

Cambridge, June 7, 1873

My Dear Kotschmar,

I was sorry not to see you before leaving Portland to thank you again for all that you have done to make the success of "St. Peter" complete, and to learn what impressions the performance made upon you; but I hope to see you in a few weeks when I go to Portland again, and then we can have a chat on the subject.

I was delighted with the way the choruses were sung; there was not one that was not well rendered. The orchestra and soloists required more acquaintance with the composition to do it full justice. These parts will come out better and make a more brilliant effect under more favorable circumstances. As a whole, however, the concert was a whole success and reflects great honor upon Portland. Above all others I owe you gratitude for the long, arduous and patient work of drilling and inspiring the chorus—a work which required pluck as well as ability.

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Description: Letter from John.K. Paine to Hermann Kotschmar.

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long, arduous and patient work of drilling and
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The newspapers all give favorable notices of the concert
and there seems to be a universal wish to hear
the oratorio in Hysteria. Zerralin says he shall use
his influence to have the H. & the Soc. bring it out
at their festival next spring. The only advantage the
music would have under that treatment would be the
massive effect of numbers like Awake now that sleepeth

I heard that Zerralin and others think that I make use of too many dynamic marks in the choruses (such as pp, crescendo, mF, etc). I am of the opinion that there is no reason why our choral music should be exempt from the law of expression. If a chorus can be taught to sing with expression then the composer should aim to make his music expressive, and one has only to examine "Awake thou that sleepeth" and "a Great and marvelous" to see how grand and effective the changes from soft to loud are made. This criticism I hold to be a real compliment, proving that in this respect the oratorio marks a progress in chorus music.

For my part, I am tired of the long continued shouting which marks the performance of oratorios in Boston. Music without expression degenerates into mere noise.

Please write me soon. Ever your faithful and obliged,

John K. Paine