

Review

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and in the same key. The song, however, is totally unlike its companion, and is exceedingly effective. No. 12, "Autumn sadness," begins with twenty bars entirely unaccompanied, the pianoforte then stealing in with an elegant figure against the first voice-part. This is one of the most expressive and melodious songs in the book. No. 13, "The Song of the Summer Birds," has a most attractive subject, and is charmingly accompanied throughout; the conversational bits between the two voices being also an interesting feature in the little composition. No. 14, "In the Wood," beginning with a chromatic descending passage, on a dominant pedal, for the pianoforte, starts afterwards most effectively with the two voices accompanied only by the right hand; the left hand, during the opening phrase, commencing every alternate bar with an arpeggio. There are many points in this composition which cannot be too highly praised; but the absence of any pedantic display is as obvious in this as in every song throughout the book. No. 17, "Rest after Storm," has a quiet melody, with an agitated semiquaver accompaniment. This song is full of dramatic feeling, the dying off of the voices on the dominant, to the words "Rest thee," being especially worthy of notice. No. 18, "The Lotos flower," is a quiet and effective colouring of the words, a syncopated figure in the accompaniment for the left hand giving much character to the subject. In the translation of the German poetry, Mdme. Macfarren has been especially careful to reproduce the feeling of the composer in setting the original text, by using equivalent words wherever possible; and the manner in which she has performed her difficult task is deserving of high commendation. To those who admire the two-part songs of Mendelssohn, a volume so thoroughly in the spirit of these beautiful compositions, and yet so instinct with that individuality which characterises all Rubinstein's works, should be warmly welcomed, and we have little doubt that the book will speedily make its way to the popularity it deserves.

*Legende, pour le Piano.*

*Impromptu-Caprice, pour le Piano.*

Composée par Oliver A. King.

*Five pieces for the Pianoforte.*

Composed by A. C. Mackenzie, Op. 13.

A LIMITED number of those into whose hands Mr. King's *Legende* and *Impromptu-Caprice* may fall are certain to regard them not only for their own sake, but for the measure in which they excite expectation of good things to come from the same source. There can be no doubt of the fact that the present is an anxious time in the history of English music. A generation of native composers is passing away, which in no mean degree has sustained the repute of our country; and as one and another join the majority, we look around for their successors, not always with confidence in our ability to find them. The most sanguine amongst us cannot regard the prospects of English art in the next generation without foreboding. From Dan to Beersheba the land, if not wholly barren, gives no evidence of coming plenty. Music, it is true, augments its votaries by thousands from year to year. Never did such an army of men and women court the favour of publishers as now, and never did such a flood of new works issue from the press. But, unhappily, the votaries are simple worshippers, not prophets and apostles of art: the army is made up of rank and file, led only by corporals and sergeants, and the new works are like ripples which subside and are forgotten as the breeze passes. Under circumstances like these every fresh man who starts up with proof of ability becomes a centre of eager and, it may be, exaggerated hopes. Our wish is father to the thought that he may stand a Saul among his fellows, nor can disappointment check the ardour with which we are prepared to welcome his successor. This is why all who know how much promise centres in the composer of the two works now before us turn to them with something like anxiety. Mr. King—he will not be offended if we regard him as still a lad—early attracted attention by the manifest way in which his destiny as a musician was marked out, nor has his boyish talent ceased to develop in a manner equally marked, during the time of the studies

he is still carrying on at the Leipsic Conservatory. His ultimate rank in art it would be imprudent to forecast, seeing, as all who have eyes must see, how many elements more uncertain than talent are factors in the problem. But from a musical point of view, the youth who can produce such music as we have here, ought now to fix, and ultimately to justify, the regards of his countrymen. A glance at the *Legende* is sufficient to prove this. Without laying stress upon the fact—surprising, nevertheless, in our day—that Mr. King has written his charming *Andantino* in an orthodox style, we may point out the masterful treatment the subject receives from first to last. Not only is the music adapted to the fullest resources of the pianoforte within its scope, but its interest is increased and its beauty enhanced by devices which are many and ingenious without being strained and embarrassing. In this respect it reminds us of Schumann, whose gracefulness of thought as well as elaboration of method is also reflected. The *Legende* is by no means easy to play, but it is better worth the trouble of mastering than many a more ambitious creation signed by a well-known name. The *Impromptu* opens with an *Allegro agitato* in B flat minor of fairy-like lightness and grace. This constitutes the body of the work; but even as Schubert has interjected many of his most serious and tender thoughts into music of equal levity, so here the quick movement is broken by a *Larghetto*, in the tonic major, upon which the player is likely to linger with fondness. The whole piece is a work of art in its way, and to whatever distinction Mr. King may attain in days to come, he will see no reason for shame in his youthful effort.

