Review

Source: *The Musical Times*, Vol. 46, No. 750 (Aug. 1, 1905), pp. 540-541

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/904302>

Accessed: 26-12-2015 16:39 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Musical Times Publications Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Musical Times*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Reviews.

HARVEST FESTIVAL MUSIC.

A Song of Thanksgiving. Cantata for Harvest and General Festival use. Words by Shapcott Wensley. Music by J. H. Maunder.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

Mr. Maunder's cantata is laid out for soprano, tenor and bass (or contralto) solo and chorus, well-known hymn-tunes being added to be sung by the congregation. The composer has a peculiar talent for securing broad and attractive effects by simple means, and we know of no work better calculated to meet satisfactorily the requirements of the majority of church choirs at harvest thanksgivings. Mr. Shapcott Wensley has provided an excellent 'book,' and its jubilant and devotional spirit is happily expressed in Mr. Maunder's music. The solos are melodious and, in common with the choral-writing, easy to read and sing. The simple omission of the hymn 'We plough the fields and scatter' makes the cantata suitable for general use, and an alternative *Finale* is provided for concert-room performances.

Thou shalt keep the feast of Harvest. Composed by Frederic H. Cowen.

Praise to God, Immortal praise. Composed by John E. West.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

Any composition from the pen of Dr. Cowen commands attention, and his new harvest anthem will certainly reward those who study it. The composer has manifestly written for a well-trained choir, the members of which are capable of taking up entrances with precision on any beat or half-beat of the bar. If this is the chief difficulty the anthem presents, the part-writing is most melodious, the intervals, with one or two exceptions, being easy to read. The exceptions, however, are justified by the harmonic effects which contribute to the significance of the music. Structurally the work consists of a dignified opening chorus in C, which leads into a short solo in A flat for a soprano voice, the singer being presently supported by the altos, tenors and basses. A brief recitative for basses in unison followed by a terse choral passage and an organ interlude effectively prepare the way for the final portion, which consists of a fugatto based on a virile subject, preceded and followed by sections in solid four-part harmony of imposing character.

Mr. West has set a portion of a hymn by Anna Lætitia Barbauld (1743-1825), and in a manner that testifies to keen apprehension of what is effective in choral-writing. The anthem contains no solos, but the respective sections of the choir are made to answer each other in a way that provides ample variety and secures good contrast with the portions in close harmony. In two places the sopranos and altos are divided severally into two parts, but the vocal-writing, although requiring a crisp attack, presents few executive difficulties.

A Method of teaching Harmony based upon Ear-training. By Frederick G. Shinn, Mus. Doc. Part II. Chromatic Harmony and Exceptional Progression.

[The Vincent Music Company, Limited.]

The first part of this work, dealing with diatonic harmony, was reviewed in our issue of September, 1904. Dr. Shinn in this new section boldly carries his ear-training plans into the subtle atmosphere of the most modern harmony. If he asks too much from the average harmony student, at least it may be said that no pains have been spared to provide ample and well-organized material for study. No student who plods through the course herein designed could fail to gain valuable knowledge and practical skill in harmonizing, and probably an awakened ear. We regret to note that Dr. Shinn, in his theoretical explanations, talks of 'generators' (which generate sounds out of tune!), and that he even goes so far as to support the least tenable assumption of the Day theory that the presence of certain

discords as part of the harmonic or partial series excuses 'preparation,' a word which, if it means anything, means the sounding of a note *before* it is discordant. Dr. Shinn is far happier in his interesting chapter on exceptional progression, wherein he shows by numerous examples from good composers that the so-called 'rules' of harmony are advantageously set aside under certain circumstances. Many students, we fear, will only too eagerly attend to this chapter.

Trafalgar. Ballad for chorus and orchestra. Words by Francis T. Palgrave. Music by Hugh Blair.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

The battle of Trafalgar took place on October 21, 1805, therefore it is with singular appropriateness that in this centenary year Mr. Hugh Blair should have set to music some of the most stirring lines of Palgrave's poem celebrating Nelson's great naval victory. The music is laid out for chorus and orchestra only, and in a manner that is productive of good effect. Chorus singers will find their full declamatory opportunity in the rendering of these stirring strains. The music is full of virility, and moreover it has the merit of being melodious, not difficult to sing, and not spun out as modern works too often are. Mr. Blair's 'Trafalgar' abounds in contrasts—from the strenuous unaccompanied phrase 'England expects every man will do his duty' to the tender music of 'Features that ne'er can be gazed on again till the death pang is o'er.'

