Review

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English Lyrics. (Fourth Set.) Set to music by C. Hubert H. Parry. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE poems chosen by Dr. Parry for his fourth set of "English Lyrics" are by Emerson, L. E. Mitchell, Byron, Keats, and that very voluminous writer "Anon." It is difficult, without going to a considerable extent into detail and technical matters to adequately describe the master-like power of musical expression and command of the manifold resources of rhythm exhibited by the composer in these songs. They are six in number, the first of which is Emerson's "Thine eyes still shine for me," every word of which seems to find a sympathetic companion in the music. The happy optimism of "When lovers meet again," by L. E. Mitchell, is no less successfully echoed in the accompanying strains. In the setting of Byron's "When we two parted," a still higher level is attained and the tragic significance of the lines is strongly accentuated. Few songs possess a brief introduction—four bars only—which so perfectly epitomises the sentiment of that which follows, and the setting of the passage beginning "In secret we met" is simply exquisite. The other poem, selected from Byron, consists of the lines beginning "There be none of beauty's daughters," which are set with remarkable vivaciousness. The text of "Weep you no more" has been wedded to music of great expressiveness. Excellent use is made of a triplet figure in the accompaniment, and a beautiful effect is obtained by a harmonic transition immediately after the first double-bar. Keats's "Bright Star" has received a brilliant setting and one that will rejoice the hearts of cultured vocalists and pianists. It should be added that the songs have manifestly been laid out for a tenor voice.

Souvenir d'un Bal. Air de Ballet. By Charles Gounod. Arranged as a song by G. Vaillant. Words by Paul Collin. English words by Theo. Marzials.

Chanson de Juillet. By Benjamin Godard. Words by Edouard Guinand. English words by Paul England. [Metzler and Co.]

THE first of these is headed *Oeuvre Posthume*, not always a recommendation, since it sometimes indicates that which a composer has thought unworthy of publication. So many hands have contributed to the song under review that it is difficult to know how much of the music is due to the celebrated composer; but the result is a lively and graceful ditty which may be recommended to the attention of such English vocalists as can enter into the spirit of French music of this description.

Vocalists who are acquainted with the style of Benjamin Godard will find a characteristic example of his talent in "Chanson de Juillet." It is suitable for a tenor or a soprano in point of compass, but in sentiment it is more suited to the former than the latter. Only accomplished pianists had better attempt to read the accompaniment at sight.

Original Compositions and Arrangements for the Organ. By Joseph C. Bridge. No. 1. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE first number of this new publication consists of an Overture in G major, by the editor. An *Andante con moto* with mysterious changes of key leads into an *Allegro vivace*, commencing with a flowing, melodious subject in three-four time with an energetic continuation, and leading eventually into the subdominant, in which key the hymn-like second theme is introduced. The working-out is noteworthy for the discursive treatment of the principal motive; but no new material of importance is introduced, and the movement proceeds in a perfectly legitimate manner to an orthodox conclusion.

Tarantella for the Pianoforte. By Charles Gardner.

Pianoforte Album. By Marston Moore.

Marion, Valse Brillante. For Pianoforte. By Oscar Allon. [Weekes and Co.]

THE effects of the bite of the legendary spider would seem likely to go on for all time, for the form of the Tarantella dance still possesses considerable attraction for composers. Mr. Gardner has written a vivacious piece, which if played with spirit would be effective; but it might be mistaken for hundreds of others which have preceded it.

Mr. Moore's Album consists of five little pieces of unpretentious and simple character, but which possess some musical charm. The Album will doubtless appeal to pianists of limited abilities.

Mr. Allon's Waltz possesses little brilliancy of a florid kind, but the composer has cleverly avoided the monotony of rhythm which too often characterises works in this form. It is easy to read and would make a pleasing drawing-room piece.

MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

AMONG the most important Concerts of the past month the place of honour must be assigned to the Birmingham Festival Choral Society's Jubilee performance of "Elijah," which was given in the Town Hall on the 8th ult., in the presence of an audience that filled every available seat. The committee sent invitations to the surviving members of the first "Elijah" chorus, who were accommodated with seats in the orchestra, while one of Mendelssohn's grandchildren occupied a seat in the side-gallery. The singing of the chorus was distinguished by remarkable tone power, precision, and fervour, the like of which has not been surpassed even at our Festivals. Thanks are due to Dr. Heap; there is no more experienced conductor of the "Elijah" in the country, he having conducted the great oratorio upwards of thirty-five times in all parts of the Midlands. The orchestra, which numbered some eighty performers, never played better, and in Mr. C. W. Perkins the conductor had a most reliable and accomplished organist. The principals were Mesdames Marie Duma and Belle Cole, Mr. Iver McKay, and Mr. Ffrangcon-Davies, assistance in the double quartet being given by local artists. In the quartet "Cast thy burden," the bass part was assigned to Mr. Pountney, who was a chorister at the first performance, and who is still an active member of the choir. The greatest artistic triumph was achieved by Mr. Ffrangcon-Davies, whose conception of *Elijah* was marked by striking individuality, and whose reading of the part revealed quite new features.

Messrs. Harrison's first popular Subscription Concert of the season was given in the Town Hall, on the 5th ult., and attracted, as usual, a large and fashionable audience. The Concert was of a miscellaneous character, the great feature being Lady Hallé's exquisite playing of Handel's Violin Sonata in A major and Néruda's quaint "Berceuse Slave" in D minor (Op. 11). Madame Nordica, who has not been heard here for some years, was the principal vocalist; but, unfortunately, she had contracted a sore throat on her return from America, and did not do justice to her powers. The other vocalists were Miss Ada Crossley, Mr. Barton McGuckin, Mr. Ley Vernon, and Mr. Santley. Mr. Felix Corbett was the pianist, Mr. Sydney Brooks, violoncellist, and Mr. Watkis, accompanist.

In the Town Hall, on the 14th ult., Mr. Stockley gave the first of his twenty-fourth annual series of Orchestral Subscription Concerts in the presence of a fairly large audience. The principal orchestral pieces were Dvorák's Overture "Le Carnaval," Goldmark's Overture "Sakuntala," Bizet's Suite "L'Arlesienne," and Sullivan's "In Bethany," an *Andante* for string orchestra, from the oratorio "The Light of the World." A feature of the Concert was Mr. Leonard Borwick's magnificent rendering of Grieg's Pianoforte Concerto in A minor. In the second part of the programme he gave Chopin's beautiful Prelude in D flat and Liszt's somewhat hackneyed second Rhapsodie Hongroise. Mrs. Helen Trust, who was the only vocalist, sang with the utmost charm Grieg's "Solvejg's Lied."

The Church Choral Association for the archdeacons of Coventry and Birmingham held a grand choral Festival at St. Philip's Church, when the amalgamated choirs of fifteen of our local churches took part in the musical service. Mr. John Heywood was the conductor, and Mr. Yates Mander the organist. In honour of this celebration several new compositions by local composers, specially written for this Festival, constituted the principal musical events. These were, two processional hymns by Mr. Henry Taylor and Mr. Tearne, a Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in F