

Review

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an independent part occasionally throughout the choral portion. As a general rule, we consider this a mistake; for the best Part-songs are those in which the effects are produced by the voices alone. The composition is melodious, but the part-writing is extremely crude—as instances of which, we may mention the octaves B, E, between sopranos and basses (bar 5, page 7), and the C sharp (bar 3, page 6), which, although omitted in the accompaniment, is taken by the tenors, first as an augmented 5th on the triad of F, and afterwards as a leading note in the dominant harmony of D minor. We also object to the triplets on the words "Where the," which do not seem in character with the rest of the song.

*Flowers.* Four-part Song. Words from the German of Wilmsen, by the Rev. J. Troutbeck, M.A. Music by J. Frederick Bridge, Mus. Bac., Oxon.

MR. BRIDGE has the credit of having written a charming Part-song to some charming words: indeed, we do not know when a more musician-like and purely-voiced composition has come before us. The melody is sympathetic with the poetry throughout; and all the effects are obtained by the most legitimate means. We especially like the unison phrase in the relative minor, with the close on the dominant; the return to the key, on the words "Till when storms are past," being particularly effective. We shall be glad again to welcome this composer.

*Where Wavelets rippled gaily.* (Aux bords de la Durance.) Quartett, or Chorus *ad lib.* The English words by Henry Dulcken, Ph.D.

*We'll gaily sing and play.* (Cantiam, cantiam, danziam.) Quartett for four solo voices, or Chorus *ad lib.* The words translated from the Italian of M. Maggioni, by Henry Dulcken, Ph.D.

The music composed and arranged by Ciro Pinsuti.

SIGNOR PINSUTI'S name stands so high as a composer of part-music, that it may perhaps cause some surprise to see that portions of these two vocal pieces are "arranged" by him. The fact is, that in the course of these compositions he has woven in two popular melodies, but so naturally and ingeniously has he effected this that the songs cannot fail to delight even a critical audience. It may be imagined that the intrinsic merit of the original parts of these Quartetts is sufficient to interest the listeners; so that, unlike most works of this class, their attraction will not rest alone upon the beauty of the introduced airs. In No. 1, we have the "Blue Bells of Scotland;" and in No. 2, the "Last Rose of Summer." The treatment of these two subjects is the same in both. After an Introduction for the four voices, the melody is sung as a solo, and afterwards in full harmony, the opening portion re-appearing to divide the two verses of the song. The first air seems to form part of the composition, and is given to the tenor voice; but the "Last Rose of Summer" is introduced by the treble as a song "from Erin's Isle," the chorus, before joining in the harmony, being supposed to listen to the solo. We should very much like to hear these compositions sung by a Choral Society: the novelty of their form, and their musician-like treatment, would, we are certain, ensure for them a decided success.

LAMBORN COCK.

*Former days.* Song. The words by Marwood Tucker (from the French of Philippe Théolien.) Music by John Hullah.

It is quite refreshing, amongst the mass of commonplace effusions daily forwarded for notice, to find so original and thoroughly unconventional a song as the one before us. The melody, although most attractive and catching even to untutored ears, is by no means the only merit in this composition, for the accentuation of the words—a qualification too rare in modern vocal works to pass without acknowledgment—shows that the composer has been earnest in his work throughout. As an example of this—although we might cite many others—let us take the syncopation on the two words "Sitting to-day," which is a perfect specimen of vocal accent; and we should

mention that in the other verses, where such syncopation is not demanded, the passage is appropriately altered. Amongst the many points in this song which call for unqualified praise we may refer to the sympathetic treatment of the accompaniment in the first four bars of the voice part, the unexpected modulation into F minor, on the words "dost ever sigh," and the whole of the following phrase marked "Cres. e accel." We know full well how the attention of public vocalists in the present day is drawn away from the consideration of the abstract worth of vocal works by other matters which need not here be mentioned; but the task of the reviewer would be much more pleasurable could he believe that his earnest recommendation of a really good composition like the one under notice, would influence those who have the talent and power to ensure its popularity.

CHAPPELL AND CO.

*Concert Fantasia.* No. 1 of Original Compositions for the Organ, by William Spark, Mus. Doc.

THIS is a fruit of the author's long experience and complete knowledge of his instrument. It displays effectively the wide resources of the organ; and it is so well fitted to the mechanical means of the player, that it will be received with pleasure by those who have mastered technical difficulties, and who wish for music wherein they may show their acquirements. It is in the unwonted key of B, and needs, therefore, an instrument tuned according to equal temperament—a condition against which some of the best judges have argued, but in vain. An introductory Adagio opens the Fantasia in a majestic manner. The Moderato that follows this has a most pleasing theme, and the modulations through which it is developed, though certainly extreme, and perhaps diffuse, are highly effective. An Andante, in G, presents a capital relief in its change of measure, as well as of key, in its employment of a different set of stops from the foregoing, and in its graceful melody. A Fugue follows, in which the key of B is resumed, and which is perhaps the best portion of the piece. It is curiously miscalled "Finale"—miscalled, for a Moderato succeeds to it, and constitutes the true conclusion. This last is a resumption of the previous movement with the same title, and it gives agreeable unity to the whole, to come back for the finish to an idea that has left a good impression.

DUFF AND STEWART.

*The Vocal Music in Balfe's Grand Opera, "Il Talismano."* Libretto by Arthur Matthison. The Italian translation by Signor Zaffira.

OUR opinion of Balfe's posthumous work has been already freely expressed, upon its production at Her Majesty's Opera; and a closer examination of the principal vocal pieces than is possible on a first hearing has in no respect altered our estimate of their merit. There is *tune* in many of them, but this is often of the most commonplace kind; indeed, the songs "Radiant Splendours" (the Rondeau so brilliantly sung by Madame Nilsson), "Oh! who shall sing the rapture," "On balmy wing," and even the "Rose Song"—destined, no doubt, to achieve a drawing-room popularity—would be simply passed over as unworthy of serious attention, were they sent for review as new publications by an unknown composer. The Ladies' Chorus, "Weary hours" (here appearing as a duet), commences so exactly like the well-known "Ten little niggers," as to suggest the banjo accompaniment; and "A song to Merrie England" (arranged as a glee for male voices) is a mere piece of smooth and innocent vocal harmony. Decidedly the best song in the Opera is "The Ladie Eveline," pure melody and musician-like treatment distinguishing this unpretending little composition throughout. The commencement, in A minor, and the happy changes of time and key, prove that the composer has endeavoured to express the words like a true artist; and the song, not being so intimately connected with the incidents of the Opera as