Review

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Romance in F. Quartet for Voice, Violin, Violoncello, and Pianoforte. By "Shah." [J. McDowell and Co.]

THE "Musical Dictionary" informs us that a Quartet is a "composition for four performers"; and as the work before us fulfils these conditions, it is doubtless a Quartet. Yet we cannot but think that as custom only sanctions the use of similar titles in literature when high-class work is at least attempted—so that, for example, "Old Mother Hubbard" would not be issued as a "Poem"—if amateurs will write and publish such effusions as that forwarded to us by "Shah," they should modestly prepare us in the title-page for the childish musical prattle which we are to expect. The "Romance" under notice consists of forty-eight bars in F minor, and forty-one bars in F major, and there are only *two* chords—tonic and dominant—throughout. The melody is of the most commonplace kind; there is not the slightest attempt at writing in any of the instrumental parts, and the voice at the conclusion holds on the last syllable of the word "pe-rish" for six bars. In the interest of art we counsel the anonymous composer of this piece to pause before he again commits his thoughts to the engraver; and, in our own interest, if he will insist upon publishing, we earnestly request him not to send us a copy of his work for review.

The Moon shines o'er the lake, love. Serenade. Words by Lewis Mansel Thornton. Composed by Charles Henry Shepherd, A.R.A.M.

[A. Hirschman and Co., Newcastle-on-Tyne.]

WE have on several occasions spoken in high terms of Mr. Shepherd's vocal compositions; and although the Serenade before us has scarcely the marked character observable in most of his former works, it is melodious and skilfully harmonised. The return to the original subject, after the unexpected change of key, is a point of interest; and a good tenor singer may make the song extremely effective.

Vittoria. Air. Composed by Carissimi. Arranged for the Pianoforte by Claudius H. Couldery.

[Lamborn Cock.]

THESE transcriptions of airs by eminent composers are excellent studies to place before amateurs, provided they are not tortured into that "brilliancy" beneath which they are usually buried. Mr. Couldery has performed his task fairly well, contenting himself with those conventional arpeggios without which no modern "arrangement" seems complete; and the piece may be conscientiously recommended, not only for the intrinsic beauty of the melody, but as a good exercise for expressive *legato* playing.

Sempre Lei! Romanza. Parole di Cesare Oliva.

Ne tu pecchè mo faie? Canzone. Parole di E. Bonadia.

Musica di L. Denza.

[Ricordi.]

THE composer of these two refined songs has undoubted talent for melody, as well as for the due expression of words. Both are decisively written in the Italian school, and little attempt is made in the pianoforte part beyond the sympathetic accompaniment of the voice. Of the two we prefer the first, "*Sempre Lei*," which, commencing in F major, passes with good effect into the tonic minor with a graceful figure in the accompaniment, and returns to the original key, the pianoforte part moving towards the end of the song in semiquavers. The second is somewhat more laboured in the melody, but it has many good points, and might, we think, be made effective by an efficient Italian vocalist, or at least one who has caught the true Italian pronunciation.

Un Mattino d' Amore. Duetтино. Poetry by L' Avvocato Enrico Lemmi. Composed by P. D. Guglielmo.

[Duncan Davison and Co.]

SIGNOR GUGLIELMO here presents us with a charming Duetтино, which should command the attention of vocalists in search of music to please a mixed audience, without presenting any difficulties to the executants. It is modelled on the received Italian style—a melodious theme, harmonised in thirds and sixths—and is quite as good as many duets which have gained much favour in the conventional fashionable operas.

Offertorium. No 2 of Twelve Original Compositions for the Organ. By H. J. Stark. [William Reeves.]

THE performance of this Offertorium produces feelings of a very mixed character. The first subject is in every way excellent—as for the one in E flat, all we can say is, that we know many waltzes less secular and quite as fitted for a place during or after a church service.

FOREIGN NOTES.

THE prospective *répertoire* of the Imperial Opera of Vienna for the coming season will include the following interesting revivals, viz., Spontini's "*La Vestale*," Gluck's "*Orpheus*," and "*Iphigenia in Tauris*," Schubert's "*Alphonso und Estrella*," Lortzing's "*Undine*," &c. Boito's "*Mefistofele*" is likewise to be produced for the first time during next winter. Regarding the activity displayed by the Imperial establishment in question during the past season, we extract the following statistical details from the *Musik Welt*, according to which, out of 284 representations, Verdi's operas occupied 37, Wagner's 35, Meyerbeer's 33, Donizetti's 22, Mozart's 22, Rossini's 21, Gounod's 19, Weber's 11, Bellini's 9, Bizet's 8 evenings respectively. The remaining performances consisted of Gluck's "*Der betrogene Kadi*," Beethoven's "*Fidelio*," and operas by Cherubini, Boieldieu, Halévy, Marschner, Schubert, Délibes, Brüll, and others.

A new cantata by Herr Brambach has achieved a great success on its first performance at the recent Festival of the "*Rheinische Sängerbund*," held at Coblenz. The work is entitled "*Prometheus*," and is written for male chorus, with vocal solos and orchestra.

The *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna has just published an interesting and characteristic correspondence between Richard Wagner and the late Carl Herbeck (then Orchestral Director of the Vienna Opera) touching chiefly upon topics in connection with the performance of "*Lohengrin*," "*Tannhäuser*," and "*Die Meistersinger*." In his letters the reformer shows himself, as usual, extremely self-conscious, uncompromising, and irritable to a degree; Herbeck, on the other hand, contriving with admirable tact and good feeling to steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of the master's peculiarities.

M. Weckerlin, the librarian of the Paris Conservatoire, has made an interesting discovery in the library of that institution. Between the covers of a long-forgotten portfolio he found the original edition of the first published work by Mozart, bearing the title: "*Sonates pour le clavecin, qui peuvent se jouer avec l'accompagnement de violon, dédiés à Madame Victoire de France, par J. G. Wolfgang Mozart, de Salzbourg, âgé de sept ans. Œuvre première gravée, par Mme. Vendôme, ci-devant rue Saint-Jacques, à présent rue Saint-Honoré, à Paris, aux adresses ordinaires.*" The copy in question is, moreover, the identical one which the child-composer presented to Madame Victoire (daughter of Louis XV.), being richly bound, and bearing a high-flown dedicatory inscription in French in the composer's handwriting.

The famous Leipzig Gewandhaus was founded in the year 1481, and was endowed three hundred years later, in 1781 (at the instance of Herr Müller, then burgomaster of the town), with its concert-hall, where the first musical performance took place on November 21 in the same year. The ancient institution will thus celebrate in November next a centenary of twofold interest and significance.

Herr Max Staegemann, of Königsberg, has accepted the post of Director at the Leipzig Stadt-Theater.

Heinrich Hofmann has just completed a new Opera, "*Wilhelm von Oranien*," to which Roderich Fels has written the libretto.

We read in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*: "Fresh activity is just now being displayed at the Bayreuth Theatre, where Herr Brand, the Technical Director of the Hoftheater at Darmstadt, is engaged, with the assistance of a goodly number of workmen, upon the scenic mounting of '*Parsifal*.' This can be no mean undertaking, since Wagner has in this, probably his most peculiar work as far as its poetry is concerned, given the reins to his imagination even to the verge of possibility. Thus, for instance, at one juncture of the drama everything on the stage is