My dear Sir,

The receipt of your letter of 13th inst. gave me much pleasure. I should have replied to it sooner, but waited to acknowledge your kind present which only reached me on the 15th inst., and have been too much engaged to examine the volume yet, although I translated yesterday, the portion of preface for Mr. Schooler, which I at once forwarded to him. I have likewise communicated to him the contents of your valued letter, and he has done the same to me, as regards yours to him.

From this I discover, with much surprise, the very perfect acquaintance which you have with our language. I wish I were equally conversant with your noble language; but regret to say I still read it with difficulty and much help from the Dictionary.

And now, after thanking you most sincerely for your valuable work, let me carefully reply to the various points contained in your esteemed letter.

I did not know that you were aware the Newspaper Article was written by me. If it was worth your perusal, you really have Mr. Schooler to thank for it, as I wrote it privately for him, just to give him my ideas of what Handel's Orgon composed really was, and Mr. Schooler was so pleased with it that he begged me to allow him to make it public.
I agree with you that the Score of Saul differs from that of Handel's other oratorios, but I cannot see how this circumstance affects the question. Although Handel afterwards used fewer instruments, I do not think he necessarily relied more on the Organ, because contemporary writers speak of his orchestra as being unusually powerful, which was doubtless owing to the many principal instruments employed. But even if Handel did rely more on his Organ, the style of accompaniment must have been of the accustomed character, such as we are taught by Heinichen, Mattheson &c. to produce from figured basses. I never can believe the Macfarren-Janesies, or obligate Organ parts, ornate counterpoints &c. &c.

It is quite true that Handel sometimes used two Harpsichords, but I am inclined to think it was rather an exception than a rule, as regards his songs (soli pieces). You, however, possess an advantage over me, in having minutely examined the original MSS. at Buckingham House Palace, which also I might have long ago examined if Mr. Anderson had not created a difficulty, as I believe. Your opinion of him, of the Rimbault, Chadwell & Macfarren clique, agrees with my own.

The reason why directions for the use of the Organ do not occur in other scores of Handel, is, I think, very
easily explained. All the directions for the Organ given in Sound are written in pencil, which is not the case as regards the other directions, Senza Ripieni, con Ripieni etc. From this M. Schelcher himself informs me that Handel must have unexpectedly required to execute his part at the Organ and called in the assistance of a stranger—or perhaps of Smith—and that he hurriedly wrote the existing directions in pencil as a guide to his Organist. Or perhaps sudden illness seized his usual Organist, and he had to provide an untrained one.

In regard to Trombone parts, are you aware of the existence of some to Israel in Egypt? I have a copy which I took from a MS. score said to be written by Smith; but the writing differs very much from the MS. of Smith which I suppose. The notes are much smaller and differently shaped.

I will endeavour to obtain a sight of this old score of Israel in Egypt, when you come to London. My MS. of Smith (viz. the Act of Music Sevolde of the additional Songs in Radamisto) shall also be at your disposal when you require them.

The discovery of the Salve Regina which you have made will be very interesting to both Mr. Schelcher and myself. So also will your Vol.3. as that will treat of the Oratorios, and I hope fully clear up all difficulty as regards Jig, Orba and the Magnificat. I am very anxious to become acquainted with all the particulars you have collected in that subject.
I must now tell you that I possess a remarkably fine bust of Handel, which is particularly interesting from its great resemblance to the features of the Monument in Westminster Abbey, and having the natural hair, instead of the usual ugly wig. Some time ago, I had a photograph taken of this bust and gave it to Mr. Schoelcher. I have another photograph of it also, and this I intend to take with me to London on Saturday next (Feb. 26) and shall place it in Mr. Schoelcher’s hands for your kind acceptance, when you arrive in London.

I have long finished an edition of Saul and one of Solomon, with all the additional pieces both from the Palace MSS. & from Mr. Schoelcher’s scores. In my preface to Saul, I have commented on the disgraceful features of the English Handel-Society’s Editions & on Dr. Pinnock’s opinion of the Trombone parts. I regret to say there is no probability of my Editions being published; for Mr. Cooke finds but a slow sale for Handel’s works; so they have put my MS aside.

With sincere esteem, believe me to remain,
My dear Sir,

Your very faithfully,

John Bishop.