Encouragement from an Unexpected Source: Louis Antoine Jullien, Mid-Century American Composers, and George Frederick Bristow's *Jullien Symphony*

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In the spring of 1856, the critic Émile Girac published a review of George Frederick Bristow's Symphony No. 2**,** the *Jullien Symphony*, in *The Albion*. What he wrote is revealing; it reads in part:

> But do you know how much is expressed by those two little words the *Jullien Symphony*? They mean simply that Jullien did more for Concert music in three months, than the Philharmonic Society has accomplished since Mr. U.C. Hill created it and brought it before the world. [Jullien] gave us Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn, as we have never heard them interpreted in New York. He taught us the art of shades and effects in music … . He [also] revealed to us the powers of Bristow, Fry, and Eisfeld, and did far more for their reputation than was ever done by the Society, which owed so much at least to the first and last of these noble and courageous musicians. … [T]his is the true meaning of Bristow's symphony**.**[1]

The author of this review quite handily used Bristow's second symphony as a metonymy for Louis Jullien and his impact on American musical life in the

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This article is an expansion of a paper titled 'Music in Mid Nineteenth-Century New York: Louis Jullien, American Orchestral Music, and George Bristow's *Jullien Symphony*', read at the conference 'Composing American', at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, November 2004.

[1] Gamma, 'Music', *The Albion* (8 Mar. 1856): 115, American Periodicals Series Online, (accessed 2 February 2009). Vera Brodsky Lawrence suggests that 'Gamma' might have been a pseudonym for the French critic Émile Girac (d.1869). See Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong*, vol. II, *Reverberations, 1850–1856* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) (hereafter Lawrence II): 819. Theodore Eisfeld (1816–82), a German violinist and conductor, led concerts by the Philharmonic from the 1848–49 through the 1855–56 seasons; he was the first to conduct a full season of the orchestra (1852–53). He was an influential musician in New York City from the time of his arrival in 1848 until he returned to Germany in 1866. See Howard Shanet, *Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1975): 103, 109, 430; Vera Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong*, vol. I, *Resonances, 1836–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) (hereafter Lawrence I): 595–6; and 'Theodore Eisfeld', *Appleton's Encyclopedia*, http://www.famousamericans.net/theodoreeisfeld (accessed 19 May 2005).

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middle of the nineteenth century. This was certainly appropriate, for the French conductor had an important role in the work's composition, and was also a dominant – if transitory – figure in the New York musical world of the time. The excerpt from *The Albion*, in fact, suggests the dual subjects of my article: the *Jullien Symphony* as a composition worthy of study, and the work as a product of a particular time and place. Close examination of this work, insight into its style, and an understanding of what its genesis symbolized to composers living and working in New York at the time provides valuable insight into American musical culture (in general) and the work of American composers of orchestral music (in particular) at the mid-point of the nineteenth century.

George Frederick Bristow (1825–98) was a fixture in the New York musical world for much of the nineteenth century: a composer, conductor, performer, educator and advocate for American music. He is best remembered today for his opera *Rip van Winkle* (1855), the oratorio *Daniel* (1866) and his passionate and outspoken championship of American composers – especially his part in an acrimonious four-month-long public quarrel in 1854 between William Henry Fry and the conservative music critic Richard Storrs Willis (and John Sullivan Dwight).[2] This identity as a self-appointed spokesman for American composers has somewhat overshadowed Bristow's other contributions – in particular his compositional activities – and a full-length biography of this important American musician is long overdue.[3] Nevertheless, the issue of Bristow's 'Americanist' proselytizing will be a important component in this article because of its crucial bearing on the topic at hand.

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[2] Both of these works are available in modern editions. See Steven Ledbetter, ed., *Rip Van Winkle: Grand Romantic Opera in Three Acts* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1991) and David Griggs-Janower, ed., *The Oratorio of Daniel* (Madison: A-R Editions, 1999). These are the only large works by Bristow in modern edition. The feud between the two composers and the critics, which took place in the pages of Willis's *Musical World and Times* (New York) and Dwight's *Journal of Music* (Boston) during the first four months of 1854, is generally known to American-music scholars. Some of the sources on this feud are Betty Chmaj, 'Fry versus Dwight: American Music's Debate Over Nationality', *American Music* 3/1 (spring 1985): 63–84 and (from a historian's perspective) Christopher Hatch, 'Music for America: A Critical Controversy of the 1850s', *American Quarterly* 14 (winter 1962): 578–86. Two thorough and detailed examinations of the controversy (with differing conclusions) are in Lawrence II, 377–8, 479–89, and my 'Introduction. Part IV: Louis Jullien and American Composers; Louis Jullien and George Bristow', in *George F. Bristow's Symphony No. 2 ('Jullien'): A Critical Edition*, a volume in the series *Music of the United States of America* (henceforth *The Jullien Symphony*) (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, forthcoming).

[3] There are several scholarly studies devoted to Bristow's music, including Delmer Dalzell Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York City as Reflected in the Career of George Frederick Bristow' (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1967); Gregory Martin Fried, 'A Study of the Orchestral Music of George Frederick Bristow' (DMA diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1989); David Griggs-Janower, 'Rescued from the Fiery Furnace: George Frederick Bristow's Oratorio of Daniel', *The Choral Journal* 38/9 (Apr. 1998): 9–21; Karl Erwin Gombert, '*Leonora* by William Henry Fry and *Rip van Winkle* by George Frederick Bristow: Examples of Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Opera' (DMA diss., Ball State University, 1977); and Denise von Glahn, 'America as Niagara: Nature as Icon', in *The Sounds of Place: Music and the American Cultural Landscape* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2004): 17–63. There are also two scholarly articles about specific aspects of the composer's life: Thurston Dox 'George Frederick Bristow and the New York Public Schools', *American Music* 9/4 (winter 1991): 339–52, and Victor Fell Yellin, 'Bristow's Divorce', *American Music*, 12/3 (autumn 1994): 229–54. For nineteenth-century biographical sketches, see Karl Merz, 'George F. Bristow', *Brainard's Musical World* (Nov. 1877): 45–7, reprinted in *Brainard's Biographies of American Musicians*, ed. E. Douglas Bomberger (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999): 45–7; and G.H. Curtis, 'George Frederick Bristow', *Music* 3 (1893): 547–64.

Bristow was a native of Brooklyn, the son of William Richard (1803–67) and Anna (Tapp) Bristow, who immigrated from England sometime prior to July 1823. William Richard Bristow became well known in both Brooklyn and Manhattan as a performer (his principal instruments were the clarinet and the organ), conductor, concert organizer, teacher and general freelance musician.[4] The elder Bristow introduced his son to the piano when the youngster was five, and the boy made his first public appearance at the keyboard at the age of nine. Shortly thereafter, he began his professional career as a member of an unnamed theatre orchestra of which his father was a member; the boy first played cymbals and side drum and later graduated to the violin.[5] The younger Bristow eventually became proficient on keyboard (piano and organ) as well as on the violin, which he studied first with his father and later with both C.W. Meyrer (one of the founding members of the Philharmonic Society of New-York, the modern New York Philharmonic Orchestra) and with the Norwegian virtuoso Ole Bull (1810–80).[6] He studied orchestration and composition with Henry Christian Timm (a founding officer of the Philharmonic Society) and also with the English composer George Alexander Macfarren (1813–87), who was in New York at the time.[7] William Musgrif, apparently an accomplished cellist in New York, also played a major role in the education of the young musician. Bristow describes Musgrif as his 'mentor' and provides ample evidence of the profound influence that the older musician had on him. The composer later remembered that because of the cellist's friendship, advice and encouragement, he (at the age of 13 or 14) 'began to think it *was* possible … to do something in music, to play well, to even compose'.[8]

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[4] Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 58–66; Lawrence I, 106, n. 24, 302, n. 20.

[5] Information about Bristow's early training and career is from an unpublished holograph document titled 'The Life of a Musician. His Troubles & Trials &c', written by George Bristow presumably in the 1860s. The manuscript is undated, but he describes the period of his early professional career as occurring '30 years ago' (10). This document is part of the Bristow Manuscript Collection in the possession of Ms Marion Edwards of Long Island; she is the niece of Bristow's granddaughter, and I thank her for allowing me access to some of the materials.

[6] Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 67–70. Meyrer is included in the list of original Philharmonic Society members by Shanet, *Philharmonic*, 91.

[7] See Henry Charles Banister, 'The Life and Work of Sir. G.A. MacFarren', *Proceedings of the Musical Association, 1887–1888* (6 Feb, 1888): 67–88, 76, http://www.jstor.org (accessed 15 February 2007). See also George C. D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (15 vols), vol. 5 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927–49): 325; Lawrence I, 558–9.

[8] 'Life of a Musician', 9–17, quotation is from 14–15. W. Musgrif (or Musgriff) is frequently mentioned as one of Bristow's teachers. See Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 67–8. Musgrif joined the cello section of the Philharmonic Society during its second season, according to Henry Edward Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society of New York. A Memorial* (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1892), reprinted in *Early Histories of the New York Philharmonic*, ed. Howard Shanet (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979): 41; he also performed cello in the 1842–43 Olympic Theatre orchestra, an ensemble that included both Bristows. See Odell, *Annals*, vol. 4, 650–651. Musgrif was sufficiently accomplished as a cellist to perform in the New York premiere of Hummel's 'Military' Septet on 20 March 1843 (Lawrence I, 221). Bristow's autobiographical essay, however, is the best source of information about the important role played by Musgrif in the education of the young musician.

