former efforts. The first act was performed in 1827, and the complete work in three acts graced the marriage of Prince William in 1829. Though the German critics abused it bitterly, *Agnes von Hohenstaufen* is undoubtedly Spontini’s greatest work. In breadth of conception and grandeur of style it exceeds both *Die Vestalin* and *Ferdinand Cortez,* and its details are worked out with untiring conscientiousness. Spontini himself, however, was utterly dissatisfied with it, and at once set to work upon an entire revision, so that on its re-presentation in 1837 many parts were scarcely recognizable by those who had heard the opera in its original form.

This was his last great work. He several times began to rewrite his early opera, *Milton,* and contemplated the treatment of many new subjects, such as *Sappho, La Colère d' Achille,* and other classical myths, but with no definite result. He had never been popular in Berlin; and he has been accused of endea­vouring to prevent the performance of *Euryanthe, Oberon, Die Hochzeit des Camacho, Jessonda, Robert the Devil,* and other works of genius, through sheer envy of the laurels won by their composers. But the critics and reviewers of the period were so closely leagued against him that it is difficult to know what to believe. After the death of Frederick William III. in 1840 Spontini’s conduct became so violent and imperious that he was sentenced to nine months’ imprisonment for *lèse- majesté.* The sentence was remitted by Frederick William IV., but on the 2nd of April 1841, when he appeared at the con­ductor’s desk to direct a performance of *Don Juan,* he was greeted with hisses and groans, and his orders to raise the curtain were ignored, so that he was compelled to leave the desk. The king dismissed him on the 25th of August, with power to retain his titles and live wherever he pleased in the enjoyment of his full salary. He elected to settle once more in Paris, after a short visit to Italy; but beyond conducting occasional perform­ances of some of his own works he made but few attempts to keep his name before the public. In 1847 he revisited Berlin and was invited by the king to conduct some performances during the winter. In 1848 he became deaf. In 1850 he retired to his birthplace, Majolati, and died there on the 14th of January 1851, bequeathing all he possessed to the poor of his native town.

**SPONTOON (Fr.** *es ponton,* Ital, *spontane,* from Lat. *punctum,* point, *pungere,* to prick), a weapon carried by infantry officers in the 17th and early 18th centuries. It was a type of the partisan or halberd *(q.v.),* a shafted weapon with a special form of spear head.

**SPOON** (O. Eng. *spōn,* a chip or splinter of wood, cf. Du. *spaan,* Ger. *Spahn,* in same sense, probably related to Gr. *σφηv,* wedge), a table implement, bowl-shaped at the end, with a handle vary­ing in length and size. From the derivation of the word the earliest northern European spoon would seem to have been a chip or splinter of wood; the Greek *κοχλιάριοv* (Lat. *cochleare)* points to the early and natural use of shells, such as are still used by primitive peoples. Examples are preserved of the various forms of spoons used by the ancient Egyptians of ivory, flint, slate and wood, many of them carved with the symbols of their religion. The spoons of the Greeks and Romans were chiefly made of bronze and silver, and the handle usually takes the form of a spike or pointed stem. There are many examples in the British Museum from which the form of the various types can be ascertained, the chief points of difference being found in the junction of the bowl with the handle. Medieval spoons for domestic use were commonly made of horn or wood, but brass, pewter and “ latten ” spoons appear to have been common about the 15th century. The full descriptions and entries re­lating to silver spoons in the inventories of the royal and other households point to their special value and rarity. The earliest English reference appears to be in a will of 1259. In the ward­robe accounts of Edward I. for the year 1300 some gold and silver spoons marked with the fleur-de-lis, the Paris mark, are mentioned. One of the most interesting medieval spoons is the coronation spoon used in the anointing of the sovereign, an illustration of which is given under Regλliλ. The sets of spoons popular as christening presents in Tudor times, the handles of which terminate in heads or busts of the apostles, are a special form to which antiquarian interest attaches (see Apostle Spoons). The earlier English spoon-handles ter­minate in an acorn, plain knob or a diamond; at the end of the 16th century the baluster and seal ending becomes common, the bowl being “ fig-shaped.” At the Restoration the handle becomes broad and flat, the bowl is broad and oval and the termination is cut into the shape known as the *pied de biche,* or hind’s foot. In the first quarter of the 18th century the bowl becomes narrow and elliptical, with a tongue or “ rat’s tail ” down the back, and the handle is turned up at the end. The modern form, with the tip of the bowl narrower than the base and the rounded end of the handle turned down, came into use about 1760.

