Miss C. A. Birch

Author(s): William H. Cummings

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 38, No. 657 (Nov. 1, 1897), p. 759

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

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3366725>

Accessed: 02-11-2015 21:34 UTC

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(Tennyson). Composed by Courtenay Gale. Tennyson's optimistic lines are set in this part-song with a directness and vigour which are calculated to stir the patriotic pulse of the most pessimistic listener.—*I love my Love in the morning*. Words anonymous. Music by J. Varley Roberts. This is a melodious and smoothly written part-song wherein the smitten one gives his reasons why he loves his sweetheart in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening, the said reasons being flattering to the lady and manifestly satisfactory to himself.

METZLER AND CO.—*Prison*. Song. Written by Paul Verlaine. English translation by Adela Maddison. *Evening*. Song. Written by Albert Samain. English words by Adela Maddison. Composed by Gabriel Fauré. These two songs are a good example of M. Fauré's graceful and finished style. In both, however, the shades of evening seem to have caused the composer to indulge in vagueness of tonality, and this has resulted in such a bountiful sprinkling of accidentals that at first sight the music suggests the reverse of the repose which is commonly associated with the close of the day, and the accompanist who, without mishap, gets through the "Evening" ditty, will doubtless feel that there has been "something attempted, something done."—*Smiles and Tears*. Written by Julien Houba. English words by Paul England. Composed by Edmund Depret. This is a good specimen of the modern French amorous lyric. It is essentially a tenor song, but, doubtless, will be sung by ladies.—*Menuet de la Reine*. By Benjamin Godard. The characteristics of the famed dance are pleasantly set forth in this piece by the late French composer.—*Serenade and Barcarolle*. For Violin and Pianoforte. By André Messager. The difference in character between a Serenade and Barcarolle might be described as that which exists between the sentiment of the timid lover and the one who commands. This definition will at least serve to indicate the nature of the above two pieces, both of which are effectively laid out for the violin, and also contain some interesting passages for the pianoforte.

EDWIN ASHDOWN.—*Beanstalk Suite*. For the pianoforte. By Arthur Somervell. This consists of five short pieces in old dance form, severally an Allemande, Sarabande, Gavotte, Musette, and Gigue, which are preceded by a Prelude. They are dedicated "To all my pupils not yet in their teens," and are slightly progressive in executive demands. The title "Beanstalk" must not be taken as a poetic basis for Mr. Somervell's work, it being merely suggestive of the continuous effort necessary alike to the young student and Jack the Giant-killer to ensure success.—Under the title of *Irish Pictures*, Mr. Barry M. Gilholy has written for the pianoforte, in simple but effective manner, four pieces based on Irish subjects.—A *Nocturno in C minor*, by Mr. Edward E. Harper, is a graceful and expressive example of its class.—Vocalists who like a song with a story in it will find a pathetic little ditty in *The Torn Flag*, words by Marian Burnside, music by Mary Augusta Salmond; and Mr. Arthur Cecil has set with some skill Bret Harte's ballad "The Wind in the Chimney."—*Cyril's Song*, from "The silence of Dean Maitland," has been allied to graceful music by John Hill, who also has provided a setting of considerable merit of Shelley's well known lines "Music, when soft voices die."

History of the Birmingham Festival Choral Society. By Andrew Deakin (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers). A very interesting pamphlet of fifty-two pages by the veteran musical critic, written in the pleasing and attractive style for which he has been so long and so favourably known. The booklet also contains some notices of the rise and progress of chorus singing in Midland towns.—*Choral Associations: their aims and objects*. By T. Roylands-Smith (Plymouth: "Church in the West" Office). This contains the substance of a paper read at the annual conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians at Edinburgh in January last. Mr. Roylands-Smith speaks with all the authority of long experience as a diocesan choir-master, fired with a zeal which is truly commendable. There are some capital hints and reflections in this little brochure.

—*L'Organo della Cattedrale di Cremona*. By Federico Sacchi (Ricordi). An interesting reprint of some articles, which recently appeared in the *Gazzetta Musicale* of Milan, giving a history of the organ in the Cathedral of Cremona, a place which is so eminently associated with the great masters of violin makers. Those who can read Italian will doubtless enjoy perusing these instructive pages.—*Some leading Organists* (Church Newspaper Co., Ltd.). Like the foregoing, this pamphlet, in its bright red cover, is also a reprint. In this case the articles originally appeared in *Church Bells*. Here are biographical sketches, with portraits, of twenty church organists more or less known to fame, headed by the veteran Dr. W. H. Longhurst, organist of Canterbury Cathedral. The sketches, if slight, are written in a pleasant manner, and will doubtless prove of interest to many "chief musicians" in "quires and places where they sing" and play.—*Richard Wagner's Prose Works*. Translated by W. Ashton Ellis. Vol. VI., Part 2. (Kegan Paul). This instalment of a valuable contribution to musical literature contains the following essays: "The public in time and space," "The Festivals of 1876" (when Bayreuth was inaugurated), and an instalment of "Shall we hope?" Of these the second-named is of special interest, considering that so many pilgrims now resort to the shrine of Wagner. It need scarcely be said that the difficult task of translating Wagner's diction is, as heretofore, admirably discharged by the indefatigable Mr. Ashton Ellis.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC.—*Four Christmas Carols*. By Herbert C. Morris. (Novello, Ewer and Co.) Those who prefer new carols to old may be recommended this collection. The music is melodious, and albeit some of the dissonances are extreme, having regard to the subject-matter, the harmonies will be acceptable to "advanced" ears. *The Babe of Bethlehem*. By Frank Adlam. (Hart and Co.) This is described as "A short and easy carol-cantata for Christmas and Epiphany," and it consists of a series of carols interspersed with recitatives and airs which are laid out for various voices. The music is tuneful, in the popular acceptance of the word, moderate in vocal compass, and simple in character. *Glory to God in the Highest*. Anthem for Christmas. By the Rev. E. Vine Hall. (Weekes and Co.) The composer of this anthem has taken the two first sentences of the "Gloria in Excelsis" and the first verse of the hymn "O come, all ye faithful," and set them in a simple but effective manner in four vocal parts with an accompaniment for organ.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MISS C. A. BIRCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In your September number you commented on the biographer who prematurely announced the death of Sam Wesley by a trifle of twenty-two years; and in the October number you cited the case of Sir F. Ouseley, who was credited with having departed this life twenty-three years too soon.

I find an error in "British Musical Biography," by Brown and Stratton, of equal magnitude, where I read: "Charlotte Ann Birch, soprano vocalist, was born in London in 1815, and died there in 1857. She sang chiefly at London and provincial concerts." Miss Birch, I am happy to say, still lives. I received a letter from her only yesterday, and I would like to remind your readers that for many years she was one of the solo vocalists engaged by the Sacred Harmonic Society. I have lying before me a programme of the memorable 23rd of April, 1847, the occasion of the second performance of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" in its revised and permanent form; the composer conducted, the Queen and Prince Consort were amongst the auditors, and Miss C. A. Birch sang the principal soprano solo music.—Yours, &c.

WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS.

October 19, 1897.