-Simon, *The Abbey Theatre, Ireland's National Theatre: The First 100 Years*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2003, p. 42; John P. Harrington, "The Abbey in America: The Real Thing", in Nicholas Grene & Chris Morash (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 35–50.

Changes in Stanford's compositional practice during this period are also notable and Stanford recognised the advantage of composing music to which audiences could easily relate but also continued to compose for a variety of contexts and audiences. While this duality demonstrates his ability to market himself as a composer, he suffered for this at the hands of critics who were more concerned with the compositional design of the music. His music was, by then, termed traditional,¹⁶ while his dedication to the work of his predecessor, German composer Johannes Brahms (1833–1897), affected public perceptions of his music.¹⁷ Claims that Stanford was too much an academic were laid down in the later decades of the nineteenth century and unfortunately, it has proved difficult to dispel these beliefs.¹⁸ It was difficult for a Victorian composer to be taken seriously in England and Stanford's conservative and traditional views on composition would not have helped dismiss the opinions of the critics which played a defining role in the reception history of his music. The critic Francis Hueffer was a known Wagner enthusiast and in his role at the *Times* he “denied him [Stanford] the highest praise” on account of his interest in the music of Brahms and he found Stanford's work to be too academic.¹⁹ Hueffer not only found fault with Stanford's style of composition, but he had little faith in the work which had been undertaken by national composers during the British Musical Renaissance.²⁰ Although Joseph Bennett who worked at the *Daily Telegraph* had named Stanford as one of five composers who had “the immediate future of English music in their hands” and the responsibility to “conserve everything distinctly English [and] reject modern and unproven theories”, he believed that Stanford was too coldly academic and lacking emotion and was often dismissive about Stanford's compositions.²¹ However, Hughes points out that “as Bennett increasingly became dismayed with contemporary trends in music, he learned to ignore Stanford's academicism and appreciate the solid conservative (Schumann-Brahms) values enshrined in his work”²²

16. In this instance, the term “traditional” refers to Stanford's approach to composition and commitment to a Germanic art music tradition rather than the genre of Irish traditional music with which Stanford is also sometimes associated.
17. In a similar vein, Sterndale Bennett, who had been Professor of Music at Cambridge University (1856-1875), was perceived as an inferior imitator of Mendelssohn in England. See Geoffrey Bush, “Sterndale Bennett: The Solo Piano Works”, *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 91, 1965, www.jstor.org/stable/765967 (last accessed 5/11/2020), p. 85–97, p. 85. See for example Henry Davey, *History of English Music*, London, J. Curwen, 1895, p. 449. He noted that “as none of them [Stanford, Parry and Mackenzie] has invented an original style it is not necessary to examine their works.”
18. Shaw frequently referred to Stanford as “Professor” Stanford in his reviews of Stanford's music. See G. B. Shaw, *Music in London 1890–1894*, 3 vols, London, Constable & Co., 1932, p. 203–204 and G. B. Shaw, *Music in London*, London, Constable & Co., 1949, p. 303–308.
19. M. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 25. Despite respecting the technical aspects of his music, the lack of expressive and dramatic power consigned it to the second rate.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 27. For further information on Hueffer's views on English music see *ibid.*, p. 25–30.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 47–49.
22. In his review of Stanford's Sixth Symphony he commented that it was “pleasant to meet with a modern composition so sane as this”. See Anon., “Article”, *Daily Telegraph*, 19 January 1906 cited in M. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 51.



Born into a Protestant family in 1852 in Dublin, Ireland Stanford was afforded a rich musical education. Stanford's father, John Stanford, who himself was a fine bass and cellist and had been instrumental in the founding of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1848, regularly performed in a range of performing groups,²³ while Stanford's mother was noted as a "distinguished amateur pianist".²⁴ Professional visiting musicians often called to the Stanford home which was a popular venue for salon music making. Stanford had numerous opportunities to hear many of Dublin's finest musicians from that time including Joseph Robinson²⁵ and Robert Prescott Stewart,²⁶ and all of this exposure to music from a young age was to have a formative influence on his future musical direction. It is no surprise then that amidst the rich cultural experiences in the Stanford household that Stanford would begin music lessons from an early age. Through his privileged background, Stanford's father's experience in musical circles in the city would certainly have ensured that he received the best possible training. Some of his piano teachers had studied with Ignaz Moscheles²⁷ in Leipzig or London and they ensured that Stanford had a thorough grounding in piano technique while exposing him to a range of 'standard' repertoire. Indeed, their European experiences would have added an extra dimension to Stanford's formative years in Dublin.

Leaving Ireland in 1870 Stanford enrolled as a student of classics at Cambridge University and was soon assimilated into musical life at the University. It was here that he quickly came to the attention of English audiences through his work as organist, performer, conductor and composer, and he was soon in demand in many of these roles early in his career. During his early period in England he travelled to the continent, taking composition and piano lessons with eminent teachers Carl Reinecke, Robert Papperitz and Frederick Kiel in Leipzig and Berlin and soaked

23. John Stanford's success as a musician in Dublin was well-documented by the press during his lifetime and he had taken main parts in many productions in Dublin. See for example Anon., "Article", *Saunders Newsletter*, 10 December 1947, p. 2; Anon., "Article", *Saunders Newsletter*, 18 February 1848, p. 2; Anon., "Article", *Saunders Newsletter*, 18 April 1948, p. 2; Anon., "Article", *Orchestra*, 12 December 1963, p. 166; and Anon., "Article", *Dublin Daily Express*, 20 July 1880, p. 2.
24. See Annie Patterson, "Eminent Dublin Musicians: Miss Margaret O'Hea", *Weekly Irish Times*, 10 November 1900, p. 3.
25. Joseph Robinson (1815–1898) conducted the Ancient Concerts until 1863. He sang in the Dublin cathedral choirs and played in the Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra. He was a teacher at the RIAM from 1856 to 1876 and conductor of the Dublin Musical Society from 1876 to 1888.
26. Sir Robert Prescott Stewart (1825–1894) was an organist, conductor, teacher and composer. He was appointed Professor of Music in Trinity College Dublin in 1861, and in 1871 he was made a professor at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He was knighted in 1872.
27. Ignaz Moscheles (1794–1870) was a pianist and composer. By the age of twenty he was one of Vienna's most popular pianists and his career as a virtuoso had begun. He taught piano in London and Leipzig and wrote a variety of works for solo piano in addition to some chamber works.

up all of the musical experiences available to him during these periods.²⁸ This period of private tuition nurtured an appreciation of Germanic compositional practices and styles. For Stanford “the spirit of adventure was abroad.”²⁹ Indeed, Stanford was the first Irish composer to study music abroad, having left Ireland in 1870, while others stayed in Ireland to develop the tradition of art music in the country.³⁰ Being based abroad would offer him greater exposure for his music and potential work as conductor, composer and teacher.

Stanford was Irish by birth but his Irishness is distinctively different from the predominant nationalist or republican imagination of Irishness. Rather, as musicologist Harry White notes, he is a different shade within Britishness; and holding unionist beliefs,³¹ growing up in an Anglo-Irish family at a time when Dublin was a city of the British Empire.³² Edmund Hunt notes that the “Irishness” of certain composers “was often seen as part of a regional British identity”³³ and this, to some extent, allows Stanford to assume a dual identity, alternating between “Irish” and “British” as and when it suited. Stanford’s association with Ireland was altered when he left Dublin in 1870. He soon earned a reputation as musical director, composer, musician, accompanist and conductor. Stanford settled into English musical life earning appointments as Professor of Music at Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music, London and as conductor and musical director of notable choirs and orchestras and he was knighted in 1902.

A prolific composer of over two hundred works spanning a variety of genres, including church music, chamber, solo instrumental, vocal, operatic and symphonic works, Stanford was known as one of the leading figures of the British Musical Renaissance.³⁴ Like many of his contemporaries

28. Carl Reinecke (1824–1910) was a German composer, conductor and pianist. He held a number of eminent positions in Germany including the directorship of the Gewandhaus Orchestra and Professor of Composition and Piano at the Leipzig Conservatory. Benjamin Robert Papperitz (1826–1903) was a German-born teacher of organ and piano. Having studied music at the Leipzig Conservatory he was appointed teacher of harmony there in 1851. Friedrich Kiel (1821–1885) was a German conductor, composer and violinist. In Berlin he worked at the Hochschule für Musik. Stanford’s period of instruction in Leipzig and Berlin was from 1874 to 1876.
29. Harry Plunket Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, London, Edward Arnold, 1935, p. 38.
30. Axel Klein, “Irish Composers and Foreign Education”, in Patrick F. Devine & Harry White (eds.), *Irish Musical Studies V: The Maynooth International Musicological Conference 1995: Selected Proceedings: Part 1*, Dublin, Four Courts, 1996, p. 271.
31. Harry White describes Stanford as “a committed unionist”, noting the complexity of understanding Irishness in either ethnic or nationalist, or indeed musical, terms. *The Progress of Music in Ireland*, Dublin, Four Courts, 2005, p. 80.
32. Joseph John Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848–1918: From the Great Famine to Independent Ireland*, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 2008.
33. Edmund Hunt, “A National School of Music Such as the World has Never Seen: Re-appropriating the Early Twentieth Century into a Chronology of Irish Composition” in John O’Flynn and Mark Fitzgerald (eds.), *Music and Identity in Ireland and Beyond*, Surrey, Ashgate, 2014, <http://www.open-access.bcu.ac.uk/9355> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 53–68, p. 61.
34. The British Musical Renaissance refers to the period from around 1880 until after World War I. See Jurgen Schaarwachter, “Chasing a Myth and a Legend: ‘The British Musical Renaissance’