Bristow's extensive experience as an orchestral performer had an important impact on his future compositional activities. In 1838, he joined the orchestra of the Olympic Theatre in Manhattan as a violinist (his father was hired to play clarinet in the same ensemble).[9] The repertory at the Olympic was 'entirely different' from the style that was mounted at his earlier place of employment, and the musical demands were higher. Young Bristow noted that, although he was a good player, he was 'not a good reader', and the new job frequently required the orchestra members to play 'without having either seen or heard the music'.[10] The increased technical demands eventually resulted in a marked improvement in the young violinist's skills and the new repertory (including the occasional opera or operatic selection) broadened his musical horizons. Bristow's musical education took another major leap forward five years later, when (at the age of 17) he joined the first violin section of the Philharmonic Society of New-York, then in its second year (1843–44). Bristow would remain a member of that ensemble (with one brief hiatus) until his retirement some 36 years later, but the experience he gained during his first ten seasons (1843–44 through 1852–53) clearly established the compositional foundations that allowed him to write major works for orchestra.[11] During the late 1840s and early 1850s, Bristow was also quite active as a performer in various concerts held in New York, appearing regularly as a freelance orchestral musician and instrumental soloist (piano and violin) in the usual gamut of ad hoc concerts that were a normal part of the cultural landscape of the period. He served, for example, in the first violin section of the orchestra that accompanied Jenny Lind in her spectacularly successful series of New York concerts (under the musical leadership of the British composer and conductor Jules Benedict).[12] The most important such freelance experience, however – and one with direct bearing on the composition of the *Jullien Symphony* – was his work in the first violin section of the orchestra assembled by the French conductor Louis Antoine Jullien (1812–60), who toured the United States in 1853–54.

By the fourth decade of the nineteenth century – the period during which Bristow was coming of age professionally – the cultivation of so-called 'art' music was becoming well established in the United States, particularly in urban areas such as New York City. Americans of the 1840s and early 1850s could attend regular performances by opera troupes (performing in English, Italian, German and French) as well as concerts by itinerant (or local) singers, pianists, violinists and, to a lesser extent, chamber ensembles.[13] Increasingly, performances of music for orchestra and concert band were added to this list of cultural options. Concerts by home-grown groups such as the Musical Fund Societies of Philadelphia (founded in 1820) and Boston (1839–47), and by the Philharmonic Society of New-York (founded in 1842) were augmented in the late 1840s by visiting European ensembles such as the Styrian Company (which arrived in 1846) and Joseph Gung'l's Orchestra, the Saxonia Band and the Germania Musical Society, all of which first performed in the United States in late 1848.[14] There were also, as mentioned above, orchestras of varying sizes assembled to accompany touring singers such as Lind, Emma Alboni, Henrietta Sontag and numerous others, and to perform in increasing numbers of benefit and special-events concerts held on an ad hoc basis. This flurry of orchestral activity in the late 1840s and early 1850s helped pave the way for Jullien and his orchestra, the American incarnation of which would include large numbers of American musicians (including George Bristow and Theodore Thomas).

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[9] Rogers ('Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 60–61) thoroughly documents the Bristows' employment at the Olympic. His suggested date of 1838 for the commencement of their employment at that house is supported by George Bristow's statement (8) that he was 12 when he started to work there; he turned 12 in December 1837. See 'Life of a Musician', 7–8, Bristow Manuscript Collection.

[10] 'Life of a Musician', 8–15, Bristow Manuscript Collection.

[11] Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 70ff. Bristow's earliest orchestral works were his Overture in E♭ Major (op. 3), written in 1845 (when he was 19), the Sinfonia in E♭ (Symphony No. 1, op. 10), from 1847, several dances for orchestra (1849), and *La Cracovian pour le Violon*, for violin and orchestra (op. 13, 1850). During his first ten years with the orchestra, Bristow performed in at least 44 public concerts.

[12] Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 76–8. Although Jean Thomas suggests that the composer accompanied Lind and Marietta Alboni on their American tours, this is incorrect, as he performed in Manhattan numerous times during this period. See Thomas, 'Bristow, George Frederick', *American National Biography*, ed. John Arthur Garraty (24 vols) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) and Odell, *Annals*, vol. 6, 81, 93, 97, 107, 182.

All of these ensembles – but in particular the Germanians and Jullien's Orchestra – had a profound impact not only on the performance and reception of orchestral music in the United States, but also on the creation of such music by Americans. It would be exceptional, in fact, if this increased presence of orchestral music in American concert life, coupled with the growing importance of such music in Europe (and the rising number of European musicians in the United States) had *not* fostered an interest in writing for orchestra among American composers, whether immigrants or native-born.[15] By mid-century, however, there still was only a handful of American composers capable of such highly specialized work. The most prominent included the Philadelphian Charles Hommann (1803–72?), who wrote a symphony and two overtures in the 1830s; the Bohemian immigrant Anthony Philip Heinrich (1781–1861), a prolific composer of numerous large programmatic works for orchestra; and the three native-born American composers we most associate with orchestral composition at mid-century: George Bristow, William Henry Fry (1813–64) and Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829–69).[16] Bristow was the first of this mid-century trio to attempt an orchestral work – his Overture for Orchestra in E♭, written in 1845 when he was 19, was among his earliest compositions.[17] This was followed over the next 13 years by the first three (out of five) symphonies (written in 1848, 1853 and 1858), another overture (from 1856) and several other miscellaneous pieces. Gottschalk and Fry, of course, also wrote orchestral works in the 1850s: the former produced a piano concerto in 1853 (since lost) and his first symphony (*A Night in the Tropics*) in 1858; most of the latter composer's orchestral works also date from that decade, including six programmatic symphonies (written between 1852 and 1854) and an overture (1857).[18]

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[13] Some important work has been done in recent years on the performance of 'art' music in the United States during the 1840s and 1850s. My chapter 'Art Music from 1800 to 1860', in *The Cambridge History of American Music*, ed. David Nicholls (Cambridge: University Press, 1998, 2004): 186–213, is an overview of the situation in the first half of the century. Three important city studies are Michael Broyles, *'Music of the Highest Class': Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); George Martin, *Verdi at the Golden Gate: Opera and San Francisco in the Gold Rush* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); and Vera Lawrence's monumental *Strong on Music*, vols. I and II (both already cited), and vol. III, *Repercussions, 1857–1862* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). Antebellum opera performance is covered by Karen Ahlquist, *Democracy at the Opera: Music, Theater, and Culture in New York City, 1815–1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), and my own *Opera on the Road: Traveling Opera Troupes in the United States, 1825–1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993, 2001). R. Allen Lott examines the performance history of itinerant pianists in *From Paris to Peoria. How European Piano Virtuosos Brought Classical Music to the American Hinterland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). In reality, however, we still do not know much about the public performance of concert music in urban areas outside of Boston and New York during the antebellum period. A great deal of research remains to be done.

[14] The arrival and reception of these three ensembles is mentioned in some detail in Lawrence I, 544–9, and I also cover their influence in 'Introduction. Part II. Mid-Century American Concert Life: Trans-Atlanticism and American Identity', *The Jullien Symphony*, forthcoming. See also Nancy Newman, 'Good Music for a Free People: The Germania Musical Society and Transatlantic Musical Culture of the Mid-Nineteenth Century' (PhD diss., Brown University, 2002) and Roger L. Beck and Richard K. Hansen, 'Josef Gungl and his Celebrated American Tour: November 1848 to May 1849', *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae,* 26/1–2 (1995): 53–72.

[15] The increased performance of instrumental music in Europe is covered in Jeffrey Cooper, *The Rise of Instrumental Music and Concert Series in Paris, 1828–1871* (Ann Arbor,

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MI: UMI Research Press, 1983) and in the various essays in Alexander Ringer, ed., *The Early Romantic Era. Between Revolutions: 1789 and 1848* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991).

[16] For information on Hommann, see Joanne Swenson-Eldridge, 'Hommann [Homan], Charles', in *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, http://www.grovemusic.com (accessed 30 October 2004). Several of Hommann's orchestral works have been edited by Swenson-Eldridge and were published as *Charles Hommann: Surviving Orchestral Music*, vol. 17 in the series *Music of the United States of America* (Middleton, WI.: A-R Editions, 2007). Kallisti Music Press of Philadelphia (http://www.kallistimusic.com/, accessed 2 February 2009) has embarked on publication of Heinrich's complete works. About Fry and Gottschalk, see n. 18 below. In addition to this handful of composers, I have uncovered the names of a surprising number of other Americans (both native-born and immigrants) who wrote orchestral works in the United States during the antebellum period. These include the Philadelphians Philip Trajetta (1777–1884), Charles Hupfeld (?1788–1864), Leopold Meignen (1793–1873), Charles Zeuner (1795–1857), Karl Hohnstock (1828–89) and Johann Heinrich Bonawitz (1839–1917); New York residents Charles Wels (1825–1906), Theodore Eisfeld (1816–82), Jerome Hopkins (1836–98), Simon Knaebel (dates unknown) and Émile Girac (d. 1869); and the Massachusetts-born Charles Crozat Converse (1839–1918). For further information on these composers, see 'Introduction. Part III: American Orchestral Composers in Mid-Century America', *The Jullien Symphony*, forthcoming.

[17] Predating the Overture for Orchestra in E♭ (1845) were several chamber works and piano compositions. See Delmer D. Rogers, 'Bristow, George Frederick', in *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, http://www.grovemusic.com (accessed 31 October 2004). The overture was performed by the Philharmonic Society on 9 January 1847; this was the first time an orchestral work by an American-born composer was performed by the ensemble. It was also performed three months later, also in New York, at a Grand Festival Concert to benefit Ureli Corelli Hill. See Lawrence I, 422–3, 433–4.

[18] Gottschalk's *A Night in the Tropics* is available in a modern edition (with the last 36 bars, missing in the full score, arranged and orchestrated by Gaylen Hatton) (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1965). About Fry, see David E. Campbell and John Graziano, 'William Henry Fry', in *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, http://www.grovemusic.com (accessed 1 November 2004). *Santa Claus (Christmas Symphony)* (1853) is the only example of Fry's orchestral works available in a modern edition, in *American Orchestral Music, 1800 through 1879*, ed. Sam Dennison (Boston, MA: G.K. Hall, 1992). For information on Bristow's compositional activities after the 1850s, see my 'Introduction. Part I', *The Jullien Symphony*, Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', and Fried.

