Review

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Trois Caprices Melodiques, pour Piano.

1. *Moderato con Grazia*.

2. *Allegro Gioioso*.

3. *Andante Cantabile* (Two-part song without words.)
Par. J. Baptiste Calkin.

MR. CALKIN never writes music either trivial or commonplace; and if some of his pieces are out of the reach of those whose mind and fingers have not been cultivated to the comprehension and execution of a higher class of composition than we are accustomed to hear in the drawing-room, it must be remembered that it is only to the intellectual minority that he appeals. The three "Caprices" now before us, are amongst the very best of the pieces we have yet seen signed by this composer, the whole of them being stamped with a grace and elegance which, apart from their musicianlike treatment, would recommend them alike to performers and listeners. No. 1 commences with a beautiful *Cantabile* melody, which, being written in $\frac{4}{4}$ rhythm, will probably suffer from being taken too slowly, few amateurs understanding the graceful flow of the triplets, when noted in crotchets instead of quavers. To all, therefore, who pay the composer sufficient deference to prefer his feeling to their own, we should recommend a due observance of the metronomic marks, which in all the movements indicate the exact time intended. The change from $\frac{4}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$, which occurs twice in the piece, will, if these directions be followed, produce an excellent effect. No. 2 starts with a joyous theme, the accompaniment flowing in triplets divided between the two hands, which character, with slight interruptions, is preserved throughout. The modulations are exceedingly good, an enharmonic change, on page 4, being especially worthy of remark. No. 3 is a melodious two-part song without words, the subject being sung at first with the thumb of the right hand. Where the two parts commence, the accompaniments are distinctly marked out in smaller notes, a device which will certainly save the player any trouble in thinking, but which we think unnecessary, seeing that the vocal parts are made sufficiently clear by having the stems of the notes turned in a different direction from the others. All these pieces will be found excellent for practice, as well as effective for performance; and in the interest of art, we shall be glad to see such "music for the home circle" multiplied.

Tarantelle, for the Pianoforte. Composed by Frederic N. Lühr.

A SPIRITED Tarantella is always a tolerably safe composition. The whirling subject, running madly on in triplets in the minor key, with the sudden transition to the major, is certain to produce effect, even where there is little novelty either in the themes or their treatment. The piece before us, in D minor, with the usual change to the major, in which key it concludes, may be recommended as a fair specimen of this popular dance. The passages are easy; and, with agile fingers, and the requisite amount of vitality, this unpretending Tarantella will be sure to please.

DUNCAN DAVISON AND CO.

Laughing Water (*Minniehaha*). Morceau pour le Pianoforte; par E. A. Sydenham.

IF MR. SYDENHAM had resolved to show us that he could write in the conventional style without being conventional, he could not have produced a more successful specimen than the sparkling little piece before us. The theme is fanciful, original, and full of character; and the treatment of the subjects throughout, shows an inventive power which we trust he will carefully cultivate. The opening theme, preceded by a short and characteristic introduction, is extremely melodious; and the second subject, in the subdominant, with the extended *arpeggio* accompaniment, is sufficiently placid to form an excellent contrast. A good effect, too, is gained by carrying on the melody in the left hand, accompanied *pianissimo* with the right; and after this temporary repose, the return to the original

theme is doubly welcome. Not the least merit in this piece is that, although the passages are brilliant and effective, they lie well under the hands; and to all pianists who believe that "drawing-room music" need not always consist of an eight or sixteen-bar melody, thickly embroidered with *arpeggios* and scale passages, Mr. Sydenham's composition may be safely recommended, not only as an attractive piece, but as a highly useful study for variety of touch.

LAMBORN COCK AND CO.

I am not all alone. Elegy for Voice and Pianoforte. Words by the Rev. Charles Mackie, M.A. Composed by E. H. Thorne.

THIS song is the work of a thorough musician; and commonplace vocalists and pianists should not attempt its interpretation. The leading theme is extremely beautiful; and if the changes of key are frequent, and often sudden, the composer has been justified in his modulations by the desire to give effect to the poetry. The opening phrase of four notes speaks the words with remarkable fidelity; and this character is well preserved throughout. Amongst the many points worthy of commendation, we may mention the manner in which the expected close in C major is interrupted by a sudden C sharp in the voice part, the harmony being an inversion of the diminished seventh in D minor, through which key the melody passes to its deferred resting point in C. This prolongation of the words, "I am not all alone," has an excellent effect, and is in happy consonance with the sentiment which it illustrates. As we have already indicated, this composition will not appeal to the disciples of the Claribel school; but Mr. Thorne may rest satisfied that he will gain honour, if not profit, by the production of such songs as these.

The Better Land. Song. Poetry by Mrs Hemans. Composed by Charles Henry Shepherd.

A PLACID and carefully harmonised song, which an expressive singer may make effective. The frequent closes in the key give a somewhat monotonous effect to the melody; but there is much feeling shown throughout for an earnest desire to render a faithful setting of the poetry.

CRAMER AND CO.

The Exile's Song of Home. Written by J. E. Carpenter.

I'm a Fisherman bold. Words by J. E. Carpenter.

The Miller's Maid. Words by L. S. Buckingham.

Composed by Theodore Distin.

THESE three songs show a decided power for the invention of melody; but the one we have placed first in our list we think infinitely the best of the group. In this, a graceful introduction leads to an exquisite theme in true sympathy with the words, the accent being placed exactly in the right place throughout. The repetition of the high G will somewhat tax moderate voices; but the phrase is so extremely beautiful, that it should not be altered. The second song, "I'm a fisherman bold," is of the conventional type; and although it might be difficult perhaps to find a real fisherman who so obstinately prefers his "bold and free" life to any other that can be mentioned, it will do well enough to express the sentiments of his representative in a drawing-room, who can roar out "hurrah" for the dangers he does not encounter, with much effect to Mr. Distin's music. The subject is somewhat commonplace, but it is thoroughly vocal, and can be accompanied with ease by a player of small pretension. "The Miller's Maid" commences with a placid theme, with a murmuring mill-wheel accompaniment. There is some effect in the short recitatives which break the flow of the melody; and in the last verse the change of character in the accompaniment is a point to be commended. On the whole, there is sufficient merit in these songs to make us wish to meet Mr. Distin again.