See C. J. Jackson, “ The Spoon and its History,” in *Archaeologia* (1892), vol. liii. ; also Cripps, *Old English Plate.*

**SPOONBILL.** The bird now so called was formerly known in England as the Shovelard or Shovelar, while that which used to bear the name of Spoonbill, often amplified into Spoon-billed Duck, is the Shoveler *(q.v.)* of modern days—the exchange of names having been effected as already stated *(loc. cit.)* about 200 years ago, when the subject of the present notice—the *Platalea leucorodia* of Linnaeus as well as of recent writers—was doubtless far better known than now, since it evidently was, from ancient documents, the constant concomitant of Herons, and with them the law attempted to protect it.@@1 J. E. Harting *(Zoologist,* 1886, pp. 81 seq.) has cited a case from the “ Year- Book ” of 14 Hen. VIII. (1523), wherein the then bishop of London (Cuthbert Tunstall) maintained an action of trespass against the tenant of a close at Fulham for taking Herons and "Shovelars ” that made their nests on the trees therein growing, and has also printed *(Zoologist,* 1877, pp. 425 seq.) an old document showing that “ Shovelars ” bred in certain woods in west Sussex in 1570. Nearly one hundred years later *(c.* 1662) Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Account of Birds found in Norfolk ” *(Works,* ed. Wilkin, iv. 315, 316), stated of the “ *Platea* or *Shouelard* ” that it formerly “ built in the Hernerie at Claxton and Reedham, now at Trimley in Suffolk.” This last is the latest known proof of the breeding of the species in England ; but more recent evidence to that effect may be hoped for from other sources. That the Spoonbill was in the fullest sense of the word a “ native ” of England is thus incontestably shown; but for many years past it has only been a more or less regular visitant, though not seldom in considerable numbers, which would doubt­less, if allowed, once more make their home there; but its conspicuous appearance renders it an easy mark for the greedy gunner and the contemptible collector. What may have been the case formerly is not known, except that, according to P. Belon, it nested in his time (1555) in the borders of Brittany and Poitou; but as regards north-western Europe it seems of late years to have bred only in Holland, and there it has been deprived by drainage of its favourite resorts, one after the other, so that it must shortly become merely a stranger, except in Spain or the basin of the Danube and other parts of south-eastern Europe.

The Spoonbill ranges over the greater part of middle and southern Asia,@@2 and breeds abundantly in India, as well as on some of the islands in the Red Sea, and seems to be resident throughout Northern Africa. In Southern Africa its place is taken by an allied species with red legs, *P. cristata* or *tenuirostris,*

@@@1 Nothing shows better the futility of the old statutes for the protection of birds than the fact that in 1534 the taking of the eggs of Herons, Spoonbills (Shovelars), Cranes, Bitterns and Bustards was visited by a heavy penalty, while there was none for destroying the parent birds in the breeding season. All of the species just named, except the Heron, have passed away, while there is strong reason to think that some at least might have survived had the principle of the Levitical law (Deut. xxii. 6) been followed.

@@@2 Ornithologists have been in doubt as to the recognition of two species from Japan described by Temminck and Schlegel under the names of *P. major* and *P. minor.* It has been suggested that the former is only the young of *P. leucorodia,* and the latter the young of the Australian *P. regia.*