Review

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Gloriette, Souvenir de Schönbrunn. Impromptu, pour le Piano.

Air de Danse, de la Régence. Pour le Piano.

Par Edouard Roeckel. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE first of these pieces is a pleasing and musicianlike trifle, but without sufficient character to distinguish it from the hundreds of "pleasing trifles" daily published. The "Air de Danse," however, is deserving of something more than mere conventional words of praise. The theme faithfully reflects the time it is supposed to illustrate, and the treatment of it throughout is in excellent keeping with the design of the piece. The second subject, in the tonic minor, contrasts well with the opening motive, a quaint effect being gained by its commencement on the half bar. We cordially commend this well-considered sketch to the notice of pianists who desire to elevate the character of their "drawing-room music."

Sonatina for the Pianoforte. Composed by Hamilton Clarke. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS Sonatina is gracefully written; but the melodious commencement of both movements scarcely accords with the somewhat laboured efforts which follow. In the last bar but one of the first page we cannot reconcile ourselves to the B which occurs on the chord of the 6th upon F, and the harmony in the last three bars of page 4 is to us particularly unpleasant. Again, in the second movement, can the 16th bar of page 8 be followed by the 17th as it stands? If so, the resolution of the diminished 7th, at the end of bar 16—especially in two-part writing—is scarcely a good example for youthful students. Apart from these, and other awkward progressions which we could name, there is some effective writing in the piece, the best portions being those where the least is attempted.

Variations on an Original Theme in G minor. Composed by F. Davenport. [Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

It is not often that we have so thoroughly refreshing a specimen of classical music presented to us as this piece by Mr. Davenport, whose name, although new to us, must, we trust, sooner or later become well known. Both the theme and the variations show that the composer has studied in a good school; and though we cannot say that the composition will not tax the powers of even a good pianist, there is nothing in it that evinces either pedantry or affectation, and the passages, therefore, will well repay the trouble expended upon their practice. All the variations are full of character—Nos. 3 and 5 being especially effective—a Dominant pedal, unexpectedly succeeded by the Tonic major, in which key the piece ends, being a point well worthy of notice. We assure Mr. Davenport that we look forward with pleasure to our next meeting.

I am the Angel. Song. Translated from the German by M. M. M. Music by Rosetta O'Leary Vinning. [Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

THE composer of this song remains firm in the determination of appealing rather to a select artistic circle than to the musically uneducated millions. We have already noticed with much pleasure several of her highly poetical vocal works, and can conscientiously affirm that the piece now before us is in every respect equal, if not superior, to those which have preceded it. Supposing that the growing tendency towards "word-painting" do not lead to an abandonment of form, we are inclined to believe that the desire to escape from the mawkish English ballad school is one by all means to be encouraged; and Mrs. O'Leary may fairly congratulate herself, therefore, upon being a worthy pioneer in a good cause. The words of "I am the Angel" are most sympathetically set throughout, the change to the tonic major at the phrase, "I bring you day," being extremely happy. The accompaniment—if a part may be so termed which forms an integral portion of the composition—is most artistically interwoven with the vocal theme, the alternations of figure in every case seeming to grow out of the varied shades of feeling in the poetry. A good contralto singer will, we are sure, be grateful to us for pointing out the merits of a song rising so far above the level of our everyday vocal music.

Yes. Song. Words by Mary Walrond Clarke. Composed by Willem Coenen. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS song, thoroughly German in feeling, although composed to English words, is remarkable not only for truth of expression but for a delicacy in the treatment of the harmonic progressions which cannot be overpraised. The commencement, with the chromatic descent from dominant to tonic harmony, introduces with much effect the pleading phrase "One word alone;" and the unexpected key of A major, on the coveted word "Yes," comes upon the ear with a freshness which cannot fail to be felt by every auditor. A good point, too, is the introduction of the triplet arpeggios, the return to the original key and theme gaining much by the contrast. We earnestly hope that lovers of pure vocal music will make themselves acquainted with so eloquent a composition.

The Balaclava Charge. Written by Alfred Tennyson. Music by C. A. Macirone. [Hutchings and Romer.]

TENNYSON'S stirring lines have already tempted more than one composer to heighten their effect by the aid of music; but Miss Macirone has brought both scientific acquirement and poetical feeling to bear upon her task with so much success that she need fear no rival. In spite of an undoubted similarity with Schubert's "Erl-King," this song cannot fail to make its way with a mixed audience, and contralto singers will, we are certain, thank us for drawing their attention to a composition so effective for public performance. The change to the tonic major on the words "Flashed all their sabres bare" is a noticeable point; and the introduction of the National Anthem for the last verse, with a separate figure in the voice part, is a happy thought, although we should have preferred a diatonic descent of quavers for the bass in bar 2 of the vocal phrase, page 10, if only to avoid the fifths between voice and bass, in passing from the triad of A to that of F. Miss Palmer, to whom the song is dedicated, has already successfully tested its merits before a public audience, creating much enthusiasm at a recent concert where it was accompanied by the composer.

Scottish Melodies, arranged for the Harmonium or American Organ, by E. F. Rimbault (Book II.) [Edinburgh: Paterson and Sons], is a little collection, including some of the most beautiful of the Scotch melodies, arranged in the simplest manner, and which will suit players of a very limited capacity.

FOREIGN NOTES.

WITH the present month the "dead season" commences at Paris. One by one the various operatic establishments and concert-rooms are closing their doors, to be reopened for the commencement of a fresh campaign in the coming autumn. In the meantime numerous prospective announcements are made by the journals of operatic representations which are to take place next season, including a new work by Victorin Joncières, entitled "Mademoiselle de Marseille," at the Opéra-Comique; the revival of Auber's much neglected "Cheval de Bronze," at the Théâtre-Lyrique; and Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine," at the Grand-Opéra. Mlle. Krauss, who will sing the part of Selika in the last-mentioned work, has gone to Vienna to become once more the pupil of Madame Marchesi, for the purpose of studying her new rôle. A promising young artist, Mlle. Andrea Barbot, has lately made her *début* at the Opéra in the character of Fides in Meyerbeer's opera "Le Prophète," and a brilliant career is predicted, on the part of the critics, to the *débutante*, who is a niece of one of the professors at the Paris Conservatoire. Among new engagements for next season, that of Madame Alice Urban is announced by the managers of the Théâtre-Italien. The lady is preceded by a great reputation won in America, Italy, and Spain, where her exceptional vocal and histrionic qualities have created much enthusiasm. There has been a private hearing lately, at the residence of the composer, of a new opera by M. Lefèvre-Niedermeyer. The work