Review

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audience. The first part of the programme consisted of selections from an Oratorio, entitled "The Prodigal's Return," composed by the Rev. H. F. Limpus (Minor Canon of St. George's Chapel Royal, Windsor). Mrs. R. Limpus gave a very effective reading of the air, "Rejoice, O young man in thy youth." Miss Jessie Giles's singing of "Let God arise," called forth loud plaudits from the audience, as did also the reading of the air, "I will arise," by Mr. Evison. The duets, chorals, quartetts, and choruses were admirably sung, the final chorus, "O Lord, our Governor," narrowly escaping an encore. Between the parts Miss C. Nash gave as a piano-forte solo, Thalberg's Fantasia, "Home, sweet home." The second part of the programme was miscellaneous. The glees, &c., by the choir were "Blow, blow, thou winter wind," the "Maiden of the Fleur-de-Lys," Tramp Chorus, and the National Anthem. Miss Fenton ably accompanied, and Mr. Limpus conducted.

THE Passion Services at the Church of St. Anne, Soho, are being repeated each Friday evening during Lent with increased effect upon the worshippers. The recital of the sufferings of our Lord—illustrated by the marvellous music of Bach, and declaimed with a power of expression rarely excelled—produces upon the large congregations an impression not easily described. To this we may add, that a small but effective orchestra, including harp and organ, an efficient chorus, and a hearty participation on the part of the congregation in the beautiful chorals with which this work abounds, combines to render the service exceptionally complete and impressive. The Princess Christian attended the service on Friday, the 20th ult. We are requested to state that the Passion Service on Good Friday will commence at four o'clock in the afternoon, instead of the usual hour.

IN continuance of the plan so successfully inaugurated last year, the Directors of the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society's Concerts are again giving a series of Oratorios, in the Royal Albert Hall, during Passion Week, commencing on Monday with the "Messiah," followed on Tuesday by Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," and Rossini's "Stabat Mater." On the three succeeding days (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) Bach's sublime Oratorio of the "Passion" (according to St. Matthew) will be given; and the series will conclude on Saturday with the "Messiah." The list of artists include Mme. Sherrington, Madame Otto-Alvsleben, Madame Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Cummings, Signori Urlo, Campobello, Giulio Perkin, and Agnesi; while Dr. Stainer, Mr. Hoyte, and Mr. W. T. Best will severally preside over the organ. The whole series will be conducted by Mr. Barnby.

WE understand that Mr. Rowland Mellor Winn, a youth of eighteen, has been appointed organist to the Parish Church, Harborne, near Birmingham, where there is a full choral service by a surpliced choir. Mr. Winn was some time ago elected pianist to the Birmingham Festival Choral Society, after a competition test with six candidates.

THE Motett, "Dixit Dominus," by Samuel Wesley, which was performed at Mr. Henry Leslie's Concert on the 24th ult., is in the press, and will be shortly published by Messrs. Novello, Ewer and Co. It was composed in the year 1800, and the MS. Score was presented in 1843 to the British Museum, by the late Vincent Novello.

WE are requested to state that a Committee has been formed for the purpose of placing a Memorial Brass in the Parish Church of St. Alphege, Greenwich, as a record of the interment of Thomas Tallis, and that the Rev. H. W. Miller, of Richmond Hill, S.W. (whose letter on the subject appeared in our last Number) is empowered to receive subscriptions towards this object.

THE anniversary services of the Sunday School in connection with the Craven Hill Congregational Church, took place on Sunday, the 8th ult. The Morning Service included *Tu Deum* (Hopkins) and G. W. Martin's "No shadows yonder," and in the evening, A. Sullivan's "Onward, Christian Soldiers," Hopkins's "Lift up your

heads," a Hymn, "Only gone before," and the *Magnificat* were sung. All the foregoing were well rendered by the teachers and scholars, under the direction of Mr. W. H. Lee Davies, the organist, to whom much credit is due, for his careful training of the singers. The sermons were preached by the Rev. A. McMillan and the Rev. Dr. Manning.

ON Wednesday, the 25th ult., a tea and concert was given at the Parker Street Schools, Drury Lane, to about 350 of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Among those who kindly contributed to the amusement of the evening, were Miss Antoinette Sterling, Madame Liebe Konss, Mr. Newton Baylis, and Mr. Frederick Oakland, their efforts being highly appreciated by the audience.

REVIEWS.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

"Ponder my words, O Lord." Anthem. By Henry Gadsby.