Bristow's considerable and ever-expanding exposure to symphonic music significantly shaped his growth as an orchestral composer. He wrote the *Jullien Symphony* in 1853 when he was 27 years old.[19] By this time, he had been a member of the Philharmonic Society for 11 years, and was well acquainted with the works of many European composers of the early nineteenth century. During these 11 seasons, in fact, the Philharmonic Society performed orchestral compositions by 41 different European composers. This large number is deceptive, however, for the Philharmonic's repertory was dominated by overtures, symphonies, concertos and other orchestral works by 3 musicians: Felix Mendelssohn, Ludwig van Beethoven and Carl Maria von Weber. Many of the other composers whose works were performed are either forgotten today or are considered fairly minor figures.[20] Mendelssohn's music was performed 27 times (13 works, including 4 overtures, the 'Scottish' and 'Italian' symphonies, and several concertos), Beethoven's orchestral pieces appeared on 26 concert programmes (multiple performances of Symphonies Nos 2–9, as well as the *Egmont* and *Leonore* overtures), and von Weber had 24 performances of 7 orchestral works (primarily overtures). The next most frequently performed composers were Louis Spohr (6 works played a total of 12 times) and Wolfgang Mozart (8 performances of 4 compositions). Two important additions to the Philharmonic's repertory in the early 1850s were Robert Schumann's Symphony No. 1 (1853) and Franz Schubert's Symphony No. 9 (1851, 1853). The latter, as we shall see, apparently made a strong impression on Bristow. In addition to these symphonic compositions, the Philharmonic Society also performed almost 90 non-orchestral works – chamber compositions, operatic arias, and songs – by 27 *other* European composers.[21]

This brief summary of the Philharmonic Society's repertory reveals what some might consider to be a surprising level of musical sophistication in at least a certain segment of the New York concert-going public at mid-century. It also suggests a strong transatlantic correlation (in terms of musical taste) between these New Yorkers and the audiences that attended concerts by similar orchestras in London, Vienna, Paris and Berlin during the same period. Finally, it accounts for the compositional language that Bristow used in his *Jullien Sympony*. The young musician, as *The Message Bird* put it in 1850, had 'grown up, as it were, in an orchestra', and the orchestra in which he had grown up had provided him with a musical education that was both broad and deep.[22] He had been introduced to the works of almost 70 different European composers, and had thoroughly absorbed the musical styles of 3 of them: Mendelssohn, Beethoven and von Weber. As a veteran of the Philharmonic Society, he knew the orchestra's audience well, and at least in these early years of his compositional career, his compositional voice was coloured by the musical styles of the German composers whose works dominated the repertory of the orchestra. As a result, Bristow's Symphony No. 2, the *Jullien Symphony*, is unapologetically Europeanist in orientation.

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[19] Thomas, in her entry on Bristow in *American National Biography*, states that the *Jullien Symphony* was written in 1856, but this is clearly an error.

[20] For more information on the make-up of the Philharmonic Society's repertory during the period 1842–53, see my 'Introduction. Part II', *The Jullien Symphony*, and Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society*, 95–109. Although many of the composers of works performed by the orchestra have been forgotten today, it is important to realize that they were well known at the time and, according to Adam Carse, their works were 'greatly overvalued' by their contemporaries in Europe as well as America. See Carse, *The Orchestra from Beethoven to Berlioz* (New York: Broude Brothers, 1949): 4–5.

[21] The non-orchestral works were by 42 composers, 27 of them different from the composers of orchestral music (many of whom also contributed non-orchestral compositions). Counting both orchestral and non-orchestral compositions, the Philharmonic performed almost 200 different works during this period, by 65 European and 3 American composers (Bristow, William Mason and the British immigrant George Loder). The seminal influence of operatic works on the young Bristow is made clear from his autobiographical description of his first exposure, at the Olympic Theatre, to 'Suoni la tromba' ('Liberty Duet') from Bellini's *I Puritani*. Writing about himself in the third person, Bristow related that the melody of this work 'was so different from anything he had heard before, so striking &c [that] he thought there was a fire in it which would stir up anybody, and from this period did our young violinist take a start' (14).

The *Jullien Symphony* is a substantial work in four movements (marked Allegro appassionato, Allegretto, Adagio and Allegro agitato – Grandioso – L'istesso tempo). It is scored for a standard early nineteenth-century orchestra (the ensemble of Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn): strings, pairs of winds (flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons), brass (horns and trumpets) and timpani. The only significant change is the addition of two horns (for a total of four) and three trombones. All four horns are used in the first and last movements, and all three trombones only in the finale (although there are prominent trombone solos in the first and third movements). Stylistically, the work is solidly aligned with the 'conservative' Romantic period composers (again, Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn), rather than with the more 'radical' (that is, programmatic) symphonists such as Hector Berlioz, Ferdinand David or Franz Liszt – or, for that matter, Anthony Philip Heinrich or William Henry Fry. It is also much more conservative than the programmatic style that George Bristow would adopt as early as his overture *Columbus*, written in 1861 and – later in his career – in his last two symphonies.[23]

The first movement is in sonata-allegro form, the dance movement is a scherzo with two trios, the Adagio is in ternary form with some varied thematic repetition, and the Finale is a rondo with significant developmental sections. The tonal relationships among (and within) the movements are fairly standard: the first and final movements are both in D minor, with the secondary themes in the relative major; the Allegretto is in the parallel major, and the Adagio is in B♭ major, with secondary themes in the flat mediant (D♭ major) and the dominant (F major). Bristow readily employs harmonic relationships by thirds in both middle movements; this compositional technique is fairly commonplace in much of the Romantic-period orchestral literature with which he was familiar. There are additional attributes that likewise mark the work as overtly Romantic. The first movement is a good example: in the minor mode, it opens with a stormy, passionate and fortissimo introduction. This brief outburst gives way at bar 7 to the ominous and brooding first theme, the darkness of which is reinforced by the scoring for celli and bassoons. The theme is developed slightly, then repeated

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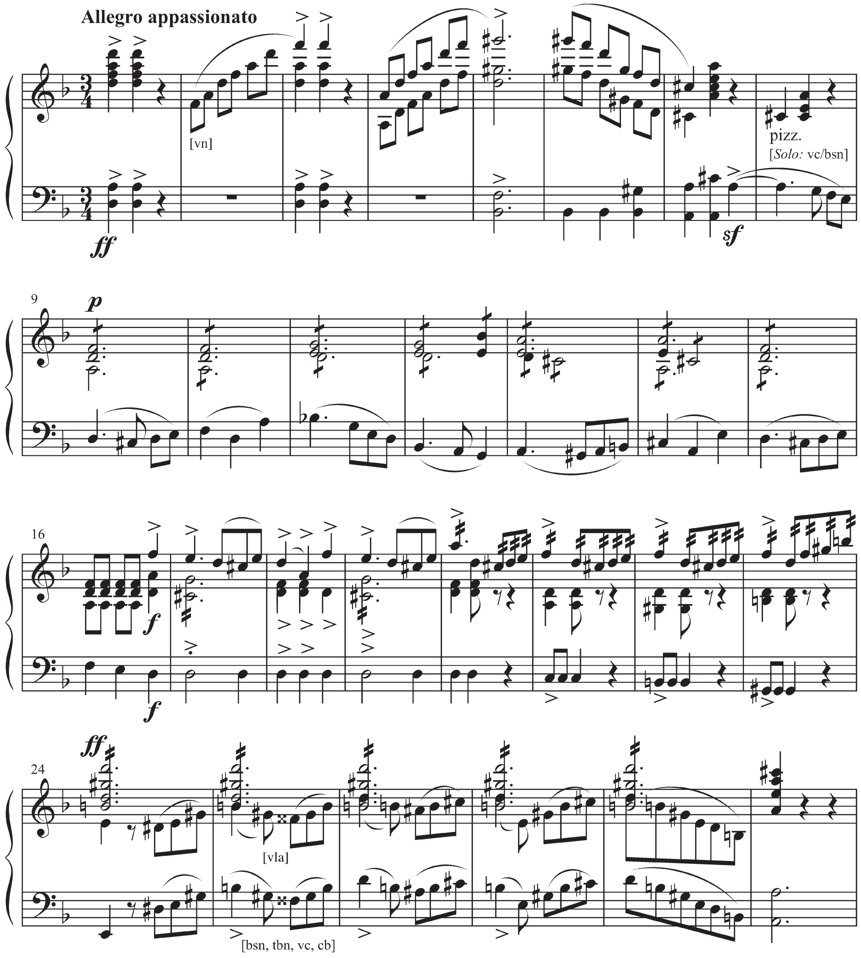
[22] *The Message Bird* (15 Jun. 1850): 362.

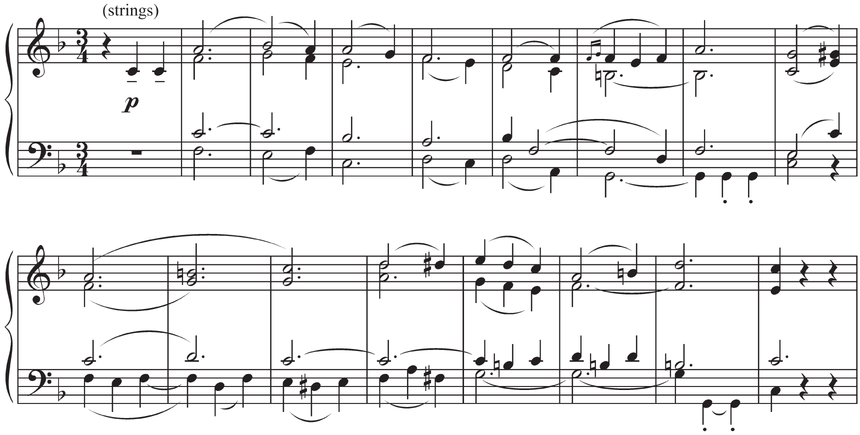
[23] *Columbus Overture* (op. 32), completed in 1861, was originally intended to be the overture for a dramatic work; perhaps for that reason, Bristow moved decisively away from the more 'classic' instrumental forms of his first three symphonies. See Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 192; and George H. Curtis (quoting William M. Thoms), in 'George Frederic Bristow', *Music* 3 (1893): 559. Thoms describes the entire overture in some detail. Bristow's last two symphonies, *The Arcadian* (op. 50) and *The Niagara Symphony* (op. 62), are decidedly programmatic in style. They date from 1872 and 1893, respectively. See Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 129, 135, 167–8, 182–3, and my 'Introduction. Part I', *The Jullien Symphony*.