including Hubert Parry (1848–1918) and Alexander Mackenzie (1847–1935), Stanford was recognised as an important figure in his role as pedagogue and composer but his music quickly went out of fashion in the early decades of the twentieth century. Stanford suffered at the hands of critics, with many expressing very harsh sentiments about his music. The next generation of younger British composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) and Gustav Holst (1874–1934) took over as the noted composers in England who received the important commissions and whose works were programmed at venues across England and who drew inspiration from and were involved in the English folksong revival.³⁵ In contrast with most English-born composers, with the notable exception of Ernest J. Moeran (1894–1950),³⁶ a number of Stanford’s compositions include reference to his Irish homeland. These works include his Irish Rhapsodies, “Irish” Symphony, Four Irish Dances for solo piano, Six Irish Fantasies for Violin and Piano, Six Irish Sketches for Violin and Piano, An Irish Concertino, *Phaudrig Crohoore*, *Shamus O’Brien*, arrangements of folk melodies and many songs which had references to Ireland in the title or text.³⁷ Although he was dismissed for his interest in and use of Irish music by James Culwick, Stanford was seen as an ambassador for Irish music in England as well as Ireland.³⁸ Stanford also edited *The Complete Collection of Irish Music* by George Petrie, a seminal figure in the Irish antiquarian movement for the preservation of Irish folk music.³⁹ Critics in Ireland critically reviewed the publication and a Father Brennan, of Killarney stated that “the result [of appointing Stanford as editor of the collection] proved that they were extremely unfortunate in their choice”.⁴⁰ An anonymous critic in *The Irish Musical Monthly* criticised Stanford for including English airs in the Petrie Collection and condemned him for not having recognised airs which were already in the volume but under a different title.⁴¹ Despite the scholarly undertaking, in a letter to Alfred

in a ‘Land without Music’, *The Musical Times*, 149, 2008, DOI: [10.2307/25434554](https://doi.org/10.2307/25434554), p. 53–60; see also M. Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press*, op. cit., 2002.

35. Georgina Boyes, *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival*, Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1993; Richard Sykes, “The Evolution of Englishness in the English Folksong Revival, 1890–1914”, *Folk Music Journal*, 6 (4), 1993, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4522437> (last accessed 5/11/2020), p. 446–490.
36. Jeremy Dibble, *Elgar and his British Contemporaries*, Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 2004.
37. Stanford’s collections of folk songs include Charles Villiers Stanford, *Songs of Old Ireland: A Collection of Fifty Irish Melodies*, London, Boosey & Hawkes, 1882; Charles Villiers Stanford & Alfred Perceval Graves, *Irish Songs and Ballads*, London, Novello, 1893; Thomas Moore & Charles Villiers Stanford, *Irish Melodies of Thomas Moore: The Original Airs Restored and Arranged for the Voice*, London, Boosey & Co., 1895; and Charles Villiers Stanford & Alfred Perceval Graves, *Songs of Erin: A Collection of Fifth Irish Folk Songs*, op. 76, London, Boosey & Co., 1901.
38. See M. Murphy, “Nation, Race and Empire in Stanford’s Irish Works: Music in the Discourse of British Imperialist Culture”, in Richard Pine (ed.), *Music in Ireland 1848–1998*, Dublin, Mercier, 1998, p. 46–55.
39. Charles Villiers Stanford, *The Complete Collection of Irish Music as noted by G. Petrie, Edited from the Original Manuscripts*, London, Boosey & Co. for the Irish Literary Society, 1903–1905.
40. See Anon., “The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music”, *The Irish Musical Monthly*, 1 (12), 1903, p. 133.
41. Anon., “The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music”, *The Irish Musical Monthly*, 11, 1902, p. 93–95, Anon., “The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music”, *The*

Perceval Graves, Stanford confided to his Irish friend that “Dublin has invariably shown me such a cold shoulder” when he offered the manuscript to the Irish Academy.⁴² Although not always to every musician’s liking, Stanford’s interest in the editing of Irish music ensured that there were collections of Irish airs available to musicians at home and abroad; thus ensuring the spread of Irish music. From newspaper archival research it is clear that the Petrie collection and other collections of folk songs edited by Stanford were available to performers in America as works from these collections featured regularly in concerts and were attributed to Stanford in the programme listings.

To this day Stanford is also celebrated in a different way as a composer of Church music, primarily performed in the Anglican Church services in England and Ireland, and as a composer of orchestral music that draws on Irish folk melodies and themes of Irishness. However, Stanford’s Irishness and potential role as a national composer continues to be debated, due in part to his religious and political beliefs.⁴³ Other nationalist composers reflect similar complexities in the formation of nation states and the relationship between nationalism and musical output. The difficulties with Stanford’s identity in an Irish context mirror and contrast sharply with those of Jean Sibelius (1865–1957). Widely acknowledged and celebrated as Finland’s national composer, Sibelius was a Swedish speaker who composed much of his music in a Russian style during a period of Russian rule, composing little after Finnish independence.⁴⁴ Unlike some other contemporaneous Anglo-Irish protestant figures, Stanford did not engage

Irish Musical Monthly, 1, 1903, p. 121 and Anon., “The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music”, *The Irish Musical Monthly*, 1, 1903, p. 133. Greene had also acknowledged some shortcomings in the collection. See H. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

42. See letter from Stanford to Graves, 16 February 1912 in Dibble, *op. cit.*, p. 369.
43. Stanford’s Irishness has been explored in detail by writers such as Harry White, Michael Murphy, Axel Klein, Joseph Ryan, Liam MacCóil and Edmund Hunt. See E. Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 62; M. Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 46–55; Harry White, *The Keeper’s Recital: Music and Cultural History in Ireland, 1770–1970*, Cork, Cork U.P., 1998; Harry White, *The Progress of Music in Ireland*, Dublin, Four Courts, 2005, p. 68–86; Joseph Ryan, “Nationalism and Irish Music”, in Gerard Gillen & Harry White (eds.), *Irish Musical Studies: Music and Irish Cultural History*, Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 1995, III, p. 101–115; Axel Klein, “An Old Eminence Among Musical Nations, Nationalism and the Case for a Musical History in Ireland”, in Tomi Mäkelä (ed.), *Music and Nationalism in 20th Century Great Britain and Finland*, Hamburg, Von Bockel, 1997, p. 233–243; Liam Mac Cóil, *An Chláirseach Agus an Choróin: Seacht gCeolsiansa Stanford*, Indreabhán, Co. na Gaillimhe, Leabhar Breac, 2010. Other writings include Elgy Gillespie, “Charles Villiers Stanford 1852–1924: Brilliant Dublin Boyhood, Cantankerous London Old Age,” *History Ireland*, 12 (3), 2003, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27725149> (last accessed 5/11/2020), p. 24–27; Kevin O’Connell, “Stanford and the Gods of Modern Music”, *The Musical Times*, 146, 1890, 2005, DOI: 10.2307/30044067, p. 33–44; Aaron C. Keebaugh, *Victorian and Musician Charles Villiers Stanford’s Symphonies in Context*, unpublished MM, University of Florida, 2004, http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/UFE0007003/keebaugh_a.pdf (last accessed 7/11/2020); Adèle Commins, “An Irishman in an English Musical Garden: Perceptions of Stanford’s Piano Music,” *Sonus*, 2012 (submitted version: eprints.dkit.ie/id/eprint/255, last accessed 5/11/2020); Jonathan Paul White, *The Symphonies of Charles Villiers Stanford: Constructing a National Identity*, Unpublished PhD, University of Oxford, 2014 (<https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:6d16fac7-bb70-4ba9-bf0e-17c0a9f26ce5>, last accessed 5/11/2020); A. Commins, *op. cit.*, 2008.
44. Glenda Dawn Goss, *Sibelius: A Composer’s Life and the Awakening of Finland*, Chicago, Chicago U.P., 2009.

with the Irish language⁴⁵ and is not presented as a national composer in the mode of Sibelius.

Stanford lived through a critical period of Anglo-Irish relations. The British Empire is at its height, ruling over 412 million people in 1913, representing 23% of the world's population at the time.⁴⁶ Ireland, devastated by the Great Hunger of the 1840s, had witnessed numerous armed revolutions, notably in 1798, 1867 and 1916. From the 1870s, there was an emerging cultural revolution in Ireland, including the formation of the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language in 1876 and the Gaelic Athletic Association in 1884.⁴⁷ Maude Gonne and W.B. Yeats are moving towards an Irish literary revival, which includes the founding of the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899 and the Irish National Theatre Society in 1903, which led to the establishment of the Abbey Theatre in 1904.⁴⁸ In the period prior to the 1916 Rising, there is a cultural revolution that seeks to imagine Ireland and Irishness, often in contrast with Britishness.

The Irish diaspora was already significant in many parts of the world and prominent in American society.⁴⁹ Many asserted a strong Irish identity that was linked with emigration and revolution, but would also reject some of the cultural representations of Ireland that came from “the old country” and designed as “national culture”.⁵⁰ Contemporaneously, Terry Moylan points to songs being written in Ireland and around the world relating to Irish revolution and culture.⁵¹ In spite of Hoover's assertions⁵² and the reference to Irishness in his compositions, it is questionable whether Stanford belongs to a cultural revolution underpinned by a sense of nationalism or whether as highlighted in this article, his music becomes meaningful for that diaspora in America during that period. Placing the appearance of Stanford's music in America in context, 1887 is the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee leading to celebrations of Empire in Britain and

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45. For example, White cites the example of Douglas Hyde (1860–1949) who led an Irish language movement and later became President of Ireland. H. White, *op. cit.*, 1998, p. 109; H. White, *op. cit.*, 2005, p. 85.
46. Angus Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2001, DOI: [10.1787/9789264104143-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264104143-en).
47. Joseph John Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1848–1918: From the Great Famine to Independent Ireland*, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 2008.
48. Robert Welch, *The Abbey Theatre, 1899–1999: Form and Pressure*, Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2003; Adrian Woods Frazier, *Behind the Scenes: Yeats, Homiman and the Struggle for the Abbey Theatre*, Berkeley, California U.P., 1990.
49. For an in-depth study of the Irish diaspora in America see Marion Casey & J.J. Lee (eds.), *Making the Irish America: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, New York, New York U.P., 2007.
50. Christopher Fitz-Simon notes how, for example, *The Playboy of the Western World*, presented an Ireland that some Irish emigrants would rather forget. C. Fitz-Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
51. Terry Moylan, *The Indignant Muse: Poetry and Songs of the Irish Revolution, 1887–1926*, Dublin, Lilliput, 2016.
52. Jean Marie Hoover, “Constructing Ireland: Culture and Politics in Stanford's ‘Shamus O'Brien’”, in Jeremy Dibble & Bennett Zon (eds.), *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002, II, p. 126–136.

the Broadway theatre district in New York is developed during the 1880s, exemplifying changes in the consumption of popular culture in America.

