Review

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(violin) and M. Paque (violoncello), both of whom performed solos with much success. The vocalists were Miss Katharine Poyntz and Madlle. Drasdil. The concert was attended by a thoroughly appreciative audience.

THE Welsh Choral Union has already given two of the four subscription concerts announced, and with a success which fully justifies us in hoping that its migration this season to the Hanover Square Rooms will bring the association as prominently into public notice as it deserves. Sir Sterndale Bennett's "May Queen" was performed with much effect at the first concert, the principal singers being Miss Edith Wynne, Miss R. Jewell, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Lewis Thomas; and a harp and pianoforte duet, excellently played by Mr. John Thomas and Mr. W. G. Cusins, was an interesting feature in the programme. At the second concert Welsh music formed, as it ought to do, the chief attraction, and the singing of Misses Wynne and Watts of some of the national melodies was much admired. We should add that Mr. John Thomas (under whose able direction the Society is steadily advancing) contributed some harp solos with marked success.

MADAME LEMMENS-SHERRINGTON gave a *Matinée* at the Hanover Square Rooms on the 23rd ult., before a full and fashionable audience. Her "Scale Waltz" and "Shake Waltz," which she sang for the first time, are chiefly remarkable as good specimens of vocal studies; and we presume that having been duly introduced in public, they will in future be exclusively kept for private practice. That the composer did them ample justice may be relied upon by those who know her exceptionally high vocal powers; but we think that her numerous admirers would have been glad to hear so great an artist in some music of a more exalted character than either these two clever *solfeggios* or the common-place ballad of Mr. Molloy, which she afterwards sang. The concert-giver was assisted in the vocal department by Madlle. Jose Sherrington, Madlle. Drasdil, Messrs. Cummings, Nelson Varley, and Whitney, MM. Jules Lefort and Valdec. A feature in the programme was the comic duet, "Comment voulez-vous que je chante," in which Madame Sherrington (who was associated with M. Lefort) by her brilliant singing and excellent acting, proved how high a position she might have assumed on the lyric stage had we such an establishment as a National Opera. The vocal music was agreeably varied by the clever flute playing of Monsieur A. De Vroye, the able performance of M. Lemmens on the Mustel Organ, and the refined execution of two pianoforte pieces by Madlle. Emma Brandes, who on being encored in a Valse by Chopin, substituted Mendelssohn's "Lied ohne worte," No. 4, Book 6, usually known by the absurd title of "The Bee's Wedding." Mr. Vernon Rigby was announced in the programme, but did not appear.

THE second concert of the St. John's Wood Society of Musicians, under the direction of Mr. Lansdowne Cottell, was given at the Store Street Rooms on the 11th ult. Miss Alexandrina Dwight, in "Il Bacio" and "Tell me, my heart," Miss Crichton in "Bid me discourse," Miss Marie Klein in C. F. Weber's "Farewell, if ever fondest prayer," Madlle. Marie Christine in "The Blind Girl's Dream," and a *débutante*, Miss Jessie Gordon, in "The Beacon," by Wellington Guernsey, achieved a marked success, and give promise of future excellence; and Messrs. Charles A. Sleight and Alfred Bennett (tenors), Messrs. Charles Bell and Montelli (basses), were also most favourably received. Amongst the pianists mention must be made of Miss Elcho, Miss Madeleine Meade and the Misses Molyneux, who are styled in the programme "Infant pianistes."