(see Ex. 1). The second theme, somewhat wistful and evocative (and appropriately contrasting in nature), is in the relative major. It is played first by the strings, then is repeated with the addition of the winds (see Ex. 2). The exposition ends with a resolute closing theme. Bristow's melodic materials are straightforward and tuneful, in a style somewhat reminiscent of Mozart or Schubert. His texture furthermore also occasionally exhibits the 'elfinish' quality sometimes heard in the orchestral compositions of Mendelssohn (this is particularly evident in the second movement). The young composer's most obvious model, however, was Beethoven. Throughout the symphony, Bristow uses a compositional technique that is clearly informed by Beethoven's style of thematic development. Moreover, there are some obvious similarities between the opening gesture of Bristow's first movement and the beginning of the 'Eroica' Symphony (the second most frequently performed Beethoven symphony in the Philharmonic repertory). Both open with a repeated fortissimo tonic triad, followed by the first theme introduced in low instruments (in Beethoven, the celli; in Bristow, celli and bassoons), and

Ex. 1 Bristow, *Jullien Symphony*, Introduction and first theme of the Allegro (first movement), bars 1–29



Ex. 2 *Jullien Symphony*, Allegro: Second theme (played by the strings), bars 82–98



both utilize a single disruptive chromatic pitch (C♯ in Beethoven, G♯ in Bristow) to destabilize the tonic key. Clearly, the young American knew his Beethoven, and was not averse to trying his hand at some of the Bonn composer's techniques.

Musically, the *Jullien Symphony* – despite its evocative title – is primarily a work of absolute (as opposed to programmatic) music.[24] There are, however, some hints of what could plausibly be considered programmatic 'American' effects. One such example is Bristow's use of the trombone throughout the symphony. The first instance is a striking triadic and uncomplicated solo for that instrument in the first movement, which Bristow introduces towards the beginning of the development (see Ex. 3a). He subsequently employs the trombone as a fine contrast to the moody first theme of this movement by skilfully using in the recapitulation a different (but similarly evocative) motive for that instrument as an effective countermelody to the first theme (Ex. 3b). He also showcases the trombone (as a soloist) in the Adagio and again in the fourth movement, where he scores all three trombones. (Ex. 4 is the trombone solo from the Adagio.) Although Bristow's inspiration for this prominent use of brass might again be Beethoven, a more immediate source was plausibly Schubert's Symphony No. 9 (*The Great*), with its haunting opening melody by the horns and the subsequent crucial role of the trombones throughout the first movement. Schubert's symphony surely was in Bristow's ear during the period he was composing the *Jullien Symphony*, for the Philharmonic Society performed the work in 1851 and again in 1853. Despite the European models, however, it is also possible that New York audiences could have heard the pronounced use of brass in the *Jullien Symphony* as a subtle (or atmospheric) reference to the United States, and that Bristow meant to exploit this interpretation. Even those New Yorkers who regularly attended orchestral

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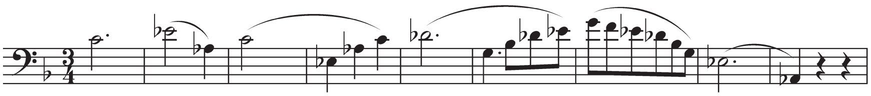
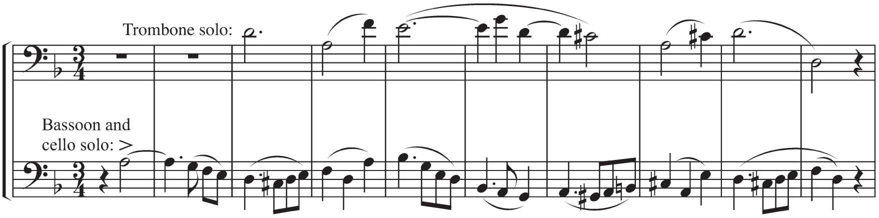
[24] Bristow's work is never identified in the published programmes of the Jullien Orchestra's performances (at least in the United States) by its subtitle (the *Jullien Symphony*), but rather as 'New Symphony' (29 December 1853) or 'Symphony in D Minor' (24 May 1854). As a result, the subtitle and its programmatic implications were not generally known to the public. The first time the work was called *The Jullien Symphony* in a published programme was at its premiere performance by the Philharmonic Society on 1 March 1856. See the *New York Times* programmes listed above, and the 1856 programme in the New York Philharmonic Archives.

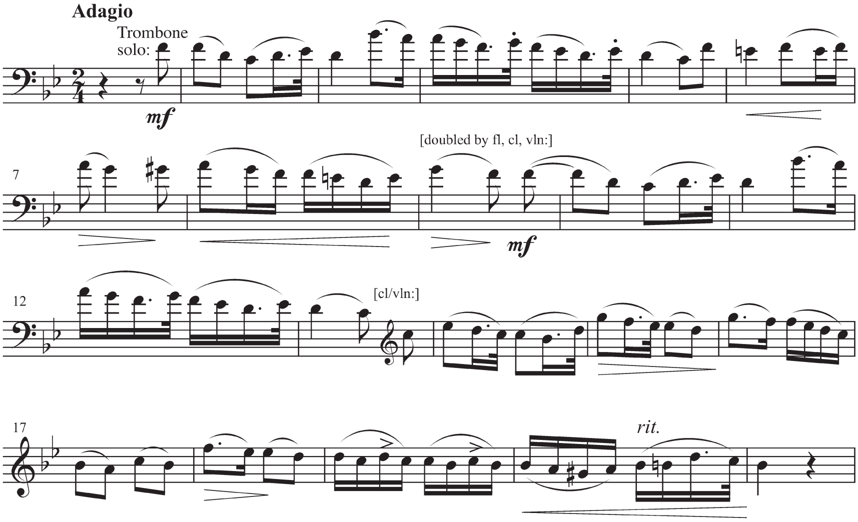
Ex. 3(a) ***Jullien Symphony*, trombone solo from the development of the Allegro, bars 245–53**



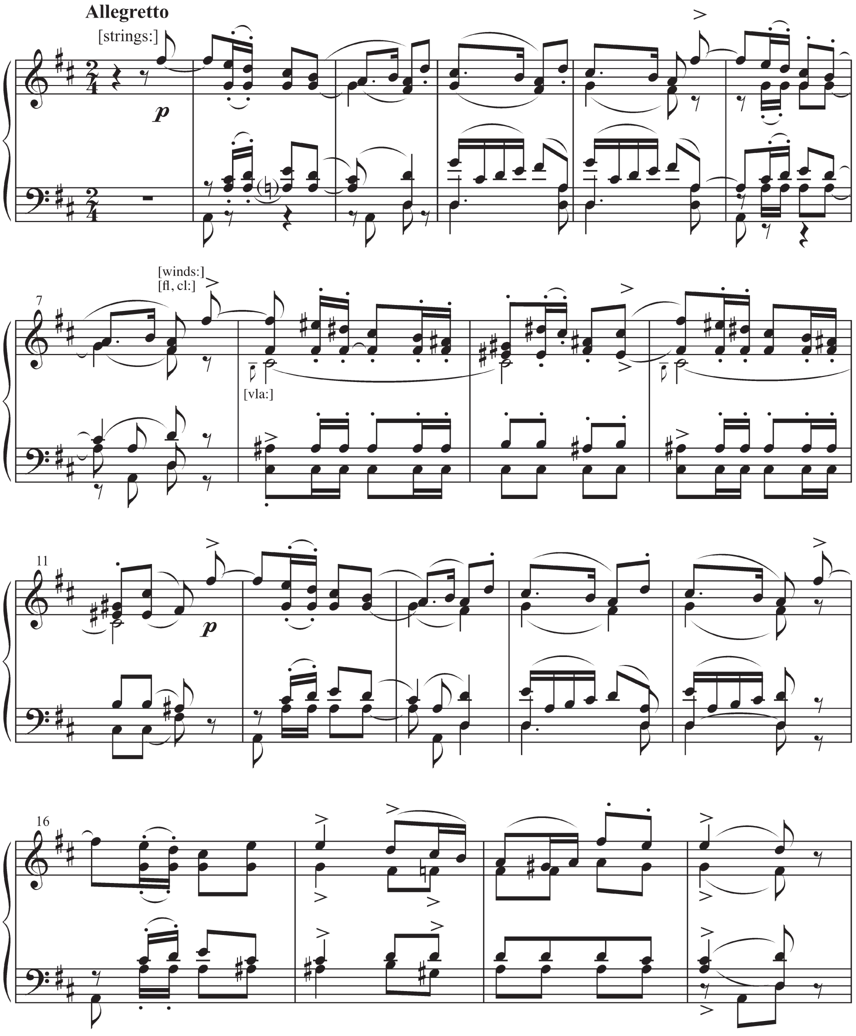
Ex. 3(b) ***Jullien Symphony*, different trombone solo as countermelody to the first theme; from the recapitulation of the Allegro, mm. 409-418**


Trombone solo:
Bassoon and cello solo: >

Ex. 4 ***Jullien Symphony*, trombone solo, Adagio (third movement), bars 8–28**


Adagio
Trombone solo:
mf
7
[doubled by fl, cl, vln:]
mf
12
[cl/vln:]
17
rit.

