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'A New Fingerit Organeist'

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especially the former, a powerful setting of words by Whittier that do not at first sight appear to lend themselves to musical purposes. They describe the tarring and feathering of a hardhearted old sailor who left a shipload of fellow townsmen to drown. The music is brutal and fierce, and would be thrilling sung by a high voice 'all out.' There is scope for fine, soft singing in the passages that treat of the drowning. A good pianist is necessary.

PIANOFORTE MUSIC

Excellent teaching material are Nos. 69, 74, and 75 of the Chester Series (J. & W. Chester). The first contains ten short pieces by Rebikoff, moderately difficult, and requiring fancy rather than technique. Unambitious as they are, however, the best of them contain matter that will interest players far beyond the modest stage of those to whom the work is addressed. The other albums contain little pieces by C. P. E., W. F., and J. C. F. Bach. They are very slight in texture, and are suitable for elementary players. There is a Preface in French and English, and the ornaments are fully explained.

Alec Rowley's Georgian Suite (Winthrop Rogers) consists of three pieces—Air, Hornpipe, and Jig. Whether Mr. Rowley means to suggest the period of the Four Georges or the present time is not quite clear. The style at the start makes us think of the former, in which case some modern touches later on seem rather out of the picture. However, it is possible to be too precise in such cases, so I pass on to say that the pieces are thoroughly attractive, and would make grateful recreative work for a fairly advanced pupil. The composer has adopted colloquial English for his directions. 'Just in a jovial manner' is one quite in the Percy Grainger vein.

To that racy composer Cyril Scott dedicates his 'English Waltz' (Elkin), a brilliant piece that will appeal to many who are left cold (or irritated) by the nebulosities that we usually get from Mr. Scott. It is rather difficult, and should be a popular item in the lighter side of recital programmes.

The reviewer is in a fix when faced by work from a composer who although still a youth has been hailed in print by a repetition of Schumann's 'Hats off, gentlemen! a genius!' He does not wish to appear grudging, and yet he may have doubts as to the wisdom of the salutation. Is it good for a young composer to be so hailed? Be that as it may, one need have no hesitation in saying that in William Baines we have a pianoforte writer who shows remarkable talent. I recently reviewed in these columns a lengthy work from his pen, 'Paradise Gardens,' and was struck by the resourcefulness of his treatment of the keyboard. Had I known that the composer was a mere lad, and practically self taught, my commendation would have been blended with astonishment. Here is a set of Seven Preludes (Elkin) in which his gifts are quite as fully shown, though the essays are much shorter. There is a decided hint of Scriabin here and there, and it is easy to see that Chopin has a high place in Mr. Baines's young affections. But there is so much originality that one does not feel disposed to dwell unduly on the imitative side which is inevitable in such early work. We must keep our eyes on this youth, hoping—indeed, expecting—soon to be able to join Dr. Hull in his cry of 'Hats off!'

Letters to the Editor

PURCELL PERFORMANCES

SIR,—One of the most curious anomalies in English musical matters is the fact that while we agree as to the greatness of Henry Purcell, and give his Church music something like its due place in our Cathedrals, hardly any attention is given to his secular works, with the exception of an occasional performance of a few songs.

In frequent performances of one or two of Purcell's works are not an adequate recognition of his genius, and the only way would seem to be the establishment of a Purcell Performing Society to produce the works from time to time. Such a scheme might be extended by including other compositions worthy of association with Purcell, and thereby an important step would be taken towards the encouragement of English opera.

I shall be glad to receive the names of those who are in agreement with this suggestion, with a view to an early attempt to put the matter into a practical form.—Yours, &c.,
F. A. HADLAND.

15, Bellevue Mansions,
Forest Hill, S.E. 23.

'A NEW FINGERIT ORGANEIST.'

SIR,—Will you allow me space in which to reply to Dr. Grattan Flood's comments on my article under above title, which unfortunately escaped my attention too long for an answer to be in time for your March issue?

(1.) The date 1250 is not that of the *introduction* of the organ into Scotland, but of its first recorded use; and the comparison drawn is between what was the *fact* in Scotland and what, by 'most Englishmen—and even Scotchmen themselves,' was commonly *supposed* to be the fact. To say that Scotland was 'more advanced' than certain historians realise involves no comparison with England at all. And if Dr. Grattan Flood will re-read his own first paragraph carefully he will see that there is no contradiction whatever between the facts he states and the sentence he quotes from me.

(2.) In thanking him for the additional instances he gives of the simultaneous use of the lute and organ, I must point out that my use of the word 'unique' was qualified. He quotes it as though it was absolute.

(3.) Dr. Grattan Flood says that the Van der Goes panel is 'now in Buckingham Palace.' This is not the case. It is now in Holyrood Palace, and (except for temporary removals) has been there since 1857, when it was removed from Hampton Court. Apparently it never was in Buckingham Palace, though it was once in Kensington Palace. I have seen it at Holyrood several times myself during the last quarter of a century—for instance, last August, when I obtained the photograph so excellently reproduced in your January number. Dr. Grattan Flood further says that 'the Provost is represented as kneeling before St. Cecilia, who is playing the organ.' This also is not the case. The Provost is at the player's left hand, and has his back towards him (or her). The position strikes one at once as peculiar. The explanation is that if the folding panels were closed the Provost would appear as worshipping the Holy Trinity, represented on the corresponding panel. The angel at the organ is identified by Mr. David Laing as representing the deceased Queen, Mary of Gueldres. Sir Herbert Maxwell calls this 'an ingenious conjecture.' Neither he nor Mr. James Caw, both high authorities, mention St. Cecilia.

Sir J. G. Dalzell's reproduction, which of course I have seen, is not in my opinion a whit better than that reproduced, by Royal permission, in your columns.—Yours, &c.,

CLEMENT ANTROBUS HARRIS.

Obituary

ODOARDI BARRI had been so long out of the limelight that his death in the last days of January passed unnoticed save for an account in the *Kensington Post*, yet this forgotten Irish composer deserves recognition if only for his once enormously popular ballad 'The Boys of the Old Brigade,' which he composed for his compatriot Signor Foli in 1874. Curiously enough both of these Irishmen Italianised their names, as Barri's real name was Slater, while Foli's was Foley. Born in Dublin on September 13, 1844, Edward Slater showed an early aptitude for music, and was sent as a boy to Rome, where he studied singing and joined an opera company. He fought as a Papal Zouave in defence of the Holy See, and then settled for seven years at Malta under the patronage of Sir Patrick Grant, whose wife was the daughter of the famous Irish soldier Viscount Gough, G.C.B. In 1872 he went to America, and narrowly escaped with his life in the great fire of Chicago. Returning to England he became reader for Cramer & Co., in succession to Sullivan, and composed numerous songs, including 'The Shadow of the Cross,' 'The River and the Maiden,' 'The Land of Dreams,' 'The Good Shepherd,' 'The Dream Flower,' 'The Shilling,' &c. He passed away at Fitzroy Street, London, at the age of seventy-five.