MR. W. H. CUMMINGS'S Cantata, "The Fairy Ring," produced at his concert at St. James's Hall on the 24th ult., well deserved the success it obtained; for although aiming at no exalted school of art, it is bright, tuneful, and earnestly written throughout. The choruses are well studied, and in every case appropriate to the words they illustrate, the best being "Round about the fairy ring," in which, in addition to some graceful vocal themes, we have some highly effective instrumentation, and the finale, "Away, away," the concluding portion of which has much dramatic feeling. A quartet, "Peace to the dreamer" (encored), is well voiced and effective, but too long for the nature of the movement; and a six-part madrigal, "Love is a sweet, yet a cruel thing," may also be commended for its careful and unpretentious writing. The composer has certainly not appropriated the best solos in the work, although, by his excellent singing, the air, "By the fair river" elicited a large amount of approbation. The gem was given to Miss Edith Wynne, "In a rosebud I

was lying," which was deliciously sung, and enthusiastically encored. The "Forge" song, rendered with characteristic energy by Mr. Lewis Thomas, reminded us too much of the Boston "Peace Jubilee;" but the contralto air, "Happy fays and fairies all," is extremely melodious, and won another encore, not only from its intrinsic merit, but in recognition of the fine interpretation it received from Madame Patey. At the conclusion of the Cantata, Mr. Cummings was called forward, and warmly greeted by a large audience. We must not omit to mention that the choruses were well given by the members of Mr. Barnby's choir (under the direction of Mr. F. Stanislaus), and that the harp *obbligato* was excellently played by Mr. John Thomas. The second part was miscellaneous, and included Beethoven's "Choral Fantasia" (conducted by Mr. Barnby, with Madame Arabella Goddard at the pianoforte), and vocal solos by the singers above named, with the addition of Madame Lemmens-Sherrington.

Rebibs.

NOVELLO, EWER AND Co.

Te Deum Laudamus, for Soprano solo, Chorus, Orchestra, Organ, and Military Band (*ad libitum*). Composed for the Festival held at the Crystal Palace, May 1, 1872, in celebration of the recovery of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, by Arthur S. Sullivan.

It would seem as though the time had at last arrived when music and its professors were taking their rightful position in social, as well as in intellectual status. Time was, and not long ago, when it was not thought odd for a Painter, in the midst of an assembly of Painters, to deny to music the right of being considered a fine art. The musician at the same time was everywhere, and by everybody looked upon as one who followed a calling which demanded powers very little, if at all superior to those of an ordinary mechanic, and he was treated accordingly. The cause of this might perhaps be found equally divided between himself and the times he lived in—for the musician of thirty or forty years back was not always a very presentable individual, and society had not yet arrived at the intermixture of the aristocracies of intellect, birth and wealth, to which we are now somewhat accustomed. That the lot of music and musicians, however, has fallen upon fairer ground in these days is undeniable, and for this happy consummation the musician has first of all to thank himself—he who respects himself is respected of others, and it is equally true that art is what its professors make it. We have now therefore arrived at a time when the musician is brought into prominence, and made of use—called upon to celebrate a victory, or bewail a defeat; compose a thanksgiving for the recovery of a Prince, or a dirge on the death of a warrior. In parenthesis we may perhaps be allowed to say that the restoration to health of the Prince of Wales, has given an impetus to this species of musical rejoicing which would lead us sometimes to doubt the sincerity of those who call down blessings upon the head of the Heir-apparent (at a published price of Four Shillings; sold at half-price). It was undoubtedly a happy thought on the part of the authorities at the Crystal Palace to commission one of the most eminent of English composers to furnish a *Te Deum*, to be performed at a Thanksgiving Festival with all the vast resources belonging to the place; and the endeavours thus made to fix and hand down to future generations, a memorial of the gratitude of an entire nation, was equally honourable to the one and the other. The remembrance of the victory of Dettingen would have passed away but for Handel's immortal celebration music, and though it would be unjust to institute comparisons, this at least may be said, that Mr. Sullivan has boldly gone to work and manfully determined to do his best, regardless of what great man may have preceded him, or what unborn genius may follow in the same path.

Considering that the tendency on the part of composers for many years past, has been the cultivation of almost microscopic detail to the disadvantage of outline, the most surprising thing about this work is its stately breadth and dignity, the whole treatment being, with but slight exception, Handelian. If we cannot agree with the principles upon which Mr. Sullivan has divided his libretto into movements, we must at least admit the difficulty that exists in making any division which would be likely to satisfy all parties. Still we cannot consider in any other light than as an error of judgment the separation of the antithetical verses, "To Thee all angels" and "To Thee, Cherubin."