THERE is much poetical feeling in this composition, which stands distinctly under the head of "Short Anthems." As to its technical merit, there is more to admire in the purpose than in the means; that is to say, we should be disposed to dispute with the author the principle on which some of his harmonies are founded. One who has so much music in him as the piece evinces has, however, a right to an opinion, and he would doubtless contend for, if he could not establish, his ground against us; but the discussion would better suit a private meeting than a public review, and uninterested persons shall therefore not be wearied by a statement of the case. The anthem will find welcome with many a musician, and to every one there will be something charming in its effect.

"Rejoice greatly." An Anthem for Palm Sunday. Composed by Henry Gadsby.

NOTHING can be more unlike than is this anthem to Handel's setting of the same text from Zechariah; and yet, so perverse is the mind of man, it is impossible to hear Mr. Gadsby's work and not compare it with the grand outbreak of jubilant enthusiasm in the *Messiah*; and again, so strong is the prejudice founded on life-long associations, it is impossible but that the comparison must be in disfavour of the new composition. Most dangerous it is to reset passages, earlier music to which is universally familiar; and, because we like and always will like the song in question better than any other music that can go to the words, we find it difficult to render such justice to the piece before us, as we naturally should, had it other words. Like the last noticed, it is a short anthem, and like that, therefore, it will be acceptable on many occasions whence greater length might debar many a piece of equal merit. The effect of the voices will be brilliant, and this will be heightened by that of the organ, which is in accord with the truly joyful character at which the author successfully aims. This, also like the above, abounds in technical points that show the composer's views to differ from ours—not through the inadvertency of a careless writer, but results obviously of a fixed, although we feel ill-founded, principle. Not to be thought hypercritically querulous, we will break through the restraint we purposed, and adduce some instances:—the progression from the chord of the second of the key to the first inversion of the chord of the tonic (p. 1, score 2, bar 2), of which the effect is unsatisfactory, as the reason why it is so is clearly demonstrable; the progression (p. 2, score 1, bar 4), from a chord of seventh of A, to a common chord of G, an upper voice repeating the G while the bass proceeds A, G, and while the leading-note C $\sharp$ descends a whole tone; the employment of the second inversion of the chord of E minor, the key being D (p. 2, score 2, bar 1), a chord that is unavailable in that relationship, &c., &c., &c.

"O, how plentiful is Thy goodness." A short, full Anthem for four voices. Composed by T. Mee Pattison.

PRaise is due to this piece for its correctness, but praise with the qualification that there is not much more to

admire in the music than to blame. Melodious it is truly; but yet it has no definite, distinct, rememberable tune. Harmonious it is, beyond question; but the harmony is, like the melody, such as might be, and has been many a time, extemporised, and has no need of commission to paper. The ear is wearied by the alternation of the keys of G minor and B flat, in the main matter of the movement, which is ostensibly in the key of E flat, and then, these two keys of B flat and G minor reappear in the episode, which thus extends instead of relieving the wearisomeness of the foregoing; and afterwards, the return of the earlier portion brings back its somewhat cloudiness of character with a lessening of its interest by the likeness of the context. The said episode, "But my hope hath been in Thee," presents the well judged variety of being for three instead of for four voices, but otherwise affords no contrast to what surrounds it. Whoever is accustomed to the manipulation of a sustaining keyed instrument must be aware of the temptation to meander through its pleasing undulations of sound, and may often yield to its charm; but it is one thing to indulge one's own self-satisfaction in the producing of progressions that are due as much to the finger as to the thought, and totally another thing to invest such extemporanities with the trapping of pen, ink and paper, that are due only to studied compositions.

"Praise the Lord, O my soul." Anthem. Composed by George M. Garrett, Mus. D.

HERE we have a composition of considerable extent and much merit. It consists of a chorus, "Praise the Lord," which will have a broad, bold effect, from its successful employment of triple measure, and its bright vocal distribution; a tenor solo interspersed with chorus, "Who forgiveth all thy sins," which has great melodious charm; and a final chorus, "Blessed be the Lord," that maintains the musicianly character of the whole. The author might perhaps advantageously modify the last portion of the second movement, where there is some confusion between the keys of E, minor and major, and C; this is at the words, "and crowneth thee with mercy," and though there may be a good intention in the employment of the major chord to illustrate the idea of mercy, the obscurity of the passage worse than counterbalances this.

Scherzo, for the Pianoforte. By Walter Macfarren.

