Review

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Villiers Stanford, as a distinguished representative of contemporary British art, had been invited to conduct. The programme included works by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Dr. Hubert Parry, Professor Stanford, and some few examples from the old English masters; the solo interpreters were Mr. Leonard Borwick and Mr. Plunket Greene, both making their first appearances in the Belgian capital on this occasion. The same may be said as regards the works produced. English music, except amongst the British residents here, had, in fact, been hitherto almost entirely unknown in Brussels, and the existence of a vigorous, characteristic and independent modern British school, as revealed by the present performance, came as a surprise to many amongst the numerous audience, who showed their appreciation throughout by most hearty applause. The concert, in short, was a complete success. Nor should we omit to add a word in praise for its important share in so satisfactory a result of the orchestra, the excellent qualities of which Professor Stanford took occasion to specially acknowledge, both at the rehearsal and at the conclusion of the concert. A highly appreciative notice of the performance, from the pen of M. Maurice Kufferath, is published in the leading Brussels musical journal, *Le Guide Musical*, of which he is the editor, and the following extracts from which, as emanating from the pen of so distinguished a musical author and critic, cannot fail to prove interesting to our readers:—

"One of the principal works in the programme," says M. Kufferath, "was Professor Stanford's 'Irish' Symphony, a very fine composition, broadly conceived, clearly developed, richly instrumented, and deriving its specially characteristic features from the legitimate use made in it of the racy popular melodies of Ireland. Altogether, the symphony is a work of high value, destined, we are persuaded, to remain on record as one of the most finished examples of English musical art of the present time. Dr. Hubert Parry's 'Symphonic Variations' enlisted the interest of the musicians present rather than of the general audience. They are essentially a production of science, a masterly exercise of thematic elaboration, interesting more particularly on account of the ingenuity of its developments. The 'Britannia' Overture of Sir Alexander Mackenzie represents a fine piece of orchestral writing, effective in its sonority and exhilarating in its rhythms. As regards the soloists, Mr. Plunket Greene, the possessor of a fine and most flexible baritone voice, completely justified the great reputation enjoyed by him on the other side of the Channel; while Mr. Leonard Borwick proved himself a most delightful pianist, whose playing possesses an almost feminine charm, which entrals the listener. The *Andante* from Schumann's Concerto, as interpreted by him, was a perfect thing, replete with subtle poetic suggestion, chaste, reserved, altogether in keeping with the spirit and character of the work. . . . Not less charmingly rendered were a number of short pieces by Purcell, Mendelssohn, and Chopin, at the conclusion of which the pianist was recalled four times. The series of ancient Irish and Welsh songs, charmingly sung by Mr. Plunket Greene, ranked not least amongst the surprises afforded by this concert, and were immensely appreciated, especially those entitled 'All through the night' and 'Hugh Maguire.' Effectively instrumented by Professor Stanford, these form part of a highly interesting collection of Irish and Welsh songs published by Messrs. Novello and Co., of London, representing a perfect treasure store of beautiful and fascinating melodies. A very characteristic air by the seventeenth century master, Greene, also formed part of the programme. To sum up, the English concert was a novel experience for us, and a most interesting one."

AN English festival concert is to be given at Monte Carlo on the 20th inst. The programme will be entirely composed of orchestral works by British composers. M. Tivadar Nachéz, who has been specially engaged for this concert, will play Sir Alexander Mackenzie's *Benedictus* and Frederic Cliffe's Violin Concerto, which, it will be remembered, was composed for the last Norwich Festival and played by M. Nachéz on that occasion.

REVIEWS.

Novello's Parish Choir Book. Nos. 339-348.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE issue of this series goes on with undiminished flow. No. 339 is a hymn entitled "How shall we teach our children to proclaim," the words written by Dean Hole, of Rochester, and the music composed by Sir George C. Martin. The hymn is in commemoration of "Queen Victoria's Nurses" and the music is calculated to enforce the spirit of the words. School teachers will do well to take notice of this simple but effective work. No. 340 is the *Te Deum* composed by Sir John Goss for the thanksgiving service at St. Paul's Cathedral, on February 27, 1872, for the restoration to health of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. The setting is one of the best examples of this composer's church music and is admirably suited for festival services. Six settings of the *Kyrie eleison*, by J. Clippingdale, forms No. 341, and will doubtless be acceptable in churches where this is the only part of the Communion service which is sung. No. 342 is a re-issue of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* in unison, by Sir John Goss, and is an excellent specimen of its class. A simple arrangement in chant form, by M. B. Elliott, of the *Benedicite* provides No. 343, and the two following numbers are settings of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*, by Charles E. Tinney and G. F. Wrigley respectively. The former is of festive character, and would interest a capable and well-trained choir. The latter is more simple in nature, but it is very bright, and, although presenting a few difficulties, it is effectively written for the voices. Nos. 346 and 347 have been supplied by Herbert Brewer, and consist of the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, composed for the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Choral Union, in June of this year. In both these settings Mr. Brewer has made much and effective use of voices in unison, and the music is of that broad and diatonic character suitable to large bodies of singers. In No. 348 the Apostles' Creed will be found set to music in monotonous recitation, by Edward Cruse. The harmonies for the organ are simple and appropriate and have already won wide acceptance.

Singing Verses for Children. Words by Lydia-Avery-Coonley. Music by Eleanor Smith, Jessie L. Gaynor, F. W. Root, and F. H. Atkinson. Pictures by Alice Kellogg Tyler. [Macmillan and Co.]

CONSIDERABLY more than "a rattle and a straw" are now apparently deemed necessary to meet the requirements of childhood's amusements, much thought and skill are lavished on efforts to cultivate artistic perception in the brains of little folks, and of such endeavours the handsomely got up volume of "Singing Verses for Children" is a striking example. The verses are neatly turned, and are distinguished by poetical fancy. The settings, with regard to the capabilities of children, are not so satisfactory. Comparatively few young singers can sing effectively below the treble stave, especially down to B and C as demanded in several of the songs, while three lyrics are made impossible to the majority of those for whom they are intended by the requirement of a vocal range of an octave and a fourth. If, however, the music is not always well suited to the children, Mamma will doubtless come to the rescue, and in so doing will find much that will prove pleasurable to herself as well as her listeners. The tinted illustrations are excellent. They are admirably drawn, possess the humour inseparable from all true delineations of childhood, and are characterised by a lively and pleasing fancy.

Original Compositions for the Organ. Nos. 255-258.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE first of these four numbers is a commemoration march, "Victoria—our Queen," founded on themes from Barnby's patriotic chorus. This bright and effective composition is by Mr. John E. West, who is not only an excellent musician, but a skilful organist, and therefore it is admirably set out for the instrument. The violin—which strict Scotch folk used to designate "the sinfu' wee fiddle"