Review

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of the *Agnus Dei*; and of the *Pater Noster*. The style of the whole is decidedly modern, but totally free from the extremely high colouring which disfigures some of the Church music of the present day. Even in the harmony to the Plain Song for the *Sursum Corda*, which is given in addition to an original setting of the text, there is no assumption of the antique, for, at the close, a second inversion of the subdominant chord precedes the final tonic as an *appoggiatura*,—one of the devices peculiar to later times,—and the entire character is as free as it is pure.

The expressive melody to the *Kyrie* is assigned to the soprano for the first three responses, is given to the tenor with a different harmony for the next three, and to all the choir in octaves with an independent organ part for the three following, and the original form is resumed for the tenth response, to be extended at the change of words.

In the *Credo*, the great difficulty is met with success, of giving a fair declamation of the text with considerable expression, and not repeating a word. Composers for the English Church are cruelly fettered in comparison with those who write for the Roman Service, in being for the most part precluded from the development of a musical idea, from the giving expansion to their thoughts, by the general requirement that the words be but once uttered; and he is indeed to be praised, who can represent the subject, and can frame a clear musical design, under this restriction. The matter to which are set forth the attributes of Our Lord, recurs pertinently at the description of the third person of the Trinity; by such artifices as this is music made to illustrate powerfully the text, reflecting one passage upon another, and thus enforcing both.

The *Sanctus* is set, according to the terms of the exhortation, which invite the communicants to join "with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven," in their everlasting song of praise, to a loud exulting strain. The choice is difficult between the reading thus implied if not demanded, and that which might better render the feelings of the people, chastened and softened as these must be by the ceremony and its mysteries. Mr. Agutter has made his selection upon high authority, and there are many occasions to which it will be the more appropriate.

On the contrary, he closes the *Benedictus* by setting the words "Hosanna in the highest" to be sung in a whisper. The text is an interpolation, for which, of course, the musician is irresponsible; but surely, if they require, who insert in this place the triumphant passage from St. Matthew's Gospel, a piece of subdued character, they should furnish the composer with words better suited to such treatment.

The best piece in the Service is, to our thinking, the *Agnus*. This is a soprano solo of some extent, interspersed with choral phrases to the "Miserere" and the "Dona." The melody is tender, and its expression is intensified at each repetition by skilful variety of accompaniment. Here, the softness of the music is as fitting to the sentiment of the words as it may be to the feelings of the auditory.

The Lord's Prayer is a mixture of chanting and rhythmic song, the latter beginning with the glorification. It is not now to discuss the propriety of such hybrid composition; if ever it be acceptable, the example before us claims to be well received.

This Service shows the church of St. Peter, Streatham, to be fortunate in its Præcentor and Organist, which offices are filled by the author; and Dr. Stainer is honoured in the dedication of so meritorious a work.

Just Judge of Heaven (Psalm 43). Set to music for contralto solo and chorus, by G. M. Garrett, Mus. D.

DR. GARRETT here presents us with an admirable specimen of musicianship. Had he done no more than this his professional reputation might have been enhanced and nothing more. Happily, however, he has done more—much more—and the musical public are gainers by the acquisition of a Cantata imbued with much charm of both melody and harmony. It would hardly be saying too much to state that what Mendelssohn's "Hear my prayer" is to the solo soprano, this Psalm is to the contralto—so thoroughly genial and beautiful is the music. Whilst compositions like these are adopted as a means of worship in our cathedrals, we need never fear that the work of development and reform, so lately and so vigorously begun, will terminate, until all music (whether it be old or new) which is *unworthy* shall have been utterly swept out of the Sanctuary.

God so loved the world. Anthem, by Hamilton Clarke.

THERE is much smooth writing in this work, and it does not lack variety. Mr. Clarke has chosen a by no means easy set of words. "Peradventure" is a long word and covers much musical ground without being as full of meaning as

it is of letters. Setting aside the conventional mode of treating the word "die" by dropping voices to the bottom of the gamut, and the word "peace" by a sudden hush, this anthem will be found acceptable and useful. It is to be hoped that more will come from Mr. Clarke's pen, as it is certain he is quite able to choose a path for himself. Unless a ♯ be added to the A in the third bar of the bottom line of p. 6 in future editions, Mr. Clarke will incur the risk of finding from his biography in provincial anthem-books, that he was born in the fourteenth century.

And behold a Throne. Anthem, by Henry Lahee.

THIS anthem is in many respects meritorious, but perhaps hardly sets the words before its hearers in a suitable shape. The "Ter Sanctus" is surely too sublime an exclamation to be given out *con brio*. The theme selected for treatment *fugato* is ably worked out, and the pedal-point is highly effective.

The Nicene Creed. Set to music for four voices (chiefly in unison) with free organ accompaniment, by S. Percival.

THIS is remarkably good. The accent of the words is carefully managed, and their deep meaning clearly sketched in the outline of the modulations. The whole of it is simple, and it must be found generally useful where the Nicene Creed is chorally rendered.

The Nicene Creed. Set to music in an easy form (principally monotone), with a free organ accompaniment by Dr. Crowe.

THIS is even more easy than the one just noticed, but it does not lack interest, although the appearance of line after line of G only looks unpromising. It is a useful addition to this style of music.

The March of King David's Army; from the Oratorio, "David and Absalom." Arranged for the Pianoforte, with Chorus, by the composer, W. H. Longhurst.

VERY excellent accounts of this Oratorio have come to us from the local papers; and if the March now under notice may be accepted as a fair specimen of the work, there can be little doubt that it is at least the composition of an earnest and thoughtful musician. Without perhaps striking us as thoroughly original, the principal theme is bold, melodious, and well harmonized; the second subject, with the holding notes, against the moving bass, being perhaps even more attractive. As a pianoforte piece this arrangement has a right to its place amongst the many Marches which have already found favour with the public. We should recommend the small notes to be played by all who can reach them; and where a chorus can be obtained, the addition of the vocal part will certainly be most desirable.

'Tis better not to know. Song. Written by Shirley Brooks. Composed by Frederic Clay.

THIS is a particularly attractive ballad, which tenor singers (especially those who can command the high A flat) will be glad to become acquainted with. The melody is extremely vocal, and the musicianlike accompaniments throughout will ensure it a warm welcome with a trained audience. The change of character in the pianoforte part at the commencement of the "più mosso," is an excellent point; and the final phrase, "'Tis better, darling, not to know," has a most effective musical setting. This song has already been sung several times by Mr. Sims Reeves with great success.

I Puritani (*The Puritans*). An Opera, in three acts; composed by Vincenzo Bellini. Edited and translated into English by Natalia Macfarren.

WHATEVER may be said of the artistic merits of the modern Italian school of opera, there can be little doubt that as long as vocalists rule the lyric stage, and audiences accept their unlimited power, whether for good or evil to the cause of music, the works of Bellini, Donizetti and their disciples will continue to maintain their popularity. "I Puritani" is essentially a singers' opera; and associated as it is with the best days of the exclusive establishment in the Haymarket, when the patronage of the aristocracy was the only one to be depended upon, it has not only kept its place upon the stage, but has always been selected by vocalists as a fair test for their talents, and received by the listeners with perhaps even more favour than it deserves, in deference to the position it once held. The Editor tells us that there are various readings of some portions of this work in different editions, but that the present agrees with the score used in performance at the Italian Opera in London. This is of course as it should be; for it is in connection with the manner in which the opera is presented at our lyrical theatres that this edition will be invariably used; and all