Review

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players, consulted their taste, as well as their probable acquirements; and the result is a group of compositions admirably adapted for their purpose. The melodies are extremely pleasing; and although the resemblance in their treatment is striking, young performers will no doubt estimate each on its own merit, and kindly forget one when they play another. Nos. 1 and 4 are exceedingly melodious, and both in the nursery and the drawing-room will, we are inclined to believe, become the established favourites. The coloured illustrations are most attractive, that representing Autumn and Winter being especially worthy of commendation.

Under the Lily Bells. Fairy Dance, for the piano-forte. By Michael Watson. [C. Jefferys.]

It is well when pieces are published for the exclusive use of juvenile pianists that they should be as good as this little "Fairy Dance" of Mr. Watson's; for even as a holiday trifle for those who are studying more classical works, it may be conscientiously recommended. The subject is appropriately airy and tuneful; and one or two points—especially the change into A flat, and the playful manner in which the key of C is reached—particularly deserve notice. We have seen many bagatelles by this composer which amply prove his aptitude for the position to which he aspires—that of a child's composer—but can scarcely point to one more sparkling and tuneful than his Dance "Under the Lily Bells."

FOREIGN NOTES.

In glancing over the lists of performances at the various operatic establishments in Germany, published periodically in a very clear and interesting form by the Leipzig *Signale*, we cannot help being struck by the extraordinary activity displayed on the part of managers in presenting to their public the greatest possible variety of works of—for the greater part—standard excellence. It is somewhat tantalising, from an English point of view, to read that during the month of November, for instance, the *Hof-Theater* at Dresden, Munich, and Stuttgart produced fifteen, twelve, and ten operas respectively, without once repeating the same work during that period! The same applies to the small but excellent theatre at Mannheim, with its nine performances of opera during the same month, amongst which the name of Gluck figures twice. Under such conditions the modern "star" system is rendered comparatively harmless. Of the efforts in a similar direction on the part of the Royal Opera at Berlin we have spoken in our last report. It is true the above establishments are all largely supported by their respective Governments, and, considering the benefit which has for many years accrued from them to the interests of the art, they will always furnish a strong argument in favour of the existence of the minor courts of Germany. In the performances of the different *Stadt-Theater*—i.e., theatres depending entirely upon the support of the public—an equal variety, though of a somewhat doubtful character, is perceptible; the works of Offenbach being occasionally in close proximity to those of Mozart and Beethoven.

An activity no less marked has been exhibited in the sphere of concerts at the various centres of German musical life, although, on account, no doubt, of the general feeling of uncertainty in political and commercial matters, there has been of late a considerable falling off in the attendance on the part of the public. According to the Berlin correspondent of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, even the sterling performances of the Stern'sche Gesangverein conducted by Julius Stockhausen, as well as the Quartett-Soirées of Herr Joachim, accustomed to overflowing audiences, have this season presented the unwonted spectacle of some rows of vacant seats. On the other hand, the concerts given by a young Spanish violinist, Sñr Pablo de Sarasate, have attracted universal attention all over Germany. The musical papers are enthusiastic in their admiration of the Southern *virtuoso*, whom the

Allgemeine Deutsche Musik-Zeitung does not hesitate to rank by the side of such consummate masters of the instrument as Joachim and Wilhelmj.

The two novelties mentioned in our last issue as having been introduced at the concerts of the *Gewandhaus* in Leipzig—namely, a Symphony (No. 3) by Jadassohn, and a vocal and instrumental work by Hofmann entitled "Die schöne Melusine," have both been pronounced wanting in originality by the German press, although the former work is said to mark a step in a more serious sphere of the art on the part of its gifted composer. We learn from the *Signale* that Herr Hofmann has just completed an opera in four acts, on a historical subject entitled "Armin."

At Leipzig, Miss Clara Meller, from London, has made successful *débuts*, both at a *matinée* given by the young pianist, and at a concert at the *Gewandhaus*. The local papers speak highly of the lady's qualifications and versatile talent in interpreting the classical works of the old as well as the modern masters of the art. The *débutante* was rewarded by frequent marks of approbation on the part of the audience.

Numerous additions have been made during the past month to the polemical literature bearing upon the Bayreuth performances of August last, the majority of them being most enthusiastic in their support of the "new era in art" inaugurated by the Nibelungen Tetralogy. In addition to these pamphlets, several separate impressions have been published of letters written under the immediate influence of the Bayreuth plays, which had appeared in leading periodicals at the time. To those who take an interest in the matter, and who, having followed the many enthusiastic accounts of these performances published in Germany and elsewhere, still hold to the maxim of *audi et alteram partem*, the perusal of the excellent letters of H. M. Schletterer, originally published in the *Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung*, may be confidently recommended. With regard to the repetition this year of the Nibelungen performances, our readers will find in another column of our present issue a modification of the announcement extracted from German periodicals in our last number. Herr Wagner, who has returned to Bayreuth from Italy, is said to be busily engaged upon his new work, entitled "Parcival," the text for which he had already completed as far back as the year 1866, while staying at Luzern. To give an idea of the restless activity of this remarkable man, we may mention that, during the same period, he was occupied with the composition of the now famous "Ring," while at the same time he wrote "Die Meistersinger" and completed his "Tristan und Isolde." In his new drama of "Parcival" the conflict between Christianity and Paganism forms a prominent feature, and will, according to the opinion of the initiated, find a most powerful expression. The first part of the Trilogy, "Walküre" (taking "Rheingold" to be the Prologue), as well as other fragments from the "Ring," have been performed in the concert-rooms of various German towns. At the Austrian capital, too, "Walküre" is in course of preparation, and will, it is announced, be performed at the Imperial Opera House towards the end of this month.

On the 26th of March next the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Ludwig van Beethoven will be completed. In commemoration of this event a committee has been formed at Vienna with the object of promoting the erection of a monument to that "supreme master" at the Austrian capital. The model of the intended statue, designed by Professor Zumbusch, has already been partially completed, and a performance in aid of the undertaking has taken place at the Imperial Opera. Signor Verdi was one of the earliest subscribers; he has contributed the sum of 500 francs.

The Beethoven literature has been enriched by a new work entitled "Beethoven, as described by his contemporaries," the author being Ludwig Nohl. The volume is dedicated to "The Master, Richard Wagner, of Bayreuth."

Madame Christine Nilsson made her first appearance at Vienna on the 8th ult., when, in the character of *Ophelia*, and subsequently in that of *Marguerite*, the *Diva* created