Although Stanford had left Ireland for Cambridge in 1870, he continued to visit his family and friends during the 1870s and 1880s.⁵³ However, after his parents died there are fewer records of his visits to Ireland.⁵⁴ In a letter to his friend Francis Jenkinson he confided: “now all my links to the old country and blessed family are practically gone”.⁵⁵ This summation summarises perfectly the situation Stanford found himself in as a voluntary exile working in England and trying to forge a reputation for himself in his adopted country, while also demonstrating traits of his national character in his compositions. Confusion over Stanford’s identity as an Irishman or Englishman is evident in America, although there is notable difference in the reception of his music on both sides of the Atlantic.

Stanford (almost) in America

A significant aspect of this paper is that Stanford himself, despite an invitation to do so, never visited America, due in part to the outbreak of World War I. In 1914, Stanford was to travel to Yale University to accept an honorary doctorate. Composer Horatio Parker was instrumental in arranging the honour for Stanford at Yale. This prestigious invitation may have been due to the positive reception of Stanford’s music in America over the preceding three decades. It could also be read, however, in a less flattering way for the Irishman. Stanford had been instrumental in securing an honorary doctorate for Parker at one of England’s most prestigious institutions, Cambridge University in 1902, and Parker may have felt it appropriate to return the same favour to Stanford. The excitement about travelling to America is clearly evident in Stanford’s letters to Parker - and Stanford requested that his new piano concerto be performed at the concert: “Your charming and very tempting letter arrived this morning. It is too tempting to resist”.⁵⁶ To coincide with this visit to Yale, Carl Stoeckel, the President of the Norfolk Festival in Connecticut, invited Stanford to conduct a concert of his own music including the premiere of his Second

53. On 11 April 1891 Stanford appeared at the Instrumental Club, Merrion Row, Dublin performing as part of a string trio. Stanford’s Piano Trio no.1 op. 35 in E flat was performed with the help of Werner and Rudersdorff while a Trio of Mozart and a Sextet by Brahms were also included in the programme.
54. John Stanford died on 17 July 1889 while Mary Stanford died on 1 January 1892. An aunt who had lived with his mother had died earlier in mid-December 1891 while another aunt died only days previously on 27 December 1891.
55. Letter from Stanford to Jenkinson, 1 January 1892, in Rodmell, *op. cit.*, p. 162.
56. Letter from Stanford to Parker, 12 November 1914, Yale University. The correspondence between Stanford and Parker from 1901 is housed as MSS 32 in “The Horatio Parker Papers” at the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University. Correspondence from Stanford to Parker is contained in Box no. 27 and correspondence from Parker to Stanford is contained in Box no. 26.

Piano Concerto. Stanford had sought success in America and may have been tactful in achieving this. Stanford had dedicated the Piano Concerto to “Two Friends on either side of the Atlantic”, one being Carl Stoeckel. The other dedicatee was Stanford’s great friend Robert Finnie McEwen.

The invitation to travel to America was important for two reasons: not only was he going to receive an honorary doctorate from Yale University, but also the concerto would finally be premiered in America under his own direction in June 1915, a coup for any composer. To conduct one of his works in America was the next step for Stanford in ensuring continued interest in his work, while also raising the profile of the English school of composition across the Atlantic. Unfortunately, Stanford’s dreams were not fully realised, as his journey to America had to be cancelled when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed off Kinsale on May 7, eight days before his departure date. Stanford and his wife, Jennie, both had their passages booked on the *Lusitania* for May 15. Stanford was very disappointed and was subsequently too nervous to travel. According to the Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union, the committee:

[...] sent a message to Sir Charles Villiers Stanford suggesting that he postpone his visit to Norfolk until June 1916. This action met with the approval of Sir Charles and an announcement was made that he would not be present at the June festival in 1915. There was natural and widespread disappointment, and many critics and campaigners prophesied that our festival had been deprived of the principal interest.⁵⁷

The performance of the concerto still went ahead on 3 June 1915 with Harold Bauer as soloist but Stanford neither received his honorary doctorate nor the opportunity to conduct his work in America, both of which would have been a great source of disappointment.⁵⁸ The concert programme provides insights into musical tastes and attitudes at the time; the other works included in the first part of the concert alongside Stanford’s concerto were Schubert’s *Symphony No.1 in B minor* and Bizet’s *Carmen*.

57. See *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union*, Norfolk Historical Society and Museum. I am indebted to The Norfolk Historical Society and Museum, Norfolk, Connecticut for furnishing me with a copy of the original programme from the American premiere of the concerto along with a copy of the *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union* and newspaper cuttings from the era. The MS number for the programme in the Norfolk Historical Society and Museum is 8–4–661.

58. The performance of the piano concerto was reported on in the *Musical Times*: Julius Harrison, “Stanford’s New Pianoforte Concerto” *The Musical Times*, 56, 1915, p. 478–479. Some errors pertain to this concert: Harrison believed that the conductor for the concert was one Arthur Ness but the inside cover of the full orchestral score to the work states that the conductor was Arthur Mees. Additionally, Rodmell, *op. cit.*, Appendix One, p. 21 incorrectly states that the American performance took place on 22 November 1915, while on page 287 he gives the correct date of the concert.

The success of the concert in America was confirmed in a cable message received from Stoeckel: “highly successful; beautiful rendition; ovation for you in spirit; congratulations”.⁵⁹ Many American newspapers commented favourably on Stanford’s skill as a composer in the work but also hinted at his traditional approach and described the work as “academic”. Although Mr H.E. Krehbiel, who reviewed the performance for the *New York Tribune*, pointed out these traditionally formalistic elements it did not appear to concern him. In his mind the value of the work rested in the audience’s delight in the performance:

Mr Harold Bauer had prepared the solo part with care, and played it with complete devotion. The orchestra under Arthur Ness [Mees] did its duty fully, and the audience found the work greatly to its taste and liking, for one thing, because it was to its understanding, and strove straightforwardly and consistently to express pure musical beauty [...]. Good sound music, all of it, with a spirit that proceeded from Schumann. Most admirable pianistic it is throughout, and scored with a Master hand. Our Musical Hotspurs will decry it as smugly academic, but it has a clean musical face. It knows its purpose, and achieves it.⁶⁰

The writer in the *New York Times* also commented on Stanford’s compositional skill: “Sir Charles Stanford [...] is conservative rather than modern. His pianoforte concerto is also skilfully and effectively written, both for soloist and orchestra: but it is not notable for novelty of substance or great imaginative power”.⁶¹ According to Cecil Forsyth, a student and friend of Stanford’s who was also present at the concert “the work was received with tremendous enthusiasm”.⁶²

The writer for *Musical America*, believed that “it is a work which will doubtless be heard elsewhere and ought to be heard at concerts of all our leading orchestras next season”, while the *New York Sun* commented on different aspects of the writing and believed that “the concerto as a whole makes a pleasing impression”.⁶³ Unfortunately, Stanford’s piano concerto does not appear to have made a lasting impression on American audiences. American writers noted Stanford’s Irishness in the work and a writer in the *New York Sun* in 1915 wrote that “the last movement is openly Irish,

59. See Anon., “Occasional Notes” *The Musical Times*, 56, 1915, p. 399–400, p. 400.

60. Anon., “Sir Charles Stanford’s New Pianoforte Concert”, art. cit., p. 478–479.

61. Anon., “Music Festival Ends in Success: Litchfield County Choral Union Gives New Compositions at Norfolk”, *New York Times*, 6 June 1915, p. 17.

62. Anon., “Sir Charles Stanford’s New Pianoforte Concerto” art. cit., p. 478–479.

63. See *Musical America* and *New York Sun* review in *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union*, Norfolk Historical Society and Museum.

and its color may lead to the christening of the composition as the ‘Irish piano concerto’ by the author of the ‘Irish’ Symphony.”⁶⁴

This report – to put it mildly – is a little far-fetched. The “Irish” Symphony very clearly uses native folk songs as the basis for the work, as do the composer’s Irish Rhapsodies. The concerto, however, does not warrant the epitaph “Irish Piano Concerto”, as only one movement in the work approaches an Irish sound. The opening of *Kitty of the Cows*, from *Songs of Erin* op.76 bears a close resemblance to bars 2–3 of the opening theme in the third movement of Stanford’s Piano Concerto, while the heroic sound of this final movement, with its march-like rhythm and successive accents on the first beat of the bar in a block chord texture, resembles the opening music of *Phaudrig Crohoore* op. 62, a choral ballad by Stanford which was completed in 1895. English composer Herbert Howells has noted: “[Stanford] turns his face to the west [and] fills his mind with the thematic cut-and-thrust of melody and rhythm innately Irish.”⁶⁵ The delight demonstrated by the audience may be, in part, due to the sense of Irishness in the work. It is clear that it was the Irishness of Stanford’s music which appealed to American audiences and critiques used this quality to raise public reception of the work, while the composer’s orthodox methods would also have been a selling point as America was also conservative in his attitudes towards composition. According to the *New York Times*:

Sir Charles is an Irishman who has often used delightfully the characteristic effect of the Irish folk-tunes, with which, in one way or another, he has had much to do, and has worked with both a patriotic and musical interest. In this concerto he has done so only in the last movement, in which there is a characteristic rhythmic vigour and incisiveness and an unmistakable turn of tunefulness that clearly show their origin.⁶⁶

Consequently, Krehbiel’s statement in the *New York Tribune*, namely that there was no sense of nationalism in this work, is not palpable.⁶⁷

Stanford’s Irishness contributed to public interest in his music in America. As one would expect, his use of native folk music in some of his compositions appealed to audiences in America and although some other works received sporadic performances across the Atlantic, it seems likely that his music may not have made the same impact on American

64. See *New York Sun* review in *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union*, Norfolk Historical Society and Museum.
 65. Herbert Howells, “Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924): An Address at His Centenary”, *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 79 (1952), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/766209> (last accessed 5/11/2020), p. 19–31, p. 30.
 66. Anon., “Music Festival Ends in Success: Litchfield County Choral Union Gives New Compositions at Norfolk”, art. cit.
 67. Anon., “Sir Charles Stanford’s New Pianoforte Concerto”, art. cit., p. 478–479, p. 478.

audiences were it not for his inclusion of Irish melodies in his works. It appears that the Irishness in Stanford's compositional output helped the promotion of his music abroad; as noted by Krehbiel there was a market for this "lighter" music in America. Although this part of his compositional output appealed to audiences in America for a time, this departure from more serious music seems to have altered public opinion of him in England.