Ex. 5 ***Jullien Symphony*, The opening strain of the Allegretto (second movement), illustrating the duple meter and one of the eighth-/sixteenth-note patterns characteristic of the polka or the schottische**



concerts by the Philharmonic Society routinely heard music performed by brass bands, which were ubiquitous at mid-century. As a result, American brass bands were the 'normal' aural context for such instruments for New Yorkers during this period, especially as few of the symphonic works performed by the Philharmonic up to this time use brass so prominently (the Schubert is the most obvious exception).[25]

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[25] Other symphonies performed by the Philharmonic Society with significant roles for brass are primarily Beethoven's Symphonies Nos 3 and 5–9 and Schumann's Symphony No. 1, which was premiered by the orchestra in April 1853. Schumann uses brass significantly in his symphony, but not in the melodic or thematic manner of

A more-obvious allusion to 'Americanism' is Bristow's dance movement. Labelled 'Allegretto', this movement is placed second (as is the dance movement in Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3). The movement was described at the time as either a polka or a schottische; both are in duple meter and are characterized by a dominant eighth-/sixteenth-note rhythmic pattern (see Ex. 5).[26] By incorporating a contemporary dance, Bristow might have been following the lead of eighteenth-century composers, but updating the reference by choosing a dance that was more suitable to his native country and time (both dances, although European in origin, were popular in the United States during the 1840s). On the other hand, he might also have chosen the dance not as a signifier of America but rather as an oblique homage to Jullien, a well-known composer of dances, including schottisches and polkas. Richard Storrs Willis, in fact, suggests precisely this programmatic association – to Jullien and the schottische – in his 1856 review of the symphony.[27] There is no known supporting documentation (such as letters, a published programme or an authorized description attributed to Bristow), to suggest that the composer was trying to create a programmatic symphony, but both of these examples can be interpreted as plausible allusions to America, in the atmospheric style of Mendelssohn's 'Italian' and 'Scottish' symphonies, both of which Bristow knew.[28] Furthermore, it is certainly possible that Bristow – at this time essentially an absolute-music composer – added these atmospheric touches in an attempt to write a work that both referenced his native country and appealed to Louis Jullien, whose fondness for programmatic compositions was well known.

The reference to the symphony's namesake provides a convenient segue – from a narrow examination of the composer and the composition itself, to the broader cultural questions alluded to at the beginning. For example, could the

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Schubert or Bristow. Another work that uses brass prominently is Rossini's overture to *La gazza ladra* (performed in 1846 and 1850). For information on performance dates, see Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society*. Berlioz was another contemporary composer who wrote prominently for trombone, but – except for two overtures (*Les Francs juges* and *King Lear*), both performed a single time, both in 1846 – his work was not known in New York. See Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society*, 99–100, and Ora Frishberg Saloman, 'Presenting Berlioz's Music in New York, 1846–1890: Carl Bergmann, Theodore Thomas, Leopold Damrosch', in *European Music & Musicians in New York City, 1840–1900*, ed. John Graziano (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006): 29–49. Bristow also clearly exploited the presence (in Jullien's Orchestra) of the virtuoso trombonist William Winterbottom (1821–89). For (limited) information on Winterbottom, see Trevor Herbert, *The Trombone* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006): 144–5, 154, 156.

[26] The dance nature of this movement was denigrated by some critics. Theodore Hagen, critic for the *New York Musical Review and Gazette*, ridiculed the composer's substitution of a 'polka' for a minuet, pointing out that the latter dance was an 'aristocratic' form, while the polka was merely a 'popular dance' that, presumably, had no place in a symphony. Richard Storrs Willis also described the movement as 'rather like a schottische.' See *Musical Review and Gazette*, 8 March 1856, 68-69 and Willis, *New York Musical World* (8 Mar. 1856): 110. Both reviews are of the Philharmonic Society's performance of the complete *Jullien Symphony* on 1 March 1856.

[27] Ibid.

[28] The Philharmonic Society performed Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3 ('Scottish) in 1845, 1848 and 1850 and Symphony No. 4 ('Italian') in 1851. Another similarly 'atmospheric' symphony is Schumann's Symphony No. 3 ('Rhenish'; 1850), but the work was not performed in New York until 1861. See H. Earle Johnson, *First Performances in America to 1900* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1979): 327.

name *Jullien Symphony* (as *The Albion* critic suggests) have inherent significance beyond deference to the man who commissioned the composition? And what did it mean to mid-century American musicians, audiences and composers that an acknowledged European virtuoso conductor commissioned orchestral works from Americans?[29] And further, that Americans were capable of writing them? Can an exploration of a larger question – the implied relationship between Louis Jullien and the many American musicians (such as Bristow) who were profoundly influenced by him – shed some light on an aspect of American musical culture at mid-century that has not yet been carefully examined? In short, to parrot *The Albion*, what is 'the true meaning' of the *Jullien Symphony*? The remainder of this article will be a consideration of these questions. Before tackling them, however, it would be useful to provide a little background – about Jullien and about American composers at mid-century – as context.

When the flamboyant French conductor-composer arrived in New York, he was already well known to music lovers in America. After studying at the Paris Conservatoire in the 1830s, he had for three years presented a series of entertainments at the Jardin Turc in Paris; these diversions eventually rivalled the famous Concerts-Musard in popularity. In 1838, he immigrated to England, where he helped to establish the promenade concert as a popular style of entertainment in the late 1830s and 1840s, both in London and in the provinces. His goal as a conductor-composer, according to a commentator in the *Illustrated London News*, was to blend 'the most sublime works with those of a lighter school'.[30] To entertain the 'one-shilling public' in England he programmed quadrilles, waltzes, polkas, schottisches and other light compositions, and conducted them, impeccably dressed, with charisma, showmanship and flamboyance.[31] To 'educate' the same audience, he also regularly programmed more 'serious' compositions – sometimes offering entire programmes by such composers as Beethoven, Mozart and Mendelssohn. His orchestra included some of the best instrumentalists in Europe, and his conducting was generally acknowledged as excellent.

Jullien brought all of this – the showmanship and charisma, the conducting virtuosity, the excellent performers and the goal of attracting to his concerts both the general public and the more discriminating lovers of the 'classical' repertory – to the United States, arriving in New York in August, 1853. He was accompanied by a core of solo instrumental virtuosi, to which group he added some 60 local musicians, resulting in an orchestra that in New York numbered slightly over 100.

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[29] William Henry Fry wrote at least two works for Jullien's Orchestra – *Santa Claus (Christmas Symphony*) (1853) and his programmatic symphony, *Childe Harold* (1854; since lost). Jullien's Orchestra premiered the latter work on 1 June 1854; according to Upton, it was 'composed expressly for this concert and presented to M. Jullien'. See 'Amusements', *New York Times* (2 Jun. 1854): 4, and William Treat Upton, *William Henry Fry: American Journalist and Composer-Critic* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1954): 142. Jullien also apparently commissioned a symphonic work titled *Sea Voyage* by Karl Hohnstock (1828–89), a German composer living in Philadelphia. The work, according to the programme, was 'written expressly for these Concerts'. See 'Jullien's Last Concert – Mr. Hohnstock's Symphony', *Cummings' Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia) (25 Jan. 1854), for a concert on 24 January 1854.

[30] *Illustrated London News*, 9 November 1850, quoted in Adam Carse, *The Life of Jullien: Adventurer, Showman-Conductor and Establisher of the Promenade Concerts in England* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1951): 66.

[31] Quotation from William Brooks, 'Jullien', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, http://www.grovemusic.com (accessed 31 October 2004).

It was not only large, but unsurpassed in quality of performance, certainly in the United States and – some would argue – also in Europe.[32] He then embarked on an astonishingly successful and critically acclaimed series of 41 concerts in Manhattan, first at Castle Garden and later at Metropolitan Hall. His typical programme included an overture, two movements from a symphony, operatic selections and dances – quadrilles, waltzes, mazurkas, polkas, schottisches,tarantellas, galops and the like. After a highly successful two months in New York, Jullien took a pared-down orchestra of 60 musicians on the road, first to Boston, Washington, Philadelphia and elsewhere, and later (and with an even smaller ensemble) further afield, as far south as New Orleans and Mobile, and as far west as Cincinnati.[33] During this nine months in the United States, he presented over two hundred concerts, including ninety in New York City.[34]

Critics recognized the impact that his programming had on the American audiences that flocked to his concerts. Richard Storrs Willis of the *New York Musical World*, for example, wrote in March 1854 that Jullien was:

> Great … both in conceptions and execution, and greater still as an educator and refiner of universal taste. He first wins our willing sympathies by his inimitable light music … [then] presents us with more refined and classic fare … and in the end we are led to appreciate the surpassing excellencies of high art, developed by genius, and [are made] almost to loathe anything of an inferior character.[35]

William Henry Fry of the *New-York Daily Tribune* echoed these sentiments, writing in May 1854 – near the end of Jullien's visit – that:

> M. Jullien has done more [for music] … in this country … than all others put together. He has given us all kinds of music, never wanting in perception as to its interpretation … . He has laid [High Art] before the people; he has opened the

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[32] Modern scholars concur with this assessment of the calibre of Jullien's orchestra. John Graziano writes that the conductor 'assembled an orchestra that played so precisely, so beautifully, and so in tune that it set a performance standard no other orchestra of the period could match', and Howard Shanet describes the New York concerts as 'on a level of technical proficiency that could probably not have been excelled in any city of the world at that time'. See Graziano, 'Jullien and his *Music for the Millions*', in *A Celebration of American Music. Words and Music in Honor of H. Wiley Hitchcock*, ed. Richard Crawford, R. Allen Lott and Carol J. Oja (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1990): 209, and Shanet, *Philharmonic*, 116.

