

Review

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recorder,' 'Tone effect of the recorder,' 'Hamlet and the recorder,' 'Shakespeare's allusions to flutes and pipes,' 'Milton on flutes and flute players,' 'The Temple flute player and the tomb piper,' and a supplementary chapter on 'Wailing among the Irish.'

The well-known passage in 'Hamlet,' where the recorder is mentioned, forms the subject of a lengthy and learned disquisition covering many pages, in which the hidden allusions are made clear, and the proper method to be employed in handing the recorder to the Prince of Denmark is indicated by pictorial illustrations.

The Roman and Greek use of pipe and flutes is fully entered into, and there is such richness of material that we cannot but express our admiration for a work which may be regarded as saying the last word respecting the subject Mr. Welch has taken in hand.

The author warns the light reader that the book is not for him, confessing that the work, made up from material gathered for his own gratification, 'abounds in notes, digressions, cross-references, and descriptions, often tedious and sometimes irrelevant.'

The literary critic who wishes to take a superficial glance at the subject may perhaps echo these words, but to the earnest student that which may be considered a fault in arrangement and prolixity becomes part of the book's merit, for a good index enables any portion of its diverse matter to be at once available for reference.

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion. Festival Anthem. By W. G. Alcock.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

This is a setting of the words of Psalm cxxvi. for voices, orchestra and organ, composed for the 258th Anniversary of the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy, held recently in St. Paul's Cathedral. It is the most important contribution to Church music from the pen of Dr. Alcock which we have yet seen, and he is to be congratulated, not only upon the opportunity which has been afforded him of writing for such an event, but upon the distinctive merits of the composition itself. An occasion such as that already mentioned, when the choir of the Cathedral is supplemented by a large body of extra voices, provides excellent scope for variety in the use of vocal resources, and of this Dr. Alcock has taken full advantage.

Thus portions of the anthem are allotted to semi-chorus, quartet, and bass solo. These were sung at the Festival by the Cathedral choir only, the portions marked 'Full' being taken by the whole body of voices.

The music is lofty and elevated in character, and although conceived in a fairly modern spirit, is thoroughly dignified and Church-like throughout. Both voice-parts and accompaniment are most effectively handled, and present many features of interest. The accompaniment, while generally of an orchestral calibre, has been well adapted for organ alone by the composer, and would prove equally effective on that instrument in the hands of a capable player.

Capriccio for the Organ. Composed by John Ireland.

[Stainer & Bell, Ltd.]

Among those modern composers who are endeavouring to raise the standard of organ music must be included the name of Mr. John Ireland. He proves that while it is not necessary to sustain the organ's reputation by writing a Fugue, it is quite possible to present acceptable examples in lighter form and yet to maintain the true character of the instrument. The *Capriccio* is admirably written, and while within the powers of those possessing even moderate technical skill, should prove a charming addition to the programme of many an organ recital.

Finale Jubilante for the Organ. (No. 44 of the Recital Series. Edited by E. H. Lemare.) Composed by John E. West.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Mr. West has given us a piece strong and abounding in interest and effective writing which should become well-known and appreciated. As is usual in the composer's work, a great deal is made of rhythmical device, and if there is any

danger of the opening figure becoming wearisome, the situation is saved by the contrast afforded by the second subject, which is of a totally different character. An excellently wrought fugal section lends much interest and contains most ingenious counterpoint. The second appearance of the second subject gains in effect by being given to the left-hand. The music is essentially appropriate to the organ, and should prove effective on an instrument of even moderate size.

PIANOFORTE MUSIC.

Pierrette. By Cyril Scott.

Scottish tone-pictures. By Edgar Barratt.

[Elkin & Co.]

Mr. Scott's 'Pierrette' is a characteristic example of his more trifling mood. It has some fascination, with an admixture of waywardness and sweet unreasonableness, and is yet compact and consistent.

Mr. Edgar Barratt's 'Scottish tone-pictures' embody some ventures into impressionism which here and there arrive at some glamour. Occasionally, however, the works are too apparent. For instance, the mere grafting of added sixths, splashes of diatonic notes and similar 'sticky' effects upon clear-cut music, does not raise it from earth to sky. As a rule Mr. Barratt shows sufficient individuality in these six pieces to soar above the conventional without recourse to these means. The collection might be recommended to pianists of moderate technical powers, desirous of making their first acquaintance with the impressionistic style.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Oesterreich, 19. Jahrgang: (i.) *Wiener Instrumentalmusik im 17. Jahrhundert*, (ii.) *Triente Codices*, (iii.) *Fünfmessen aus 15. Jahrhunderts*. (Vienna, Artaria & Co.; Leipsic, Breitkopf & Härtel.)

From Mendelssohn to Wagner. Being the memoirs of J. W. Davison, forty years music critic of *The Times*. Pp. 539. Price 12s. 6d. (London: William Reeves.)

Sea songs, ships, and chanties. Collected by W. B. Whall, master mariner. Second edition, enlarged. Pp. 131. (Glasgow: James Brown & Son.)

Correspondence.

THE ORIGIN OF THE IRISH HARP.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—I am very sorry to have misunderstood Mr. Galpin. I certainly thought he admitted that the earliest Irish harps wanted the fore-pillar. I observe that the passage stands as follows in his paper as printed by you: 'The appearance of the harp in Britain coincides with the coming of the Anglo-Saxon and Northman to our shores; though whether these sea-rovers, who were excellent carpenters as well, had added the fore-pillar which henceforth distinguishes their harp from that of Eastern nations we cannot tell.' Now, remembering that the Saxons first appeared in Britain about the middle of the 5th century, the Angles soon after the commencement of the 6th century, and the Danes in the last quarter of the 8th century, this statement is rather vague. Nor is it quite fair to quote me as having said that 'names matter little.' My words were: 'Names matter little, except for purposes of reference.' I maintain that the relative position of instrument and player on the Ullard Cross indicates a performance on the harp, and not on the cruit; nor can I see that the excellent photograph accompanying Mr. Galpin's letter gives the least support to his theory.

If I may be allowed to answer Mr. Galpin's 'practical question,' I say that whatever the difficulty of tuning harps possessing no fore-pillar, there is no reason to suppose it greater in the case of Irish harps than in those of Eastern origin. There were no metal strings in the 9th century, the art of wire-drawing not having been invented until about