As, however, a work of this character demands a more detailed analysis than nine-tenths of the compositions usually

sent for review, we may begin by stating that the first chorus which embraces the first three verses of the Canticle, is in its early phrases bold, bright and dignified—just what the opening movement of a work of this character should be. The fughetta upon the words "To Thee all angels" is not altogether happy in its subject, or remarkable in its working out; but an episode, introduced twice, on the words "The Heavens and all the Powers therein," may be cited as being decidedly striking and original.

The Sanctus is introduced by a phrase for soprano solo—graceful in itself, and otherwise admirable as affording a contrast to the solemn thrice repeated "Holy." And here we may say that whenever the initial words of the Sanctus are repeated, the music is such as to suggest almost beyond any other setting of this subject, an utter prostration both of body and soul before the "Majesty of His Glory." As abstract music this may not be the strongest number in the work, but considered as a piece of musical colouring in relation to its subject, it is unquestionably the most impressive.

In No. 3, Mr. Sullivan shows signs of warming to his work, and whether we consider his admirable treatment of old subjects, or the freshness and vigour of the new ones, it is impossible not to recognize in this movement the hand of a master. The thrice repeated tonic followed by ascending arpeggios and a syncopated descending passage, subsequently repeated in double counterpoint, the moving the accent on to the second measure of the bar, and the quaint cadence just before the introduction of the eighth Gregorian tone by the voices—all these go to prove that the author felt he had been happy in the conception of his subjects, and that his satisfaction had remained until he had completed their treatment. As a matter of construction it was perhaps hardly wise to make so important a verse as "Thou art the King of Glory," a mere episode in the middle of this number, but a curious orchestral figure in the accompaniment serves to give it prominence, if at the cost of a trifling loss of dignity.

The salient characteristic of No. 4 (soprano solo) is a breadth of phrase which can leave no doubt that the air was written specially for Madlle. Titiens. It is throughout of a very elevated character and the fine burst into the key of B major at the words "Thou sittest at the right hand of God," is grandly conceived and most successfully carried out.

No. 5, although full of charm and graciousness (to coin a phrase), is probably the weakest number in the work. But even here there is much to reward the student in the easy flow of the voice parts, and the graceful form of the accompaniment. In regard to the latter, we would wish to call particular attention to the charming effect gained by slurring two notes in the violin figures, page 45 of the vocal score.

The few introductory phrases of No. 6, "O Lord, save Thy people," are hardly to be called interesting—unless we consider them in the light of a foil to the succeeding brisk fugal point, "Day by day we magnify Thee," the interest of which is kept up with unflagging vivacity to the end of the movement. Especially commendable is an effect where the voices in unison are singing a broad phrase, the orchestra meanwhile keeping up the original subject with infinite force and animation.

In No. 7 we have a repetition of the opening phrases of No. 1; the soprano this time taking the *canto fermo*, which in the earlier instance had been given to the orchestra. The subject is then repeated *pianissimo* by the voices in four-part harmony, unaccompanied, after which a counter subject is led off by the basses and treated with great dexterity and musicianly skill; each phrase of the *canto fermo* being introduced in turn by the brass instruments and, as it were, superimposed upon the fugue which is being quietly unravelled beneath. But Mr. Sullivan does not here reach the end of his resources, for presently we have a March of a most piquant, if not secular character, the latter feature being brought into stronger relief by the fact that it is given to a Military Band. Surely nothing could be more glaringly in contrast than the chorale with which the movement commenced (known to every one as the common measure tune St. Anne's), and the gay, even sprightly, march immediately following it. Yet it is not long before we find the Tenors and Basses leading off the first phrase of the Psalm Tune, with the march *still going on* soon to be joined by the organ, which taking the fugal subject previously mentioned for its share, forthwith proceeds *simultaneously* to work its way without the slightest reference to the march or the chorale; and yet there is no discord. Each of these three subjects—apparently divided in feeling wide as the poles asunder—retaining its marked characteristics, merges with the others into an unity of effect as musically harmonious as it is grandiose.

