Review

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REVIEWS.—(Continued from page 176.)

NEW EASTER ANTHEMS.

Worthy is the Lamb. By E. H. Thorne.*If ye then be risen with Christ.* By Ivor Atkins.*Jesus Christ is risen to-day.* By Alfred R. Gaul.*Christ the Lord is risen again.* By E. Vine Hall.

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

There is a solidity and Bach-like strength in Mr. Thorne's anthem that should cause its wide acceptance. It imperatively demands a well-trained choir of capable singers to do it justice, but to such it will not present exceptional difficulties. The work opens in an original manner with an organ unisonal passage which gives out the fugal subject, followed by its counter subject, with which is built up the first chorus of the work. It is a subject admirably constructed, not only with reference to technical requirements, but from an expressive point of view, the theme emphasising the statement, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.' The second section of the anthem is also fugal. The subject extends over ten bars, very dignified in design, and one that happily echoes the spirit of the text. The organ part, possessing considerable independence, is not the least effective portion of this sterling composition.

The clever organist of Worcester Cathedral has written an anthem ('If ye then be risen with Christ') which, while preserving the dignity of the best church music, is sufficiently modern in character to meet present-day requirements. As Mr. Atkins has selected only few words for his setting, these are frequently repeated; but he has sought to express the varied meanings which the weighty lines will bear, and in this way has avoided some of the objectionable results of 'vain repetition.' There can be no doubt about the composer's earnestness; it proclaims itself in the first section, in the theme to which the tenors and basses in unison deliver the postulate which gives the title to the anthem. This theme is well contrasted with the persuasiveness of the music of the succeeding *Andante*, 'Set your affections on things above.' Some effects of a dramatic character are secured at the entrance of all the voices, and the subsequent parts are impressive. The *Finale, Allegro*, is opened in vigorous fashion by a phrase sung by the tenors and basses, answered by the sopranos. After this the music is written in solid four-part harmony of diatonic character, and the anthem is brought to an imposing conclusion.

Mr. Gaul's setting of 'Jesus Christ is risen to-day' may be commended to choirs of limited capacities, inasmuch as it makes no serious demands on executive ability. The first two bars, assigned to the tenors, consist of the opening strain of the old hymn-tune (from the *Lyra Davidica* of 1708) associated with the title of the anthem, and although Mr. Gaul makes no further use of this quotation the sense of familiarity thus engendered is not disturbed in what follows. The opening chorus is succeeded by an Easter carol containing solo passages for a soprano voice. The most distinctive section of the music is found in a long and gradual *crescendo* which leads up to a jubilant conclusion.

Mr. Vine Hall has evidently had in mind the capacities of village choirs in the composition of his Easter anthem. He has selected for his text the words of the well-known hymn, 'Christ the Lord is risen again,' translated by Miss Catherine Winkworth from the German. The music is presented in simple chordal progressions set forth in stately minim array, and two soprano solos afford pleasant relief. The organ accompaniment is in keeping with the facilities of the vocal portion of an anthem that will undoubtedly serve its purpose.

Songs of the Church with stories of their writers. By Lady M'Dougall.

[Charles H. Kelly.]

The 'Songs of the Church' upon which Lady M'Dougall so pleasantly discourses in this interesting volume from her pen, are the various hymns that are sung from time to time in church and home. In her introduction she says: 'The literature of hymnology is particularly rich. Every age since the Christian era has produced some fine outburst of song. The Latin Fathers, the devout King Robert of

France in the midst of the darkest days of the dark ages, monks such as the Bernards of Clairvaux and Cluny, the German singers in the midst of the horrors of civil war, George Herbert fresh from the Court of Charles I., the Wesleys and their contemporaries, and the many writers of the 19th century, all contribute the best thoughts of their lives in the best words.' This is not only well put, but the statement is perfectly true. Moreover, the songs (hymns) of the church are catholic in the fullest sense of the word. The heart-promptings of Ken, Keble, Charles Wesley, Watts, Newman, Doddridge, Cowper, and a host of others are sung in all the churches, irrespective of and without a thought of denominational differences; surely this is a fact which should rejoice the hearts of those who are responsible for the music of the sanctuary.

Lady M'Dougall has primarily written for the edification of children, but children of older growth may learn much from her interesting pages; and organists, choirmasters and members of church choirs will gain not a little inspiration in the discharge of their duties from the perusal of this very readable book.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Art of Touch in all its Diversity: an Analysis and Synthesis of Pianoforte Tone-production. By Tobias Matthay (Longmans).—*Grosse Kompositionslehre.* By Hugo Riemann (Berlin and Stuttgart: W. Spemann).—*Famous Composers.* By Nathan Haskell Dole, with portraits (Methuen and Co.).—*Musical Ministries in the Church.* By Waldo Selden Pratt (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company).—*Church Music.* By A. Madeley Richardson (Longmans).—*Devotional Services for public worship; and Hymns of Faith and Life.* By the Rev. Dr. John Hunter (J. M. Dent and Co.).—*The Psalms: their Structure and Musical rendering.* By A. Madeley Richardson (The Vincent Music Company).—*Confessions of a Violinist.* By T. L. Phipson (Chatto and Windus).—*Musical Fantasies.* By Israfel (Simpkin, Marshall and Co.).—*Piano Teaching.* By Felix Le Coupey, translated by M. A. Bierstadt (William Reeves).—*Modern Organ-Tuning.* By Hermann Smith.—*A Treatise on the Training of Boys' Voices.* By George T. Fleming.—*The hand of the pianist.* By Marie Unschuld von Melasfeld (Breitkopf and Haertel).—*British violin-makers, classical and modern, with portraits and facsimiles.* By the Rev. W. Meredith Morris (Chatto and Windus).

MRS. NEWMARCH ON
TCHAIKOVSKY'S OPERAS.

At the Musical Association, on the 9th ult., Dr. Charles Maclean in the chair, Mrs. Newmarch read the fourth of a series of papers upon National Opera in Russia. On this occasion she dealt with the operas of Tchaikovsky.

The lecturer in her opening remarks said that Tchaikovsky's musical tastes developed earlier on the dramatic than on the symphonic side. He knew and loved the masterpieces of Italian and French opera long before he had made acquaintance with the works of Beethoven or Schumann. His loyal affection for Italian opera dated from early childhood, when he listened with delight to selections from Bellini, Donizetti and, above all, Mozart, played by an orchestra—an instrument dear to Russian hearts. But although Tchaikovsky was so strongly attracted towards operatic music, of the eight works he composed for the stage only two had retained a strong grip on the popular taste: 'Eugene Oniegin' and 'Pique-Dame' (The Queen of Spades).

Seeking a reason for this comparative failure of his dramatic music, Mrs. Newmarch said it did not lie so much in the poverty of the subjects he treated as in the fact that he frequently chose them without reference to his particular cast of mind. Opera was the one musical form to which the objective outlook was essential; but Tchaikovsky saw everything from a subjective and temperamental point of view. Consequently he was only at his best in those operas in which, by reason of their literary contents, he was able to infuse most of his own individuality and lyrical inspiration.

Several of Tchaikovsky's operas were commented upon in detail, and Mrs. Newmarch warmly commended