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"O Clap Your Hands." Anthem by John Stainer

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factory effect. There is the music in G for the *Benedictus*, that will be available on many occasions to which music of higher pretension is inappropriate. The setting in D of the *Cantate Domino* is animated and brilliant. The *Deus Misereatur*, in the same key, may be regarded as a companion to the foregoing, to which its more placid character makes a good contrast. These are followed by three Anthems: the first, intended for Advent, begins "The Lord, even the most mighty God," which first words are set as recitative for a solo bass, and this is followed by a *Larghetto* and an *Allegro Moderato* for the full choir; the second, "Teach me Thy ways," consists of one movement, which is grave in character and generally melodious; and the third has the well-known and frequently set text, "O how amiable are Thy dwellings," which will win attention in spite of intimacy with other renderings of the same passage. Finally, there are two short Anthems or Intros: one "Rend your heart" is for eight voices, and aims, not unsuccessfully, to picture the penitential words; the other "Lift up your heads" will not obliterate the memory of Handel's Chorus to the same text, any more than the foregoing will teach us to forget Mendelssohn's Recitative; it is injudicious to set new music to passages with which some former rendering is known to everybody, for recollection is a child that will not be laid to sleep, and its troublesome prattling prevents our giving due regard to music that might be found meritorious, had it a fair undisturbed hearing. It is highly commendable in our composer to take full advantage of all the opportunities his position may afford for exercising his abilities; he is perhaps less to be praised for putting into print everything he writes, for were he more sparing in his demand on public opinion, he might still gain valuable experience, and might only challenge criticism with works that might be as full of merit as the many that come before us are free from fault.

"O clap your hands." Anthem. Composed by John Stainer.

AMONG the many compositions by the organist of our Metropolitan Cathedral with which it has been our fortune to meet, we far prefer this now before us. The harmonies are for the most part simple, though coloured occasionally with so much of the chromatic element as gives them life, and strength, and variety; and they are so distributed for the voices as to produce a full and sonorous body of tone. There is so much of interest in the part-writing as to make the music attractive to the singers, which is a sure means of effect upon an audience. The organ part extensively amplifies the vocal score, and enriches, without obscuring, the sounds to be poured forth by the singers. The piece consists of three movements, which are well contrasted in character. Each is self complete, the first having a few bars after the close of the voices, to lead into the second, and the last opening in like manner with some interludial matter to link it to the second. The said second movement, already twice named, "They that wait upon the Lord," is expressly stated to be available as a separate piece without the context. It is directed to be sung by semi-chorus or by solo voices, and the ingenious interweaving of the parts throughout it, is admirable in purpose and certain of good effect. In the last movement, there is a fugal point on the words "For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," which is worked with some freedom, but yet gives the advantage of variety to the work, and the inestimable relief of a timely cessation of full four-part harmony. From the time of Mendelssohn, we have been made more and more familiar with previously unusual forms of final cadence, all tending to show how the dominant and the more extreme chords derived from it govern the key, and necessarily lead to a satisfactory conclusion; here we have a chord of the dominant major 9th for the penultimate harmony, with the 7th in the bass leaping to the tonic in the closing chord, and with the rare distribution of the 3rd standing in a higher part than the major 9th from the root; the effect is novel, and the verdict on its beauty in such a situation has to be pronounced by those who may hear it. Let us repeat a protest that has many a time been urged in these columns,

against the anomaly of encumbering music which is as modern in style as in date, with the notation of the age before Handel and Bach: supposing even it to be generally admitted that the employment of four minims in a bar were the necessary and only means of expressing music of the Elizabethan period, or music which technically emulated its manner, on this very account, the said white notation is inappropriate to the setting down of nineteenth century ideas, and we cannot countenance its assumption.

Twelve Popular Hymns. Set to music by Guido Aretino.

UPON examination it would appear scarcely necessary for the author of these tunes to seek to shelter himself under a *nom de plume*, which this obviously is; for although there may not be much in these compositions which rises far above the average of modern hymn tunes, there would seem to be little which falls greatly below it. A novel feature strikes us at first sight in the naming of each tune after some one of the ancient Philosophers, who have written upon the art of music: but has the question as to whether a name is essential to a tune ever struck the author? Few, if any, among the musical nations on the Continent seem to have considered it necessary to label their tunes further than to give the first line of the hymn to which the music is set; nor do we in England endeavour to distinguish Chants, Songs, Kyries, &c., by the names of towns, saints, or other objects, animate or inanimate. However, the question resolves itself into a matter of taste, pure and simple. The first tune, "Pythagoras," is flowing, and presents some pleasing sequences, together with the novelty of a tenor part which "doubles" the melody. The unsatisfactory features are the high range of the melody (G ♯) and a kind of bass which is sometimes called "vamping" for want of a better term, and which could only be excused on the ground of the character of the hymn being martial, which this is not. No. 3, "Aristoxenus," would be a wholly successful tune, were it not for the fact that it contains three full closes. No. 6, likewise, is full of right feeling, and only suffers from bad accentuation. Each of the remaining tunes possesses some special merit needless to specify. But on the general question of *tempi* it appears to be necessary to say a few words. The pace at which some of these tunes are intended to be sung, if we may judge by the metronome marks, is sufficient to take one's breath away; for example, $\text{♩} = 80$ in a tune which contains minims and even crotchets, indicates a pace which might fairly be called racing. We would strongly urge the author to reconsider his metronome marks, as the evils resulting from this hurried singing are not confined to the spoiling of the music.

Perpetuum Mobile, for the Pianoforte. Composed by F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

THIS sketch, forming No. 48 of the Posthumous works of Mendelssohn, will be warmly welcomed by all who believe with us that, whether good, bad, or indifferent, the merits of any compositions left by a deceased author should be judged by the world rather than by a section of it. There can be little doubt that Mendelssohn's fame, although it may not be materially raised, will never be lowered by the publication of any one of his pieces; and it seems strange indeed that, whilst we read with the utmost interest every letter penned by this popular composer, we should throw aside even the merest *Impromptu* written in the language of his art. The "Perpetuum Mobile" is a lively and melodious piece, reminding us occasionally of the last movement of Weber's Sonata in C (known as the "Moto Continuo"), but thoroughly individual in character, and so excellently written for the hands as to make the task of playing it, as it is marked, "Prestissimo," one of no great difficulty to pianists with agile fingers. The frequent modulations prevent anything like monotony arising from the unceasing flow of semi-quavers; and the return of the original theme has a remarkably fresh effect. Both as a study and as an attractive composition for performance, we cordially commend this piece to the notice of all who desire worth as well as novelty.