Review

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Hints on Singing. By Manuel Garcia. [E. Ascherberg and Co.]

"Since the publication of 'L'Art du Chant' (1840), the experience of the laryngoscope and fifty years of additional invention has naturally enabled me to acquire many fresh ideas, and also to clear up my pre-existing doubts. The result of this I now offer to the public in as concise and clear a form as I have found possible. Thus begins the preface of a volume by one who has long been recognised as a leading authority on the science of singing. Although we cannot agree with the author's statement that "singing is becoming as much a lost art as the manufacture of Mandarin china," and though we cannot but regret that he has adopted for his explanations the tiresome and artificial form of question and answer between an impossible pupil and an all-wise teacher, the book has an obvious value that makes it very welcome. It begins with a clear explanation of the vocal organs, the understanding of which is greatly facilitated by a series of excellent illustrations. The registers and compass of the various voices are next treated, and some valuable remarks are made on vocal technique, timbre, an important subject which has recently received due attention. Under the heading of "singing coupled with words," vowel sounds are dealt with in a concise but exhaustive manner. Vowel-shapes and timbres are clearly described, and the physiognomy of the voice," and as an illustration of their delicacy the author says, "let us suppose the question 'Are you coming?' to be put by an imperious master, or an entreating lover, or a threatening servant. In each case the same sound would assume a different ring." In answer to a question by the impossible pupil, "Would not the modification of words disfigure the language?" M. Garcia says: "In the utterance of a thought all the vowels are modified in the same proportion; their mutual relation remains unaltered; only as a whole have they taken the tint harmonizing with the passions involved." Such a sublime analysis shows that the master mind. Again, with regard to the use of consonants the definition that "through their varied degrees of energy they declare the state of activity of the sentiment, just as the vowels manifest its nature," is admirable, and conducive to the cultivation of that most desirable of all habits in students—namely, precise and clear thinking. The secret of a trained vocalist's success may be said to be given in answer to the question "How can a singer transmit his emotions to an audience?" By feeling strongly himself. Sympathy is the sole transmitter of emotion, and the feelings of an audience are excited by our own, as the vibrations of one instrument are awakened by the vibrations of another." The musical illustrations are apposite and the vocal exercises well calculated to achieve their object. There are but few singers who may not profit by consulting the pages of M. Garcia's valuable treatise.

Original Compositions for the Organ. Nos. 239-241. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

These three numbers consist of the several movements of an Organ Sonata in D minor, by John E. West. For many years it has been a practice among book-sellers to issue works of fiction in weekly or monthly parts, but it has not obtained much acceptance in the music trade, though there are times when it may offer a convenient method of publication, as, for example, when an organ piece has not obtained much acceptance in the music trade, and it will be performed according to the original score, with strings and organ accompaniment, at the Purcell Bicentenary Festival in Westminster Abbey on November 21 next.

Andante Melancolique. For Violin (or Violoncello) and Pianoforte. By A. Simonetti.

Moments Joyeux. For the Violin and Pianoforte. By William Henley. [G. Ricordi and Co.]

Grace and refinement are usually prominent in M. Simonetti's compositions, and in this instance an exception to this rule. Its reflective character is relieved by passages of impassioned nature and a sympathetic player could make it very effective.

In her which, of course, is the chief need of those beginning the study of the violin, Mr. Henley has written a series of six pieces in the first position, of which "Moments Joyeux" forms the sixth. It is a bright little piece, well calculated to please, and it may be recommended to the performer—and may be recommended to teachers as likely to encourage young students.

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character, with harmonies which suggest the influence of Spohr. It is repeated with amplified accompaniment, and there is a pianissimo close. An episode, *Più mosso*, in B flat minor, follows, more agitated in character, and then the principal theme returns in the hands of the florid triplet accompaniment for the right, this style being continued to the end of the movement. The third portion of the Sonata, headed *Allargando piano*, opens in a bright and dignified manner in the major key, 3-2 time; but this is merely introductory, a well-marked fugue subject being soon given out and developed at some length. After a prolonged dominant pedal the opening theme returns, and the peroration is as brilliant and imposing as could be wished. The least out of character with the dignified style in which the Sonata is written. The work will serve for Recital purposes, or the three movements for use separately as Church Voluntaries.

**Talks with Bandmen.** A Popular Hand-book for Brass Instrumentalists. By Algernon S. Rose. [W. Rider and Sons.]

**Twelve Humorous Songs.** Written and composed by Mostyn T. Pigott. [A. Scherber and Co.]

This very amusing album consists of a series of parodies of various well-known types of song popular at the present day. Each has a satirical description of the essential features of the type, intended to be read by the singer, and bringing enough of the subject to set the empty heads of the performers. Mr. Pigott's words are excellent foiling; and though his music is scarishly on the same level as regards humour, both are marked invariably by a degree of refinement that is as welcome as it is rare in compositions of this class. Among the best parodies in the book are "The Land of Placardy," "The Wet-Blanket Drawing-Room Song," "The Way of the World"—which begins "Down in a little bright tin box, there lay a small Sardine"—and "Arriet's Answer."

**Novello's Part-Song Book.** Nos. 727-737. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

This first of these has the unprepossessing title of "The Hag." It is a setting of lines by Herrick, the composer being B. Luard Selby, and is intended for the Wakefield Music Competition of the present year. It is a wild but very musically piece in B minor, and might have been penned by Mendelssohn when the master was in the mood that prompted his "First Walpurgis Night." Very different is No. 728, "Stay, sweet day," by George Garrett. This is a fairly bright and certainly effective part-song, suitable for performance without accompaniment. No. 729 is yet another setting of Shakespeare's "Who is this Sylvia?" by Edward German. It is quite different from whatever to Schubert's lovely song, but it is full of quiet expression and even originality—in fact, a very charming piece. No. 730, "The Shepherd's Waking," by Eaton Fanning, is an appropriate setting of words from John Attey's "First Book of Airs," 1622, being more in the style of a madrigal than a part-song. The last is a setting of Herrick's "Cherry Ripe," by S. F. Waddington. It is a madrigal in six parts, and, like the best compositions of Pearsall, has an antiquarian flavour with a tincture of modern feeling. All these, with the exception of the first, would sound better without than with accompaniment.

**Novello's Octavo Edition of Trios, &c., for Female Voices.** Nos. 304-307. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

This first of these is Walter Macfarren's "You stole my love," too familiar to need words of description, and here skilfully arranged for soprano and contralto voices in four parts. No. 305, "Moonlight," by Hamilton Clarke, is a familiar waltz in three parts, with ad lib, accompaniments for castanets, triangle, and tambourine. It is very graceful and pretty, and conductors of young ladies' singing classes may be recommended to give it a trial. No. 306, "The Snow," by Edwin Elgar, has obbligats for two violins, and is a composition of a high class. It is for the most part sad in character, the key being E minor, but it ends more cheerfully in the tonic major. No. 307, "The singing bird," is in the same key, with the same accompaniments but brighter in style. It is delightfully fresh and piquant, and the pianissimo close is very charming.