Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 20, No. 436 (Jun. 1, 1879), pp. 324-325

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3357302>

Accessed: 05-01-2016 14:14 UTC

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told that in this investigation the respective parts of the two composers, very nearly as described by Süssmayer himself, were distinctly pointed out to the Count's advocate." It is impossible to imagine a more attractive little book to Mozart-lovers than this history of the most important work of the great master. "It is necessary," says the author, "in order to render intelligible the proceedings during the greater part of the time, to keep back some of the earliest incidents, the knowledge of which did not transpire till the end. It is, in this respect, like a novel, the interest of which hangs on a mystery only revealed in the last chapter." This plan constitutes the great charm of the work, for the thread of the narrative is so skilfully preserved throughout that the reader cannot lay down the book when once fairly carried on by the events which seem constantly arising to lure him forward. We hope, and indeed confidently predict, that the author's labours in so good a cause will be rewarded by an extensive sale of his interesting "story."

Novello's Octavo Anthems. "By the Rivers of Babylon." "For the Mountains shall depart." Composed by L. Samson. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

IN the first of these anthems we have another musical illustration of a text which, by reason of its pathos and beauty, will never cease to attract composers. In times to come, as in times past, the pitiful lament of the captive Israelites whose harps hung silent upon the willows, cannot fail to kindle the imagination and arouse the sympathy of musicians. None may hope to have a monopoly of it, and whether he be the Englishman Boyce, the Frenchman Gounod, the German Goetz, or the composer whose work is now before us, each must rest content with the position of one among many capable exponents of a subject that, in Wagnerian phrase, "yearns" after expression and is never satisfied. There are many good points in Mr. Samson's handling of the subject, not so much in the opening passages, perhaps, as farther on, and especially in the treatment of the words, "How shall we sing the Lord's song." This is decidedly and conspicuously happy. The voice part is simple enough—contraltos and basses answering sopranos and tenors with short unisonous phrases—and we must look to the accompaniment for an expression of the agitation and intensity of feeling conveyed by the words. This we find in the subjoined passage and its prolongation:—

meno vivo.

Voices. *p* How . . . shall we sing, sing . . .

. . . the Lord's song, . . . shall we sing, How . . .

Here, as it seems to us, the case is fully met. Again, after a vigorous unison passage on the words, "If I prefer not Jerusalem," occurs a *crescendo* thoughtfully expressive of the swelling emotions called up by the name of the beloved city:—

p a - bove my chief joy, a - bove my

chief joy, Je - ru - sa - lem, . . . O Je - ru - sa - lem.

This is followed by a *reprise* of the leading subject, now treated in a varied and much improved form. Altogether, the anthem is one of considerable musical interest, and distinguished by a novelty of style that cannot fail to arrest attention wherever it is heard.

The second anthem is less striking, because more conventional. It may, however, please a larger public than its companion on that very account, especially as it cannot be accused of poverty of idea or treatment. Every phrase is dealt with in a musicianly fashion, and the sentiment of the text well expressed. Moreover, the anthem presents no difficulty, and could easily be mastered by a village choir having a single boy capable of singing a few solo bars.

Suites de Pièces, for the Pianoforte. No. 1, Contentment; No. 2, Energy; No. 3, Mirth; No. 4, Joy. Composed by C. J. Ridsdale. [Enoch and Sons.]

