Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 15, No. 354 (Aug. 1, 1872), p. 575

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

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3351647>

Accessed: 18-03-2015 19:16 UTC

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We have heard of the theory that compound measure is formed by two bars of simple measure "rolled into one" (although we utterly disagree with it), but that four crotchets in a bar can be called "compound measure" strikes us with wonder. Although, in the interest of musical education, we have thought it our duty to allude to passages in this book which we think open to grave objection, there are many others with which we cordially agree; and several of the explanations, particularly those on Transposition and Beating Time, are clear and concise. In the course of the book we are occasionally referred to the "Appendix," but as no Appendix appears, we presume that it is to follow, especially as this being marked "Book I.," is evidently the first of a series of works on the Elements of the art.

AUGENER AND CO.

Memories. Words by Mrs. J. A. Rowell. The music written (by commission) by Charles Henry Shepherd, A.R.A.

It is not stated who has commissioned Mr. Shepherd to compose this song, but we think that a fitter person could scarcely have been selected to give effect to the words, which are well suited for a musical setting. The expressive and pathetic melody in F minor, although somewhat monotonous, is in character with the poetry, which lingers over the recollection of a broken vow with much tender feeling. The simplicity of the accompaniment is perhaps in parts even exaggerated; but we like the symphony, with its imitative phrases, which occurs between the verses, in spite of the thinness of the harmony. An expressive singer may create much effect with this song.

Mariana. Song. Words by A. Tennyson, Esq. Composed by Hortense Berton.

TENNYSON'S words are often selected by vocal composers without thought that the ideas of a true poet require a kindred mind to colour them with due effect. The composer of the song before us has hardly risen to the dignity of the occasion, although his flowing and carefully written melody might pass with more conventional verses. The sameness and smoothness of the theme becomes tiresome from its length; but musically speaking the composition is written with commendable purity and good taste.

HENRY STEAD AND CO.

Chant du Soir. Reverie; par Edmond Wiehler.

It is good that publishers who revel in fantastic title-pages, like the one which adorns this Reverie, should print one for show and one for service, or the poor matter-of-fact reviewer, who has to place the name both of the piece and the composer at the head of his notice, would find it difficult, with the distorted letters, floral accompaniments, and mixture of languages, to unravel the mystery. The "Chant du Soir" is a good little sketch of its kind, presenting no especial novelty, but graceful enough, both in melody and treatment, to satisfy a languid audience on a sultry evening, where a "little music" is supposed to go well with the ices and cooling drinks which are the chief characteristics of a Summer *Soirée*. The principal theme is melodious; but we like the second subject, in the relative minor, somewhat better, the figure in the bass giving much vitality to the melody. The rapid scale passages appear to have been put in for the mere sake of the executant, as they seem to grow out of nothing; and the return to the original subject, with the semiquaver *arpeggio* accompaniment, becomes a decided relief. There seems an indication in this piece that its composer can do something better; and, if so, we shall be glad to meet with him on a future occasion.

HUTCHINGS AND ROMER.

The Street Arab. Scena. Words by the Rev. Philip Morris. Composed by James J. Monk.

A *Scena* descriptive of the life and death of a "Street Arab" is a curiosity which deserves some attention. The first thing that strikes us in the composition is its highly dramatic character, every phase in the career of the gutter-child being most minutely and faithfully coloured. Commencing with a mysterious *tremolo* on the chord of C, the little outcast is described as shivering, barefooted, on the cold flags, to some mysterious chords; the bass walking up and down the scale, to express, we presume, the measured tread of the policeman. Then an "Alle. deciso," denoting the order of the official to "move on," is succeeded by soft music, the bass continuing its promenade upon the keyboard with an evident unconsciousness of the little being "huddl'd on the frozen stone." The death is written to an "Andante," with an *arpeggio* accompaniment, the harps of course appearing at the right moment, and dying off with

the hero, after the manner of the approved miserable ballads so popular with a drawing-room audience. Seriously speaking, that such a work as this should be written, composed, published, and, above all, sent for review, cannot but shake our faith in the spread of that artistic taste of which we hear so much; for that poet and composer are here on an equality may be inferred when we say that

"With limbs all quiv'ring,
Scarce able to support
The emaciated frame they ought."

are some of the lines supplied by the Rev. Phillip Morris to be set to music.

GODDARD AND CO.

The Message of the Breeze. Duet. (Companion Duet to "La Siesta.") The words by Francis Turner Palgrave.

Maid of Athens. Song. Dedicated to Byron's original Maid of Athens, Mrs. Black.

Composed by Charles Gounod.

We confess never to have been able to understand what is meant by one vocal composition being "companion" to another. If it is intended that they shall so resemble each other that we can scarcely tell them apart, M. Gounod may be said to have achieved a decided success in the "Message of the Breeze," for it is so like "La Siesta," which we reviewed some time since, that instead of being its "companion," we think that they should be kept as widely apart as possible. The symphony begins, as in "La Siesta," with a $\frac{2}{4}$, the rhythm is precisely the same (although, strangely enough, $\frac{3}{4}$, instead of $\frac{2}{4}$, is marked) the vocal parts are merely a paraphrase of the former duet, and the characteristic accompaniment is preserved throughout, except that where the right hand falls against the accent, we have a quaver in the "Message of the Breeze," and two semiquavers in "La Siesta." This alteration takes away much of the Spanish character to be found in the original, and we think materially weakens the effect of the duet. In the "Maid of Athens" we find the composer in his happiest vein; indeed we are inclined to believe this to be one of the most graceful and melodious songs he has yet written. The theme is thoroughly vocal and full of passionate tenderness, the flowing *arpeggio* accompaniment, divided between the two hands, aiding materially the beauty of the melody. It is a true love-song, in which both poet and composer have united their best efforts; and tenor vocalists who can give expression to their words, will we are certain be glad to sing Byron's well-known verses to the sympathetic and eloquent music of M. Gounod.

DUFF AND STEWART.

The Conscript. Song. Written by Walter Boulton. Composed by Walter Maynard.

INSTEAD of taking a broad view of the feeling of the little poem which he has undertaken to set to music, Mr. Maynard has, like many other vocal composers, been tempted into putting on patches of colour to express the mere words, and the consequence is that "The Conscript" is a series of fragments which no amount of art can piece together. This practice, lying at the root of inferior song writing, is so much in vogue at the present time that it is good to draw attention to it. Anything relating to the sea has a rippling accompaniment in fine weather, and an agitated bass when the wind begins to blow; the name of a bird immediately suggests a twittering in the treble, usually terminating with a shake; lullabies are provided with a rocking *arpeggio*, and the slightest mention of pastoral life produces a double pedal, the voice-part—which in these cases usually accompanies the accompaniment—being a matter of apparently but little importance. In the song before us whenever the word "march" occurs the music assumes a martial character. Then the conscript sighs for home, and we have a quiescent four bars, followed by *arpeggios* of tonic and dominant harmony, accompanying a conventional melody to conventional words, about the "brief happy day" of childhood. It may be said that a song of such small pretension needs no more than a line either of praise or censure, but as it illustrates a principle in the manufacture of vocal music, we accept it as a representative work; and knowing that Mr. Maynard has already written some good songs, we do not desire that he should join the ranks of the many musical pretenders without an earnest word of protest.

The Last Word at the Gate. Song. Words by Miss Clara Loud. Music by C. H. R. Marriot.

A light and tripping melody well expresses the unpretentious words of this song; and both poetry and music