Review

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Reviews.

ANTHEMS.

Behold, I come quickly. There is none that can resist Thy voice. By Ivor Atkins.
O everlasting Light. By John E. West.
I will go unto the Altar of God. By Henry Gadsby.
Thou art a Priest for ever. By Samuel Wesley.
Come, Holy Ghost. Anthem for unaccompanied singing. By Palestrina.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

The first of the above anthems by the gifted organist of Worcester Cathedral, is a remarkably terse and impressive setting of verses from the twenty-second chapter of Revelation. It opens solemnly in the key of E minor, but at the words 'I am Alpha and Omega' a most effective transition is made into the dominant, while the close is also instinct with solemnity. The other anthem is composed for this year's Gloucester Diocesan Choral Music Festival. The music is laid out on broad lines, and the form is sufficiently extended to make the work suitable for festivals. It opens with a four-part chorus of vigorous character, in which occur some effective passages in imitation. The second section, for soprano solo or semi-chorus, is devotional in expression, and after it a return is made to the opening, which in shortened form concludes the anthem.

Mr. West has taken for his text words from Lydley's 'Prayers,' attributed to the year 1566, and their deep devotional spirit is happily accentuated by the music, which is written to be sung unaccompanied. A well-trained choir will be necessary to fulfil the composer's intentions, although there are no difficulties which are not justified by proportionate effect. In sundry passages great harmonic richness is obtained by doubling the respective parts, but the greater portion of the work is in four-part harmony.

'I will go unto the Altar of God,' by Mr. Henry Gadsby, belongs to the excellent series of 'Novello's Short Anthems,' and is an admirable example of its class. The music is flowing and graceful, the parts moving melodiously and independently. At the close a very effective use is made of the chord of the dominant major ninth.

Amidst the pressure of the present it is well at times to revert to the past, and revised versions of anthems by the old masters of church music are ever to be welcomed. The anthem by the elder Wesley is a particularly fine example of this great church musician. It is laid out for soprano, first and second alto, first and second tenor, and bass, and is intended to be sung without accompaniment. The opening is very striking, and the reiteration of the ascending scale-passage allied to the words 'After the order of Melchizedek' has a singularly stirring effect.

Devotional, dignified and solemn are the adjectives which occur to the mind on reading Palestrina's anthem 'Come, Holy Ghost,' and the consonant character of the harmonic scheme is peculiarly refreshing after the prevalence of torturing dissonances in modern works.

The Cathedrals of England and Wales. By T. Francis Bumpus. First Series.

[T. Werner Laurie.]

The author of this attractive book has already proved himself to be a congenial cathedral cicerone. His previous volumes have treated of various sanctuaries in France and North Germany respectively, and now he gives the result of visits paid by him to nine English cathedrals, together with an introductory essay of architectural import. A well-qualified ecclesiologist, Mr. Bumpus pleasantly imparts much information on the stately sanctuaries he so graphically describes, more especially the structures and the changes they have at various times undergone. Music, however, finds a place in this cathedral survey. In this respect one of the most interesting references is to an ancient Hereford Office Book, which William Hawes, in 1834, discovered on a bookstall in Drury Lane! Upon examination this volume turned out to be an 'Antiphonarium' of 1265, containing

the old 'Hereford Use.' Hawes communicated his 'find' to the Dean and Chapter of Hereford, who at once agreed to purchase the treasure found at Drury Lane for the sum of twelve guineas, whereby the precious MS. returned to its old home. As Dr. S. S. Wesley was at that time organist of Hereford Cathedral, this 'Antiphonarium' was doubtless submitted to his inspection. Mr. Bumpus's very readable pages are interspersed with some excellent illustrations: his book is sure to have many readers, and the second and third series—the three volumes are to include nineteen cathedrals—will be looked forward to with pleasure.

VIOLIN MUSIC.

A Modern School for the Violin. Fourth Book of Studies. Book IVb. By August Wilhelmj and James Brown.
The Junior Violinist. Edited by C. Egerton Lowe. Book 24. Four Characteristic Pieces for Violin and Pianoforte. By Herman Koenig.

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

To those familiar with the earlier parts of 'A Modern School for the Violin,' the recently issued Fourth Book of Studies may come somewhat as a surprise. With the exception of a few special studies by the authors and two by Spohr and Kreutzer, the contents are devoted to excerpts from well-known classical and modern violin solos. These are grouped in sections, each exemplifying a branch of technique expected to be previously prepared from Book IVa, designed to be taken concurrently with IVb. The idea is excellent; first by convincing the student how greatly the practice of technique facilitates in overcoming the difficulties invariably encountered in advanced pieces of every description, and secondly by keeping before him a high and elevated aim even when engaged in the daily routine or drudgery of purely mechanical exercises.

A single example from the present book will suffice to show its purpose. The first section is devoted to 'Passages formed of Scales and Arpeggi.' Here are shown extracts taken from familiar works by Beethoven, De Bériot, Saint-Saëns, Mendelssohn and Schubert, while reference is made to suitable studies dealing with the same matter by Kreutzer and Fiorillo. Similarly treated are such subjects as 'Passages on the G string,' 'Firmness of Stop and Intonation,' 'Solid and Spring Staccato,' 'Octave Passages,' 'Double Notes,' 'Harmonics,' &c.

The Junior Violinist Series continues to supply young players with good material for study and recreation. The latest addition, Book 24, contains 'Four Characteristic Pieces' by Herman Koenig, entitled, respectively, Romance, Humoreske, Intermezzo and Arioso. Short, melodious and effective solos, they are admirably suited to those who have not yet left the first position.

Te Deum laudamus in C. By E. Markham Lee.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

Dr. Lee writes with long experience of the capabilities of average church choirs and knowledge of what is required by the majority of congregations, the result in the present instance being a setting of the great Eastern hymn that is calculated to find widespread favour. The sequential form of melody has been adopted, the tonality kept distinct, and for the most part the harmonic scheme is diatonic. The voice parts are well varied and effectively supported by the organ accompaniment, and repetition of the words only occurs in one sentence.

If music be the food of love. Glee for A.T.T.B. Words by Shakespeare, music by George Benson.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

This is a charming setting of lines that truly crave for music. The part-writing is singularly flowing and graceful, and the romantic spirit of Shakespeare's words seems to have taken possession of the composer. The closing section is particularly beautiful.