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Reviews.

Old English Organ Music. Edited by John E. West.
[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The stream from which Mr. West is drawing his supply gives no indication of running dry. Here before us is an instalment of a double quartet of books which well maintain the interest of those which have preceded them. Two pieces by Jonathan Battishill are contrasted, the one a pleasant *Andante* movement, the other a capital March, not vulgar and all too short. Edward Gibbons and his pupil, Matthew Lock, furnish three 17th century compositions, Gibbons in 'A Prelude upon ye Organ as was then usual before ye Anthem' (the said anthem being Gibbons's 'How hath the city sate solitary'), and Lock in a Voluntary in F major and a Toccata in A minor, both from his 'Melothesia,' published in 1673. That the designation 'Voluntary' covered a more or less wide range of compositions for the organ is proved by a work bearing that title of which John Travers is the author. As a matter of fact this 'Voluntary in D major' is really a prelude and fugue, the subject of the latter being of stately minims in scale progression with a pretty hop to the octave at the end—the whole affording excellent fare to those who play, and keen enjoyment to those who listen to the strains of an 18th century musician.

A trio of slow movements—Thomas Adams, John Bennett, and William Walond being responsible for their paternity—are as melodious as they are churchlike, which is more than can be said of some organ music of the present day. John Bennett's *Adagio* is from his 'Ten voluntaries for the organ or harpsichord,' to which Handel subscribed. Thomas Attwood is best known by his vocal music, but that the pupil of Mozart could write for the organ is proved by two pieces, the Dirge composed for the funeral service of Lord Nelson in St. Paul's Cathedral on January 9, 1806, and performed by the composer on that occasion, and a Cathedral Fugue, a really fine work, fully justifying the unusual but appropriate title Attwood bestowed on this imposing contribution to organ music. Away back in the 16th century were two composers named Richard Alwood and Robert Redford. The former was 'a priest'—and that is all that is biographically known of him—the latter was organist, almoner, and master of the boys of St. Paul's Cathedral. A voluntary by Alwood and a 'Glorificamus' constitute the two slow movements from No. 24 of this series of 'Old English Organ Music.' From manuscripts in the British Museum Mr. West has transcribed and adapted to the modern organ a couple of pieces by Dr. John Bull—one entitled 'Vexilla regis prodeunt' (part iii.), the other a Fantasia on the Flemish chorale 'Laet ons met Herten reijne.' Last, but not least, because it is a very welcome number, is an organ concerto in E flat by the Rev. William Felton, well known as the composer of a chant bearing his name. The concerto opens with a *maestoso* movement—characteristic of the period (the 18th century) in which it was written—to which succeeds an animated fugue, well contrasted in its cheerful strains. Diversity is afforded by an *Alla Siciliana* in C minor, which leads to a most charming Gavotte, as dainty as dainty can be. This felicitous Feltonian composition should meet with general favour. It only remains to say that the difficult task of editing these pieces has, as heretofore, been discharged by Mr. West in a spirit of reverence for these old masters who have enriched native music by the fruits of their genius.

Musical reminiscences and impressions. By John Francis Barnett. Illustrated.

[Hodder & Stoughton.]

Books of this kind are welcome because they often record incidents and relate anecdotes which might otherwise have been lost. In the course of his long and varied career Mr. Barnett has had many opportunities of meeting with celebrated people in the art of music, from the time when he obtained a King's scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music (in 1851) at the age of thirteen, to the present day of his professorships of the pianoforte at the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music, and the Guildhall School

of Music. During his studentship at the Leipzig Conservatorium his schoolfellows included Edvard Grieg, Carl Rosa, Walter Bache, and Franklin Taylor, and it is not everyone who can say that he played a pianoforte concerto under the conductorship of Spohr, fifty-three years ago. Space will not admit of detailed reference to the reminiscences which Mr. Barnett has recorded in this well illustrated and readable volume. It is amusing to read of the early days of the Guildhall School of Music, when operations were carried on in a disused warehouse in Aldermanbury, and that, owing to the lack of class-rooms, the gentleman who taught the drums gave his lessons in the coal-cellar! One of the best stories in the volume relates to Hans von Bülow: this we venture to give on p. 809.

Mr. Barnett's book contains much information relating to music and musicians in England during the last half-century, and the author's impression of music past and present, together with accounts of his various compositions, including his best known work, 'The ancient mariner,' furnish much that will interest the reader. In view of a possible second edition, the following corrections should be made: p. 274, the year of Wagner's last visit to England is 1877, not 1887, when the composer had been dead four years; and on pp. 314 and 322, the locality of Sir George Grove's 'quaint old house' is given as Lower *Norwood* instead of Lower *Sydenham*. The statement on p. 158 that Lindsay Sloper (1826-87) 'was editor of the first musical journal ever started' also needs correction.

The Cathedrals of England and Wales. By T. Francis Bumpus. Third series, with illustrations.

[T. Werner Laurie.]

In this the third instalment of his interesting survey, Mr. Bumpus has worthily set his seal on an undertaking which has justly received warm commendation. The present volume contains descriptions of such important old cathedrals as Lichfield and Gloucester, and the newer foundations of Manchester and Truro, in addition to a quartet of Welsh cathedrals, including a full and very readable account of St. David's, the mother-church placed in that far-away and accessibly-difficult corner of Pembrokeshire. While the main thesis of the author's illuminating discourses is architecture, he seasons his descriptions with many references to music, the material for which he has largely obtained from the valuable library of his brother, Mr. John S. Bumpus. It only remains to be said that this book fully maintains the excellence of its pair of predecessors and that the trio of volumes on the Cathedrals of England and Wales forms a valuable work of reference on the fascinating subject of which it treats and, moreover, adds to the reputation of the author as a competent and enthusiastic ecclesiologist.

Selected choral music for use in schools of the Girls' Public Day School Trust.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

This is a substantial volume containing twenty pieces selected for use in the schools under this great Trust. It is interesting as showing what, in these times of discussion as to the kind of music that should be used in schools, the musical advisers of the Trust think is suitable for study in girls' schools of the secondary class. Eight pieces are for unison singing and are of the folk-song and national type. 'The Golden Vanity' and 'The Arethusa' are among this group, and two other unison songs are Purcell's 'Fairest Isle' and Arne's 'Where the bee sucks.' There are seven two-part songs, including Schumann's choice 'May song,' Mendelssohn's 'O wert thou in the cauld blast,' Handel's brisk and straightforward 'Welcome thou whose deeds conspire' ('Jephtha'), and others by modern composers. There are only two three-part songs—'The gardener' by Brahms, and the naive and charming trio 'The shepherd' by H. Walford Davies. Finally, for the older sections of the schools, there is the classic setting in four parts of 'The Lord is my shepherd' by Schubert. On the whole it may be said that the old and the new and the grave and the gay are pleasantly mingled. String-band parts, easily arranged, are available for all the unison and some of the two-part songs. There are many school bands to whom these will be welcome, especially as the instrumental score is complete in itself and can therefore be used for performance without the vocal parts.