Review

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Tonic Sol-fa method of teaching singing classes. We have too much admiration for the broad principle of that method, as well as respect for the late Mr. Curwen's successful life and work, to go out of our way to criticise the over earnestness of Mr. Ellis's advocacy of the independent and scientific origin of the dynamic method of notation used in this country; but with his wealth of learning, he might have more theoretically—shall we say, more frankly—exposed the manner of employment in that system of the *lah mode*. Mr. Ellis does not approve it; he could not do so without ignoring the most prominent feature in the modern tonality, which is the transposition of the *octave modes* to one common final—a fixed *doh*. The Tonic Sol-fa creed has been recently expounded for our general edification in an article in Grove's "Dictionary of Music." We cannot give Mr. Ellis chapter and verse, but somewhere in the article referred to, he will find written these stupendous words—"A minor, should be C minor." Mr. Ellis's exegesis of the text quoted would have been of more value to us than many "duodenals."

The Psalms (Bible Version) pointed for Chanting. By the Rev. John Troutbeck, D.D. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE translation of the Psalms contained in the Authorised Version (commonly called the "Bible" Version of the Psalms) has been published by Messrs. Novello and Co., pointed for chanting by the Rev. Dr. Troutbeck. The principles on which the pointing has been done are mainly those of the Cathedral Psalter, of which Dr. Troutbeck was Co-Editor, a Psalter which has now successfully endured the test of long experience, and we have not remarked any instances where we should decidedly disagree with the pointing adopted. When the history of chanting comes to be written, it will be recorded that to the late Dr. Stephen Elvey rightfully belongs the credit of having been the first to show that smooth and intelligent chanting is best secured by making the strict time of the Chant begin before the recitation-note is left, with a bar, containing a greater or less number of words according to emphasis and accent. Dr. S. Elvey's own Psalter, which is sung to perfection at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, may perhaps be regarded as chiefly suitable for highly trained choirs, and to be a little complex for Church singers in general, but his principle, which has been adopted, sometimes without acknowledgment, in many later Psalters, is beyond controversy. The Psalter we are reviewing professes to suit, in its pointing, ordinary Anglican Chants, but it is a question, which we are convinced will soon come under discussion, whether the Anglican Chant, especially the double Chant, with its uncompromising stiffness, should be retained as the normal music for the Psalms. Many are the instances in which the original grouping of the verses, and with it their expressiveness and very meaning, have to yield to the inexorable requirements of the Chant; and the more the Psalms are studied, and their structure discerned and expounded, the less adequate does their customary musical treatment appear. It is possible that single Chants might still be used; but if greater variety be desired than that which single Chants alone can give, both double and triple Chants will have to be brought into use as well. The Psalter under review is not, of course, divided into daily portions like the Prayer Book Psalter, for it is intended for the use of those Christian bodies in which the Psalms are not sung throughout in monthly course, but it can easily be so divided by those who use it; and whatever be the Chant-form of the future—single, double, or those well-known forms with a triple Chant as well—there is no obstacle to the adaptation of the Psalter just published to all three types.

The Scottish Hymnal. With Tunes for use in Churches. [T. Nelson and Sons, London and Edinburgh.]

THERE are three branches of the Scottish Presbyterian Church, one the Church of Scotland, connected with the State, the other two the United Presbyterian and the Free Church bodies, separatists from the Establishment. They vie with each other, we learn, in many things, and in nothing so conspicuously as in aids to divine praise—not to do more than allude to the strongly pronounced opposition of the two dissenting bodies to the State recognition and maintenance of the mother Church. The United

Presbyterians were the first of the three to use a collection of hymns in public worship, not to speak of four, by Addison and others, which have been printed for many long years at the end of the metrical Psalms and Paraphrases to be found at the end of every Bible printed for Scotland. This book of hymns was issued some forty or fifty years ago. The Established Church followed, though tardily, with a Hymnal of somewhat limited extent; the Free Church some years later with a still smaller collection. The latter body, however, three or four years ago, issued a greatly enlarged collection, prodigal of outlay for the best music available for it; and now the Established Church, not to be outdone, has just issued a new edition of the book in use in the congregations of the denomination. This collection, upon which we now offer a few remarks, bears the original title "The Scottish Hymnal." It contains twice the number of hymns there were in the early book, set for the first time to fixed tunes. The musical editorship has been entrusted to Dr. A. L. Peace, Organist of Glasgow Cathedral.

The selection of hymns naturally comprehends a great variety of measures, nearly all being of sufficiently rhythmical and familiar character. The best music, old and new, seems to have been chosen, and in the matter of adaptation there does not seem much to object to. We must take exception, however, to the inclusion of several American hymns, with their tunes, chiefly to be found, it may be added, among the hymns to the young—on the principle, perhaps, that anything will do for children. It seems difficult, apparently, to keep this class of hymns and hymn music, bad with but few exceptions, out of Scottish collections. There does not seem much otherwise in the new book, in respect to the music, that is not familiar in English Hymnals, but a few new compositions are included. Some of these are by the Editor, and are, as a rule, musical efforts of originality and character. A few of the others which find a place are amateurish and indifferent. Dr. Peace has done his editorial supervision, generally speaking, with care, a noticeable liking for counterpoint of two notes against one (second species) in freshly arranged tunes, being an attractive feature rather than otherwise. Alterations which have been made in the rhythm of one or two familiar tunes are rather risky. The tunes are printed in short score, as usual, but the barring is carried right through the two staves in organ fashion, while, besides, the bars are almost invariably under each other, giving a marked degree of clearness to the eye, and greater quickness, no doubt, of reference of words to music. The typographical part of the book is highly creditable to the publishers.

Songs of the North. Gathered together from the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland. Edited by A. C. Macleod and Harold Boulton. The music arranged by Malcolm Lawson. [Field and Tuer, the Leadenhall Press.]

WE are told in the preface to this work that the object the editors had in view has been "to gather together in an agreeable and singable form a collection of Scottish and Highland songs not familiar for the most part to the many enthusiastic admirers of the minstrelsy of Scotland." There have been so many volumes of well-known Scottish melodies recently published that we can now scarcely see any sufficient reason for multiplying them; but the novelty of design in this collection will ensure it a welcome with all who love Scottish music and Scottish poetry. A number of the songs, notably some of the Highland ones, are here written down, it is believed, for the first time. In some instances words in the Lowland Scottish language that either had no tunes, or tunes unworthy of them, have been set to old Highland melodies, a proceeding which, as the editors truly point out, "though it might possibly be objected to by purists, has been generally acknowledged as admissible since Burns set the example." The arrangement of the music is, on the whole, extremely good; and a feature in the work is the printing of the words of the song upon a separate page, as well as underneath the musical notation. Nothing is said upon the title-page respecting the very refined illustrations which are scattered through the volume; many of these, however, are really beautiful pictures, apart from the subject which they so graphically depict, and materially enhance the value of the book.