IN the present day the line which separates either vocal or instrumental amateurs from professors is often by no means to be determined by the amount of talent or the amount of training they exhibit before the public. Choral bodies, solo singers, and even exponents of high-class musical compositions, are now to be found fully capable of taking their place in the world of art; and when we speak of an executant, therefore, as an "amateur," we simply mean that he or she does not live by the profession. Whether amateur composers may eventually take equal rank with the established creative artists of the day still remains to be proved. Certainly there can be no reason why they should not possess as much natural talent, or study as deeply as the professor; but as they usually move amongst, and are judged by, a limited *coterie* of admirers, they have rarely the power of accurately measuring their true capabilities. In playing through the "Suite de Pièces" of Mr. Ridsdale, however, the first thing that strikes us is that it is written not for the drawing-room but for the study; and herein we are assured of the fact that, whether amateur or professor, the composer is an artist; every movement indeed is remarkable for vigour of style and knowledge of contrapuntal effect; and although the writing seems almost to prove that the author is essentially an organist, the passages, when well studied, are perfectly playable on the pianoforte. The first piece, "Contentment," has a well-marked subject (reminding us, however, of that in the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in F, No. 15, in Agnes Zimmermann's edition), the treatment of which is skilful and musicianlike throughout. As we have said, the parts can well be reached, but where they are widely separated it would certainly be advisable to indicate with which hand the notes are to be taken. We may also mention that in bar 24, page 3, there is something omitted between the upper F and E. No. 2, "Energy," is a spirited movement, which will well repay practice. No. 3, "Mirth," in Minuet form, has all the life and vivacity demanded by its title, and No. 4, "Joy," may be cited as, musically speaking, the best number of the set, the various passages of imitation and the general design of the movement evidencing that definite plan which is the surest indication of a composer's power. "Suite de Pièces" is a title

which would perhaps lead us to anticipate a less modern series of movements; but however they may be named, they would challenge comparison with most recent compositions of this class; and if, as we presume, the work of an amateur, deserve additional praise as real contributions to art.

Carmen. Opera in Four Acts. The English version by Henry Hersee. The music composed by Georges Bizet. [Metzler and Co.]

THIS opera is now so firmly established in public favour, and we have already given so full a review of its merits, that it remains only to notice the English words, supplied by Mr. Henry Hersee. In criticising the result of the translator's task, there can be no question that the fairest method is first to test the effect of the text in performance. This we have done; and can affirm that not only in the songs, but throughout the concerted music, the words are most aptly fitted to the notes. Those who read the English version, too, apart from its stage representation, will find that it reflects the spirit of the original very fairly; and we congratulate the publishers upon having provided us with so excellent an addition to our "Operas in English," the words of which are too often unworthy of the music.

Menuetto from Haydn's Quartett in D minor; for two Violins, Viola, and Violoncello. Arranged for the Pianoforte by Agnes Zimmermann. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

IT is well when so accomplished an artist as Miss Zimmermann undertakes the transcription of classical works; for we know that, although the passages will be well adapted to the pianoforte, they will not be tortured from their original form to please those amateurs who, instead of desiring to raise themselves to the music, prefer that the music shall be lowered to their capacities. The arrangement of the *Menuetto* before us will of course more interest those who are acquainted with the Quartett from which it is taken; but as a pianoforte piece it is extremely effective, and students cannot have this class of music too often placed before them.

Danse Norvégienne pour le Pianoforte. Par Louis Samson. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE intelligent art-loving public will always have a welcome for national music, even in its lightest forms, not only for its own sake as music, but for the materials and suggestions it offers to composers. All the great masters, we need not say, have drawn with good effect upon this exhaustless store, while those of our own day are fully alive to its value. As yet, however, comparatively small use has been made of the national music of Scandinavia, both Norwegian and Swedish musicians aspiring rather to be Germans of the Germans than exponents of their own native art. None the less, however, is Scandinavian national music charming in its distinctiveness, as all must allow who make acquaintance with the example before us. Mr. Samson's so-called "Danse" is by no means that which the term generally implies. It is a piece full of poetry; it is as picturesque as a Norwegian scene of fiord and mountain; and its quaint themes are treated with the skill of a musician. If, therefore, anybody weary of ordinary *morceaux de salon* wants to break fresh ground, regale himself with unhackneyed melodic forms, and, in the truest sense, enlarge his repertory, here is a chance of doing so.

Concerto for Pianoforte. Composed circa 1770 by John Christian Bach (Op. 13); arranged by Haydn; first published in 1790. New Edition, edited and revised by Edmund H. Turpin. [Weekes and Co.]