[33] Carse, *Life of Jullien*, 82. A master's thesis by Eugene Victor Frey, titled 'Jullien in America' (University of Cincinnati, 1943) suggests by its title that it is comprehensive, but in reality Frey deals almost exclusively with Jullien's activities in New York and Boston. Extant newspapers reveal that Jullien and his orchestra performed in the following towns and cities between August 1853 and June 1854: Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Newark (NJ), Wheeling (VA), Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Louisville, New Orleans, Mobile and Montgomery (AL), Savannah and Augusta (GA), Charleston (SC), Richmond (VA), Cleveland (OH), Buffalo and Rochester (NY). Some cities enjoyed multiple visits from the orchestra. I have compiled a database of published programmes from all the cities that Jullien's Orchestra visited (with the exception of Montgomery, AL, for which newspapers on the appropriate days are unavailable).

[34] According to Frey, Jullien gave two hundred and thirty-four concerts in America, but an examination of his itinerary suggests that his total was somewhat less than that. Newspapers are not extant for all the cities that he visited, so a precise number is difficult to ascertain. See Frey, 'Jullien in America', 129.

[35] 4 March 1854, quoted in Carse, *Life of Jullien*, 81.

> door of the exclusive concert-room to tens and twenties of thousands who would never have entered it otherwise.[36]

Of equivalent importance to Jullien's 'educational' mission was the quality of the ensemble he conducted. The many American musicians who played under him – such as Bristow and Thomas – learned much about the performance of symphonic music, for the orchestra in which they played was outstanding. According to a notice (probably written by Fry) that appeared in the *Daily Tribune* in December 1853, the conductor had searched 'Paris, London, Berlin, and other great European cities … for players indisputably pre-eminent, for this orchestra'. It was clear that the conductor had found excellent musicians; Fry described the ensemble as comprised of 'such a combination [of virtuosi] as we have never heard before, and may never hear again'.[37] This core of European musicians numbered 27, and included some truly brilliant performers: Mathieu-André Reickert (b. 1830, flute), Hubert Collinet (1797–1867, flageolet), Herman Koenig (dates unknown, cornet), Antoine-Joseph Lavigne (1816–86, oboe), Henri Wuille (1822–71, clarinet) and William Winterbottom (1821–89, trombone). The strings were similarly strengthened, with five violinists (including concert master Thomas Baker (b. 1815), Henry Weist Hill (1828–91), Louis Barque (dates unknown), and the Mollenhauer brothers, Éduard (1827–1914) and Frederic (1818–85)); one violist; two cellists; and three double-bassists (including 'the Paganini of the double-bass', Giovanni Bottesini (1821–89)) anchoring the sections.[38] By the end of the first week of performances in New York, the critics were already gushing. 'Jullien's orchestra – without mincing matters – is the most perfect and superb in the world', wrote the reviewer for the *Spirit of the Times*. 'Nothing like its individual and collective instrumental skill, precision, and wonderful discipline, has ever been heard in America before.'[39] Fry – who less than a year earlier had returned from a European sojourn of six years' duration – concurred with this assessment. 'In a word', he wrote, 'no orchestra approaching Jullien's in delicacy or grandeur has been heard in this country, and his solo players of the wind instruments have not their equals in Europe – it as a whole is the best in the world.'[40] John Sullivan Dwight penned similar observations, writing in October that the ensemble played with 'the most perfect unity and precision', and that 'to hear the great works of the masters brought out in the full proportions of so large an orchestra, where all the parts are played by perfect masters of their instruments, is a great privilege and great lesson'.[41] The accolades continued, undiminished, for much of the 10-month duration of Jullien's visit to the United States; in one of the final American reviews of his orchestra, dated mid-May 1854, a critic described the ensemble as ‘unrivalled’ and ‘richly’ deserving of ‘the most unbounded patronage’.[42]

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[36] *New-York Daily Tribune* (26 May 1854): 7.

[37] *New-York Daily Tribune* (15 Dec. 1853): 7.

[38] The reputations of most of these performers have not survived to the present, but contemporary critics agree on their virtuosic abilities. See *Dwight's Journal* (20 Aug. 1853): 159, and Frédéric Louis Ritter, *Music in America*, 2nd ed. (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895): 346. The nickname for Bottesini is from Rodney Slatford, 'Giovanni Bottesini', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, http://www.grovemusic.com (accessed 24 July 2008).

[39] *Spirit of the Times* (3 Sep. 1853): 348, American Periodical Series Online (accessed 18 January 2007).

[40] *New-York Daily Tribune* (6 Oct. 1853): 6.

[41] *Dwight's Journal of Music* (29 Oct. 1853): 29–30.

Jullien’s mixed programming and his profound impact on the performance of orchestral music in the United States have been dealt with (to a greater or lesser extent) by other scholars.[43] He is also known, however, for his willingness to programme and commission works by American composers. This tendency, which has been noted (but not fully explored) by scholars, is of particular importance in relation to Bristow and his *Jullien Symphony*. The composer’s nickname for his work can easily be read as a mark of homage and perhaps gratitude by the younger musician to his benefactor, who reportedly paid the American composer $200 for the symphony.[44] But, considering the circumstances surrounding the conductor’s entrance onto the American musical scene at mid-century, it is also credible that Bristow’s name for his symphony manifested much more than just one musician’s high regard. It might easily, in fact, be considered a reflection of American *composers’* gratitude to the French musician, for he had stepped – perhaps inadvertently – into a breach in American concert life about which they had been complaining for at least five years.

Most composers need to hear their works performed if they are to thrive and grow; this is particularly true of those who write for large ensembles. Mid-century American composers found it difficult to secure readings of their orchestral works, and usually had to be satisfied with performances by pick-up ensembles assembled for benefit concerts and other special events. This was the accepted practice, for there were few established large ensembles in the United States at mid-century. But there *was* an established orchestra in New York – that of the Philharmonic Society – and it was increasingly exasperating to American composers, especially those who lived in the city, that their resident ensemble refused even to rehearse their compositions. (There were two exceptions to this: Bristow’s Overture for Orchestra (op. 3), was performed by the Philharmonic in 1847, and his Sinfonia in E♭ (op. 10), was read at a rehearsal in 1850.)[45] This indifference must have been particularly galling to New York musicians, because the orchestra had been founded, in part, to assist in the establishment of ‘an American school of musical composition’; a by-law in the organization’s constitution, in fact, required that the Philharmonic Society perform each season a ‘grand orchestral composition’ written in the United States, if one that was suitable was submitted.[46] The story of this mid-century falling-out between American composers and the Philharmonic – especially the 1854 public quarrel about it between Fry and Willis (which Vera Lawrence dubbed 'the musical battle of the century') – is well known among American-music scholars.[47] Few, however, are aware that American composers had been complaining about the Philharmonic Society's hostility or indifference well before Fry and Willis locked horns. Six years before this altercation (and five years prior to Jullien's arrival), Anthony Heinrich had written an open letter to the Philharmonic Society protesting that his numerous attempts to contact the orchestra about performing one of his pieces had been completely ignored.[48] Less than a year later, in November 1849, the editor Hermann Saroni noted in his journal that some members of the orchestra were considering resigning in order 'to found a new society by themselves', presumably in response to this disregard for native composition.[49] *The Message Bird*, also in late 1849, wondered why 'a certain *symphony*' written by 'a talented [*native*] member' of the orchestra (clearly Bristow's Sinfonia in E♭) had not yet been programmed, despite the fact that a read-through at an open rehearsal in late March had indicated at least to some that it was worth hearing. 'When shall we have the pleasure of hearing this interesting production?' the periodical's editor queried. 'Our *patriotism* is becoming a little pricked in anticipation of this event.'[50] After another six months, Saroni noted again that, with remarkably few exceptions, the Philharmonic had 'refused to perform any domestic compositions at their concerts, nay, refused to play them even for the instruction of the composers at their rehearsals'.[51] *The Message Bird*, which described the orchestra as 'the first instrumental society in this country', rather pointedly suggested in July 1850 that the ensemble's leaders 'seek in future to extend the sphere of its usefulness by a more direct and positive encouragement of the resident talent among us'.[52] These complaints continued regularly for nearly six years, which suggests that for over half a decade American composers and their supporters – especially those active in New York – had been expressing serious unhappiness at what they considered to be institutionalized marginalization of their efforts. This, then, was the musical atmosphere in New York when Louis Jullien arrived in 1853.

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[42] *New York Times* (16 May 1854): 4.

[43] In addition to the article by Graziano cited above, see also the standard work by Carse, *Life of Jullien*, as well as his more readily available *The Orchestra*, 230–41 and 377–82; Ritter, *Music in America*, 346–8; Richard Crawford, *America’s Musical Life: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2001): 285–7; Shanet, *Philharmonic*, 116–21 and 431–2; John Tasker Howard, *Our American Music*, 4th ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1965): 219–25; Ezra Schabas, *Theodore Thomas. America’s Conductor and Builder of Orchestras, 1835–1905* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989): 9–10; and Charles Hamm, *Music in the New World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983): 220–21.

[44] ‘George F. Bristow’, *Brainard’s* (ed. Bomberger), 46.

[45] Overture for Orchestra was premiered on 9 January 1847 with the composer conducting. See Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society*, 100–101; Symphony No. 1 was performed at an open rehearsal of the Philharmonic on 25 May 1850. See Lawrence II, 130–31.

[46] The statement about founding an American school of composition is from an interview with Harvey Dodworth, who was one of the original members of the

Writing in the 1950s, Irving Lowens saw Jullien's decision to commission and programme American compositions – in particular those by Fry and Bristow – as opportunism. Fry, after all, was a prominent music critic as well as a

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Philharmonic Society and whose father Allen was one of the founding officers. See 'Band Music Then and Now', *New York Times* (29 Jun. 1879): 10. The information about the Philharmonic Society's by-laws is from Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society*, 43. See also Shanet, *Philharmonic*, 102 and *Constitution and By-laws of the Philharmonic Society of New-York. Adopted April 1843* (New-York: S.W. Benedit & Co., 1843). By-law VII is on p. 14. Another copy of the Constitution and by-laws, 'containing all the amendments to January 1847' was published in 1847, and by-law VII is still included. These documents are in the New York Philharmonic Archives.

[47] Lawrence II, 378. For further information on sources related to this journalistic battle, see n. 2 above.

