

Review

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## Reviews.

*Longing.* For S.A.T.B. By Haydn Keeton.  
*Sweet day, so cool, so bright.* For S.A.T.B. By David Stephen.  
*Perfection* (Sinfonia domestica choralis). For S.S.A.A.-  
 T.T.B.B. By A. C. Mackenzie.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Dr. Keeton's part-song is a short and very agreeable essay. The part-writing is interesting and grateful, and well within the powers of a choir of quite modest attainments.

Mr. Stephens's setting of George Herbert's well-known lines demands more of the performers, by reason of some sudden key-changes. The rhythm also is less straightforward. These difficulties surmounted, the little work should be effective.

Advanced choral Societies in need of a humorous work wherewith to recreate themselves after more severe labours will find what they want in Sir Alexander Mackenzie's Choral Domestic Symphony. The first part of the work is for T.T.B.B.; the second for S.S.A.A.; and the third for S.A.T.B. with occasional division of parts. We quote the words of the first section, in order to give an idea of the ke:

'I hail the perfect woman,  
 Perfect in every sense,  
 With beauteous form to grace allied,  
 And fortune quite immense.  
 No curtain lecture doth she read,  
 When night's dim hour has come.'  
 'If so,' my loving wife exclaimed,  
 'Poor dear! she must be dumb!'  
 'I love a perfect woman  
 And she, I know, loves me.  
 Who praises all her friends' attire,  
 Though dowdy they may be.  
 A Paris hat of ancient style,  
 She views with glances kind.'  
 'You can't mean me,' my wife replied,  
 'For surely I'm not blind.'

The female choir then enters (*irato*) with a similar satire directed at the men, after which both parties join in sympathising with the inhabitants of Mars, where it is presumed these perfect men and women are to be found. There is some capital fun in the writing of this section, notably in the time-honoured sequence of descending 7ths (*stridente*) at the words 'And bore each other all day long.' The music throughout is tuneful, and would present no difficulty to a well-equipped choir.

*Musiciens Anglais Contemporains.* Par R. A. Streatfeild.  
 Traduction française de Louis Pennequin.

[Paris: Editions du temps présent.]

Rare indeed are the signs that British music rouses any interest among foreign musicians as a thing to be sought out and studied. A sign is now given, in the form of this translation of Mr. Streatfeild's essays, that there is a demand in France, or at least Paris, to learn about our composers and their works—if one may credit the publisher with a knowledge of his market. Mr. Streatfeild deals with the life and works of Elgar, Dr. Ethel Smyth, Delius, Parry, Stanford, and Bantock, and shows exhaustive knowledge of his subject in each case. He is no mechanical eulogist, for while he gives free rein to his enthusiasms he does not shirk criticism. The article on Elgar was printed in *De Nieuwe Gids* (in English) and in *Le revue du temps présent* in 1912, and an extensive quotation was made in our issue for June, 1912.

*Of the Father's love begotten.* Anthem for Christmas. By Edward C. Bairstow.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Dr. Bairstow has taken the ancient melody, 'Corde natus,' as a basis for his work, which is practically a set of choral variations. The words are from the well-known hymn of Prudentius (A. & M. 56, E. H. 613). The first verse is given to the tenors and basses in unison, with an organ part

containing some effective bits of canon. Verse 2 (*Andante Pastorale*) is for trebles, a charming melody in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, with the hymn-tune used as a bass. A four-part section mainly unaccompanied follows, while the final chorus (*Allegro con spirito*) gives us five pages of admirable polyphonic treatment of the *Canto fermo*. While thoroughly modern in style, the work has an unmistakably ecclesiastical flavour, both by reason of the theme and its treatment. It is a convincing proof, if any be needed, that it is possible to write good church music without adopting the style of a bygone age.

*Funerale for Harmonium.* By Sigfrid Karg-Elert.

[Carl Simon: Berlin.]

A simple little tribute to the memory of Prof. August Reinhardt (*d.* November, 1912). Personal interest is supplied by a quotation from a work by the deceased composer. We note that the dreadful Lowell-Mason tune to 'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' on which Herr Karg-Elert recently wrote a symphonic organ piece, seems to have taken his fancy. Anyway, he had by no means finished with the tune, for here we find him using a strain from it by way of final cadence. It is the very last tune, we should have thought, to appeal to one with the magnificent chorales of Germany in his blood. We hope he does not think it is typical of English hymnody!

*Legend.* (Original Compositions for the Organ (New series), No. 15.) By Harvey Grace.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Mr. Harvey Grace's 'Legend' has the rare value of being original without affectation or eccentricity, and of capturing the attention with a mood of simplicity. It opens with a tune that suggests an old-world carol. This is continued and treated with simple, gently-moving harmonies, and gives way to a more decided theme in common time that seems to introduce a new scene or character to the unfolding of the 'Legend.' The new matter is carried to a climax on a more emotional note, and suddenly gives way to the opening theme, *lento ponderoso*, with the bass in canon at the octave. The carol tune remains in the ascendant, while the music becomes quieter, until the end. There is no lack of chromatic harmony, but it clings to the key of the piece—D minor. Within the limits of this simple form Mr. Grace expresses a good deal that is worth expressing.

*Nine Folk-Song Carols.* Collected and arranged by Cecil J. Sharp. (Novello's School Songs, Book 245.)

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The collection of folk-songs, of which this set of carols forms a new and interesting part, grows steadily under the fostering care of Mr. Cecil J. Sharp. The first of the set, 'King Herod and the Cock' (Worcestershire), with its quaint words and robust tune, is likely to attract. A Warwickshire ditty, 'The moon shines bright,' the music of which is in a minor mode with a flat seventh, strikes us as being one of the most beautiful melodies in the book. A Gloucestershire version of 'The holly and the ivy' has a lively tune in which the accented pulse of every bar but one has two quavers. Another swinging tune from the same county, 'Come, all you true good Christians,' although newly-found, gives us the impression that we have heard it before. 'Come, all you worthy gentlemen' has a distinctive feature in two leaps from the leading-note up to the mediant. 'As I sat on a sunny bank,' a version of the 'Three Ships' tradition, is a six-eight melody that could be picked up in a few minutes. 'The Virgin unspotted' is a peculiarly graceful tune in triple time. 'Sons of Levi' (Kent) is a broad, flowing tune which, like the last in the set, 'Wassail Songs,' would be very effective with a large choir or congregation, but the words of the latter are not so well adapted to ecclesiastical use. All the carols are adorned with accompaniments that are musically attractive without distracting attention from the melodies. Of course these accompaniments are in the nature of decorative redundancies that may be used at option.