This refreshing work, which occupies fifteen minutes in performance, is one that, if we mistake not, will be welcomed by choral societies, not only for its spirited subject-matter and skilled musicianship, but for the healthy character of its strains.

Six Morceaux de Salon. Pour Violon et Piano. By Carl Bohm.

First Steps for the Violin (first position only). By Emil Kreuz, Op. 53. Part I. Violin only. Part II. The pieces for violin with pianoforte accompaniment. (Nos. 65 and 65A of Novello's Music Primers.)

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

Among the present-day writers of music for the violin Carl Bohm holds an enviable position, teachers and amateurs alike regarding him with high esteem for the skilful and delightful solos his resourceful brain and facile pen abundantly provide for them. His latest work, 'Six Morceaux de Salon,' will not only go far towards retaining the affections of his old friends, but will bring him many a new admirer.

With the exception of the last number, the pieces under review are written in various dance rhythms; nevertheless, they are most creditably free from the usual hackneyed type of such things. Thus No. 1—'Rigaudon,'—gives us a solemn, impressive theme (*Molto moderato, quasi Adagio*), in place of the lively, even skittish little airs often associated with the Rigaudons of the old French composers of the 17th century. Apart, however, from the title—which perchance may cause some surprise—the solo, with its elevated harmonic accompaniment, lends itself to effective solo playing, with a possible good display on the G string.

The Bourrée and Gavotta (Nos. 2 and 3) are conventional in form, but none the less pleasing. The Gavotta, with its bright, joyous theme may indeed possibly become the favourite of the set. Strong and majestic in character is the Sarabande (No. 4), a piece that requires a somewhat masculine handling to give it its full measure of success. The Valse Etude (No. 5) departs from the usual beaten track of the mere waltz. Skilfully constructed on an arpeggio foundation, the subject-matter furnishes good scope for excellent legato practice. No. 6, a flowing *Capriccio Finale*, demands nimble fingers for an adequate performance, but young people—for whom these pieces are more especially designed—should give a warm welcome to a pretty strain written in a form in which they have doubtless had many a dry study to practise:

&c.

The violin parts—employed only within the compass of the first to third positions—are most ably written, and afford almost a maximum of effect with a minimum of effort. The accompaniments, as usual with Herr Bohm's compositions, are always interesting, and with pleasing harmonies well support the soloist.

'First Steps for the Violin' should prove to be a useful instruction book. It comprises a number of easy and progressive studies and a collection of melodious pieces with pianoforte accompaniment. Mr. Kreuz is an experienced teacher and an accomplished musician, and he has embodied in this Primer the results of years of observation of the difficulties met with by beginners. He considers that in instruction books, as a rule, too many difficulties are introduced at each successive step. His course is divided into twenty well defined and graded steps, and the technical instruction is accompanied by explanations of musical theory. But the logic of violin fingering and not that of abstract musical notation governs the gradation of the course. Thus one of the first exercises is in the key of E on the E string, the steps being based upon the idea of finger posture. In this way a pupil is led on to play many scales without difficulty. An attractive speciality of the course is that a pianoforte accompaniment is provided to the exercises. This will be an incentive to home practice. All the valuable exercises and melodious studies so treated are in the instruction book and are also published separately with the pianoforte accompaniment. They are thus available for use as a supplement to other courses.

Beethoven. By Ernest Walker.

[Philip Wellby.]

This little volume, belonging to the 'Music of the Masters' series edited by Mr. Wakeling Dry, concerns, as the title shows, only the master's music. Limited space compels the author to be brief, yet on every page he shows himself well acquainted with Beethoven's art-work. It would be impossible, and indeed unnecessary, to review this thoughtfully written book in detail. We therefore just comment on one or two passages. In the interesting chapter on the pianoforte sonatas, for instance, the author speaks of Op. 2, No. 3 in C, as 'technically very brilliant'; but we are surprised that he does not specially single out the *Adagio*, which seems to us on a far higher plane than the rest of the work. Again, we cannot agree with his opinion respecting the sonata 'Pathétique' as 'vastly superior' to that in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1. But after all there is truth in the old proverb, *Quot homines, tot sententiae*. Attention, by-the-way, is called to the thematic similarity between the opening notes of the first three movements of Op. 106. But surely the fugue theme in the *Finale* might also have been included. In referring to Beethoven's music as a whole, Dr. Walker touches on the 'burning question' of the 'meaning' of instrumental music. He thinks it highly probable that all the master's statements recorded by the friends of Beethoven were 'mere jokes.' With this we cannot agree, although we feel sure that the composer would have looked with contempt on some of the 'meanings' assigned by various writers to many of his works. Neither do we think his remark to Charles Neate, *re* always working to a picture in his mind, 'cryptic,' 'difficult' to understand. There is a 'Chronological Table of Ludwig van Beethoven's Life,' but even for a small volume too brief, and referring principally to some works, their completion, production, or publication.