[48] 'To the President, Government, and Members of the New York Philharmonic Society', letter dated 14 December 1848, published in the *New York Herald* (16 Dec. 1848), quoted in Lawrence I, 550–551.

[49] *Saroni's Musical Times* (17 Nov. 1849): 88.

[50] *Message Bird* (15 Nov. 1849): 130. Italics are in the original.

[51] *Saroni's Musical Times* (25 May 1850): 410–11.

[52] *Message Bird* (1 Jul. 1850): 377.

composer, and Bristow was his colleague.[53] Others have proposed that Jullien was simply attempting to curry favour with his American audiences. Karl Merz, the editor of *Brainard's Musical World*, wrote in 1877, for example, that Jullien – by commissioning a symphony from Bristow – had 'by his apparent generosity placed himself in a patriotic light and secured public favor'.[54] Louis Jullien, of course, was a shrewd judge of audiences, and some of these issues must have occurred to him – especially since the mood among New York composers in 1853 was so sour that he must quickly have recognized a golden opportunity for favour-currying. But 'cosying up' to critics does not explain the French musician's *repeated* programming of works by Americans, in particular those by Fry and Bristow; Jullien must have found something of value in the compositions themselves. Furthermore, no appeal to American patriotism would explain Jullien's decision to take some of these American compositions back to England, where he performed them successfully. Merz reports, for example, that Jullien 'took both of Mr. Bristow's symphonies to England and reproduced them there', and Henry Weist Hill (then Jullien's concert-master) wrote to Bristow from London in March 1855 to report that the orchestra was playing not only his (Bristow's) music, but also Fry's *The Breaking Heart*.[55] Clearly, mere pandering to either critics or American audiences does not fully explain Jullien's interest in works by American composers.

Regardless of the conductor's motivation, the important issue is that Jullien's Orchestra *did* perform American compositions, frequently and repeatedly, and – as already mentioned – that the conductor commissioned works from several American composers. The principal beneficiaries of Jullien's attention were Fry and Bristow. Jullien premiered Fry's programmatic symphony *A Day in the Country* on 20 September 1853, during the fourth week of his New York engagement; the ensemble repeated the work twelve more times before the end of the year, in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore.[56] Jullien later added two more Fry symphonies, *The Breaking Heart* and *Santa Claus (Christmas Symphony)*, the former performed 15 times, the latter 9.[57] Altogether, the orchestra performed four of Fry's six programmatic symphonies a total of 39 times, in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Baltimore. Jullien also programmed several of Bristow's works: the Minuet from his Sinfonia in E♭, played 11 times, an unidentified symphonic work (probably the Minuet) performed in Philadelphia (21 November), and the first movement ('Allegro moderato', *recte* Allegro appassionato) from a 'New Symphony' (the *Jullien*), performed on 29 December (American Night) and 31 December (the second time with a billing 'received on the American Night with great applause').[58] The orchestra also played the second movement of the *Jullien* (Andante; in reality Allegretto) three times, all in New York.[59] Apparently Jullien's Orchestra did not premiere the entire *Jullien Symphony*, at least in the United States, nor did the conductor programme individual movements of the work outside of New York City. Jullien, in fact, clearly gave preference to Fry's programmatic works over Bristow's more straightforward 'classical'-style compositions.[60] This programming bias should not be surprising, however, considering Jullien's own penchant for composing narrative works. It could also indicate the conductor's belief that American audience members would be more receptive to programmatic works, since most Americans (especially those away from New York) were unfamiliar with the 'classical' repertory but had been introduced to narrative compositions by the Germanians and the other bands that had visited the United States in the 1840s.[61] It should be clear, in any case, that the French conductor's support for both American composers was concrete and obvious.

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[53] Irving Lowens, *Music and Musicians in Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964): 221.

[54] According to Delmer Rogers, the conductor 'catered to American musicians and audiences by employing the former and pleasing the popular tastes of the latter'. See Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 117. The quotation from Merz is from the biographical sketch of Bristow in *Brainard's* (reprinted in *Brainard's Biographies*, ed. Bomberger, 46).

[55] In his review of the Philharmonic Society's belated first performance of the *Jullien Symphony* (March 1856), William Henry Fry bragged that Bristow's works 'had been successfully heard in London' (*New-York Daily Tribune* (3 Mar. 1856)). There are also references to performances of Bristow's works in the as-yet-unpublished *Concert Life in Nineteenth-Century London Database Project*, accessed 1 September 2006 by one of the compilers, Christina Bashford, for which I thank her. Two letters to the composer in the Bristow Manuscript Collection also mention that his works were performed in England. ALS (Jullien) to Bristow, 4 December 1854 and ALS Hill to Bristow, 25 March 1855, Bristow Manuscript Collection. My thanks to Ms Edwards for sharing this material with me.

[56] *A Day in the Country* was performed in New York 20, 21, 24 and 30 September, 3, 5, 11, 19 October, and 17 and 29 December. It was performed in Boston on 29 October, in Philadelphia on 12 November and in Baltimore on 28 November 1853. See the published programmes for the appropriate days in the *New York Times*, *Boston Herald*, *Cummings' Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), and *Baltimore Sun*.

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[57] For further information on the Jullien Orchestra's performances of *The Breaking Heart* and the *Christmas Symphony*, see my 'Introduction. Part III', *The Jullien Symphony*, Upton, 133–4, and Frey, 140. The scores to both *A Day in the Country* and *The Breaking Heart* (1852) have been thought lost, but the author of a recent scholarly paper reports having located them. See Joseph R. Harvey, 'Rethinking William Henry Fry: Uncovering Two Lost Symphonies', unpublished conference paper presented at Musical Intersections, Toronto (Society for American Music, 3 Nov. 2000). According to George Upton, Fry's brother Horace claimed that Jullien played the *Christmas Symphony* more than 40 times during his visit, but examination of programmes published in newspapers in the cities that Jullien's orchestra visited on tour suggests that this number is artificially high. See Upton, 240. The Jullien Orchestra also gave the premiere performance of Fry's 1854 symphony, *Childe Harold*, in New York on 1 June 1854.

[58] The performances of the Minuet were on 12 and 14 October (New York), 4 November (Boston), 21 November and 3 December (Philadelphia), 8, 19, 29 December and 18 May (New York), 10 February (Louisville), and 6 March (New Orleans). The advertisment for the first Philadelphia performance, on 21 November, reads only 'Symphony (new)', but since this would have been the first performance of a work by Bristow in Philadelphia, it was probably the initial Philadelphia performance of the Minuet, which was repeated on 3 December. No reviews or other advertisements relating to the 21 November performance in Philadelphia shed any light on it. The 'new' symphony performed on 29 December in New York was billed as 'composed expressly for this occasion'. See programmes for the various concert dates in the *New York Times*, *Boston Herald*, *Cummings' Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), *Louisville Daily Journal* and *New Orleans Daily Picayune*.

[59] Performances of the Allegretto (consistently mis-identifed as the Andante) were on 24, 26 and 31 May. See the appropriate issues of the *New York Times* and the *New-York Daily Tribune*.

[60] According to Henry Wiest Hill, Jullien's Orchestra also played the 'slow movement' (presumably the third-movement Adagio) numerous times in England. This means that Jullien programmed at least three of the four movements of the *Jullien Symphony*. Hill also wrote that he frequently wondered why they had not played the entire symphony (by early 1855). 'I have asked Jullien many times to do so', he continued. 'In fact the Orchestra expressed a wish to hear it' (the whole symphony). See ALS Hill to Bristow, 25 March 1855, Bristow Manuscript Collection. Determination of whether or not Jullien ever had his orchestra perform the entire work in England awaits further research. Apparently Jullien's copy of the score to the symphony is not extant; it was probably destroyed (along with many of Jullien's other scores) when Covent Garden Theatre burned in March 1856 (Carse, *Life of Jullien*, 87–8).

American composers must have regarded the endorsement they received from this celebrated European musician as a shot in the arm, since they were (as Vera Lawrence put it) 'performance-starved'.[62] As Delmer Rogers points out, this was 'one of the few times in Bristow's life [that] … he received unsolicited encouragement as a composer'.[63] In addition, the chance to hear their works performed by such a good orchestra – an ensemble generally regarded as superior to the Philharmonic – should have been quite a heady experience for Fry and Bristow. But their feelings must have been double-edged: proud vindication, surely, but mixed with a righteous indignation at the condescending attitude they had long felt from the German musicians who increasingly controlled the Philharmonic Society and its repertory.[64] Richard Crawford recently wrote that later observers might wonder why Fry was 'rankled so deeply' by the Philharmonic's 'indifference' when such 'a famous orchestra like Jullien's' had performed his compositions. Crawford acknowledged that the Philharmonic's established place in New York gave 'weight to its musical choices'; the Philharmonic Society, after all, was the city's permanent orchestra, while Jullien's series of concerts, although inspiring and educational, were essentially ephemeral. But Fry's anger at the Philharmonic, he suggested, also reflected a perception that the orchestra was committed to music 'as art and not entertainment', making it 'a symbol of the obstacles that he and his fellow American composers faced'.[65] There is certainly merit in this argument, since the Philharmonic Society (which would not perform American works) was committed primarily to edification and Jullien (who would) was interested in entertainment as well as education. But one of Fry's central points in his argument with Willis was his vehement objection to the critic's contention that programmatic compositions were inherently inferior to works written in what Fry called the 'strictly classical' style (by which he meant multi-movement absolute-music compositions 'modeled on the forms of the great masters').[66] And a corollary to this was his accusation that the Philharmonic Society refused to perform even those American works that were written in the 'classical' style (such as Bristow's first two symphonies).[67]

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[61] It is worth noting that Henry Weist Hill mentions that British audiences had had some difficulty with Fry's *The Breaking Heart* when Jullien's Orchestra played the work in England. 'We Britishers', he explained, are 'a little behind the times [so] that kind of music is a little ahead of us at present'. ALS Hill to Bristow, 25 March 1855, Bristow Manuscript Collection.

