Review

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tura "is generally understood to represent a note of half the value of that which it precedes," but can scarcely understand what he means by saying "however written," for as nothing whatever is mentioned about the *acciaccatura*, which should have a line drawn through it, there is much danger of an inexperienced writer mistaking one for the other. We should prefer, too, that the mark which divides music into measures should be termed a "bar-line" instead of a "bar;" for assuredly a "bar" in a composition signifies the music contained within two bar-lines and not the bar-line itself. These, however, are merely gossiping observations, called forth by a careful perusal of what may truly be termed an extremely thoughtful little treatise, and, if considered by the author of any value, may be pondered before issuing a second edition.

WEEKES AND CO.

The Southport Hymnal. Composed by Mrs. Frederick Ellis.

If anything is calculated to turn sour the milk of human kindness in the breast of the reviewer, it is to have to wade through a large collection of amateur psalm-tunes. One almost always knows what to expect—a dreary platitude of chords, varied by a not unfrequent reminiscence of some well-known melody, and perhaps occasionally by some crudeness of harmony that makes the hair stand on end. Of course, if people choose to amuse themselves and waste music paper by writing psalm tunes there can be no possible objection to their doing so, but why do they publish them, and why, alas! will they send them for review?

These remarks have been forcibly suggested by the present Hymnal, which contains forty-two tunes. Mrs. Ellis has carefully dated each tune, and it appears that the spirit first moved her to compose in the year 1872, and that the movements continued at intervals during the following year. In 1874-5 she appears to have been suffering from a very aggravated attack of the complaint, and the result lies before us. We confess that after going through the first half-dozen tunes we felt a strong inclination to put the book into our waste paper basket, but we persevered, feeling that it would be, perhaps, scarcely fair to Mrs. Ellis to dismiss her in so summary a fashion, and also hoping, though somewhat against hope, that the later tunes might be better than the earlier ones. We were doomed to disappointment. Excepting when the melody is not original, it is as dull as it can well be, and the occasional clumsiness of the harmonic progressions only renders the general effect more uncomfortable. Perhaps the best tune in the book is the last, and of this the first line is note for note identical with the opening of Mozart's "Batti, batti," the third is a descending scale, the fourth ascends the scale from G to C, and then comes back again; the fifth line is from Beethoven's first romance for the violin, and sixth from a German chorale by J. H. Knecht.

We have spoken strongly on the subject of this collection because we think a protest ought to be made against publications of this kind. We cannot for a moment suppose that such tunes would find acceptance in our churches—it would be a bad thing for church music if they did; and people have no right to rush into print unless they really have something to say that is worth hearing.

EVANS AND CO.

Valse Fantastique. Morceau de Salon. Pas des Sylphes. Morceau Élégant. Par Edouard St. Pierre.

Why the first of these pieces should be termed "Fantastique" and the second "Élégant" we are at a loss to understand, for certainly either word would as aptly describe one as the other. We shall be glad to see the day when composers will allow their works to speak for themselves, for they may rest satisfied that if they have any character at all, "fantastique," "élégant," or otherwise, performers and listeners will be quite able to find it out. The tunefulness of the "Valse" will ensure it a welcome in a drawing room, although it has but little else to recommend it; but the "Pas des Sylphes" is a well-

written and effective piece throughout, if we except the *arpeggios* in the last page, which are out of tone with the rest of the composition. We are especially pleased with the opening theme, the simplicity and grace of which is never obscured by unmeaning ornaments. Judging from this trifle, we should imagine that M. St. Pierre might be successful in music of a somewhat higher class.

DUNCAN DAVISON AND CO.

Dreaming and Waking. Song. Words by Mrs. Pfeiffer.

Composed by Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew.

A SONG so deeply sympathetic with the poetry as this rarely comes before us; and we are certain that the authoress of the words, to whom it is dedicated, will fully appreciate the graceful compliment of her sister artist. The changes of key are most felicitous throughout; and amongst the many beautiful points which strike us, we may mention the two phrases—the first in E flat major and the second in E flat minor—to the words, "Shamed is the golden head, And the magic smile is fled." The ascent to the upper D, whilst the voice is holding the low key-note at the end, is also extremely beautiful. Singers should lose no time in possessing themselves of this highly attractive composition.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE AND PROFESSOR OAKELEY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—We on this side of the Border have, as a rule, great respect for the opinions and critical abilities of Englishmen. In fact, when they speak or write on things that they know something about (which of course often happens), we are completely upset with awe and admiration at the exceeding brilliancy and accuracy of their discriminating powers. But, clear as their mental vision is in all other directions, no sooner do our English friends attempt to deal with anything Scotch than their usual clear-sightedness takes its departure. They are on such occasions invariably seized with a—what shall we call it?—a sort of *scotomy*, or dizziness in the head, and as a natural consequence their logical faculties become clouded, and unfit for any other use than making Scotchmen laugh. The letter of your correspondent "M. H." on Professor Blackie and the students' concert in Edinburgh is a very fair sample of what one might expect from one labouring under the influence of a slight attack of the above-mentioned complaint. "M. H.," when he wrote his letter, seems to have set out in a very hopeful if not pompous style. It is rather amusing, however, to notice how soon the Scotch mist begins to take effect upon him, and by what an abrupt and extraneous transition he betakes himself to a more congenial atmosphere. He starts jauntily with Professor Blackie for his subject, but soon finds it advisable to make a sudden decampment, to accomplish which, instead of returning gracefully home to "merry England," as one would have expected, he takes flight across the German ocean, and halts not until he is safe in Wagner's bosom, where he wags and warbles away, making us hold our breath with wonder at the familiar way in which he handles foreign languages, and finally winds up by telling us that he has written a disjointed letter—a statement which will be universally recognized as an indisputable truth.

"M. H." is just like the majority of Professor Blackie's critics—he appears not to have read the Professor's protest, or has misunderstood it if he did read it. The greater number of those who have taken up arms against Professor Blackie seem to have laboured under the delusion of supposing that he meant to dictate to Professor Oakeley regarding the class of music he ought to use in the training up of youths in the way they should go in order to become musical experts. Now, if I understand Professor Blackie aright, he does not concern himself about the method or tools employed in the cultivation of professional