Despite the disappointment surrounding his inability to travel and losing out on the honorary doctorate, one must assume that Stanford was delighted with the success of his piano concerto in America. As he had been unable to attend and hear the performance he did all in his power to organise an English premiere. Stanford's proposed visit to Yale to receive his honorary doctorate and the performance of the concerto in Norfolk were reported in the *Musical Times* in England.⁶⁸ Both Stanford's intended trip and subsequently his inability to travel received attention in the American press, indicating interest in the composer and his music.⁶⁹ The performance was later referred to in an article on the Norfolk Festival by Krehbiel which provides a very detailed account of Stanford's Irish music. The newspaper also includes a copy of the cover page of Stanford's Fifth Irish Rhapsody outlining the dedication on the work and also a separate image detailing the folk tunes used in the piece.⁷⁰ Such accounts appear to have raised the profile of the work in England and a performance seemed more hopeful.

Reception and Criticism of Stanford's Music in North America (1888–1924)



The American press provides valuable insights into perceptions of Stanford's music at that time in America, a country in which he had not made the same contribution to society as he had done in England through his work as conductor, musical director, composer and pedagogue. His reputation there was built upon writings about his music and the promotion of his works by notable musicians in America. Furthermore, reviews and accounts of Stanford's music in the American press provide an interesting view of American perceptions of Irish music at this time. An examination of articles in the American press allows us to reflect upon how Stanford, an Irish-born composer working in England, was identified in America by audiences and critics alike.

68. *Ibid.*

69. See for example, *New York Sun*, 1915, review in *Report of the Music Committee of the Litchfield County Choral Union*, Norfolk Historical Society and Museum.

70. H.E. Krehbiel, "New Music Composed for The Norfolk Festival", *New York Tribune*, 3 June 1917, p. z.

What is particularly interesting is the regularity of references to Stanford and his music in the American press, particularly in the first two decades of the twentieth century, considering that his reputation in England was being overshadowed by the younger generation of composers. By comparison, there are fewer references to upcoming performances of his music or lengthy reviews of performances of his compositions at notable venues in England in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Removed from the socio-musical sphere in England dominated by both the politics of identity and the desire to create or pioneer a new English school of composition that would move away from Germanic traditions, Stanford's music remains popular and worthy of performance, being critically well received in America. While numerous references appear in Church listings to his Services and *Te Deum*, in a secular context, it was clearly his Irish infused compositions which attracted greatest attention and which may have been deemed to have most popular appeal. Those works infused with Irish folk music which feature most prominently include his comic opera *Shamus O'Brien*, the "Irish" Symphony, *Phaudrig Croohore* and his arrangements of folk melodies. Other works received some attention in the press including his Serenade in G which was performed from manuscript at the third concert of the New York Philharmonic Series on 19 January 1884.⁷¹

It appears that the first substantial references to Stanford's music in American newspapers occur in the late 1880s, with some drawing on articles published in the English press. One example featured an excerpt from George Bernard Shaw's criticism of the "Irish" Symphony in the English publication *World* in the *New York Times* in 1893.⁷² Although Stanford continued to receive some positive criticism in the press in the twentieth century, it is clear that the ghost of George Bernard Shaw's brief period as music critic in England tainted his fellow Irishman's reputation in musical circles in England. Stanford's most cruel critic was his fellow Irishman, Shaw.⁷³ Outspoken and always striving for musical perfection, he based "his judgments not only on his remarkable musical knowledge, but on the extent to which he had enjoyed a performance."⁷⁴ Although Shaw was disliked by many musicians, he "was adored by his general readers" as

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71. See Anon., "The Philharmonic Rehearsal", *New York Times*, 19 January 1884, p. 4. The reviewer did not seem inspired by the work, referring to it as a "Suite" and he believed that the work was not "overburdened with ideas". Although he appeared impressed by the composer's handling of the orchestra, he believed that the instrumentation was "wanting in colour".
72. Anon., "Gossip of Concert Hall and Opera House. The Pianist, His Piano and His Harps – A Few Remarks to Show How the Wheels Go Around – the Return of Mme. Materna, the Famous Wagner Singer – Phases of the Wagner Controversy – Kneisel as a Conductor – Villiers Stanford Irish Symphony", *New York Times*, 21 May 1893, p. 13.
73. George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) was an Irish dramatist who also worked as a critic. In that role he wrote under the pseudonym "Corno di Bassetto". Some of the magazines and journals which he worked for included *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *The Star* and *The World*.
74. Eugene Gates, "The Music Criticism and Aesthetics of George Bernard Shaw", *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 35, 2001, DOI: 10.2307/3333610, p. 63–71.

he made music criticism comprehensible to all.⁷⁵ More significant to this study is Shaw’s tendency to parrot public perceptions at the time.⁷⁶ Irvine sums up Shaw and the effect of his methods of criticism in 1946:

He is the malignant personal enemy of every fallible musician. Usually he punishes quite impartially, but not always [...] His professed attitude is relativistic and pragmatic. Shaw writes for immediate effect, in a gay and passionate effort to make audiences insist on better music, and musicians and composers produce it. He coddles, bullies, lauds, insults, gadflying everybody to do his best. In short he tries, not to put the whole truth in all its facets upon paper, but to drive fragmentary and partial truth into the heads of his readers by all sorts of exaggeration and special pleading.⁷⁷

Shaw’s damning criticism of Stanford proved a crucial turning point in Stanford reception in the nineteenth century.⁷⁸ While Shaw’s criticism was entertaining for readers of his articles, his negative criticism served to highlight issues relating to Stanford and his music: his academicism, his reliance on traditional means of composition and his Irishness. These aspects of his compositional style, however, were not the main focus of the critics in America.

The inclusion of writings by European critics in American newspapers is not dissimilar to a practice in the nineteenth century when American critics quoted the words of Eduard Hanslick in their articles on the music of Hungarian composer Franz Liszt (1811–1886) in America. At that time in England, reviews of Stanford’s music were numerous and featured prominently in English newspapers as many of his compositions were performed to great acclaim across England and Europe. Indeed, his

75. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

76. While Shaw has been commended for his writings as a music critic, an anonymous critic writing in 1923 gives an interesting alternative account of Shaw’s work in this role, noting that ‘nobody takes Shaw seriously these days. He can be depended upon to take the opposite of any popular idea or ideal. He dotes on controversy for controversy’s sake and takes the limelight by doing a double somersault for the delectation of the crowd. He is the arch buffoon of letters, the infant terrible of parlor politics and though age has slowed down his passion it has not in any perceptible degree sweetened his temper or broadened his tolerance’. ‘Shaw scolds the Writing Craft’ *Arts and Decorations* XIII (March 1923), p. 87 in George S. Barber, ‘Shaw’s Contribution to Music Criticism’, *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 72 (5), 1957, DOI: 10.2307/460376, p. 1005–1017, p. 1006.

77. William Irvine, ‘G.B. Shaw’s Musical Criticism’, *Musical Quarterly*, 32 (3), 1946, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/739194> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 319–332.

78. Holroyd suggests that the rivalry between the two Irishmen may have stemmed from personal reasons. Stewart, Stanford’s organ teacher, had successfully exposed Vandaleur Lee – Shaw’s mother’s singing teacher – as an imposter in Dublin which inevitably led to Lee’s exile from Dublin. Holroyd believed that Shaw’s review of Stanford’s symphony ‘reads as a quintessential exposition of Shaw’s twenty years of experience in England, in which he reacted violently to a genteel cultured classic piety of English composers dulled by university education and established religion’. See Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw: 1856–1898: The Search for Love*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1988, I, p. 48–49. Shaw had acknowledged the influence which Vandaleur Lee had on the Shaw household. In 1876 Shaw moved to London to join his mother and Lee. See also See Holroyd, *op. cit.* in Dibble, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

work as conductor and pedagogue was also beginning to be recognised in the press with many references to his work in these capacities also. It was the performance of Stanford's "Irish" Symphony in America, however, which appears to mark the beginning of American audiences' exposure to his music. Completed in April 1887, it was soon championed by Hans Richter and Hans von Bülow in London and Germany while the Symphony Society included the work at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York on 27 and 28 January 1888.⁷⁹ Two movements of the work had been programmed earlier in the month in the Brooklyn Academy of Music under the direction of Damrosch and the critic noted that "if the two movements from this symphony, heard for the first time in this country last night, are good samples of the entire work, it is to be hoped that Mr Stanford's compositions will soon be given here in its entirety."⁸⁰

In England, Stanford had featured in series of biographical sketches of composers, two notable examples being *The Musical Times* and *The Strand Magazine*. Such lengthy accounts, many of which included photographs, demonstrated the reputation which he had built up as a composer, conductor and pedagogue in England and served to inform audiences about his successes.⁸¹ While certainly not as long as those in English newspapers, it is interesting to note that Stanford was featured on a number of occasions in American newspapers, including news of his death and obituary. Like the English examples, photographs of the composer were included.⁸² Indeed, Krehbiel wrote a lengthy summary of Stanford's article "Some Thoughts Concerning Folksong and Nationality". Krehbiel's publication was timely as it also announced Stanford's intended visit to America the following month and it also demonstrated Krehbiel's keen interest in Stanford and his music.⁸³ Such coverage helped inform the American public about Stanford as a composer. However, these newspaper articles can also lead to confusion over his identity as an Irish Protestant Unionist, which differed from the dominant Irish Catholic Nationalist identity which was popularised in America in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising.⁸⁴

79. Anon., "Fifth Concert of the Symphony Society", *The Sun*, 29 January 1888, p. 2 and Anon., "Music. Stanford's Irish Symphony", *New York Daily Tribune*, 28 January 1888, p. 5.

