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REVIEWS.

Transcriptions from the Works of Mendelssohn, for the Organ. By George Calkin. Books 7 and 8.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

FEW, if any, composers of the first rank have proved so serviceable to musicians who make organ arrangements and to performers on the instrument, as Mendelssohn, and his works have been nearly used up for this purpose. Mr. Calkin, however, has managed to break some fresh ground, so far as our knowledge extends. In Book 7 of his series there are arrangements of the *Adagio* from the Pianoforte Concerto in D minor, the Musical Sketch (No. 1), and a selection from the Variations Sérieuses. In Book 8 we have the second movement of the "Italian" Symphony, the *Intermezzo* from the Quintet in B flat (Op. 18), the *Adagio* from the Quartet (Op. 13), and the *Andante* from the Quartet (Op. 12). It may be noted that the editor does not give directions for registering, this matter being left to the discretion of the performer, and as the composer's marks of expression are, of course, inserted, organists of taste should be able to supply the rest.

Ten Years of University Music in Oxford. Compiled by P. C. Buck, B.A., B.Mus., Worcester College; J. H. Mee, M.A., D.Mus., Merton College; F. C. Woods, M.A., B.Mus., Exeter College. [Oxford: W. R. Bowden.]

THIS volume is a brief record of the proceedings of the Oxford University Musical Union from 1884 to the present time. It is a record of remarkable success, and one of considerable interest owing to the great beneficial influence the Union has exerted in the highest interests of musical art. According to the preface, "the idea of establishing a University Club for the study and practice of chamber music by members of the University of Oxford was 'in the air' all through the first two terms of the year 1884"; but to Mr. Franklin Harvey, Mr. F. Cunningham Woods, Mr. H. M. Abel, and the Rev. J. H. Mee belongs the honour of having held the first meeting to consider the possibility of starting such a club. Many predictions of a speedy failure were freely made, but so warmly was the scheme supported that soon after the club-room was opened, on October 12, 1884, it was determined to extend the original limit of fifty original members, and 109 ultimately gave in their names. So rapid was the progress of the music that the programme of the weekly concert, given on December 9, 1885, entirely consisted of compositions by members of the club. Since that date this practice has been continued at the last music meeting in the October term. In the following year Mr. G. H. Betjemann, to whom a tribute of high praise is paid, assumed the direction of the *ensemble* class. A new club-room was inaugurated in 1887, and in 1889 the success of the Union led to the foundation of a similar society at Cambridge, resulting in the most friendly relations existing between them, and each club annually undertaking an entire programme in the other's club-room. The Oxford Union now not only possesses an excellent library of its own, but Mr. Taphouse generously permits members access to his fine library. The programme of the invitation concert in Balliol College Hall, on June 14 last, in commemoration of the close of the first ten years of the club's existence, included Mendelssohn's Octet for strings and Schumann's Pianoforte Quintet; and the programmes of the other 258 concerts, given by the members during the last ten years, contain a list of works the practice and study of which must have given incalculable pleasure, and have planted many fruitful seeds.

Fifty Years of Church Music. By W. E. Dickson, M.A.
[Ely: T. A. Hills and Son.]

THIS little book should be read by all organists, if only to make them duly grateful for the superiority of the organs now placed at their disposal as compared with those in use during the early part of this century. But apart from this, Mr. Dickson chats about his musical experiences in so

genial, yet withal thoughtful a manner, that his pages are most pleasant and instructive reading. Born in the reign of George IV., endowed with keen musical perception, and entering the Church and subsequently becoming Precentor to Ely Cathedral, the writer draws many graphic pictures of the state of church music during the last fifty years—pictures that in many cases give rise to involuntary thanksgiving that the present days are not as others were. Mr. Dickson has also some pleasant words to say about Clara Novello, Jenny Lind, and Braham, and writes: "I was the admiring neighbour (at a Concert at Drury Lane) of Mr. Braham during some ten minutes while Henry Russell was in possession of the stage, and was singing his 'Gambler's Wife.' . . . Braham listened with great attention to the younger tenor, and now and then muttered audible soliloquies, somewhat thus: 'Ha! a good G sharp! H'm, very fair, very fair!'" Subsequently he heard Braham sing "'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay," and he draws an interesting picture of the veteran tenor, then about seventy, as he stood on the great stage in "the dress of a long past day, the blue coat with large gilt buttons, the buff waistcoat, and the large shirt frill."

Posthumous Nocturne for the pianoforte. By F. Chopin.
[E. Ascherberg and Co.]

THE discovery, at Warsaw, of a Nocturne by the Polish composer is an event of considerable interest. One is apt to look upon such discoveries with a certain suspicion. Of a Polonaise published some twenty years ago, Professor Niecks, in his *Life of Chopin*, remarks: "Nothing but the composer's autograph could convince one of the genuineness of this piece." Of the Nocturne in question the same could scarcely be said; it breathes throughout the spirit of Chopin, and the music contains certain peculiar features difficult to describe, but which seem to argue strongly in favour of its genuineness. It was probably written somewhere about the date of the F minor Pianoforte Concerto; the first two bars of page 3 will recall in no vague manner a passage in the opening movement of that work. The dozen bars or so which form the middle portion of the piece are, however, so fragmentary and unsatisfactory as to suggest that they represent merely a sketch for something more extended. The flaw is all in favour of the work's authenticity however. It is a pity the publishers have afforded no information as to the history of the work. This is to unnecessarily excite suspicion.

Trio in D (Op. 1), for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello. By John William Ivimey. [Augener and Co.]

THIS Trio is a bright and engaging specimen of modern chamber music. The writer has pleasing fancy, and he expresses it in a straightforward and effective manner, and one in which the geniality of Haydn and the grace of Mozart are sometimes reflected. In the first movement the energy of the opening theme in D minor is well contrasted with the tender pleading character of the second subject in the relative major, and the interest of their development is well divided between the instruments. The *Andante con moto* contains some effective passages for the violin; and the *Finale, Allegro molto*, has for its chief theme a spirited subject in D major, the charm of which is enhanced by its suggestiveness of the old English dance. An episode in F considerably adds to the attractiveness of this movement, which throughout is well knit and cleverly written. The work, as a whole, promises well for Mr. Ivimey's Opus 2.

Lead, kindly Light. Sacred Song. By D. Pughe-Evans.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS song is an artistic and expressive setting of Newman's familiar hymn. The various changes of sentiment are effectively echoed by the music, and the conception and treatment is distinguished by a devotional fervour admirably consistent with the spirit of the text. The moderate compass of the voice part, an octave and a minor third from tenor C, renders it available to many vocalists.