Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 15, No. 358 (Dec. 1, 1872), p. 693

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

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3353298>

Accessed: 06-01-2016 16:00 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 and Singing Class Circular*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

sharp minor, well express the words, and the return to the key is accomplished without effort. "The Roses are in bloom" is somewhat more conventional in form; but it has a flowing theme, and may be made attractive by a good singer. The harmonies are carefully written throughout, if we except that between the third and fourth bar of the voice part, where C sharp, D, is made the bass to G, A, an effect which we certainly do not like.

The Worker. Song. Written by Frederick Weatherly. *Thy will be done.* Words by Charlotte Elliott.

Composed by Charles Gounod.

THE composer's dramatic feeling has, in our opinion, led him into an excess of "word-painting," which somewhat detracts from the merit of the first song, and we can hardly reconcile ourselves to some of the harmonies which accompany the voice-part; but there is a deep poetical feeling throughout which rivets the attention, and lifts the composition far above the "descriptive songs" of the day. The dreamy opening, in D minor, is admirably suggestive of the cheerless surroundings of the poor worker in his garret; and much effect is gained by the sympathetic accompaniment, which, although not taxing the executive powers of a pianist, will require a trained hand to do it full justice. Pedal chords are perhaps rather too plentiful; but the creeping sensation of the harmonies on the obstinate B natural, to the words "Cold lay the lifeless body," cannot be overpraised. The second song, "Thy will be done," is a prayer for a mezzo-soprano voice, with an *ad lib.* harmonium accompaniment; and, like all M. Gounod's sacred vocal pieces, is remarkable for earnestness and truth of expression in the voice-part. The harmonies, however, are somewhat restless; and on the 5th page we have some modulations, which however cleverly written, seem scarcely in sympathy with the simple fervour of the prayer. The *ad libitum* accompaniment, which is written for the harmonium or organ, seems almost an essential portion of the composition.

LAMBORN COCK AND CO.

As it fell upon a day. Song. The poetry by Shakspeare. The music by Charles Gardner.

Two difficulties beset the composer who attempts to illustrate the text of Shakspeare; one (and the more important) being the fear that the music will fall immeasurably below the standard of the poetry, and the other that the innumerable settings which have received an almost universal acceptance, will so haunt the memory that they cannot be successfully shaken off. The greater then is the credit due to Mr. Gardner, for he has not only caught the spirit of Shakspeare's words, but, neither consciously nor unconsciously, has he imitated any composition to the same verses by his predecessors. A light and graceful melody, with a characteristic accompaniment, is set to the opening lines; and an excellent change from G major to E flat, occurring on the words "Beasts did leap and birds did sing," gives much freshness to the composition, and makes the return to the theme, in the original key, additionally welcome. We commend this unpretentious little song with the utmost confidence to vocalists in search of novelty.

Sabbath Bells. Words by Charles J. Rowe. Music by Charlotte M. Hewke (Mrs. Edward Boulton).

KNOWING, from sad experience, how few song-writers can resist the temptation to "twitter" when birds are spoken of, or to run down the scale at the mention of bells, we have much pleasure in awarding praise to the simple and melodious ballad before us, for the composer has wisely attempted the perhaps somewhat more difficult task of giving a musical colouring to the feeling, instead of the words, of the poetry. The theme is extremely graceful, and accompaniments unexceptionable throughout. As a genuine specimen of an English ballad "Sabbath Bells" should make its way, even in the present crowded state of the market.

GEORGE PHILIP AND SON.

A Manual of Vocal Music, for use in Elementary Schools. By John Taylor.

"The following Manual," says Mr. Taylor in his preface, "prepared expressly to meet the requirements of the new code of 1871, will, it is believed, thoroughly supply a pressing want, and one very generally felt by teachers." Had a number of competent musicians been requested to settle, according to their best judgment, the manner in which vocal music should be taught in Elementary Schools, a text-book would, of course, have been prepared, duly sanc-

tioned, and introduced into these establishments, as an authority from which no departure could be permitted; but the very fact of Mr. Taylor telling us that he hopes to supply a "pressing want" is a sufficient proof of the general impression that no definite system is now being acted upon. That this Manual will be likely to "meet the requirements of the New Code" is a somewhat hazardous conjecture, considering that we have not yet been made acquainted with what these "requirements" are; but we are bound to review the work as one, at least in its author's opinion, in every respect suited to lay the foundation of a national system of musical education. Let us commence then by stating that it is one more of the many attempts to force our present notation into doing the duty of a rational one, by making the Do (or key-note) moveable, instead of stationary. The Relative and Absolute methods of notation for vocal music, are, we believe, destined to cause much dissension amongst teachers, until a system which sufficiently combines the advantages of both shall have become law. Meanwhile, however, we cannot but enter our protest against the practice of ignoring the minor scale so far as to make it a mere offshoot of the major. "The key-note of every scale" says Mr. Taylor "receives the name Do, whatever may be its pitch." Disagree with this theory as we may, it, at least, is a theory; but further on we are told that in sol-fa compositions in the minor mode the syllabic names of the notes remain unchanged. "Thus, A, which is La in the scale of C major, is also La in the mode of A minor." Now we care not to be told again and again how the minor mode "grew up," because our desire is not to find out what it *was*, but what it *is*. In the present day composers write as much in the minor key as the major; and if Do, therefore, is to represent the key-note, by what possible rule can it be presumed only to do so in the major mode? Can Mr. Taylor supply us with any reason, for instance, why in Beethoven's "Air Suisse" (which he quotes in F major and F minor) the first two notes C, F (unquestionably Dominant and Tonic) should be called Sol, Do, in the major, and Mi, La in the minor mode? Referring to the chapter on Time, we are told that "Compound duple time is that in which each bar consists of two or four measures of simple time." After this explanation, we are not surprised to find our author term four-four "Compound duple time," although as he adds "*or C*," and has previously described this sign as expressing *Simple* duple time, a student must be somewhat puzzled to arrive at anything like a clear comprehension of the subject. Compound triple time is said to be produced in the like manner, by putting together three measures of simple time, nine-eighths, for instance, being created by "merging into every single bar three bars of three-eighths time." Nothing in our opinion can be more erroneous than this definition. Compound time, either duple or triple, is, in modern music, nothing more than moving in triplets, for which purpose it is necessary to dot each division of the bar. The idea of using three bars of simple time to produce one of compound, causes a false notion of the matter; for by observing the *bâton* of a conductor who marks the rhythm instead of the quantity, nobody can tell whether he is beating simple or compound time, and this is a proof that a dot after a note in the regular divisions of compound time, does not *lengthen* it, but makes it equal to three instead of two. The term "Compound" certainly does not express this; but it is no more absurd than many other words which are used in music, although their meaning has long since altered. Strangely enough, in speaking of the clefs, Mr. Taylor conveys a wrong impression to the learner. "The F clef," for instance, he says "is so called because it gives the name F to the note on the fourth line of the complete stave." Surely the fact of its giving the name F to the fourth line is not the *reason* but the *result* of its being "so called," and it is so called because originally it was simply the letter F itself. Whilst correcting any such inaccuracies as these (supposing that our author agrees with us that they *are* so) it would also be well to get rid of the word "preventative," which occurs in a foot-note at page 40, for works intended for schools cannot be too carefully written. With the exceptions we have mentioned we cordially agree with the remarks on the facts and principles of music, and also on the mode of study which Mr. Taylor enforces. The exercises are carefully written, and some very good rules are given as to the method of practising them. We may especially draw attention to the section headed "Directions to be observed in the conduct of a practical singing lesson," which contains much sound and valuable advice to teachers.