80. Anon., "Music – The Drama at the Brooklyn Academy of Music", *New York Daily Tribune*, 4 January 1888, p. 4.

81. See for example, Richard Aldrich, "Sir Charles Stanford's Entertaining Sketches of Some Distinguished Musicians – A Composer's Reminiscences", *New York Times*, 21 February 1915, p. 3. Here Aldrich provides a synopsis of Stanford's career, while summarising some of his reminiscences in Stanford's autobiography.

82. See for example, Anon., "Musical Comment, Grief as a Writer for Orchestra, The Pianoforte Concerto and Chamber Music, A miniaturist Latter Day Decay, An Irish Nationalist in Music", *New York Tribune, an Illustrated Supplement*, August 1897, p. 16 and Anon., "Charles Villiers Stanford. Reviver of Ireland's National Music", *The Chicago Tribune*, 17 March 1900, p. 12.

83. H.E. Krehbiel, "Folksong and Music's Future. Sir Charles Villiers Stanford on Germany's Decay – Irish Tunes and Beethoven", *New York Tribune*, 2 May 1915, p. 3.

84. Damien Murray, "Ethnic Identities and Diasporic Sensibilities: Transnational Irish-American Nationalism in Boston after World War I", *Éire-Ireland*, 46 (3-4), DOI: 10.1353/eir.2011.0018, p. 102–131.

The American press regularly published accounts of Stanford's recent engagements and performances of his music in England and Ireland, demonstrating the awareness of European culture amongst American audiences. On occasion these accounts were taken from the *Times* in London (with some articles noting "FROM LONDON"). For example, reports of the performance of *The Canterbury Pilgrims* in Dublin and London⁸⁵ and *Much Ado About Nothing* at Covent Garden were included,⁸⁶ while the concert Stanford conducted entirely of his own works in Berlin featured in the *New York Herald*.⁸⁷ A number of the American premieres were noted, including *Verdun* in 1918.⁸⁸ American newspapers also made reference to letters which Stanford wrote to the *Times* in relation to the establishment of a national opera in England.⁸⁹ The setting of the tune by Stanford for the new bells at St Mary-le-Bow received coverage in a number of newspapers.⁹⁰ The conferring of an honorary doctorate on him by Oxford University in 1883 was reported on in *Buffalo New York Daily Courier*,⁹¹ while his appointment as first President of the "Feis Ceoil" in Ireland was also noted.⁹² Such references indicate an awareness that American audiences had in relation to Stanford's music in Europe and his role in the musical life of both England and Ireland.

As noted earlier, different composers benefited from various critics' treatment of their music. While some critics wrote objectively in their assessment of a composer's music, many reporters were subjective in their writings; some exaggerated their writings for the amusement of the reader, while other composers suffered at the hands of critics as those may have had their own personal preferences of taste. It is clear from a study of music criticism in England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that some critics promoted composers for personal reasons. Fuller-Maitland, who worked as music critic at the *Times* from 1889 until 1911, was one of Stanford's oldest friends, having played duets with him during Stanford's early years at Cambridge in the 1870s. Fuller-Maitland also

85. Anon., "Article", *Richmond Dispatch*, 2 September 1884, p. 2 and B.B. Young, "Article", *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 May 1884, p. 11.
86. See for example, Anon., "The Foreign Stage London", *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 15 June 1901 p. 15; Anon., "Article", *San Francisco Call*, 16 June 1901, p. 18; Anon., "First New Opera of Covent Garden. Dr C Villiers Stanford's 'Much Ado About Nothing' Novelty in London Season", *New York Herald*, 31 May 1901, p.9 and Anon., "Shakespearian Opera. Production at Covent Garden of 'Much Ado About Nothing'", *New York Daily Tribune*, 31 May 1901, p. 6.
87. Anon., "Cable Brevities", *The New York Herald*, 15 January 1889, p. 7.
88. Anon., "Philharmonic Society", *New York Tribune*, 13 October 1918, p. 4.
89. Anon., "Article", *New York Evening Post*, 25 March 1899, p. 28 and Anon., "Article", *The Record Union*, 16 April 1899, p. 7. This was earlier reported in Anon., "Article", *Kansas City Journal*, 9 April 1909, p. 17.
90. Anon., "Whittington Chime Rings", *The Minneapolis Journal*, 10 November 1905, p. 25; Anon., "Article", *The Rice Belt Journal*, March 1906, n.p.; Anon., "Bow Bells to be Rehung", *The San Francisco Call*, 24 September 1905, p. 53 and Anon., "The Old Bow Bells of London Town", *The Evening Star*, November 1905, p. 3.
91. Anon., "Musical Matters", *Buffalo New York Daily Courier*, 8 September 1883, n.p.
92. Anon., "A Fair Doctor of Music. Annie Patterson, Secretary of the Great Irish Feis in Dublin", *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 10 November 1895, p. 7. See also Anon., "Irish Musical Festival From The London Daily News", *New York Times*, 31 March 1895, n.p.

worked as critic at the *Guardian* and *Pall Mall Gazette* for a time. During Fuller-Maitland's period as music critic at the *Times* Stanford's music received positive commentary; indeed, Hughes commented that Stanford "came in for the most extravagant praise".⁹³ In Fuller-Maitland's opinion "Stanford is musical counterpart to Tennyson."⁹⁴ Although this comparison was drawn in relation to Stanford's "special poetic affinities", the very placing of Stanford as a parallel to Tennyson who was well respected in poetic circles in England as well as holding the post of Poet Laureate bears testimony to Fuller-Maitland's view of him.⁹⁵ Enthusiasm for both Parry and Stanford's music is evident in his reviews and it was clear that Fuller-Maitland used his position with "the most widely-read and influential newspaper" to promote two men whom he considered to be "the leading spirits in the renaissance of British music".⁹⁶

Although many of the reviews written about performances of Stanford's music in America bear no signature, knowledge of who was writing, in particular newspapers, makes it possible to ascertain who were the public champions and promoters of his music. On account of the great number of reviews of his music by eminent critics, such as Richard Aldrich, Henry Krehbiel and W.J. Henderson, both of whom were music critics for the *New York Times*, while Henderson also contributed to the *New York Sun*, this provides an opportunity to examine the themes that emerge in their writings which are worthy of consideration here. According to Richard Aldrich, Henry Krehbiel from the *New York Tribune* "was the leading musical critic of America; and, indeed, it is not too much to say that he had set musical criticism in the United States on a plane that it had never occupied before, in respect of technical knowledge, breadth, and penetration of view, critical faculty and power of expression."⁹⁷ Indeed, Krehbiel was highly influential as a critic. It is noteworthy, therefore, that Krehbiel was positive in his assessment of Stanford's music and writings. Unlike some composers who were acquaintances of critics of their music, for example in the case of Elgar and Volbach, it is unlikely that Stanford had met his American critics.

93. M. Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press*, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

94. J.A. Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford, an Essay in Comparative Criticism*, Cambridge, W. Heffer & Sons., 1934, p. 11.

95. This comparison was similar to an opinion held by a critic writing in *The Irish Times* after Stanford's death in which the writer proclaimed that Stanford 'was to musical Ireland what Mr W. B. Yeats is to literary Ireland. See Anon., "A Great Musician: Death of Sir Charles Stanford", *The Irish Times*, 31 March 1924, p. 6.

96. See M. Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press*, *op. cit.*, p. 8 and J.A. Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford*, *op. cit.*, p. 11. On the other hand Fuller-Maitland showed antipathy towards Frederic Cowen while Henry Lunn, critic with *The Musical Times*, was often critical of Arthur Sullivan. For more information regarding critics and their treatment of composers in England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see M. Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press* *op. cit.*, p. 1–103.

97. Richard Aldrich, "Henry Edward Krehbiel", *Music and Letters*, 4 (3), 1923, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/726960> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 266.

