Review

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show much originality of research. He is on safer ground in the periods of history nearer to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, though his dates are not always trustworthy. Of the character of the music of these periods little can be gleaned from the pages. There is plenty of most interesting information about old books and old writers, but little concerning their contents or the peculiarities of the compositions. Still the book of Mr. Matthew may be read by those who desire to get a general idea of the lives of musicians spoken of, and who wish to have musical matters placed pleasantly before them. The book for students, which shall satisfy educational needs, has yet to be written.

Motett for forty voices. By Thomas Tallis. Edited by A. H. Mann, Mus. Doc., Oxon. [Weekes and Co.]

In printing this Motett Dr. Mann deserves all due recognition from the lovers of the older English School of Music. He places within the reach of all who are interested in the preservation of these monuments of musical history a composition concerning which little was generally known. In his preface he gives no information concerning the original MS., or any traditions concerning its existence. He, however, mentions a list of known copies and their owners. He says that only seven scores are known. 1. In the Buckingham Palace Library. 2. In the British Museum Library. 3. In the Royal College of Music Library. 4. In the Madrigal Society's Library. 5. In the Rev. Canon Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley's Library. 6. In the possession of Mr. Reeves, Music Publisher, Fleet Street. 7. And in his own possession. He describes these in detail, and gives all the information that he has been able to collect concerning them.

The published score, arranged by Dr. Mann, has the first four choirs on the left-hand side, and the last four on the right; this is done for convenience of publication, and to obtain as good a view as possible of all the parts. Each choir consists of soprano, contralto, alto, tenor, and bass parts. The music is said to be in canon; in fact, in more than one instance when the work has been spoken of by historians it has been called Tallis's "Forty-part Canon." It is not, properly speaking, in canon, but it opens in canonic imitation, but it is not strict throughout. The ingenuity of the arrangement is such, however, as must commend it to all scientific minds among musicians, while the effect will astonish all those who know the state of music at the period at which it was written, for the distinctly advanced character it possesses.

The Months. Twelve Sketches for pianoforte solo.

Six Songs. Words by Caroline Radford.

Composed by Erskine Allon.

[The London Music Publishing Company.]

ALTHOUGH weak compositions—as we have frequently said in these columns—are often helped forward by "characteristic" titles, it by no means follows that strong compositions are to be thrown aside because they are intended to realise definite ideas. We are, therefore, inclined to notice the pieces before us rather as Sketches appealing to our love of abstract music than as illustrative pictures of "The Months," the names of which may be as much mistaken in listening to Mr. Allon's twelve pieces as in experiencing their varying effects in our daily life. The composer always writes well, and is, perhaps, at his best when unfettered by the necessity of musically depicting such decisive meteorological peculiarities as March winds, April showers, snowflakes, and other incidental varieties of our climate. Perhaps we may be inclined to select May, June, August, and November for special commendation; but as agreeable little trifles for drawing-room audiences they may all be conscientiously recommended. The Six Songs are highly favourable specimens of the composer's vocal writing. No. 1 ("Evening") and No. 2 ("A Spring Song") are charmingly adapted for expressive vocalists and intelligent pianists; and No. 3 ("Two Songs")—one treating of the singing of a girl in "tattered garments" and the other of a bright little maid who was "too happy to wonder why"—being almost pathetic in their contrast. No. 4 ("Aubade"), No. 5 ("Sweetheart"), and No. 6 ("Westleigh Bells") are in every respect vocal gems, and should be procured and earnestly studied by all accomplished singers.

The Music Class, or Sight Singer. By Sinclair Dunn.

[The Music Publishing Company.]

WE always look with especial favour upon Instruction-books by those actually engaged in tuition, because experience teaches them what is really necessary to ensure the steady progress of the pupil. It is also good, we think, to adopt the plan in vocal tutors of writing original exercises; for, as the author of this work observes, "there will be less chance of the pupil learning by ear, which would be the case if too many well-known airs were given." All Mr. Dunn's lessons are carefully written, and fairly suited for the purpose intended. But we scarcely think that a young student can derive a clear idea of the difference between a major and a minor scale, by being told that "In the Diatonic *major* scale from Doh to Me is a major third of two full tones," and "In the Diatonic *minor* scale Lah to Do is a minor third of three half tones." Neither can we agree with the examples of compound time being called 2.2, or 6.4, 2.4, or 6.8, 3.2, or 9.4, &c. It is very well to say that 9.4, for instance, is "three dotted minims"; but assuredly, then, it cannot be 3.2. Curiously enough, too, the simple signatures 2.8, 3.8, and 4.8 are used alone to express the compound times, two dotted quavers, three dotted quavers, and four dotted quavers. Many of the compositions contained in the book will, we have little doubt, become favourites with young vocalists, for although simple, they are all tuneful, and several include some good contrapuntal effects. Amongst the best of these may be mentioned the Quartet "My lady sleeps"; the Anthem "The Lord is good"; and the Glee "Awake," all the composition of Mr. Sinclair Dunn.

Six Characteristic Pieces for Pianoforte Duet.

Merrily Bounds the Bark. Three-part Song for Male Voices.

Love Wakes and Weeps. Serenade.

Composed by M. Heale.

[Augener and Co.]

THE first of the six Pianoforte Duets in the above list—a Minuet and Trio in E minor and major—is a very fair example of a good teaching trifle for young players, and well indicates the style and quality of the following pieces. No. 2 (a Gavotte) and No. 3 (a Waltz) are sufficiently melodious to interest juvenile pianists; and No. 4 (a Scherzo), No. 5 (a March), and No. 6 (a Polonaise) have some exceedingly good imitative points, apart from the attractive nature of the subjects.

As a vocal writer the composer (whose name is new to us) shows very decided talent, especially in the three-part Barcarole, "Merrily bounds the Bark," the words of which are adapted from Sir Walter Scott. Throughout this composition the hand of a cultivated artist is decisively shown, not only in the musical colouring of the poetry, but in the pianoforte part, which is charmingly interwoven with the voices. To male-voice choirs this part-song will prove a valuable acquisition. The Serenade, "Love wakes and weeps," derives much of its effect from the constant substitution of two even quavers for the group of three demanded by the time-signature, 6-8. The song, however, is well written for the voice, and with a good singer will no doubt secure a success.

Chwec'h o Gueuon Gwliðgarol i Baritone neu Bass. Gan R. S. Hughes. [Wrexham: Hughes and Son.]

THIS is a collection of six spirited and melodious songs for Baritone or Bass voice. The style of the airs is distinctly Balfean. Like most of the ballads of the famous Opera writer, they are well laid out for the voice, and such as would readily catch the ear. We have no doubt that the music has gleaned much of its character from the poetry. This, unfortunately for us, cannot be determined now. There are few musicians who are not in sympathy with the Welsh, although their language does not form part of a musical education. However, we may infer the agreement of music and words because of the consonantal character of the latter.

Among other pieces set to Welsh words which have been received from the same publishers, is a pretty setting of Longfellow's "Stars of the Summer night," by T. J. Davies, "Geiriau Cymraeg gan," which means Welsh version, by