Thus ends a work which despite the somewhat unfavourable circumstances under which it was first heard, cannot fail to live.

Its few short-comings, viz., want of individuality and modern feeling, disappear altogether before its great merits. With much of the breadth of Handel, some of the grace of Mozart, and an orchestral colouring almost unique in its masterly handling, this *Te Deum* ought to serve as a gratifying promise that English Music is blossoming into a Spring to be succeeded by a Summer, such as this land has not experienced since the death of Purcell.

The Organist's Quarterly Journal. Edited by Wm. Spark, Mus. Doc. Nos. 11, 12, 13 and 14.

HERE is a year's issue, namely, from July 1, 1871, to April 1, 1872, of a serial that is steadily growing in esteem. Its value to art is to be regarded from two sides, on one of which organ players are ranged, while composers for the organ stand on the other. The instrument in which both these classes of musicians interest themselves—for they are two classes, though many an individual belongs to both—has come into far greater use in recent years than it had, even in the memory of those who are not the oldest among us. A few years back, it was rarely to be met with out of a church, or of a private house where it served devotional purposes, and, whether a community or a single person, its owners were nearly always among the wealthiest. Now, the places of worship are few, even of Dissenters, that are without an organ; most of our concert rooms possess one; many a town hall is enriched in appearance, in property, and in the power to draw together and gratify large masses of the population, by the largest of musical instruments; and in the domestic circle a specimen is now more frequent, than was a pianoforte fifty years ago. The multiplicity of organs is induced by the multiplication of players, and their mutual product is a large amount of organ music. The best organists agree that Bach, the mighty, the unapproachable, has left works, that, as studies, are as far superior to everything else that has been produced, and that probably can be produced, as they are superior in merit. But organists, who are not the best, find Bach, in another sense than his matchless excellence, also unapproachable, and these require music of less difficulty than his, through the practice of which to fit themselves to approach him; and even they, who may be said to have mastered the master, are not content to play in but one style though this be the noblest, and of but one author, though he be the greatest. The demand for music less creates composers, than gives opportunity to those, who have already come into being, for the exercise of their ability; and they who have written and would continue to work in other fields of art, rejoice to develop their talent in a style of writing which has scope for erudition at once with the loftiest imagination, and comprises within its range almost every variety of musical productions. The two classes, players and writers, act and react upon each other; the more music is played, the more will be written, and the more is written, the more will be played. Up to the date of the first part of the "*Organist's Quarterly Journal*," January, 1869, music for the organ was printed here, indeed, but it consisted mainly of arrangements from Oratorios and instrumental works, with some occasional and admirable productions of a very few original writers, whose high reputation as executants stimulated interest in what they might compose for their instrument. The periodical under notice is then to be regarded as yielding to players an ever fresh supply of music in many styles and of many degrees of difficulty; and as opening to composers a medium through which they may address the world in their productive capacity without recommendation from their practical renown. In respect to these latter, another point claims consideration; the work is an arena for the exhibition of music from all sources, and the productions of Englishmen are set side by side therein with those of artists of other lands, which present the means for comparing their relative merits, and perhaps of assigning a standing to either to which they might not have been thought entitled when reviewed singly.

It would be interesting and gratifying minutely to discuss the merits of each piece in the four times twenty pages now under consideration, but the interest and gratification would pertain wholly to the writer, who had the music before him, while the discussion would be just as tiresome to the reader, who had any amount of time and space between him and the said music which alone could throw light on the remarks. All the pieces shall be named, then, to show how far and wide, and how totally without prejudice for name or nation, the editor has recruited for contributions