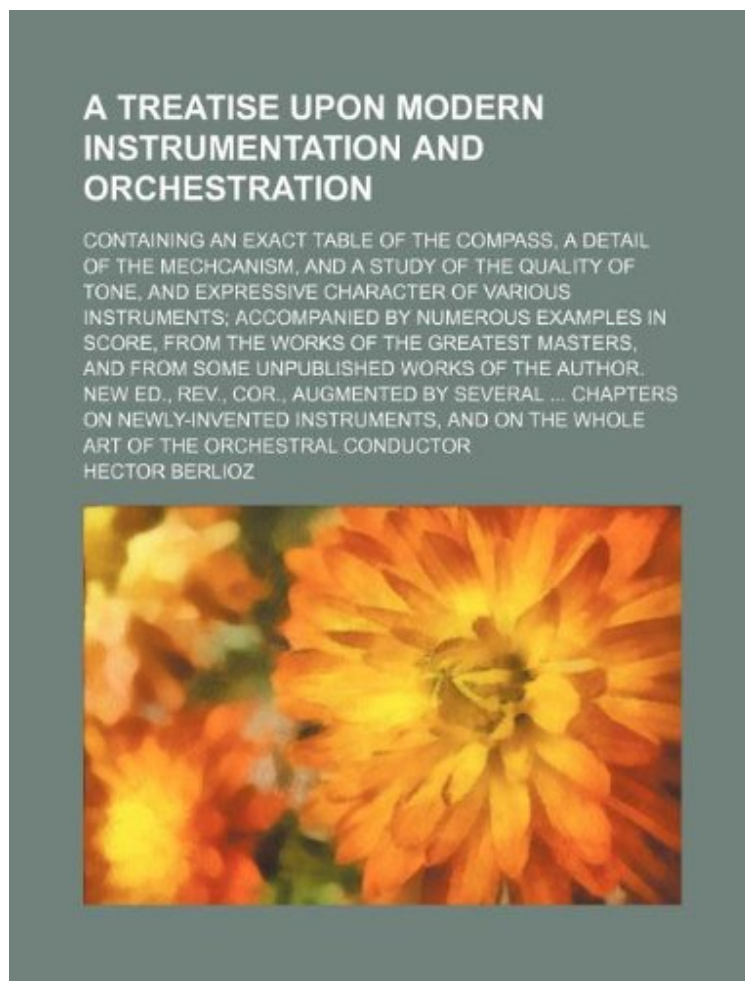


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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1858 Excerpt: ...of the orgy. It depends on the composer to make it by turn chaunt like a choir of priests; threaten, lament, ring a funeral knell, raise a hymn of glory, break forth into frantic cries, or sound its dread flourish to awaken the dead or to doom the living. There have nevertheless been found means to degrade it,--some thirty years since--by reducing it to a servile redoubling, as useless as grotesque, of the double-bass part. This plan has been at present almost abandoned. But there may be seen, in a host of scores, otherwise very beautiful, the basses doubled almost constantly in unison by a single trombone. I know nothing less harmonious, or more vulgar than in this mode of instrumentation. The sound of the trombone is so markedly characterised, that it should never be heard but for the production of some special effect; its duty, therefore, is not to strengthen the double-basses, with the sound of which, moreover, its quality of tone has no sort of sympathy. Besides, it should be understood that a single trombone in an orchestra seems always more or less out of place. This instrument needs harmony, or, at least, unison with the other members of its family, in order that its various attributes may be completely manifested. (Beethoven has sometimes employed it in pairs, like the trumpets; but the time-honored custom of writing them in three parts appears to me preferable. It is difficult to determine with precision the degree of rapidity to which trombones can attain in passages; nevertheless, here is, I believe, what may be said on this point: in a bar of four-time, and in the movement *Allegro moderato*, for instance, a passage of simple quavers (eight notes in a bar) is feasible on the bass trombone:--third being an octave below the two others, and the first and second being an octave above the third. Such is the te...