Review

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Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in G. By H. Elliot Button. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THERE is naturally a stronger demand for simple and straightforward services than for pretentious and elaborate settings, and Mr. Button's version is worthy of acceptance by parish choirs, for it is well written as well as unassuming. It is, for the most part, in plain diatonic harmony, and in this style of writing the composer is most at home, as there is a certain effect of patchiness or a suggestion of inconsequence about the few excursions he makes into remote keys. The merits of the service, however, more than outweigh this slight defect.

Cavatina for Violin, with Pianoforte Accompaniment. Composed by E. H. Thorne. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

MR. THORNE has here given us a refined, graceful, and melodious little piece, which violin players will, we are certain, thank us for calling attention to. The principal theme is well contrasted with the second subject, and the conversational passages with the pianoforte lift the composition above the ordinary level of violin solos, with an accompaniment cut to the conventional pattern.

Te Deum Laudamus. For Festal Occasions. By C. J. Ridsdale. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS setting is inscribed to the Rev. J. R. Buchanan, Vicar of Herne, where it is said the Ambrosian Hymn was first sung in English. It is "festal" rather in length than in elaboration, for although the voices are frequently subdivided, the writing is for the most part homophonous, and only now and then does the accompaniment force itself into notice by its richness or independence. The style of the music is essentially broad and diatonic, and in places it recalls, perhaps designedly, the manner of the seventeenth century Church composers. In others it is modern, as, for example, at the words "We believe that Thou shalt come," where a dactylic figure is repeated no less than twenty-five times with questionable effect. As a whole, Mr. Ridsdale's *Te Deum* is a composition of great merit, and proclaims him to be a musician of whom much may be expected.

Handel. By Eliza Clarke. [Cassell and Co.]

THIS little volume is one of a series, entitled "The World's Workers," and, if we may judge by its diction, is intended for juvenile readers, though it is not so stated on the title-page. It is less a complete biography than a character sketch of the great composer, a large proportion of its contents consisting of personal anecdotes, most, if not all, of which are known to musicians, and of which it may be said, "Se non e vero," &c. So far as regards the facts of Handel's life, it is fairly correct; but the author's knowledge of musical instruments appears to be limited, for she speaks of the serpent as "a brass instrument of exceedingly soft, rich tone," and declares that on a certain memorable occasion Handel seized a kettledrum (?) and threw it vigorously at the head of the conductor. It may also be noted that among the oratorios no mention is made of "Israel in Egypt." Having regard to its obvious purpose, however, the volume may be spoken of as a success.

Carols of Cradleland. By Leonhard Emil Bach. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

It can no longer be said that the claims of musical babes and sucklings are neglected. Their requirements in literature have been for some time well provided for, and latterly music publishers have also turned their attention to the needs of infantine performers. The present volume, tastefully illustrated by Mr. E. F. Manning, and sumptuously printed, as well as handsomely bound, is excellently adapted as a gift, leaving out of consideration the question of the intrinsic value of its contents. An examination of the latter suggests the idea that the songs are intended to be sung to children rather than by them, and this is confirmed by the statement that they have already been sung in public by Madame Sterling. They are six in number, Mr. Horace Lennard having contributed the words, in which a touch of sly humour may be traced. It cannot be said that Herr Bach's music is infantine in the sense of being puerile. Nos. 2 and 5 are simple enough; but, speaking generally, the series reflects something of the

style of Schumann when he was in the mood to throw off charming trifles. No. 3, "Little blue eyes," is a gem, and worthy of association with verses of more definite meaning.

The School and Home Song Book. Selected and arranged by P. Goodman. [James Duffy and Sons.]

ON glancing at this volume the first thing that arrests the attention is the admirably simple, yet complete, synopsis of the rudiments of music and the elements of harmony as far as the chord of the dominant seventh. This is the more noteworthy, as the title-page describes the book merely as a collection of songs for use in Irish schools. The ditties are mostly in two-part harmony, and the Irish division, numbering seventy-six out of 130, is by far the most satisfactory. In the English and Scottish songs are some unfortunate adaptations from the great masters, perhaps the worst of which is one of Beethoven's already much abused song "Creation's Hymn." Musicians who may use Mr. Goodman's little work for teaching purposes will, doubtless, confine their attention to the first half, which leaves absolutely nothing to be desired.

FOREIGN NOTES.

A MUSICAL Festival was held from the 24th to the 26th ult. at Rostock, Germany, under the direction of Dr. Hermann Kretzschmar. An incidental feature of the programme was the combined commemoration of the bi-centenaries of Bach and Handel, and of the ter-centenary of Heinrich Schütz, the "father of modern German music."

The experiment of combining Schubert's "Rosamunde" music with a performance of "As you like it" ("Was Ihr Wollt," in the German version), recently tried at the Magdeburg Stadt-Theater, is said to have been a very great success. The musical numbers had been distributed as follows:—Act I.: Overture and Entr'acte, No. 3 (B flat major); Act II.: "Trinklied" (Hirtenchor), Ballet-music, No. 2 (G major); "Romanze" and Entr'acte, No. 2 (D major); Act III.: Entr'acte, No. 1 (B minor), as prelude to the act, and "Hirten-melodie"; Act IV., as prelude: Ballet-music, No. 1 (B minor).

Wagner's "Siegfried" is in active course of preparation at the Berlin Opera, where it will probably be performed for the first time at the end of this or the beginning of next month. The following artists will be engaged in the principal parts—viz., *Siegfried*, Herr Ernst; *Brünnhilde*, Frau von Voggenhuber; *Mime*, Herr Liebau; *Alberich*, Herr Krolop. The Conductor will be Herr Radecke.

Next year's Bayreuth performances have been definitely decided upon in accordance with the scheme already foreshadowed in these columns. There will be alternate representations of "Parsifal" and "Tristan und Isolde," thirty-four to thirty-six in all; the former, as before, to be conducted by Herr Levi, the latter alternately by Herren Hans Richter and Felix Mottl, of Carlsruhe.

According to a new regulation, issued by the municipal authorities of Bonn, all private teachers of music in that town will, in future, have to apply for a license to enable them to continue their avocation, and to obtain which they will have to subject themselves to an examination respecting their competency as instructors in the art. The town of Bonn is setting an excellent example to the musical world generally by the adoption of this measure.

Herr Xaver Scharwenka's Conservatorium at Berlin has, according to the annual report just to hand, made very satisfactory progress during the short period of its existence. The institution now numbers 403 pupils, among whom are 113 foreigners, and the teaching body consists of twenty-nine professors. A new term will commence on the 5th inst.

The project of raising a monument at the town of Brunswick (where he had been for many years Capellmeister) to the late Franz Abt, meets with some well-grounded opposition in German musical quarters, where the claims to such a distinction on the part of the prolific composer of pleasing songlets are looked upon as, at least, not very urgent ones. Nevertheless, the Abt admirers will probably have their way, seeing that the subscriptions towards the carrying out of the scheme are said already to exceed those which, up to the present, have been raised on behalf of the monument