Declining now, the Sun's bright Wheel. Lo, now the Shades of Night are swiftly fading. Come, Holy Ghost. English words by the Rev. John Anketell. Music by Horatio Parker. Op. 58.

Two little songs: *The Lark. The Bumble-Bee.* Words by Alice Herbert. Music by John Punter.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

So many modern sacred songs have a secular character that it is satisfactory to come across these three legitimate examples by Professor Horatio Parker, which are instinct with nobility and reverent feeling. The original Latin words of 'Declining now' are by Charles Coffin; they are

taken from the Paris Breviary of 1735, and their dignity and depth of sentiment are echoed in the broad, musical phrases to which they are allied. This song is designed for a baritone voice, but 'Lo, now the shades' is written for a contralto. The text is a solemn prayer for pardon, protection and peace, and the music is distinctly impressive. 'Come, Holy Ghost' is similar in sentiment, but is laid out for a soprano voice, and affords a fine opportunity for *legato* singing. These songs may be specially recommended to those who sing at organ recitals given in churches.

Mr. Pointer's 'Two little songs' are delightfully gay and dainty little ditties for a soprano voice; moreover, they are as clever as they are pretty.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Francis Hopkinson and James Lyon: two studies in early American Music. By O. G. Sonneck. Pp. viii. and 213 (Washington: Printed for the author by H. L. McQueen).—*The Ripon Psalter*. Edited by Rev. E. H. Swann, M.A., Succentor. Pp. 258 (Ripon: W. Harrison).

ASSOCIATION OF MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVALS.

The Association, which was formed in May 1904, held its first annual Conference on June 27 at Messrs. Broadwood's King's Room, Conduit Street. At the morning session there was a large attendance of ladies and gentlemen associated with between thirty and forty Festivals. Lady Mary Forbes-Trefusis presided. It was stated that 244 subscriptions and a donation of £10 had been received. The officers, Lady Forbes-Trefusis as Chairman, Miss Wakefield and Dr. McNaught as Hon. Secs., and Mr. W. II. Leslie as Treasurer, were re-elected, and it was decided that they were to be regarded as an Executive Committee with power to co-opt not more than two other members of the Association. We understand that Mr. Fuller-Maitland has consented to join as one of the co-opted members.

In the course of a short discussion on the business of the Association attention was drawn to a large map starred to show places in England where competitions were held. The most noteworthy feature was the concentration of a number of Festivals in the North-Western corner of England.

Mr. Fowler (Bristol) asked why Welsh competitions were not noticed on the Association lists, and it was stated that although the idea of competitions had been adopted from the Welsh, the lines of Eisteddfodau were generally different from the English Festivals, and there had been no disposition shown by the Welsh to join the Association.

Miss Wakefield then read a paper on 'How this Association can enhance the value of the musical competition festival movement. What is the hindrance to music in England?' It was impossible to lay down hard and fast rules for the conduct of Festivals, because the circumstances of districts differed considerably. Broadly, the scheme should include (1) a plain-sailing choral work, (2) a madrigal, (3) a male-voice part-song, (4) a female-voice part-song, and 'sight-singing for all and above all' and always with words at first sight. In addition to the above there should be, say, three junior classes—(1) a unison song or a round, (2) a two-part song, and (3) again sight-singing. As to the 'hindrance to music in England,' it consisted of the want of serious purpose on the part of the general public. The drawing-room view of music is paramount in England. She looked to the competition festival promoters to improve the outlook and to stifle all that tends towards want of thoroughness. 'Every nerve must be strained, every purpose rendered purposeful to the fullest extent possible, for so, and so only, may we hope to remove an artistic reproach of which we hardly seem aware.'

Mr. Plunket Greene, in opening a discussion, deplored the prevailing lack of seriousness in musical study. No doubt great strides had been made in recent years, and much of this progress was due to the movement initiated by Miss Wakefield. A big point in the whole matter was the professional singer. What songs were in demand? Unfortunately the wrong sort. The professional singer and the publisher naturally gave way to this demand, and so fed and accentuated the appetite. A vicious circle was