Mr Mackenzie's "Five Pieces" must by no means be confounded with the general run of modern effusions for the pianoforte. They are the work of a man who, before he took pen in hand, found something to say, and then said it in a style which, if not his own in the fullest degree, possesses much of the charm of novelty. The composer has evidently been a diligent student in the school of Schumann, whose influence we imagine ourselves able to detect both in his thoughts and mode of expression. Here, however, is not the smallest cause for blame. To say nothing of the fact that we get a change from the abounding mannerisms of Mendelssohn, we find a deeper poetry and fuller, richer utterance than are common. Mr. Mackenzie writes with a free hand, and here and there occur points to which adherents of the "prunes and prism" school would take exception. There is a purpose, however, in all he does, and the result, as a rule, vindicates the means adopted to secure it. But the leading features in these little pieces are an ingenious fancy and much power of characterisation. A good deal of music is elegantly made and pleasant to hear while destitute of all power to impress. Of such is not the music before us. It has been thought out by a mind able to think, and has an intention which the composer contrives to reveal with all needful clearness. That the pieces are, neither in this respect nor in any other, of equal merit, may at once be granted, but all leave upon the hearer's mind an impression that, while the composer is not "talking for talking's sake," he has the faculties of speech which are necessary to justify him in talking at all.

*The Church Service, set to Music in the key of F.* By Edward Hodges, Mus. Doc. Edited and published under the supervision of his daughter, Faustina H. Hodges.

WE are not sure that Miss Hodges has added to her own reputation as a musician of taste by editing the above *Service* of her father's. It is true the work is as free from grammatical errors as we should expect from a Mus. Doc., it being quite possible to defend the double false relation between treble and tenor, and tenor and bass, in the eighth bar of page 8. But there is a want of breadth and solidity about the whole work, and the composer has striven to maintain the musical unity of his production at the expense of the words, by setting strongly contrasted sentences to music identically the same. The opening subject of the "Te Deum" is evidently intended to be the main feature of the whole work. It serves as the commencement of the "Jubilate," "Gloria in excelsis," "Magnificat," and "Nunc Dimittis." In the dominant it

is set to the words "To thee all angels cry aloud," and to the latter half of the three Glorias: and twice more it reappears in the "Te Deum"—once in the sub-dominant, as a song of triumph at the words "Thou sittest at the right hand of God," and again in the mediant, associated with the words of supplication "Make them to be numbered with Thy saints." The "Ter Sanctus" is very properly set to the music which accompanies the same theme in the "Te Deum;" but we hardly see why it should serve also for the commencement of the three Glorias. From a purely musical point of view, neither of the subjects of which we have spoken is sufficiently original to bear such constant repetition.

The voice parts are, on the whole, written smoothly, but few choirs will be found to contain trebles possessing a compass of two octaves and a tone. It is a misfortune that no indication whatever is given of the intended time of the several numbers; but if the "Te Deum" be taken at the most moderate pace which the genius of the composition suggests, it is difficult to imagine how any choir could articulate the rapid utterance of the words "Thou art the King of Glory," still less the following verse, where the trebles have to reiterate a high F sharp. These verses, moreover, follow the preceding by a very abrupt transition, which would render their attack the more difficult.

There is, nevertheless, much in this Service that is melodious: some parts are almost striking. It can hardly advance the standard of cathedral music; but to those who regard Jackson in F as an ideal Service it will be welcome.

It is quite within the grasp of parish choirs, and the only difficulty the accompaniment presents is one which the most accomplished organist is no more able to overcome than the veriest tyro, as it involves the employment of a B flat, which is below the compass of the instrument. Perhaps the best parts of the work are the "Gloria in excelsis" and the "Evening Service." The latter would doubtless become popular with country choirs.

*The New Israelitish Anthem—Lost Israel Identified.* By W. Thackwray.

