Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 14, No. 323 (Jan. 1, 1870), p. 340

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3354912>

Accessed: 11-01-2016 16:52 UTC

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tunity of becoming acquainted with works of such excessive beauty. Some few years ago it would have been necessary to preface a volume of Sonatas by Schubert with a few lines introducing him to the public as a writer worthy of a certain amount of attention. Happily this time has passed away, and Schubert has taken his place as one of the great composers of the world. This edition of his Pianoforte Sonatas will convince the most sceptical not only of the fertility of his invention, but of his power to mould his thoughts into a form so perfect as to remind us occasionally of his great contemporary Beethoven; whilst the volume of dances will show that he can be as light and graceful as the airiest of our modern pianoforte writers.

Second Concerto. Composed for the Harpsichord or Organ, by G. F. Handel; arranged for the Pianoforte by Agnes Zimmermann.

THE many modern arrangements of the works of the old masters for our household instrument, the Pianoforte, may be accepted as a hopeful sign of the times; for if amateurs are ever to become intimately acquainted with the grand compositions which have brought the art to its present state of perfection, it will be by introducing them into the homes of those whose musical training begins in the nursery, is continued at school, and ends in the drawing-room. Those who direct the studies of the young pianists of the day may do much towards the furtherance of real art not only by teaching, but by directing the attention of their pupils to the excessive beauties of those undying specimens of a school of composition before which the majority of the writings of the present day sink into utter insignificance. Intelligent amateurs who, in their ignorance, might pass over works which have been branded as "heavy," are very often not slow to appreciate the salient points of a piece when played and commented upon by a professor who has gained their confidence; and it is with a firm reliance upon this truth that we give a cordial welcome to the revival of those compositions belonging to a period when music was written by artists for artists. Miss Zimmermann has already made her name as a sympathetic arranger of many classical gems; and we cordially commend this Concerto as one of the very best of her adaptations. The composition itself will be found good practice, as well as good music; and we can promise that any amount of time bestowed upon it will be amply repaid.

Melody for the Pianoforte. By E. H. Thorne.

AN unpretending little piece, requiring, however, a thoroughly trained touch and refined expression to render it according to the intention of the author. Mr. Thorne always writes well and conscientiously; and it is by such composers that the character of the pianoforte music of the day may be materially raised. The melody of this sketch is extremely elegant, and the accompaniment, although very full in many parts, especially in the last page, is always perfectly within the grasp of the performer. The key-note pedal, at the conclusion of the piece, is exceedingly effective.

March for the Pianoforte. Composed by Frederick N. Löhner.

A BRIGHT and spirited March, written with a good knowledge of effect. The subject is pleasing, and the harmonies are bold and appropriate throughout. The phrase in D minor, with the quaver, and afterwards the semiquaver, accompaniment, forms an excellent contrast with the vigorous opening theme; and the *trio*, although perhaps not so strikingly melodious as the other portions of the piece, is so skilfully treated as to give a new and attractive character to the composition, and to prevent any undue monotony from the too frequent recurrence of the first subject. This piece may be safely recommended to the notice of teachers who are in search of a really good March.

A Shadow. Song. Words by Adelaide Anne Procter. Music by Frederick N. Löhner.

THIS song is short, but ambitious; and we believe that

the composer would have accomplished more had he attempted less. Nothing can be more distressing to the ear than restless change of key; and where these changes are not skilfully managed this sensation of uneasiness in the listener is increased. We do not at all like, for instance, the first modulation into A minor, nor do we, indeed, see why the composer ever went there, considering that the following melody commences on a harmony which compels some rather awkward preparatory chords. Again, we are by no means pleased with the alternations of major and minor in the last page. Beyond these objections, we have not a word to say in disparagement of the song. It contains some exceedingly effective detached phrases; and the words are carefully—perhaps too carefully—studied.

Choral Songs (S.A.T.B.) Composed by E. A. Sydenham.

1. *The Parting Kiss.* Poetry by Robert Dodsley.

2. *When the Rosy Morn.* " Francis Brooke.

APART from the melodious character distinguishing all the vocal compositions of Mr. Sydenham which have come before us, there is a solidity of writing—a vigorous and truly English flavour about them—positively invigorating in these days when it is so much the custom to import our musical fashions from Germany. It is the duty of all well-wishers to the formation of a National School of Music to encourage the early efforts of any composer who has the courage to think for himself; and if Mr. Sydenham can resist the temptation to fritter away his talents in abortive attempts to hit the taste of the hour, we believe he has a bright future before him. His song, "The Parting Kiss," is a simple and appropriate melody, carefully and most effectively harmonized. It is strictly a "choral song;" and, if rendered by a choir with due attention to gradations of tone, cannot fail to please. The closes at the end of each line are excellently managed, considering the unpretending nature of the theme, the only perfect close being skilfully reserved for the end of the verse. The words are perhaps sufficiently good for musical purposes; but we cannot say that we particularly like the lugubrious line, "Though my body must remove." No. 2, "When the rosy morn," although scarcely as attractive in the melody as the song just noticed, has no effect of being put together in fragments—a defect in many part-songs we could name—but the themes flow on with that continuity of idea which is the surest sign of the possession of real creative power in the composer. It is well harmonised, and the modulations are natural and well-conducted throughout. There is much character in the final phrase, where the bass has a short solo passage, against the holding notes of the other voices. We trust that we may have an opportunity of hearing these compositions at some of the choral concerts during the coming season.

Four Hymns. Set to music by the Rev. W. H. Bliss.

AN effective setting of four favourite Hymns, of which two are of a bold, vigorous character, and two of a smooth flowing nature, forming an effective contrast. We might perhaps take exception to the occasional high range of the first two; for, as a rule, the effect of a congregation singing up to F and F sharp is unpleasant. And we cannot approve the adoption in Tune 3 of the plan of giving a semibreve to the beginning and ending of each of the first four phrases. It would be unfair to speak of the awkward accents in No. 4, for really the words are so unequal that a violation of the laws of accent is forced upon a composer in one or other of the verses. The melody, however, of this tune is worthy of great commendation, and—in a general way—so are the harmonies. In short, the four tunes are certainly above the average of amateur productions.

Hymns for Christmas. Set to Music by the Rev. W. H. Bliss.

These Christmas Hymns present the same characteristics as those described above, with the addition of a somewhat over-abundant display of vigour.