Review

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—and we may say, that on the whole, this idea is well carried out. A good effect is gained where, on the return to the original key, the theme is given to the left hand.

The Gipsies. A Cantata. Words by Marmaduke E. Browne. Music by Edwin Aspa.

THIS bright little composition comes to us in pianoforte score, adapted of course for drawing-room performance; but although we are inclined to look favourably upon it in this shape, there can be no question that it wants the colouring of the instrumentation to give it due effect, the work being so exceedingly simple and unpretentious in design as to be occasionally somewhat feeble with the mere pianoforte accompaniment, more especially in the choral parts. The composer has evidently much feeling for that important element in a Cantata obviously written to catch the public ear, which we should perhaps rather call “tune” than “melody;” and throughout his composition he has so liberally used this power, that we have little doubt of future representations of the work being as successful as we are apprised that the first performance of it was, a short time back, at a concert given by the South Warwickshire Harmonic Society, at Leamington. The opening chorus is based upon a pretty subject which cannot fail to please, and includes an effective modulation at the words “Merry, merry are we,” the whole piece well expressing the popular notion of the light and joyful character of Gipsy life. The duet which follows, opens with a graceful melody for the soprano, succeeded by an extremely vocal theme for the tenor; and where the voices are afterwards united, we have some better writing than is to be found in any other part of the Cantata. The mezzo-soprano solo, “When stars are bright,” and the unaccompanied quartett are, perhaps, scarcely as good as the following bass song, “What cares the Gipsy,” which commences with a bold subject, in D minor, full of character, and excellently adapted to the words. The concluding quartett has a theme, in waltz measure, the latter portion of the opening chorus being repeated to conclude the composition. On the whole, we consider that the Cantata, although laying no claim to much depth of thought, successfully fulfils its composer’s object; and its light and cheerful character will unquestionably secure for it a favourable reception with many Choral Societies.

CHAPPELL AND CO.

Ireland. Grand Fantasia on Irish Melodies.

By Brinley Richards.

As this Fantasia is dedicated to Madame Arabella Goddard, it may be expected that the majority of amateurs will have some considerable amount of hard work before them if they desire to give due effect to the piece. The “Last Rose of Summer” and “St. Patrick’s day,” are the melodies chosen by Mr. Richards; and we need scarcely say that the embellishments are refined and graceful throughout. There is much variety in the treatment of the airs; and some effective changes of key prevent any undue monotony in the variations.

By the way of the Sea. Ballad. Words by the Earl Cathcart. Music by R. Sloman, Mus. Doc., Oxon.

DR. SLOMAN has written a graceful and musicianlike ballad, sufficiently simple to ensure favour with vocalists who are more ambitious to display expression than execution. We are not sure whether the mournful phrase at the end will not rather mar the effect of the song in performance; but the words inexorably demand such music.

A. DIMOLINE, BRISTOL.

The Angels’ Song (Der Engel Gesang). By Goethe.
Composed by E. G. Whately.

THERE is merit in this sacred song; but the composer does not quite know what to do with his materials, and the consequence is that it is too fragmentary in character to be accepted as a musicianlike setting of the words

Frequent changes of key will not compensate for want of creative power, nor will rapid arpeggios conceal the poverty of a melody. The modulation which flows on most agreeably is that on the fourth page; and the return to the original key is also well effected. We must protest, however, in the interest of purity of writing, against the triad of G sharp leaping down to the $\sharp$ on C, which so often occurs as to lead us to imagine that Mr. Whately likes it; and also to the G in the accompaniment for the left hand, at the end of the 7th bar; this should assuredly be E.

ASHDOWN AND PARRY.

The Streamlet. Sketch for the Pianoforte.

By T. Albion Alderson.

THE recollection of Mendelssohn’s graceful little piece, illustrative of the same idea as that selected by Mr. Alderson, will not interfere with the success of this sketch; for, although to a certain extent all pianoforte “Streamlets” must resemble each other, the one before us is neither a copy nor a paraphrase of its predecessor. The melodious subject in the left hand flows calmly on against the triplets in the upper part; and the composer may be congratulated on resisting the excessive modulations which are so continually seized upon to give “character” to a piece, which would often have none without them. This little composition may be fairly recommended to those who do not select music merely on account of its difficulty.

LAMBORN COCK AND CO.

Golden Dreams. Song. Words by E. C. D.

Music by Francesco Berger.

A well-written song, evidently the production of a skilled musician and a thoughtful composer. We should have preferred it, however, if the harmonies had been laid on with a more sparing hand: the chromatic chords interfere with the boldness of the melody in some places—as, for instance, where the F is sharpened, in the first bar of the third line, page 3, upon the dominant harmony of E flat (the D in which, by the way, should evidently be marked natural)—but a good contralto singer and a good accompanist may unite their powers with much effect in this composition.

What we have loved, we love for ever. Song. Words from “The Afterglow.” Music by Ciro Pinsuti.

SIGNOR PINSUTI always writes in that charmingly melodious and unaffected style which many more ambitious but less talented composers would do well to imitate. The song before us is, in every respect, one of the most fascinating trifles we have lately seen from the pen of this composer.

The Bird at Sea. Song. Written by Mrs. Hemans.

Composed by Daniel Middleton.

MRS. HEMANS’S pretty words have been wedded to an appropriately simple melody by Mr. Middleton; and the result is a song with which unassuming young vocalists may please both themselves and their listeners. We think it would have been better if the composer had written his chord of the dominant seventh in the accompaniment lower down, where the F is chromatically raised in the voice part, but generally the harmonies are carefully considered; and a happy use of what is technically called the “augmented triad” deserves mention.

The Syren. Song. Poetry by Robert Buchanan (from “Undertones”). Music by Francesco Berger.

THERE is so much character in this composition as to make it stand apart from the conventional songs of the day. The opening is extremely graceful, the voice having a melodious theme, accompanied with a light arpeggio in the right hand, and a monotonous legato bass. The excessive variety obtained by the most legitimate means, after the first double bar, deserves the warmest commendation, the change into G major, with the placid accompaniment, contrasting excellently with the phrase to the