Review

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Madame Angus Weldon, who has a rich contralto voice, was enthusiastically encoired in "The lark now leaves his wat'ry nest," Miss Arabella Warren gave, with good feeling, "I mourn as a dove," from "St. Peter;" and Mr. J. H. Croft sang with much pathos, "If with all your hearts," and Mattei's "Non è ver." A selection of choruses, glees and quartets were very creditably performed by lady and gentlemen amateurs from the neighbourhood.

MR. JOHN GILL has retired from the management of the Choir at St. James's, Marylebone. All the Choir Boys left with Mr. Gill, and have presented him with a handsome inkstand, as a mark of their esteem and regard.

THE directors of the Crystal Palace Company have fixed the 1st of May for a grand National Festival in celebration of the recovery of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; and have commissioned Mr. Arthur Sullivan to compose a *Te Deum*, for voices and orchestra, to be performed on the largest scale in the centre transept on that day.

THE National Music Meetings, to be held during the ensuing summer at the Crystal Palace, have already awakened a lively interest amongst those who desire the healthy progress of every branch of the art in this country. We understand that a Council will be formed, consisting of the most eminent authorities in music, from which body the competitors for the prizes will elect a jury by ballot. It will be seen by an advertisement in our present number that Messrs. Novello will publish the whole of the choral music to be used on the occasion. Most of the works in Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, will be issued in the cheap form, so that every facility will be afforded to Choral Societies for procuring and preparing the pieces for competition, the number and order of which are to be decided by the jury in each class. The first annual meeting is announced for June 27, 29, July 2, 4, and 6.

WE understand that it is the intention of Herr Stockhausen to give a series of Three Recitals during the ensuing month, consisting of selections from Schubert's *Schöne Müllerin*, and *Winterreise*, and Schumann's *Dichterliebe*. He will be assisted by Miss Agnes Zimmermann and Madlle. Sophie Loewe. The singing of this eminent artist has so enlisted the sympathies of the musical public during his stay in this country that little doubt can exist of the interest with which this announcement will be received; for, apart from the pleasure which must be derived from the performance of comparatively unknown works, so intellectual a reading of them as may be confidently anticipated must appeal most powerfully to all the lovers of high-class German music. Herr Stockhausen, we are informed, will only sing in London during the present season at these Recitals and at the "Oratorio Concerts."

Reviews.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion. Anthem for four voices, chorus and semi-chorus, by J. Stainer.

THE translation of Dr. Stainer from one of the Oxford Chapels to the Cathedral of London calls particular attention to those artistic labours, which are his credentials for the new office. His publication of a book on musical theory is a justification to the world of any tenets peculiar to himself, and reference must be made to that work for explanation of some passages in the anthem before us that seem unaccountable upon principles elsewhere enunciated. A course of harmony for instance at the turning over from page 3 to 4, and the singular progression from a second inversion of a chord of G minor between bars 2 and 3 at the top of page 14, are remarkable, and to some hearers,

not satisfactory. The anthem is in four movements, one of which is a choral recitative, and in this the novel device is employed of omitting the bar-lines, which gives the utmost freedom to the singers, but at the cost of control; since, even, where a conductor was present, it would be difficult to make a number of executants hold the same path without defining roadmarks, but where, as in a church, they must be without direction, the difficulty must be increased, if not rendered insuperable. The work is avowedly designed for use on Saints' days, Ordinations, at Choral Festivals, and occasions of general Thanksgivings. Its extent and its variety of character fit it for such seasons; the second movement, "How beautiful upon the mountains," being for semi-chorus or for four solo voices, will make a good contrast to what precedes and follows; and the organ part, which is often independent of the voices, will much enrich their effect. This last is a resource of which our elder English writers made little avail; and it is turned to best account by such a master of the instrument as is the author of the piece under notice.

The Erl-King's Daughter. Ballad, founded on Danish Legends. The English version by Miss Louisa Vance. The music composed for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, by Niels W. Gade. Op. 30.

"WHETHER we become acquainted or not," writes Mendelssohn to Gade in 1842, "I beg you will always look on me as one who will never cease to regard your works with love and sympathy, and who will ever feel the greatest and most cordial delight in meeting with such an artist as yourself." In spite of the years which have elapsed since this letter was penned, how little progress have the works of this composer made, especially in this country. And yet the Cantata before us, had we indeed no other composition by which to judge, affords ample proof not only of his creative faculty, but of the possession of a dramatic power which is too rare to be disregarded. The subject of the Cantata is based upon old Danish ballads, the English version, by Miss Louisa Vance, being really so excellent as to appear as if it had been originally written in that language. A short instrumental Introduction, in which occurs the subject afterwards sung by the Erl-maidens, leads to a chorus which forms what is called the "Prologue" to the work. The first Part then commences with a chorus (the voices quaintly beginning on a ♯) interspersed with solos for *Oluf* and his Mother. The principal theme of this piece is extremely melodious, and a prominent figure in the accompaniment occurring in various keys, is a highly interesting point. After a characteristic song for *Oluf*, a duet with his Mother, commencing in A minor, is effectively concluded by the chorus bursting in with a *forte*, upon the words "The black steed rushes," first in the minor, and afterwards in the tonic major. The song for *Oluf* at the commencement of Part 2, "Night, thou art silent," is extremely beautiful. The voice starts upon a dominant seventh, with a striking melody; and the accompaniment in triplets, and afterwards in rapid semiquavers, gives much intensity to the expression of the words. An exquisitely light and fanciful chorus of Erl-maidens then occurs (the theme of which is heard, as we have said, in the instrumental Introduction to the "Prologue") which is twice most effectively interrupted by a solo for *Oluf*. This is succeeded by a dramatic scene for the *Erl-King's Daughter*, *Oluf* and Chorus, which ends the second Part. A "Morning Hymn" ushers in Part 3, the calm and devotional character of which is in admirable sympathy with the words. The two last numbers of the Part are chiefly choral, but with most effective solos for *Oluf* and his Mother, the death of the knight being expressed with true pathos. The passionate grief of the Mother having subsided, the chorus sings with deep solemnity the words "Sir Oluf is dead;" and with a brief choral "Epilogue," the Cantata ends. We can of course give but a faint idea of the beauties of this work by the few lines our space has permitted us to devote to it; but we have little doubt that now it is for the first time available in this country, and more especially in the