Stanford's "Irish" Symphony



Stanford completed his "Irish" Symphony in 1887 and Richter gave the English premiere of the work in St James's Hall on 27 June 1887. Initial reception of the work was positive as the composer's use of Irish folk music appealed to audiences.⁹⁸ The success of this composition may have encouraged Stanford to develop his interest in the folk-music of his native land, hoping that it would win him favour with audiences and critics alike. It was Richter and von Bülow who brought Stanford's "Irish" Symphony to European audiences with performances in Hamburg, Berlin and Amsterdam in 1888.⁹⁹ On the strength of a successful performance of the symphony at Berlin in 1888, the Berlin Philharmonic invited Stanford to conduct a repeat performance of the work the day after the Berlin premiere.¹⁰⁰ Despite its initial successes, in his review of the "Irish" Symphony George Bernard Shaw noted that "the symphony, as a musical form, is stone dead".¹⁰¹ Stanford's "Irish" Symphony featured regularly in America. It was highly significant that a symphony by an Irish composer reached American audiences so soon after its completion. The symphony was regularly performed under the direction of both Frank and Walter Damrosch and was frequently included in the programmes of the Philharmonic Society.¹⁰²

Public rehearsals of the "Irish" Symphony were held on 27 and 28 January 1888 by the Symphony Society at the Metropolitan Opera House for a performance on 28 January 1888. Although some elements of the programme were criticised, Stanford's "Irish" Symphony was noted as being "full of character, [...] rich in melody and excellently made".¹⁰³ Another critic commented that the performance of the work was a novelty.¹⁰⁴

98. Anon., "Mr Stanford's New Symphony", *The Times*, 1 July 1887, p. 4.

99. Von Bülow conducted the symphony at the Stadttheatre on 26 January 1888 in Hamburg while Willem Kes conducted the work in Amsterdam on 3 November 1888. On the strength of the performance at Hamburg the composer was invited to conduct the work in a programme which included the music of Wagner, Brahms, Beethoven and Goldmark.

100. It appears that von Bülow stood aside to allow Stanford conduct his own work. See Anon., "Dr Stanford's "Irish" Symphony in Germany", *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 29 (541), 1888, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3360380> (last accessed 7/11/2020), p. 154–155. This article reviews the performance of the "Irish" Symphony in Berlin in February 1888.

101. George Bernard Shaw, "The Second Richter Concert This Season", *Pall Mall Gazette*, 15 May 1888. This is cited in Dan Laurence (ed.), *Shaw's Music: The Complete Musical Criticism in Three Volumes*, II, London, Bodley Head, 1981, p. 515. Harry White perpetuates a critical reception of this work a century later when writing "This work, of all Stanford's compositions, perhaps most easily illustrates his untroubled juxtaposition of Brahmsian pastiche and the arrangement of traditional airs", *op. cit.*, 1998, p. 196.

102. Frank Damrosch (1859–1937) was a German-born conductor, organist and teacher working in America. He worked at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York and was director of the New York Institute of Musical Art. Walter Damrosch (1862–1950) was also a German-born conductor working in America. He was director of the New York Symphony Orchestra and conductor of the Metropolitan Opera and Symphony Society in New York. Damrosch was also a composer, noted for his songs and operas.

103. Anon., "The Symphony Society", *New York Times*, 28 January 1888, p. 4.

104. Anon., "Fifth Concert of the Symphony Society", art. cit., p. 2.

Although this writer commented that the work was “pleasant and musically”, they noted that it was “not impressive.”¹⁰⁵ They did, however, attest that Stanford “was as well qualified certainly as any English composer of today to utilize his material to his best advantage. There is, therefore, no lack of dignity and merit in his work.” He acknowledged that the effect “might be improved by more lightness in the performance.” After the initial successful performances of the work in the decade after its completion, it appeared to lose favour with American audiences. However, owing to the work of the Damrosch brothers and Gustav Mahler, the symphony appeared more frequently in programmes in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Walter Damrosch conducted a performance of the symphony at Carnegie Hall in November 1907 with the New York Symphony Orchestra.¹⁰⁶ Frank Damrosch conducted the symphony on 28 March 1908 at the Sixth Symphony Concert for Young People at Carnegie Hall while Mahler revived the work in February 1911 with the New York Philharmonic Society. Walter Damrosch also conducted the work on 6 January 1912 and 17 November 1912 at Carnegie Hall and Madison Square respectively.¹⁰⁷

Damrosch obviously recognised the appeal the “Irish” Symphony had for audiences of the time and programmed the symphony on at least three occasions in the Young People’s Symphony Concerts at the beginning of the twentieth century. Three such concerts took place on 28 March 1908 (Carnegie Hall), in February 1912 (Brooklyn) and on 25 February 1917 (Carnegie Hall). Characteristically, Stanford’s work headed the programme of the Symphony Society of New York concert with the New York Symphony Orchestra at the Century Theatre on St Patrick’s Day (17 March) 1912.¹⁰⁸ Interestingly, the second half of the concerts consisted of excerpts from Wagner’s “Die Meistersinger”. The concert was reported on favourably in *The Evening World* with the critic noting that the work has always “been received with favor”, and that it was “redolent with the sentiment, the sadness and the rollicking humor of old Erin.”¹⁰⁹ The symphony was also included in an Irish Musical Festival which took place under the direction of Victor Herbert at Carnegie Hall on 23 March 1913. This performance took place on Easter Sunday.¹¹⁰ The symphony was performed

105. *Ibid.*

106. Anon., “Article”, *New York Tribune*, 18 November 1907, p. 6.

107. Anon., “Irish Tunes Please Big Carnegie Audience”, *The Matthews Journal*, November 1912, n.p., and Anon., “Music Here and There” *New York Times*, 10 November 1912, n.p.

108. This concert was announced in Anon., “Music Here and There”, *New York Times*, 17 March 1912, p. x7; Anon., “Article”, *The Sun*, 10 March 1902, p. 9 and reviewed in Anon., “Sunday Afternoon Music, Irish Symphony and Negro Overture – Griswold’s Fine Singing”, *New York Times*, 18 March 1912, n.p. in which the writer commented on its “real beauty, the felicitous use the Irish composer has made of Irish themes, and the success with which he has made the music expressive of the Gaelic spirit, by turns merry and pathetic.”

109. Sylvester Rawling, “Damrosch Remembers Erin’s Day”, *The Evening World*, 18 March 1912, p. 22.

110. See Anon., “Article”, *New York Times*, 16 March 1913, p. x9 and Anon., “Article”, *The Sun*, 16 March 1913, p. 10.

at a concert for the 69th Regiment Relief at the Manhattan Opera House on 24 September 1916 and a performance of the symphony took place at the Aeolian Hall on 21 January 1917.¹¹¹ An Irish Night organised with the help of the Irish Music Society in the Lewisohn Stadium City College on 15 August 1921 included two movements from the symphony in its programme. Reviews of the “Irish” Symphony were often very detailed, one example being the notice of the performance in January 1888 in which readers were given an analytical overview of each movement. This article also refers to the performance under the direction of Richter in London and notes that “the symphony answers most strikingly to the characterization of Irish music to be found in Dr Norman McLeod’s Notebook.”¹¹²

Association with prominent conductors helped to raise profile of Stanford’s “Irish” Symphony. In advertisements and reviews of the work, the names Richter, von Bülow and Mahler were often noted as conductors and exponents of the works.¹¹³ Positive reviews of the symphony were given in the *New York Times* and *New York Tribune* ensuring continued interest in the work in America.¹¹⁴ Aldrich found it surprising that the work was not more frequently performed, while Krehbiel commented on the ever growing admiration for the work.

On the whole, statements in relation to Stanford’s skill as a composer were mostly positive. Stanford’s proficiency as a composer is celebrated in reviews of his “Irish” Symphony, which comment on his skilful treatment of folk tunes. Indeed a critic in the *New York Times* writing in 1911 noted “it is rather surprising that its merits and certain qualities that might well make it popular in the best sense have not gained it more frequent repetition.”¹¹⁵ Following a performance of the “Irish” Symphony conducted by Mahler in 1911, a writer in the *New York Times*, commented on Stanford’s “resourcefulness of accomplished musicianship” and the scholarly methods “employed to make the most of the extremely interesting material.”¹¹⁶ Other reviews contained some perceptive comments in relation to his compositional style. The *New York Times* critic believed the work to be “charming, of sustained interest, and made with much dexterity and skill in the manipulation of its material.”¹¹⁷ Aldrich noted that “he writes skilfully,

111. This performance was reviewed favourably by Krehbiel: H.E. Krehbiel, “Irish Symphony Brings Message. Damrosch Orchestra Stirrs Hearers with Villiers Stanford Work”, *New York Tribune*, 22 January 1917, p. 9.

112. Anon., “Music. Stanford’s Irish Symphony”, art. cit., p. 5.

113. See for example Anon., “The Philharmonic Society”, *New York Times*, 26 February 1911, p. x7; Anon., “Sunday Afternoon Music”, art. cit., p. 11; Anon., “Sunday Filled with Orchestral Music”, *New York Times*, 18 November 1912, p. 11.

114. See for example Richard Aldrich, “The New York Symphony. Concert of Irish, Welsh and Norwegian Composer’s Music”, *New York Times*, 18 November 1907, p. 7 and H.E. Krehbiel, “Irish Symphony Brings Message”, art. cit., p. 9.

115. Anon., “The Philharmonic Society: A Programme of Music by British and American Composers”, *New York Times*, 15 February 1911, n.p.

116. *Ibid.*

117. Richard Aldrich., “The New York Symphony”, art. cit., p. 7.

often charmingly, for orchestra.”¹¹⁸ In a review of the “Irish” Symphony in the *New York Times* Aldrich noted that “it is not great music, nor wholly original in style, but it is charming, of sustained interest and made with much dexterity and skill in the manipulation of its material.”¹¹⁹ Aldrich does note, however, that Stanford “does not always quite know when to stop and that at least the first three movements are extended considerably beyond the point where his material yields him profitable results.”¹²⁰ His tendency to prolixity is noted in the second movement of the “Irish” Symphony where the second theme “is prolonged to the point of monotony”.¹²¹ While some American writers hinted at his traditional and conservative approach and described his work as “academic”, this criticism of his writing did not appear to overly concern them and was not the central focus of their critiques, unlike their English counterparts.

Despite these seemingly negative criticisms, audiences in America rated the work on a par with Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique Symphony* and Dvořák’s *New World Symphony*, an important achievement for a composer of the “English School”.¹²² A concert held at Carnegie Hall on 6 January 1912, which was devoted entirely to the music of British and American composers, included two movements of the “Irish” Symphony. Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance* was the only other British orchestral work performed. Such programming bears testament to the American reputation which Stanford had earned for himself as a composer of note.