We can perhaps best give our readers an idea of this peculiar work by saying that on the title-page it is described as "being a brief sketch in verse of certain statements set forth in the work entitled 'Forty-seven Identifications of the British Nation with the Lost House of Israel,' by Mr. Edward Hine, to whom this Anthem is, by permission, respectfully inscribed by the composer." The music is worthy of the subject; and we strongly advise Mr. Thackwray for his next effort to versify and compose either Paley's "Evidences" or Butler's "Analogy," both of which are, we firmly believe, quite as well adapted for musical illustration as Mr. Hine's book.

*Lightly, gently ply the oar.* Part-Song for a double Chorus. Words by H. T. Bywater.

*Soldier rest.* Four-part Song. Words by Sir Walter Scott.

Composed by H. T. Bywater.

THE "Part-song for a double Chorus" is not so pretentious as the title-page might lead us to expect, for in no place are the two choirs united, save in the final chord. In a drawing-room the effect of this little composition would be good, the intention being that the choir of rowers, consisting of Alto, two Tenors, and Bass, should be before the audience, and that of the friends on shore welcoming them home, consisting of mixed voices, in an adjoining room. The air "Home, sweet home" is well woven in, and a good point is gained near the conclusion by the responses of the rowers to those assembled on shore. The voice parts are generally well written; but we should much prefer, in the first bar of the "Allegretto," on page 6, D for the last bass note, the descent of the A being to us particularly unpleasant. The second song is a quiet melody, carefully accompanied, and containing some fair points of imitation, the "Coda," with the final plagal cadence, effectively expressing the words. As the composer tells us that it is to be "sung without accompaniment in the key

of D flat," we do not understand why it is published in C. Are the singers to suppose that they are singing it in C, and the conductor secretly to start them in D flat?

LAMBORN COCK.

*Ask me no more.* Song, for Soprano or Contralto. Written by Alfred Tennyson. Composed by Herbert S. Oakeley.

THE words of the song before us, from Tennyson's "Princess," are excellently adapted for musical treatment, and the Edinburgh Professor (who published this composition before he had won more than a professional title to his name) has given us a highly effective setting of the poetry, if anything perhaps slightly erring on the side of an undue display of harmony. The theme, commencing in C minor, and richly accompanied, has a burst in the tonic major which reminds us too much of many modern songs, but will no doubt be regarded by vocalists, who are unmoved by such considerations, as an extremely telling point. There is an air of refinement and an evidence of artistic power throughout the song which must commend it to the notice of every intelligent listener; and although, as we have said, somewhat over elaborated, it will be universally recognised as the conscientious work of a highly accomplished musician.

ASHDOWN AND PARRY.

*Bourrée*, in F major, for the Pianoforte.

*Le Trianon* (Gavotte), for the Pianoforte.

Composed by J. Theodore Trekell.

MR. TREKELL has thoroughly caught the spirit both of the Bourrée and Gavotte. The themes of the first, in F major and D minor, are extremely melodious, and the harmonies quite in sympathy with those of the composers who have left us so many specimens of this old dance tune. "Le Trianon," too, is a genuine Gavotte, which cannot fail to become popular with players and listeners.

WEEKES AND CO.

*Masonic Music*, consisting of an Anthem, Sanctus, Odes, Marches, &c., appropriate for the Ceremonies in Craft-working, &c. By Frederick C. Atkinson, Mus. Bac., Cantab.

NOT being ourselves Masons, we are unable to say how far the contents of this little work are adapted to fulfil the object at which they aim, but must confine ourselves to their musical aspect. The book contains, first, an Opening March, then an Anthem in three movements, "Behold, how good and joyful," a Sanctus, Procession Music, four Odes, and a Closing March. Mr. Atkinson has evidently had to write under considerable restrictions, but, so far as we are in a position to judge, he has been very successful. His ideas are always pleasing, and the treatment shows the hand of a practised musician, the consecutive octaves on page 14 between first tenor and bass being evidently a mere slip of the pen. The whole of the vocal music is, of course, for male voices. The Anthem is very good, though we care less for the opening baritone solo than for the two numbers which follow. The Odes are, excepting the last, "Hail, Masonry Divine!" mere part-songs, but are effectively written; while the last is for tenor solo and unison chorus, with piano accompaniment, and with a large mass of voices would be very telling. The instrumental parts of the music we also like. Mr. Atkinson has produced a little manual which we should think would be very acceptable at Masonic meetings where music forms a part of the ceremonial.

*Longing.* Song. Words by "Anon."

*The Return.* Song. Words by "Anon."

Music by E. Newbatt.

BOTH these songs appear to have been originally published at Port Elizabeth, but we have given the name of the London agent. If the melody of the first compo-