MR. TURPIN has rendered good service to pianoforte students by bringing under notice this highly characteristic specimen of what may be termed an antiquated style, for in it may clearly be discerned the germ of much that we find more amply developed in modern music. John Christian Bach ("Bach of London," as he was popularly called) was well known as a fashionable writer, but although he composed a quantity of light music (unworthy perhaps of the great name he bore) he was a man of undoubted talent, and the composition before us may be accepted as a very

fair example of his earnest writing. Many of the passages shadow forth the brilliant style which grew so rapidly after his time; and the Finale, introducing the Scotch air, "The yellow-haired laddie," might almost pass as a recently published "teaching piece." The present edition is clearly printed; and being carefully revised and in many places fingered by Mr. Turpin, should be warmly welcomed by all musicians who take a real interest in the history of their art.

La Campanella. Morceau pour Piano. Composé par Carl Hause.

Gavotte and Bourrée for the Pianoforte. Composed by Otto Booth.

Pendant la Valse. Caprice pour le Pianoforte. Par Ernest Stoeger. [Neumeier and Co.]

THE small and unpretentious piece which stands first on our list may be commended to pianists as an elegant trifle for drawing-room performance; but there is nothing sufficiently novel in design to arrest attention. The feeling of the title of the composition, too, is but feebly carried out. Mr. Otto Booth's "Gavotte and Bourrée" have a genuine flavour of the old dances quite refreshing, and are entitled to rank somewhat above the average modern specimens of this class of composition. The Gavotte is extremely tuneful; and the harmonies always appropriate and carefully written. The Bourrée we like even better, not only on account of its melodious character, but because the writing throughout is musicianlike without being pedantic, and the traditional feeling of the dance is never lost sight of. "Pendant la Valse" reminds us very much in its principal subject of Wely's well-known piece, "Les Cloches du Monastère"; but it is an effective little sketch, and will be found a good study for touch. The "Intermezzo," having a *legato* theme, with a flowing accompaniment, contrasts well with the opening melody; and the piece is on the whole well worth the attention of amateur pianists who are searching for novelty.

The Evening Tide. Song. Words and music by M. Davidson. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THERE can be no question that in the present day, for one song expressive of joy and life, we have twenty expressive of grief and death. That the latter is infinitely easier to write must be an admitted truth, since mournful words spoken to mournful notes are sure to lay hold of the feelings of those who have not trained themselves to be moved by the eloquence of real music; but art in the meantime suffers; and we shall be glad therefore to welcome a reaction in the choice of words especially intended to be sung in drawing-rooms. "The Evening Tide" will assuredly please those who like dismal songs, for the music, although evidently the work of an amateur, is appropriate, and, with few exceptions, grammatically written. To sing about "your dead love's cold form washed ashore," is perhaps, as we have indicated, scarcely at all desirable before a mixed audience; but if it must be done, the simple setting of this song may be pronounced sufficiently sympathetic with the words.

The Key Table set to Music. By John Adcock. [Weekes and Co.]

WE have never held the opinion that the rudiments of music can be taught by songs, games, or arbitrary words repeated backwards or forwards, according to the system advocated by the disciples of what is termed "artificial memory"; and certainly Mr. Adcock's little musical sheet now before us does not alter our conviction. When a pupil is told, for example, that sharp keys rise by fifths—G, D, A, E, &c., he has only to learn this rule, and the order is easily remembered; but when he has mastered Mr. Adcock's song—which by the way, musically speaking, is by no means bad—he is extremely likely to forget it in a week; or, unless he can accurately recollect how many bars he has sung, to name too many or too few sharps or flats in a key. There is some connection in the words "Good Deeds Are Ever Bearing Fruit," the initials of which show the succession of six out of the seven key-notes with sharps; but certainly "Fruit Bearing Ever Are Deeds Good" is not a very intelligible sentence to impress the order of flat keys upon the memory, not to dwell upon the fact of its also