Review

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well sung, and Mr. Bishenden was effective in "Thus saith the Lord," "But who may abide," and "Arm, arm ye brave." The second part consisted of a Pastoral Operetta, entitled "The Merrie Men of Sherwood Forest," in which Mr. Bishenden, who took the part of *Little John*, was thoroughly efficient. Miss Harrison, as *Maid Marian*, and Mr. Philbey, as *Robin Hood*, were also highly successful. Mr. Williams conducted, and Mr. Stokoe presided at the pianoforte. A large and well-organised band gave good effect to the music.

ON Thursday, the 17th ult., Mr. J. B. Bolton gave his first evening concert at North Brixton Hall, assisted by the following artists: Miss Pelham, Miss H. Pelham, Miss F. Taylor; Messrs. Stanley Mayo, R.A.M.; G. J. Tear, W. R. Kirby, F. Cramer, C. Weber, and Lansdown Cottell, R.A.M. Mr. Bolton possesses a good baritone voice, and sang "The People that walked in darkness," from the "Messiah," with much effect. The programme included instrumental as well as vocal solos, all of which were highly successful.

THE South Norwood Musical Society opened its season, 1870-71, on the 14th ult., with a performance of Mr. J. F. Barnett's new Cantata, "Paradise and the Peri." The solos were sung by Miss Annie Sinclair, Mrs. Bennett, Mr. Stedman, and Dr. H. Owens, and the performance was thoroughly satisfactory. The choir of the Society has been slightly enlarged, and its quality is much improved, the freshness of the soprano voices being especially remarkable. After the Cantata there was a short miscellaneous selection, in which Miss Sinclair and Mr. Stedman were highly effective; and Ellerton's lively chorus, "Now the bright morning star," was sung for the first time. Mr. Westbrook occupied his usual post as Musical Director, and must be complimented upon the excellent result of his careful teaching. Mr. Frank Laughlin accompanied at the pianoforte.

THE first of the three Subscription Concerts of Mr. William Carter, took place at the Eyre Assembly Rooms, St. John's Wood, on the 2nd ult. The names of the Artists engaged for these performances will, doubtless, cause them to be well supported; Madame Rudersdorff, was highly effective in her vocal solos: the singing of Miss Fairman was also much admired, and Mr. Stedman gave a successful rendering of "Eily Mavourneen," Mr. William Carter and his pupil, Master Puddicombe, on the pianoforte, and Mr. Otto Booth, on the violin, were deservedly received with much favour. A noticeable feature in the selection was the singing of some part-songs, by the "Standard Quartett." The conductors of these Concerts are Mr. Benedict, Signor Catalani, and Mr. W. Carter.

WE understand that Mr. Robert Hilton, formerly of the Parish Church Choir, Preston, has been appointed to the Vicar Choralship in Westminster Abbey, vacant by the decease of Mr. Machin.

Reviews.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

Man is mortal. An Eight-part Chorale. The English version by W. Bartholomew. Composed by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

THE growing popularity of Mendelssohn in this country will, we trust, stimulate the many lovers of his works to search more widely than they have hitherto done for comparatively unknown specimens of his genius, instead of confining their ideas to compositions, the beauties of which have been so long and so universally acknowledged. We have recently reviewed the entire collection of this composer's songs; and strange indeed does it appear that so many years after his death we should find it necessary to tell the public that in this volume are enshrined many gems which, although of countless worth, have been hitherto most unaccountably passed over. The

Chorale before us—one of three sacred pieces written at Rome in 1830—is a proof that, much as we value the well-known religious compositions of Mendelssohn, there are others which are allowed to languish in obscurity, infinitely worthier of performance than many works of more modern composers which are constantly brought before us. The production of "Man is mortal," by the Glasgow Choral Union, at the sacred concerts lately given in the nave of Glasgow Cathedral, will no doubt have the effect of drawing public attention to the Motett; and it may also, we hope, be the means of bringing into notice some other of the composer's sacred works, which, as we have said, are still waiting for a hearing. Without claiming for this Chorale the sublimity of "Judge me, O God," we may say that it is deeply imbued with the purest religious feeling; and that, although richly harmonised, it is so admirably written for the voices as to present but few difficulties for the singers. The grand burst of the entire choir on the major chord of C, to the words "Holy and gracious God," has a fine effect; and the return to the minor for the expression of the phrase, "On the brink of death we stand," is truly devotional. With a well trained choir, this Motett cannot fail to enlist the sympathies of an audience.

Mass for Four Voices and Organ. By E. Silas.

THIS Mass, which gained the prize offered in 1866 in Belgium to composers of all nations, is a work of great merit. Throughout it there is a distinctive character which proves that the author has not allowed original thought to be marred by conventional training. The Kyrie is calm and devotional, and the almost Bach-like subject given out by the tenors is handled with evident skill. The Gloria is slightly flavoured with Beethoven, but would that more knew how to assimilate their conceptions to his! The fugal powers of the composer are not exercised on the "Cum sancto spiritu," but are reserved for the words "Et vitam venturi." The Credo is probably the finest portion of the work, combining as it does all those styles which best exhibit the deep meaning of the noble Nicæan formulary. We must not pass over the Benedictus without a word of commendation: it is excellent. In addition to the movements belonging to the Mass proper, are a Graduale and Offertory for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in E. Composed by John Stainer, Mus. Doc., M.A.

AT a time like the present when the services of the old Cathedral writers are found wanting in strength of colour it is not a little interesting to study and examine such compositions as are intended to supply their place. The vitality of the ancient compositions must have been great to have lasted through the greater part of two centuries. It would be rash to the last degree to expect the modern ones to exist for anything like that period. We live more rapidly in these times, and changes are more sudden, sweeping and frequent. Of one thing, however, we may be sure that such music as most nearly approaches the True and the Beautiful will outlast that mere exhibition of self which comes under the term clever. Dr. Stainer's music as here exemplified is true both in the abstract and in relation to the words it illustrates; whilst there is also a considerable dash of that beauty without which music would lose half its power. In regard to the former qualification may be instanced the phrase "All generations shall call me blessed" and "He hath scattered the proud," whilst touches of quiet beauty are by no means unfrequent. A feature of some originality is the commencement of the Nunc Dimittis on the first inversion of a triad on the tonic. And again in the Gloria Patri a bold and sudden transition takes place into the key of F when almost as suddenly the original key E is resumed producing an effect as fine as it is daring.