[62] Lawrence II, 368.

[63] Rogers, 'Nineteenth-Century Music in New York', 117.

[64] For further discussion of the issue of German musicians and their increasing domination of the Philharmonic Society, see my 'Introduction. Part III', *The Jullien Symphony*. See also Shanet, *Philharmonic*, 109–10.

[65] Crawford, *America's Musical Life*, 327–9.

[66] *New-York Daily Tribune* (31 Dec. 1853): 5. To Willis, absolute music – and the forms of musical unity employed in such compositions (essentially, thematic development) – was superior to programmatic compositions such as Fry's *Christmas Symphony*, which was entertaining, but not 'an earnest work of Art' worthy of careful analysis. Fry countered with the argument that the 'classic' style of composition was old-fashioned, that composers like him were the wave of the future, and that he and other composers of programmatic

The Philharmonic's increasing reliance on works by the European masters and its avoidance of programmatic compositions, coupled with an apparent willingness to perform new works only if they were by Europeans (such as Neils Gade, Louis Spohr, Jan Kalliwoda, Peter Lindpaintner and others) spoke clearly to the coterie of composers active in New York: there would be no support from the local orchestra regardless of the style of composition.[68] This indifference (or outright hostility) towards native composers was the basis of Fry's (and Bristow's) accusations against the Philharmonic Society. In this light, the suggestion that the conflict between the Philharmonic and American composers was the result of a growing philosophical gulf between an ensemble increasingly committed to music as art and American composers who continued to adhere to the idea of music as entertainment is not persuasive. This explanation furthermore overlooks a more visceral interpretation: that Jullien's overt support demonstrated to the satisfaction of these American composers that their compositions *were* worth hearing, that they *could* stand on their own, that they were *not* inherently inferior to anything and everything from the other side of the Atlantic. This would certainly explain Bristow's 'hot-tempered' accusation that the Philharmonic was dedicated to 'a systematized effort for the extinction of American music'.[69]

This also suggests clearly that the French conductor played an important role in what Gilbert Chase would later call 'one of the most extraordinary public correspondences in the annals of American music'. [70] The juxtaposition of events is most intriguing, for the first salvo of the battle was a letter Fry wrote to Willis in early January 1855 in response to a review of the Jullien Orchestra's American Night concert (29 December), in which he took Willis to task for his dismissal of the *Santa Claus Symphony*, which Jullien had commissioned. Bristow joined the fray in March 1854, with his frequently quoted censure of the Philharmonic, accusing the ensemble of 'anti-American' programming; shortly thereafter he resigned from the orchestra (temporarily, it turned out) in protest at its policy of performing 'exclusively the works of German masters'.[71] But the American

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works were now writing compositions based on a different criteria for musical unity. See Willis, 'Musical News from Everywhere. New York', *Musical World and Times* (7 Jan. 1854): 5–6 and 'A Letter from Mr. Fry', *Musical World and Times* (21 Jan. 1854): 30, 31, 34. For a more in-depth and nuanced discussion of this disagreement, see my 'Introduction. Part IV', *The Jullien Symphony*.

[67] 'A Letter from Mr. Fry', *Musical World and Times* (21 Jan. 1854): 29.

[68] For a thorough discussion of the New York Philharmonic's repertory during the first eleven years of its existence, see my 'Introduction. Part III', *The Jullien Symphony*. The only works by Berlioz that the Philharmonic Society performed during this period were two overtures, *King Lear* and *Les francs juges* (from the unfinished opera), both in 1846. The orchestra did not perform any works by Liszt until 1857. See Rena Charnin Mueller, 'Liszt (and Wagner) in New York, 1840–1890' (50–70) and Saloman, 'Presenting Berlioz's Music' (29–49) both in *European Music & Musicians in New York City*, ed. Graziano.

[69] *Musical World and Times* (4 Mar. 1854): 100; the characterization of Bristow is from Lawrence II, 484.

[70] Gilbert Chase, *America's Music*, rev. 3rd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987): 313.

[71] Bristow's first letter appeared in *Dwight's* (4 Mar. 1854): 182. The quotation is from Bristow, 'The Philharmonic Society', *Musical World and Times* (4 Mar. 1854): 100. His resignation from the orchestra (of which he had been a member since 1843), was announced in his 'Second Letter from Mr. Bristow', *Musical World and Times* (1 Apr. 1854): 148–53.

composers' public criticism of the Philharmonic Society was not simply the result of a reaction to Jullien's American Night concert or to one of the works that he had commissioned. Equally important were the preceding four months of support: it is clear that Jullien's overt encouragement, and his excellent orchestra's performances of works by American composers (in particular Bristow and Fry, the two native composers who most publicly 'took on' the Philharmonic Society) had served as a catalyst for this high-profile and crucial mid-century quarrel. There had been smouldering resentment against the Philharmonic for years, but something happened – beyond the frequently cited critical dig at Fry's *Santa Claus Symphony* – to inspire both of these musicians to speak up. Jullien's steady and continued encouragement of their compositional efforts had emboldened them to take a public stand.

As a textual coda, it is fitting to consider how the *Jullien Symphony* corresponds with our twenty-first century ideas concerning the nature of American music. Scholars of American music have frequently puzzled at the apparent paradox implied in the compositions of Bristow and Fry: how the Europeanist musical language of the compositions seems to contradict their ardent written support for American composers. And although scholars today can assuredly identify American elements in Bristow's compositions – the programmatic aspects of his later symphonies, the overtly American subject matter of the opera *Rip van Winkle* and the atmospheric 'Americanisms' mentioned earlier – the reality is that the young George Bristow embraced firmly and enthusiastically the musical language of Western Europe. Modern scholars who write about Bristow's symphony have tended to focus on the contemporary critics who found the symphony to be too 'familiar'; as an anonymous correspondent to *Dwight's Journal* wrote in 1856, the work 'is full of reminiscences of other composers, Weber, Mendelssohn, Spohr, Haydn, Mozart, and I know not what others'.[72] But there were also others, such as Richard Storrs Willis, who applauded the symphony in the *Musical World* when he first heard it, praising the young composer as one whose 'thought is clear, translating itself in round forms and phrases, and moving always at an expeditious pace', or William Fry, who called the second movement – with its 'piquant and graceful' theme – the 'best hit' of the symphony, and described the final movement as 'particularly well stocked with modern effects', including 'sonority of climax' and 'vigor'.[73] From the vantage point of the twenty-first century, it is

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He apparently missed only five performances: the final concert of the 1853–54 season (22 April), and four during 1854–55 (2 December 1854, and 20 January, 20 March and 21 April 1855). See programmes of the Philharmonic Society concerts, New York Philharmonic Archives and my discussion in 'Introduction. Part IV', *The Jullien Symphony*.

[72] 'Musical Correspondence', *Dwight's Journal of Music* (8 Mar. 1856): 180. Henry Cood Watson, writing in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, complained that the symphony 'lacked originality' ('N.Y. Philharmonic Society', *Leslie's* (15 Mar. 1856): 265). Charges that American compositions lacked originality or observations of similarities to works by European composers were commonplace in criticism of American compositions during this period. At the same time, critics seemed to delight in recommending to young native composers that they travel to Europe in order to study with 'the masters', who would (theoretically) teach them how to compose. These two contradictory concepts – advice to imitate the 'masters' and complaints that American works were too derivative – must have seriously rankled young American composers of the time.

[73] *Musical World and Times (Message Bird)* (7 Jan. 1854): 5–6; Fry's comments are from the *New-York Daily Tribune* (3 Mar. 1856).

easy to overlook praise and instead to assess Bristow's work in the context of our own ideas of what we think American music *should* sound like – even American music of a much earlier era. There is no question that the *Jullien Symphony* sounds European – much more so, for example, than the music of Bristow's compatriot Louis Gottschalk. But to criticize the work because of this (as some have done) is unfair; it also, to a certain extent, misses an important point.

The fault lies in judging the quality of this composition from the perspective of a stereotypically 'American' voice (which, in the twentieth century, was understood as a combination of Western European and African musical styles) that has developed since the middle of the nineteenth century. As a young musician, Bristow set out to write a symphony – an undeniably Western European genre – and predictably chose as models those composers who excelled at writing this type of composition. He knew his audience and was familiar with their responses to the repertory performed by the Philharmonic Society. He reasonably wrote an orchestral composition (in a 'classical' style) that would appeal to the directors of the Philharmonic Society and to the audiences that attended their concerts. One could call the resulting work derivative or Europeanist, but to fault the young composer for not writing otherwise is anachronistic and ahistorical; the 'reminiscences' of European contemporary orchestral compositions are no more or less marked than the musical gestures and techniques shared (as a common language) by many European composers of the time. The fact that Louis Gottschalk, for example, wrote in a style that would eventually *become* 'American' does not make his music at the time any more 'American' than was Bristow's. As an American composer trained entirely in the United States, in fact, Bristow would probably have been rather taken aback at the suggestion that his music did not sound sufficiently 'American', for at the time an American compositional voice was still in the process of evolution.

The important point that has been missed in discussions of the 'Europeanist' style of Bristow's music is a failure to examine the forest that produced this tree. The fact that a 27-year-old musician, trained entirely in New York, was sufficiently schooled in this tradition to write the *Jullien Symphony* reveals much about the sophistication of concert life in urban America during the 1840s and 1850s. It reveals the ready familiarity of American musicians with contemporary European compositional techniques and symphonic repertory, reveals much about the tastes of at least a portion of the American concert-going public and furthermore suggests that musical culture in the United States at mid-century was part of a cultural sphere that was truly transatlantic. In this context, Bristow's *Jullien Symphony* – a well-written, tuneful and interesting composition that deserves to be heard – reveals a great deal about American musical culture in the middle of the nineteenth century. To return one final time to the point made by *The Albion*'s critic at the beginning of this article: all of *this* is the true meaning of George Bristow's *Jullien Symphony*.