The Importance and Perception of Stanford’s National Identity in America

A writer in the *New York Tribune* in 1897 noted that “in symphony, opera and ballad Dr Stanford has done work which places his name high among the refined nationalists in music”,¹²³ and his music was compared to that of *Dvořák* and *Grieg*. It is not unusual for critics in other countries to focus on national elements in one’s music. In the case of *Sibelius*, for example, *Tomi Mäkelä* has noted that German reception of *Sibelius*’ music emphasises “the Nordic elements, Finnish nature and the character of the Finnish people as a source of inspiration for *Sibelius*’s music”, despite *Sibelius* himself being a cosmopolitan individual.¹²⁴ This may also

118. *Ibid.*

119. *Ibid.*

120. *Ibid.*

121. *Ibid.*

122. Anon., “Philharmonic Society”, art. cit., p. x7.

123. Anon., “Musical Comment, Grief as a Writer for Orchestra”, art. cit., p. 16.

124. *Tomi Mäkelä*, “Towards a Theory of Internationalism, Europeanism, National and ‘Co-Nationalism’ in 20th Century Music” in *Tomi Mäkelä* (ed.), *Music and Nationalism in 20th Century Great Britain and Finland*, Hamburg, 1997, p. 175.

have a negative impact on the appreciation of a composer. Mäkelä comments, “Instead of being regarded as an individual artist on his own terms, Sibelius attracted superficial nationalist headlines from an early stage”.¹²⁵ The emphasis that American critics placed on Stanford’s identity as an Irish composer was possibly an attempt at writing to an increasingly middle-class Irish American community and potentially limited an appreciation of the totality of Stanford’s compositional output and the complexity of his national identity.

The concept of portraying or representing a national identity through music is prominent in America during this period. An examination of reviews of performances of Stanford’s works in America from the 1880s through to 1920 has revealed that a large number of his works were performed in a variety of venues and pioneering conductors such as Walter Damrosch and Gustav Mahler generated interest in his music. Works performed included sacred music, his arrangements of folk songs, art songs, choral, organ and orchestral works. Of his output it was his “Irish” works which clearly had the most popular appeal. The performance context of his “Irish” Symphony reveals much about the reception and interpretation of his music; on one occasion Mahler chose the symphony for inclusion in a programme to demonstrate nationalism in music.¹²⁶ Given the prominence of Stanford’s music in concerts which celebrated Irish music and its inclusion in popular Sunday afternoon concerts suggests that American audiences believed that Stanford was among the best representative of this at the time in order to promote Irish music.

Shaped by the complexities of Irish society, Irish identity in America was similarly divided and difficult.¹²⁷ Following an initial wave of primarily Protestant migrants from Ireland, many Irish Catholics had emigrated to America in the second half of the nineteenth century and numerous societies were founded which acted as meeting points for Irish-Americans. The emergence of Irish American newspapers, the presence of academics engaged in the study of the Irish language and Irish history, and the foundation of societies that promoted the Irish language, as well as music and dance led to a strong awareness of heritage and identity amongst an Irish American community.¹²⁸ While Irish emigrants of both nationalist

125. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

126. Anon., “Sunday Filled With Orchestra Music”, art. cit., p. 11.

127. J.J. Lee, “Introduction: Interpreting Irish America”, in Marion Casey & J.J. Lee (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 1-62.

128. Many Irish American newspapers from the 1850s onwards included Irish related articles. Indeed, in 1888, one journal gave a list of 44 newspapers nation-wide which were involved in promoting Irish. Many academics promoted the Irish language and Celtic departments were founded in universities. Many societies were founded with the aim of promoting the Irish language and they organized music classes as well as Irish classes. Some also give lectures on historical topics relating to Ireland. The publication *An Gaodhal* was popular among those with an interest in the Irish language and they encouraged people to embrace the language and the activities of their past. There were a substantial number of native Irish speakers in America in the latter half of the nineteenth century which is not surprising given the large

and unionist beliefs expressed an Irish identity in America, Scheer argues: “as political tensions increased, most people chose to ally themselves with individual national identities, Irish or English; but some went on believing in a United Kingdom”.¹²⁹ Thus, unlike in Ireland where Stanford is often neglected by the dominant cultural nationalism that defines Irishness, he is perhaps a more acceptable “Irish” figure in America, where the Irishness of his music commands more attention than his political or religious beliefs.

By the 1880s, Irish musical culture was already a significant element of American musical life.¹³⁰ Aside from the folk music traditions of the mainly working classes, Thomas Moore’s parlour repertoire was aimed at the middle classes.¹³¹ It is that audience for which Stanford is probably most relevant. It is interesting to note that Moore drew from the collections of folk music by Edward Bunting, a contemporary of George Petrie, whose collection Stanford later edited. Stanford edited a collection of *Moore’s Melodies* in 1895. Like Moore, Stanford is reinterpreting older Irish traditions and presenting them within the frames of a middle-class aesthetic. Moore’s music featured prominently in the minds of the middle class with many familiar with a number of his melodies. Stanford’s works which draw on Irish themes and melodies put him in a similar category to Moore in America. The large number of concerts featuring Irish musicians and Irish repertoire is testament to the strong interest in Irish culture in America. A number of concerts featured the Irish tenor John McCormack¹³² and Irish culture was prominent on the vaudeville stage.¹³³ Considering the impact which his Irish themed works made on audiences in America and the focus on his contribution to the use of folk song and his arrangements, it is not surprising that Stanford was referred to as a nationalistic composer. Stanford’s arrangements from both the Petrie Collection and *Moore’s Melodies* restored were often performed

number of emigrants living in America and although these numbers were decreasing by the 1920s with most emigrants realizing that a knowledge of English was more beneficial to them in their daily lives in their new home. An awareness of their history and heritage was certainly prevalent among the Irish American community. Stanford’s “Irish” music would certainly have been of interest to Irish Americans.

129. Christopher Scheer, “For the Sake of the Union: The Nation in Stanford’s Fourth Irish Rhapsody”, in Rachel Cowgill & Julian Rushton (eds.), *Europe, Empire, and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006, p. 160.
130. Nicholas Carolan, *A Harvest Saved: Francis O’Neill and Irish Music in Chicago*, Cork, Ossian Publications Ltd., 1997; Rebecca S. Miller, “Irish Traditional Music in the United States”, in Marion Casey & J.J. Lee (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 411–416.
131. Sean Williams, “Irish Music Revivals Through Generations of Diaspora”, in Rachel Cowgill & Julian Rushton (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Revival and Post-Revival Music-Cultures*, London, Oxford U.P., 2014, DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199765034.013.024, p. 596–615.
132. See for example, Anon., “Irish Tunes Please: Big Carnegie Audience”, *The Mathews Journal*, November 1912, n.p. which reports on a performance by John McCormack at Carnegie Hall in which McCormack performed in a concert which also included Stanford’s “Irish” Symphony. See also Anon., “Music Here and There”, *New York Times*, 10 November 1912, n.p. which advertises the concert of 17 November 1912.
133. Robert W. Snyder, ‘The Irish and Vaudeville’ in Marion Casey & J.J. Lee (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 406–410.

in concerts in America.¹³⁴ Concerts of Irish music were also popular and the *Washington Herald* reports on a concert of national music of Ireland hosted by the Friday Morning Club which included a paper read along with illustrations of songs and a performance of Stanford's *Irish Fantasia Jig* op. 54 no. 3.¹³⁵

Stanford's popularity in America may be due in part to an emphasis there on his Irish identity and the growing and upwardly mobile Irish community in America in the late nineteenth century. However, he retains a dual identity here also and, at times, Stanford is also referred to as a composer of the English School with reference to him as "a noted English musician",¹³⁶ or well-known English composer,¹³⁷ particularly in the case of church listings. He was also noted as "one of the most serious, dignified and ambitious of England's composers",¹³⁸ "a noted English musician" and the "distinguished English composer".¹³⁹ Young writing for the *Salt Lake Herald* noted that Stanford was "by far the most promising of the young English composers".¹⁴⁰

While Stanford's music was regularly chosen for inclusion in programmes of English music in America, references to him as an Irish composer in America are more frequent. Stanford is repeatedly referred to as an Irish composer with articles referring to him as a "distinguished Irish composer",¹⁴¹ "an Irish composer of deserved prominence",¹⁴² and an "eminent Irish composer"¹⁴³, "the noted Irish composer",¹⁴⁴ and an "Irish composer long connected with Cambridge University".¹⁴⁵ Krehbiel comments that "Sir Charles Stanford is as thoroughly Irish that he finds Irish influences in quarters in which they have never been suggested before."¹⁴⁶ He also notes that Stanford "is an Irishman of the most admirable type and stands without a peer as a representative of the music of his native land."¹⁴⁷

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- 134. One such concert was reported on in Anon., "A Concert of Irish Music at the Academy – Plays Elsewhere", *Buffalo Courier*, 13 May 1889, p. 6. His arrangement of *My Love's an Arbutus* featured regularly in concert listings.
 - 135. Anon., "Article", *Washington Herald*, 19 March 1911, p. 6.
 - 136. See for example Anon., "Article", *Wilton CT Bulletin*, 1895, n. p.
 - 137. Anon., "A Week's Musical Topics. Gossip of the Opera House and the Concert Hall. Programme of Music in this City – What the Composers are Doing Here and Abroad – Stanford's Music for Tennyson's 'Becket', Rubinstein as Conductor", *New York Times*, 19 February 1893, n. p.
 - 138. Anon., "Music, Stanford's Irish Symphony", *New York Daily Tribune*, 23 January 1888, n. p.
 - 139. Anon., "Philharmonic Society", *New York Tribune*, 13 October 1918, p. 4.
 - 140. B.B. Young, "Article", *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 May 1884, p. 11.
 - 141. Anon., "Musical Comment, Grief as a Writer for Orchestra", art. cit., p. 16. See also Anon., "Damrosch Remembers Erin's Day", *The Evening World*, 18 March 1912, p. 22.
 - 142. Anon., "Fifth Concert of the Symphony Society", art. cit., p. 2.
 - 143. Anon., "Famous Ballads of the Irish Bards", *Elmira NY Morning Telegram*, 18 October 1903, n. p.
 - 144. Anon., "Sir C V Stanford, Noted Irish Composer, Dead", *Albany NY Evening Journal*, 29 March 1924, p. 13.
 - 145. Anon., "Opera in London", *The New York Herald*, 2 May 1884, p. 7.
 - 146. H.E. Krehbiel, "Folksongs and Music's Future", art. cit., p. 3.
 - 147. *Ibid.*

