Review

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again we hesitate to give the preference to any particular example, as each of the series of five is noteworthy for tunefulness and a certain *naïveté* of expression certain to win favour from miscellaneous audiences. It must not be inferred from this that Mr. Sydenham's are not musically, for they are so to a high degree, being, indeed, noteworthy for smoothness and elegance of style. No. 621, "Winter," by Edmondstone Duncan, is a remarkably vigorous and unconventional setting of words by Shakespeare, from "Love's Labour Lost." The piece would prove extremely effective if sung with spirit. The same composer's "Hunting Song" (No. 622) is also fresh and written with much freedom in all the parts, so that the singers would be likely to feel interest in their work. The last of the series is "Song and Summer," by Herbert Brewer, an effective part-song, modern in feeling, with an extremely elegant refrain.

Wood-notes Wild. Notations of Bird Music. By Simeon Pease Cheney. Collected and arranged, with Appendix, Notes, Bibliography, and general Index, by John Vance Cheney. [Boston, U.S.A.: Lee and Shepherd.]

"THE Music of the Spheres" is a metaphor of such hoary antiquity that weak brains have been known to mistake it for a scientific fact. Another, less figurative, though scarcely less venerable, "The Music of Nature," has long been a favourite with poets and imaginative writers generally. Latter-day scientific habits, however, have bred a desire for accuracy—even in language, which, as every schoolboy knows, was given to us to disguise our thoughts—so that, of late, "The Music of Nature," as a phrase, has fallen into disrepute, and, like "Snakes in Iceland," has come to be regarded as synonymous with the non-existent. "There is no music in nature," says a popular writer, "neither melody nor harmony." And, of course, if by "music" is meant only the higher manifestations of the art, it is obvious that he is right. The sounds of wind and water, the cries of animals, the hum of insects, the "songs" of birds cannot be said to resemble in any important particular the symphonies or sonatas of a Beethoven or a Mozart, the nocturnes of a Chopin, or even the valse of a Strauss. But the complexity of music, as of other things, has its degrees; and if the simplest forms be taken into consideration, it will be found that the "music" of nature and that of art have much in common. And that in earlier times they had still more may be inferred from some of the music of savage tribes, and even of certain Eastern nations already far advanced on the road towards civilisation. In limited tonal range, uncertain intonation, lack of rhythmic variety, and, above all, in the incessant repetition of a simple musical figure, certain songs and dance tunes of these people exactly resemble the best examples of bird music. How much this is so the curious in such matters may learn from the entertaining volume before us, which contains hundreds of examples of bird song in musical notation, together with a large amount of information from innumerable sources, old and new, on the subject of "music" in nature generally. Such a book is valuable, and should be widely read. From it we may learn how plentifully nature has supplied the raw material, so to speak, of our art; and, at the same time, how little the music of Nature, plentiful as it is, has contributed to the music of Art as we moderns know it. No fairy godmother furnished the splendid equipment in which the Cinderella of the arts appears to-day. Her glory is due to a mighty host of lovers—whose names and deeds, are they not written in the dictionaries of Fétis and Grove?

Notations Artistiques. Par F. Guy Ropartz.

[Paris: Librairie Alphonse Lamerre.]

In this volume M. Guy Ropartz, author of a very able essay on Victor Massé, and of a volume of delicately written verses, gives us the impressions of the combined poet and musician, gathered in the course of some travels in Northern and Southern parts of Europe. Thus his Notes have the merit of being "artistic" in more than one sense. His description, for instance, of scenery, more especially that of Sweden and Norway, where our traveller made the most prolonged stay, while always interesting, becomes occasionally truly poetic. Nor is his observation of men and

manners devoid of shrewdness and originality. During his sojourn in Scandinavia M. Ropartz had, of course, many opportunities to make himself acquainted with the musical status prevailing at the various social centres, and arrives at the conclusion that, apart from the two leading personalities, Grieg and Svendsen, the creative faculty is not very strongly developed in the nation; although the latter is very proud of such of its native composers as Hallstroem, Soedermann, and others. On the other hand, the author is full of praise as regards the condition of the choral societies, more especially of Sweden, which he has found most excellent, both as regards the quality of the voices and the training. From the Northern extremity of Europe the traveller made his way to the South of Germany, where he paid a visit to Bayreuth and its Festspielhaus. His observations on Wagnerian art, albeit not particularly new or remarkable, have at least the charm of poetic feeling impressed upon them, and are, moreover, thoroughly sympathetic. As we have to confine ourselves here to the musical portions of the volume, we will only add that in the final chapter of his "Notations" M. Ropartz furnishes a short essay on the symphonic works of some prominent French composers of modern days, including Eduard Lalo, César Franck, C. Saint-Saëns, and Vincent d'Indy, thus winding up his observant and appreciative wanderings abroad with a survey of at least one of the artistic aspects of his native country. The volume is divided into six chapters with the following headings—viz., "Stockholm en hiver," "A Bayreuth," "Vers L'Adriatique," "En Savoie," "Jeu de Massacre," and "Apropos de quelques symphonies Modernes," all of which will well repay a perusal.

Methodist Free Church Tune-Book. Harmonies revised and edited by Battison Haynes. The same in Tonic Sol-fa notation. [Andrew Crombie.]

THIS handsomely printed volume is a welcome addition to the already large store of Nonconformist hymn books that have been issued during the last few years. It was prepared by direction of the Annual Assembly, to provide music for the Methodist Free Church Hymns. Six gentlemen were entrusted with the selection of tunes and chants from existing collections, and nineteen new tunes have been composed expressly for the work by Sir Joseph Barnby, Professor Bridge, Dr. Rea, and Messrs. J. F. Barnett, M. M. Barton, J. D. Macey, and the Editor. There are in all four hundred and eighty-four tunes, the selection including standard melodies of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, known and loved throughout the Christian world, and favourite modern tunes from the most famous collections, comprising compositions by Sir Arthur Sullivan, Dr. Hopkins, Dykes, Gauntlett, &c. Among the hymn books thus placed under contribution are "The Hymnary," "Hymns Ancient and Modern," the "Home Hymn Book," the "Presbyterian Hymnal," the "Wesley Tune Book," and others. The harmonies of the old hymns have been carefully revised by Mr. Battison Haynes, whose editorial work throughout bears conspicuous evidence of conscientiousness and good taste. The name of the composer is affixed to each tune, the print is large and clear, and the Indices have been compiled with considerable care.

Concert für Violine. Von Oliver King. Op. 37. Ausgabe für Violine mit Pianoforte vom Componisten.

[Breitkopf and Härtel.]

THIS work is not a recent effort of its talented composer, as it is dated "Ottawa, 1882," but it is noteworthy for ripe musicianship, showing no traces whatever of crudeness or juvenility. The first movement, in G minor, opens in a solemn, not to say religious style, but it soon becomes brisker, and the second subject, in B flat, is at once melodious and cheerful. From thence ordinary concerto form is followed with tolerable closeness, though no opportunity is given for an improvised cadenza. The slow movement, *Andante con moto*, in D major, commences with a long-drawn melody, and the continuation, in which the tonality is shifted first to F sharp and then to A, is wild and very impassioned, the close, however, being quite peaceful. The *Finale*, in G major, is a very spirited *Allegro All' ongarese*,