HOWEVER much may be said and written upon the ill effect of the quantity of bad music issued to the public, there can be no question that a large number of healthy and instructive works by modern composers are constantly published which must, to a certain extent, neutralise the evil; the bane and antidote are both before us; and we cannot do better than counsel those who have enfeebled their constitution by indulgence in the "sweet" pieces carefully manufactured for musical children, at least to make the experiment of feasting for awhile upon the more solid fare so plentifully existing around them. Amongst those who have set themselves the task of introducing a higher tone of thought into the lighter compositions provided for amateurs, Mr. Walter Macfarren deserves to be honourably mentioned, for in all his original works—even those in which the more severe form has not been attempted—there is always an under current of latent power which, like the style of a classical scholar in literature, gives a tone to his writing, impossible to be imitated by an inferior artist. The "*Scherzo*" now before us will be warmly welcomed both by sound performers and conscientious teachers. It is charmingly written throughout, the playful subject, first simply given out with the right hand, obstinately appearing wherever it is least expected, and cleverly used even to accompany a *legato* theme, with which it forms an admirable contrast. The *coda* of the piece, too, is exceedingly effective, the character of the movement being well sustained to the end. As a study for the acquisition of a light and even touch, as well as on its own intrinsic merits as a composition, we confidently recommend this little Sketch to public attention.

Sehnsucht (*Longing*). Waltz. Composed by E. A. Sydenham.

In reviewing mere dance pieces to which their composers have affixed pretentious and affected titles, we have often

expressed our regret that they have not been simply called what they are; but in the case of Mr. Sydenham's composition we cannot but think it a pity that he *has* styled it a Waltz, because it is in fact something very much better. What Herr Wagner calls the "poetic basis" of music is here we find distinctly traceable throughout—the word "*Sehnsucht*" clearly defining the origin of the many refined and melodious phrases with which the piece abounds. The eloquent theme, beginning on a key-note pedal, in C minor, is happily expressive of the leading idea, and the graceful passages which follow seem to grow up so naturally that not a bar betrays a sign of weakness. The second subject, in A flat major, is extremely attractive, and a brief passage of part-writing—a low bass note being sustained with the pedal—is a point of much interest. Mr. Sydenham, we think, might with confidence attempt a more important composition; for there is sufficient indication of talent in his modestly styled "Waltz" to prove that he both thinks and writes in the true school.

A Race between two Walking Dolls. Marche Grotesque. By Alfred B. Allen.

THE title of this piece is unquestionably the most "grotesque" thing about it. A comic March is certainly a good idea—and that it may be made thoroughly successful has been proved by Mendelssohn in his *Clowns' Funeral March* in the "*Midsummer Night's Dream*" music, and by Gounod in his "*Funeral March of a Marionette*"—but if the humour is not inherent to the composition itself, no description upon the title-page will make its character felt by the listeners. It is never so wearisome to sit out a Tragedy at which we can laugh, as a Comedy at which we cannot; and although Mr. Allen's exceedingly common-place March might pass amongst the multitude of works of its class if its composer did not assume the cap and bells, we cannot allow such a production to escape without a word of protest when its claim to be "funny" is so boldly declared. Mr. Allen is we believe no novice, and may have taken advantage of a former success to break ground in a fresh quarter; but he must remember that the choice of subject rests with the artist, and that even a landscape painter who fails in his execution of a sea-piece, must expect his work to be as dispassionately judged as if he had not already made his name in another department of art.

Six Part-Songs, for four and five voices. Composed by Jacques Blumenthal.

- No. 1. *Evening Hymn*.
- „ 2. *What care I how fair she be?*
- „ 3. *A Shadow*.
- „ 4. *Gather ye Rosebuds*.
- „ 5. *The Loyal Lover*.
- „ 6. *The Butterfly*.

THE melodious character of these Part-songs, and the musicianlike manner in which they are treated, will be certain to ensure them a cordial welcome amongst the many Choral Societies desirous of increasing their *répertoire* by the introduction of sterling music by modern composers. No. 1 has a placid theme expressing with remarkable fidelity every change in the feeling of the words, a beautiful effect being produced at the commencement of the third verse by the fresh harmony which accompanies the original subject. No. 2—written to those well-known words of Wither which have inspired so many composers—is full of character throughout. Starting with a *staccato* subject for the basses, answered in full harmony, we get some excellent points by the repetitions of the defiant questions propounded by the poet; and, even if we are of opinion that the music somewhat halts in the phrase, "I will die ere she shall grieve," it must be remembered that at least the defect arises from the over zealous attempt of the composer to give an appropriate colouring to the words. The song is written for two tenors and two basses, and although occasionally reaching to the high A in the first tenor part, even timid amateurs need be under no fear of the composition over-taxing their powers. No. 3 we like least of the set; not because it is crudely written; but the theme does not strike us, and we