

George Frideric

# HANDEL

## THEODORA

AN ORATORIO

Miniature Score

K 01323





## P R E F A C E.

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The Oratorio of THEODORA was composed in the period from the 28<sup>th</sup> of June to the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 1749, and was produced for the first time on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1750. The libretto is by TH. MORELL, who in a long preface mentions a book by *Boyle* (London, 1687) and a French play as the sources from which he has drawn. The poet appears to have set as high a value upon his share in this extraordinary work as the composer upon his; but the public behaved coldly towards it. The comparison of the alterations and improvements subsequently introduced by Handel, has enabled us to produce the work in a much correcter form than in previous editions. Later alterations and abbreviations, which are to be undoubtedly regarded as Handel's latest intentions, and in so far as improvements, are found especially in the airs "The raptur'd soul" (p. 34) and "Deeds of kindness to display" (p. 127). In the recitatives also, and in the order of the pieces, a better arrangement has occasionally been restored. The comparison of the conducting score with the original showed clearly enough what was to be done in these cases. In two pieces only, assigned to the part of Valens, Handel's intention could not be clearly discovered, and we had to choose what approved itself to our judgement as most suitable. Valens' first air, "Go, my faithful soldier, go" (p. 8) was subsequently replaced by four bars of recitative :

The image shows a musical score for a recitative. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The treble staff contains a single melodic line with lyrics written below it. The lyrics are: "Go, my faith-ful sold-ier, go, let the fragrant in-cense rise to Jove, great ru-ler of the skies!". The bass staff contains a simple accompaniment consisting of a few notes and rests. The music is in a common time signature and ends with a double bar line.

immediately following the recitative which introduced the air. Here we have allowed the original air to stand, as it surely is a more satisfactory filling-up of the gap than a mere recitative. In the third act, on the other hand, when a similar exchange was made on the words "Ye ministers of justice", we have given the later recitative in the body of the drama (p. 208), and the earlier air in an appendix (p. 221); for here, so near the end, a greater rapidity in the action seemed to be desirable. Some airs which are contained in the London editions, are omitted here for the simple reason that they are merely borrowed from Handel's Italian operas.

Thus we are enabled to present this glorious, yet utterly unknown oratorio, to which the fates have hitherto been singularly adverse, to the members of the Handel Society in a much correcter form than heretofore; and we venture to express a hope that some one may be thereby encouraged to endeavour by a noble performance to gain for the work that acknowledgement which it so truly deserves.

LEIPZIG, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, 1860.

Chr.

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