Review

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The Vale of Flowers. A Pastoral Idyl. By P. Godfrey. [Augener and Co.]

THE music of this Cantata, set for female voices with soli and chorus, is very pretty, effective, and easy to sing. The accompaniments are well written and characteristic. The work of the musician is far superior to that of the versifier, whose design is trite, his images hackneyed, and his rhymes somewhat commonplace.

Trois Morceaux de Salon pour Piano-forte. Par J. Jacques Haakman. [Charles Woolhouse.]

THE title given to these pieces has been so often employed to describe weak, invertebrate, and uninteresting works, that it serves often as a hint to pass them by. These three pieces are so far out of the common as showing good purpose, strengthened and supported by musical skill, that they are satisfactory exceptions to the general rule.

Six Celebrated Pieces. By J. S. Bach. Transcribed for the Harmonium by King Hall. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THESE are arrangements of movements from the Sonatas and Suites for violin and violoncello of the old Leipzig master, and are so skillfully transcribed that persons unacquainted with the originals would never suppose they were not written for the harmonium. Some of them are, perhaps, too light to serve as Voluntaries, but they are all extremely effective.

Soft Voluntaries for the Organ. By George Calkin. Book XII. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

As in all the previous instalments of this publication, we have here six pieces in which dignity and a melodious, elegant style are happily united. They are, perhaps, more even in merit than any of the previous books, and organists will find them very acceptable.

FOREIGN NOTES.

In view of the Bayreuth performances now in progress, it may not be uninteresting to enumerate the various German operatic institutions, both Royal and Municipal, which have contributed leading members to the body of some three hundred artists taking part in these unique representations. They are the following—viz., Berlin, Herr Betz and Frau Rosa Sucher; Vienna, Herren Hans Richter and Van Dyck and Frau Amalie Materna; Dresden, Herr Gudehus and Frau Therese Malten; Munich, Herren Levi, Strauss, Porges (musical directors), Fuchs, Gura, and Siehr, and Mesdames Dressler and Borchers; Carlsruhe, Herren Felix Mottl and Ernst Wehrle and Frau Reuss-Belce; Darmstadt, Herren Hofmüller and Kranich (technical director); Hamburg, Herr Wiegand; Bremen, Herr Friedrichs; Leipzig, Herr Perron, &c. The largest contingent of orchestral members has been furnished by the Court Theatres of Carlsruhe and Mannheim.

Madame Etelka Gerster is just now the great attraction at the Kroll'sche Theater of Berlin; while at the Friedrich-Wilhelmstadt House, in the same capital, Millöcker's comic operetta "Der Bettel-Student" has been revived, and appears to be as popular as ever.

The Berlin Sing-Akademie has arranged an attractive programme for its Winter Subscription Concerts. Mendelssohn's "Elijah," Handel's "Israel in Egypt," and Blumner's "Abraham" are to be performed, and Bach's Christmas Oratorio will be given at the end of December. The first Concert is to take place on October 25, when "Elijah" will be given.

Johannes Brahms has completed a new work for eight-part chorus *a capella*, entitled "Fest und Gedenk Sprüche," which is to be first performed at the Music Festival to be held in September next, at Hamburg, under the direction of Dr. Hans von Bülow.

The Swedish Students' Choir of the University of Lund, numbering some thirty-two vocalists, under the direction of Mr. E. Norrmann, has met with a most hearty welcome at Concerts given last month both at Berlin and Leipzig.

Herr Angelo Neumann, the energetic *impresario*, has arranged for a series of performances at the Berlin Victoria Theatre, his *répertoire* including Wagner's early opera "Die Feen," Peter Cornelius's comic opera "Der Barbier

von Bagdad," and Weber's "Die drei Pintos" (Herr Mahler's version), all of them novelties to Berlin audiences.

M. Saint-Saëns's opera "Henri VIII." having had to be shortened, after production, by about one-half, a French wit suggests that the title should now be Henri IV.

At a recent performance at Bâle of Bach's "St. Matthew Passion Music," the bass soli were sung by Professor Julius Stockhausen, the eminent German singer, well remembered by many amateurs in this country. Herr Stockhausen, who has just completed his sixty-third year, still remains at the head of German concert-singers.

We again read, in Frankfort papers, most eulogistic accounts concerning the pianoforte playing of Mr. Howgrave, the young Englishman of whom mention has been previously made in these columns. At a recent public Concert of the Raff-Conservatorium, Mr. Howgrave (who is still a pupil of that institution) played, *inter alia*, Beethoven's Variations in E flat major (Op. 35) in a manner which, says the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, "entitles him to the first place amongst the executants of the three days pupil performances. We seldom have heard Beethoven," adds the journal in question, "interpreted in a more truly classical style, and then only by mature artists."

Herr Felix Mottl, the eminent German Conductor, proposes to perform next season, at the Carlsruhe Hof-Theater, Berlioz's opera "Les Troyens" in its entirety. The performance will be an event in the musical world, as the work has hitherto been produced only in an enormously curtailed condition, notably at the Théâtre-Lyrique, of Paris, years ago, where the first and second acts were entirely omitted.

At the Imperial Opera of Vienna, three operas of French origin will obtain a first performance during the coming season—viz., Berlioz's "Benvenuto Cellini," Bizet's "Les Pêcheurs de Perles," and M. Paladilhe's "Patrie."

Capellmeister Riccius, of Dresden, has been appointed librarian of the important musical library belonging to the King of Saxony, whereof the late Professor Fürstenau had been for so many years the highly esteemed custodian.

The Order of the Iron Crown has been conferred by the Emperor of Austria-Hungary upon Antonin Dvorák.

M. Ambroise Thomas is just now engaged upon the composition of a new opera, "Circe" (a Spanish subject, the libretto by Jules Barbier), which is to be brought out next year by the Opéra Comique Company.

M. Gounod is said to have declined, at the eleventh hour, the setting to music of the prize-poem written in glorification of the Revolution Centenary. "Quatre-Vingt-Treize" is the title of M. Theodore de Banville's verses, but the veteran French composer finds himself unable to make anything of them.

Forty recent performances at the Paris Opéra of M. Gounod's "Roméo et Juliette" have brought the exchequer of that establishment the sum of no less than 800,000 francs.

M. Tomas Breton's opera "Gli Amanti di Ternel," recently brought out with great success at Madrid, has just met with an equally favourable reception at Barcelona.

Performances of what is called "picturesque music" are just now being given at the Paris Trocadéro, among the home and foreign instrumentalists being the Provençal Tambourine Players and the "Muntere Musikanten," or Joyous Musicians of Finland. The Finn students come from the University of Helsingfors, and they have had a genial reception from the students of Paris, as well as from the Exhibition authorities.

Mr. Ambroise Thomas's music to the new ballet "La Tempête" (founded upon Shakespeare's "Tempest") continues to be the attraction at the Paris Grand Opéra, abounding, as the score of the work does, with graceful melodies and most effective instrumentation.

Pablo de Sarasate and Eugene d'Albert have just signed an engagement for a joint concert-tour in the United States of America during the coming winter.

The Swedish composer, Ivar Hallström, has just completed an opera, "Neaga," the libretto of which is from the pen of "Carmen Sylva," the well-known *nom de plume* of Queen Elizabeth of Roumania. The Royal authoress is now engaged upon another operatic text, founded upon a Swedish popular legend, for which M. Hallström is likewise to furnish the music.