The inconsistent presentation of Stanford as Irish or English in the musical press illustrates a number of interpretations that are relevant to understanding the transatlantic cultural flow at the start of the twentieth century. There is a lack of understanding as to Stanford's nationality or a belief that composers inherit the nationality of the country in which they reside. One reference which notes Stanford as "English or rather Irish musician",¹⁴⁸ demonstrates that there was confusion over his perceived identity in some quarters. Interestingly the *San Francisco Call* noted that it was an Englishman who wrote *Shamus O'Brien*, the only Irish opera ever written that amounts to anything.¹⁴⁹ Such confusion in American newspapers echoes comments made by recent writers including Axel Klein who have noted that Stanford was too Irish for the English, too English for the Irish and too German for both.¹⁵⁰ Despite the presentation of Stanford's perceived dual identity in the American press it does appear that his link to Ireland is felt more strongly, particularly considering the significant emphasis placed on his work with the folk music of Ireland. One writer noted Stanford has "written music as an Irishman who knew the musical treasures of his native isle; and in this symphony he has produced one of the finest of 'national' works in the larger forms."¹⁵¹ Krehbiel believed the second movement of the "Irish" Symphony to be "the finest monument to the spirit of Celtic folksong which artistic music has produced."¹⁵²

Few of Stanford's more "serious" compositions which represent his Germanic influences featured prominently in America. Rather, one of the greatest triumphs for Stanford in the America press is the recognition of his work with Irish folksongs. Aldrich notes that "he has done more with this material in an artistic form than anyone else"¹⁵³ and he "has done more than any other since Moore to revive the national music of his country",¹⁵⁴ while it was noted that he was "famous for his invaluable work in arranging Irish ballads".¹⁵⁵ Stanford's use of Irish folklorism in his music clearly appealed to the Irish living in America. Despite the confusion over his perceived identity in some quarters, given the popularity of his Irish infused compositions at this time, the critics undoubtedly believed that Stanford was appealing to a growing middle class of Irish descent.

While Stanford's academicism was noted by critics in English publications such as Shaw, it was Stanford's Irishness which appears to have

148. Anon., "The Foreign Stage. London", art. cit., p. 15.

149. Anon., "Article", *San Francisco Call*, 6 February 1898, p. 27.

150. Axel Klein, *Irish Classical Recordings: A Discography of Irish Art Music*, Westport, Greenwood, 2001, p. 145.

151. Anon., "The Philharmonic Society: A Programme of Music by British and American Composers", art. cit., n. p.

152. H.E. Krehbiel, "Irish Symphony Brings Message", art. cit., p. 9.

153. Richard Aldrich, "The New York Symphony", art. cit., p. 7.

154. Anon., "Ireland. Record of the Most Important of the Recent Events Culled from Exchanges", *Kentucky Irish America*, March 1900, n. p.

155. Anon., "Famous Ballads of the Irish Bards", art. cit., n. p.

secured a strong position for him in America among American audiences, conductors and critics. Another notable difference between English and American criticism at that time is the lack of emphasis placed on Stanford's place in the British Musical Renaissance in American newspapers. By the turn of the twentieth century Stanford had to struggle for his place among composers in England with continued reference to this in the press. Instead, American critics placed greater emphasis on the perception of Stanford as an Irish composer with much praise for his skilful handling and treatment of folk melodies in his compositions. However, increasing consciousness of nationalism in cultural politics appealed to different sections of society, perhaps similar to the emergence of the Irish tenor as "the paramount sonic representation of the Irish 'civilised homeland'".¹⁵⁶ Critics in America noted that Stanford's "Irish" Symphony was one of three symphonies, including those by Tchaikovsky and *Dvořák*, favoured by American audiences, highlighted by the choices submitted by American audiences for a special "request" programme to be given by the Philharmonic Society in 1911.¹⁵⁷ The construction of Stanford as a nationalistic composer may have made Stanford more relevant to an Irish readership. Writings in the American press underline perceptions of Stanford and Irish music and the continued reference to those works by Stanford with an Irish flavour and a suggestion to christen his second Piano concerto as the "Irish Piano Concerto" highlights that they believed that Stanford epitomised Irishness, which may have reflected opinions of his music. Stanford's music obviously made some impact in America; in 1919 the writer in the *New York Tribune* called for a performance of his recently completed opera *The Travelling Companion*.¹⁵⁸ Stanford was aware of his declining reputation in England. It is not evident if Stanford was aware of the interest being shown in his music in America. Extant correspondence from that period does not include reference to America, save for the correspondence with Horatio Parker in relation to his proposed visit to Yale in 1915. It is unfortunate if Stanford was not aware of the positive reception of his music in America.

Many commentators reflect on Stanford's identity as a composer but few have reached clear conclusions.¹⁵⁹ Perhaps it is because there are no easy answers. Rather than providing clarity, examining the reception of Stanford's music in America further complicates the issue but this may in turn highlight the potential for Stanford's music to simultaneously reach and be appreciated by different audiences who construct identities and interpretations based on their own cultural and political baggage. All at once, Stanford's music becomes, for his audiences, a symbol

156. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 605.

157. Anon., "Philharmonic Society", *New York Times*, 26 Feb 1911, p. x7.

158. Anon., "Article", *New York Tribune*, 31 August 1919, p. 5.

159. E. Hunt, *op. cit.*; H. White, *op. cit.*; J. Dibble, *op. cit.*; P. Rodmell, *op. cit.*; J. White, *op. cit.*

of nationalism and unionism, reflecting the work of an English, British and Irish composer, who is simultaneously critiqued, celebrated and criticised for an over-reliance on German or Brahmsian approaches and the use of Irish folk melodies for international audiences enjoying a diversity of sounds implicated with identities of nationhood. Such dichotomies resonate with O’Flynn’s concerns with the Irishness of Irish music over a century later and could inform the dialectic on articulations of Irish music in the present.¹⁶⁰

Conclusion

Motherway reminds us that “globalizing processes are present through Irish cultural history, namely in relation to the spread of Christianity, British colonization, and mass emigration”.¹⁶¹ Stanford’s reception in America and in particular reviews of his “Irish” Symphony may be critically examined through the lens of globalisation and the exchange of cultural artefacts across the Atlantic. Placing Stanford’s music in this context provides new perspectives through which to critique his musical output and the impact of his compositional practice beyond what has already been considered. The dichotomies evident in Stanford’s own identity, his use of folk melodies, and portrayal of Irish characters, challenge simplistic analyses of Irish cultural identity on both sides of the Atlantic.

At the turn of the century, English critics were much harsher in their interpretation of Stanford’s music as traditional and academic. While American critics include some similar views, it does not become the prime focus of their writings. While a number of newspapers include only short references to Stanford and his music, with coverage in some papers appearing shortly after more substantial reviews in larger newspapers in America such as the *New York Times*, or indeed reproducing content from leading English newspapers such as the *Times*, they are a useful source in order to demonstrate the spread of appreciation for Stanford’s music across the country. The level of interest in Stanford and his music in American newspapers displays that there was interest among the readership in Stanford and they covered a range of matters relating to Stanford. American audiences were thus informed on various aspects of Stanford’s career and activities, including both the accolades and challenges that he faced. Whether coverage in the American press relates to his Irishness or Britishness is unclear, and the inconsistencies of the references to his identity betray

160. John O’Flynn, *The Irishness of Irish Music*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2014, p. 199.

161. Susan Motherway, *The Globalization of Irish Traditional Song Performance*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2013, p. 1.

a confusion or lack of relevance for the readership. Ostensibly, the main concern is what is fashionable in America at that time.¹⁶²

Stanford is ascribed various identities in the reviews of the American press. A critical evaluation of this inconsistency helps us to understand more about how his music was received and the importance of European national identities in the America at the start of the twentieth century. Although scholars agree on his unionist affiliation and political beliefs, it would appear that his audience, particularly in America, were not as assured or, perhaps, heard the “Irishness” of his music as an assertion of national and therefore nationalist identity. In some instances, it may be that particular audiences or promoters, such as Irish organisations, appropriated his music for political purposes. The performance of Stanford’s works in America must be understood in the context of competing and incomplete national identities in Ireland and a post-colonial and diasporic context in America.

An examination of American criticism has highlighted both similarities and distinct differences to criticism of Stanford’s music in English newspapers at this time. Despite numerous contradictions between writers in England, on the whole most American critics were supportive of his music, and while they pointed to deficiencies in the music, the themes highlighted in their reviews were often similar. The space afforded to reviews of some of Stanford’s works is also significant and it is well known that the fate of some compositions can depend on the opinions of critics, especially those held in high regard, Aldrich and Henderson being two notable examples.

Despite the main focus of this paper on newspapers in the state of New York, examinations of other newspapers have demonstrated that Stanford’s music received attention in a variety of publications across America. American critics ensured that his music was promoted and audiences informed about his life. The examination of the reviews of his music, coupled with the prominence given to some works in programmes, has allowed for an evaluation of American musical tastes at this time by assessing and analysing opinions of critics writing in pertinent newspapers and provides for new insights into reception studies of the composer and provides insights into the circulation of popular culture between Ireland and the USA during that period.

162. The use of the English language for his comic opera *Shamus O’Brien* may also be relevant in the context of American tastes and attitudes to opera at this time.