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Six Pieces for the Organ by E. Silas

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the graduates could never have enough of "punishment." He should have lived when wars went on for thirty years at a stretch, but even as it is he looks proudly back upon not a few agreeable experiences of wounds and death, and delights to shoulder his crutch and show how fields were won. "Hurrah," says he

for gun and sword
My friends till death they'll be.
Hurrah, once more, for the cannon's roar—
A soldier's life for me.

This is the burden of the old man's song, and it is not likely to be without its effect upon a fighting nation such as our own. We hardly need to point out what sort of music should be connected with verses like those from which we have quoted. It should suggest the measured tramp of armed men; reflect the boldness which banishes fear, and convey the exultation that accompanies the fierce rapture of the strife. All this Mr. Mackenzie's music does in no commonplace manner. The melody marches with a fine rhythmic swing. The accompanying harmonies, without being of the "vamped" order, are natural and effective, and the spirit of the words is reflected with the utmost nicety. We should add that the key is C minor (highest note E flat), the refrain being in the tonic major. Mr. Santley has added "The Old Grenadier" to his repertory, but even apart from this acknowledgment of its merit, the song cannot fail to win large approval.

Genrebilder. Six pieces for the Pianoforte. Composed by Hermann Goetz. (Op. 13.) [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

No long time has elapsed since we reviewed at some length the German edition of these charming tone-pictures, further acquaintance with which has enhanced rather than diminished the high opinion we were constrained to express at first sight. Music of the finest order is here—not easy to play therefore, nor such as can be grasped with a single effort, but music which, once mastered, becomes an abiding joy. The present edition possesses an advantage for English amateurs in that the verse forming the key to each "picture" is a translation and not a mere reprint of the German original. This lays bare to non-German readers what was in the mind of the composer, and gives a clue to expression such as could not possibly be arrived at by any other means. In all respects beside, the edition is a faithful transcript; and the publishers may again be congratulated upon the practical manner in which they have appreciated the worth of Hermann Goetz's music.

The Orpheus (New Series).

I loved a Lass. Love's good morrow. Merrily rolls the mill-stream on. Now night her dusky mantle folds. Four-Part Songs for Men's Voices. Composed by Samuel Reay. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE new series of the "Orpheus," containing part-songs for men's voices only, will be found a mine of wealth for vocal amateurs. One hundred and fifty-nine numbers are already published, including compositions by the most eminent modern writers. The four by Mr. Reay, recently issued, may be cited as amongst the best of this popular composer's works. No. 1, to some quaint verses by George Wither, has a well-marked and most appropriate theme, in A minor, the passage in the relative major—especially the emphatic syncopation in the bass, on the dominant, to the word "fool"—being highly effective. No. 2 is extremely melodious, and harmonised with skill and judgment throughout; the oft-repeated "Good-morrow" giving some opportunities for imitation, of which the composer has happily availed himself. No. 3, words by George Coleman, is an excellent setting of some simple verses, a good point being gained by the change from 6-8 to common time; and No. 4 is a regular English hunting song, full of the life such a stirring subject demands, and containing some effective responsive phrases for the various voices.

Six Pieces for the Organ. Composed by E. Silas. [Ashdown and Parry.]

THE perusal of these pieces has given us real pleasure, so fresh and melodious are they. Mr. Silas always has something original to say, and he generally says it in a powerful and masterly manner. No. 1 is an Andante in G minor, based upon good and interesting subjects, excellently adapted for an opening Church Voluntary; while No. 2,

which is a vigorous and well-developed March, would be equally suitable for the end of the service. The first part of No. 3—in A major—is built upon a short phrase of four bars, which, after considerable modulation, is brought to a conclusion in the key of the tonic. Then, rather unexpectedly, the movement proceeds in fugal form, and is based on a very melodious though rather long theme, which evidently has grown out of the first subject. No. 4 is a Pastorale in G major, and is a truly original and tolerably effective composition. No. 5, which is entitled "Meditation in a Cathedral," is a thoughtful and dignified work. Though marks of expression are scarce, it is plainly evident that Mr. Silas desires that this movement should display the character which belongs specially to the organ—that of a very extended *crescendo*. The last number, an Elegy in B flat minor, is, as its title explains, a very sombre movement, containing several exceptionally effective points. In fact, these pieces show that Mr. Silas is deserving of a place in the very first rank of composers for the organ.

Second Sonatina, for the Pianoforte. Intended as a preparation for the study of the Sonatas by the Great Masters. By Stephen Heller. [Forsyth Brothers.]

WE are perfectly ready to accept this Sonatina by so eminent a writer as Stephen Heller entirely upon its own merits, and not as a preparation for Sonatas by other masters; for assuredly the smaller works of a composer will sufficiently introduce any student to his larger ones, not to dwell upon the fact of the Sonata before us being quite as difficult as many we could name by the "great masters" themselves. In the first movement we have some really excellent writing; and although the Scherzo is somewhat wanting in interest, the "Larghetto," headed "Feuillet d'Album," and "Finale" make ample amends. The last movement, indeed, is full of life; and played *presto*, as the composer has marked it, will require a nimble finger to give it due effect. A feeling of continuity is gained by a return to the theme of the first movement, ingeniously augmented, the character of the accompaniment being preserved throughout. The Sonata will be found a very valuable study both for the finger and the mind of the young pianist.

Miniatures, for the Pianoforte. Composed by Bruno Ramann. [Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

ALTHOUGH this collection of little sketches has an English title-page, the German name of each piece is given before the English, so that we have a right to infer that they were not first published in this country. How far the idea, so successfully carried out by Schumann, of telling little stories in pianoforte pieces, can be justified, is a question which cannot in this place be entered upon; but certainly the composer of these "Miniatures" has a right to a place amongst the many who have moulded their ideas in this form. No. 3, "Love's Message," and No. 4, "The Reply," may be cited as amongst the best of the numbers, the former, especially, being an extremely attractive piece in 4-8 rhythm, with an almost continuous triplet accompaniment. No. 6, too, "Silent Happiness," has a placid theme appropriately illustrating the title; several stretches in the left hand, however, somewhat detracting from the simplicity which should characterise so unpretentious a trifle.

The First Star. A Twilight Song. Words by Jetty Vogel.

The Maiden's Tryst. Song. Words by Jetty Vogel. Composed by Mary Hale. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

BOTH these vocal pieces show that the composer has feeling for melody and an earnest desire to give due expression to the words. But we should counsel her not to begin a simple song in F and end it in D, as she has done in the first of the two before us. The "Maiden's Tryst" has an agreeable theme, and on the whole it is well harmonised. A few hints from a good master would, however, be serviceable to her; and meantime it would be well if she were to reconsider the second and third bars of the opening symphony, where the triad on the subdominant leaps on to the chord of the sixth on the leading-note. In the song the same melody is properly accompanied.