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Duo Brillant à quatre mains by Charles Edward Stephens

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with the melody. The part, however, which we really do not like in the piece is the abrupt modulation on page 6, where, after the chord of A major, we have the chord of the 6th on F $\sharp$, followed by a minor 7th on the same note, which, by an enharmonic change, takes us back to the key we have left, the only question being, when we get there, what we ever went away for.

Gigue Moderne, en Sol; par Berthold Tours.

THE "Gigue" has scarcely been so much worked by modern composers as the Gavotte, Bourrée, and other dances of the olden time; and Mr. Tours, in the publication of the piece before us, appeals therefore to a large class of music-lovers who desire to multiply their examples of this species of composition. The principal theme is melodious and vivacious, and there is good contrast of character in the flowing phrases, with *arpeggio* accompaniment, which occur throughout. The harmonies are extremely appropriate; and although the passages are brilliant and effective, the piece is by no means difficult. We conscientiously recommend this *Gigue* as an excellent trifle, both for practice and performance.

The Cambridge Concert Studies, for the Pianoforte. Composed by Horton C. Allison.

THE first of these studies—a Canon in A—is a good specimen of contrapuntal workmanship, but the subject is scarcely attractive enough to justify its title—"Mountain Echoes." The Fugue which follows—"L'Allegro"—we infinitely prefer: the theme is well suited for fugal treatment, and the parts flow smoothly and effectively. The Double Fugue, "Il Penseroso," is somewhat more laboured in the writing, but the piece shows that the composer has studied in a good school. These studies have been played by Mr. Allison both in England and Germany; and are merely identified with "Cambridge" in consequence of their dedication (by permission) to the late Sir Sterndale Bennett.

SCHOTT AND CO.

Duo Brillant à quatre mains, pour le Piano, par Charles Edward Stephens.

AMONGST the mass of pianoforte music published in this country it is astonishing how rarely we find a Duet—not a showy operatic Fantasia "arranged for two performers"—but a genuine pianoforte Duet. Whether it is because there are no composers to write them, or no public to buy them we cannot say, but the fact is undeniable; and Mr. Stephens may congratulate himself, not only upon supplying a want, but upon adding to his fame by so doing. There is such evidence of good solid writing throughout this piece that we should be glad if we could call the attention of teachers to its merits as a valuable study for advanced pupils, as well as an effective duet for performance. The flowing subject which pervades the first movement requires to be well woven in with the accompanying passages by both players; but any practice it may demand will be amply repaid by the result. The "Andante Mesto," in the tonic minor, with its three "Paraphrases," is perhaps somewhat dry, but the contrasts are well preserved, and the care of the part-writing will excite interest with the professor, if not with the amateur. The last movement starts with a light and playful theme, and has an exceedingly pleasing and melodious second subject, which is afterwards effectively given to the *Secondo*, with a graceful descending semiquaver passage for the first player. Those who are delighted with natural and unforced harmonies will be especially pleased with the legitimate manner in which Mr. Stephens gets his effects of colouring. The composition is evidently the work of a trained musician and an original thinker.

E. C. BOOSEY AND CO.

The Changed Idol. Song. Words by Miss Alice Forrest. Composed by G. Newcombe.

THERE is much musical feeling in this song, but the harmonies are somewhat crude in parts, as if the composer

were rather feeling his way in colouring his melody, than seizing upon the chords which should seem spontaneously to grow from it. As instances of awkward progressions, we may cite the passage on page 3, in B minor, which beginning upon a 6.4, proceeds, by the most extraordinary succession of chords upon F $\sharp$ and F $\sharp$ alternately, to a dominant harmony, upon which the voice-part temporarily reposes; and we must also mention the series of consecutive fifths (bar 4, page 5) which, by a little management, might easily have been avoided. The varied accompaniment will give effect to the voice-part, provided the pianist and singer sufficiently sympathise with each other; and the song will no doubt be successful with listeners who are not as particular as ourselves.

RANSFORD AND SON.

Our Song; the Compass, Book and Square. Written by Francis Bennoch, Esq., F.S.A.

Do I not love? Song. Words Anon.

Composed by Donald W. King.

IN both these songs we find a decided vein of melody; but the attempt to make the accompaniment an independent part has occasionally caused some awkward effects, which we cannot but believe that the singer will revolt against. The first song has many good points, and there is a quaintness about the entire composition which should ensure its popularity at Masonic Festivals. Musically speaking, "Do I not love?" is, however, the better of the two; the theme is extremely vocal, and it is generally effectively harmonised. Opinions are divided on the notation of many chords; but if Mr. King believe that in bar 1, page 4, C double sharp should be written, instead of D natural, it should certainly have been continued throughout the *arpeggio*. We need scarcely say that, being composed by so experienced a vocalist as Mr. Donald King, the voice-parts in both songs are most carefully considered.

JOSEPH WILLIAMS.

Transcriptions Classiques. Morceaux de Concours, pour le Piano, par Ch. Neustedt.

ONLY three of the six numbers already published in this series have been sent to us for notice; but we presume that they may be accepted as fair specimens of the entire set. Why No. 2 should be called "Sonatine de Beethoven; op. 6," considering that it is the last movement of the well-known Duet in D, arranged as a Solo, we cannot conceive. It is true that musicians are aware of this, but students are not; and seeing that the title-page informs them that it is a "Sonatine," and says nothing about its being originally written for four hands, many young players will receive a wrong impression regarding the composition which it may take years to remove. The other numbers are "La Romanesca; Air de Danse du XVIIe Siècle," and the "Allegretto un poco Agitato" from Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang." All the pieces are carefully transcribed, lie well under the hand, and will be found extremely useful for teaching.

Three Classical Duets, from Haydn's Celebrated Overture in D. Arranged by John Pridham.

SUCH arrangements as these are always welcome, for they inculcate a knowledge of classical works at a stage of progress when the taste of pupils is forming for better or worse. The three movements, "Andantino," "Allegro con spirito," and "Minuetto and Trio," are exceedingly attractive to young players; and the fact of the "Secondo" not being a mere accompaniment to the "Primo" should strongly recommend them to teachers. The "Allegro con spirito" must, we think, become an extremely popular number.

MOFFAT, PAIGE AND CO.

A First Book on the Theory of Music, for the use of the Plymouth High School for Girls. By Louisa Gibson.

THIS is one of the clearest little books on the rudiments of music that we have seen for some time. The author,