

Review

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had been so greatly overlooked, and which must be cultivated that the pupil might learn that harmony was art, and that chord making must result in music.

The discussion which followed was one of the longest that has taken place at the meetings of the Association, and amongst those taking part were Drs. McNaught, Maclean, Greenish, and Campbell, and Messrs. Barri, Southgate, and Banister. The last-named spoke at some length, but the substance of what was said may be gathered from Dr. Sawyer's reply, which may be epitomised as follows: That the contention that there were text-books which gave some attention to chord progression and the harmonisation of melodies did not alter the fact that these important particulars were slighted in the popular books by Goss, Richter, Stainer, Macfarren, and Prout. That the admission made by most of the speakers that they did not follow the text-books but interpolated exercises, and in teaching practically adopted the method advocated in the paper, proved that the text-books were deficient. That the fact that most faults occurred in examination papers in the harmonisation of given melodies, also showed that the teaching was not good. That if our average teachers were unsatisfactory it was because our text-books were faulty. That the pupil who could use chords freely would be perfectly able to analyse harmonic progressions.

CHELTENHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE fourth triennial Musical Festival at Cheltenham took place on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th ult., in the Assembly Rooms of the bright and attractive town. Owing to the recent epidemic at Gloucester, and its effect upon adjacent places, the question of celebrating the Festival this year was in suspense until the summer had considerably advanced, and when conditions enabled the promoters to make up their minds the time remaining was comparatively short; hence, a good deal of work had to be hurried somewhat, with the result that, although there was little fault to find with the general arrangements, there were unmistakable evidences in the musical performance of imperfect preparation. The Festival scheme included three Concerts—one for each of the three days of the Festival—and the works brought forward were Sullivan's "Golden Legend," Mendelssohn's "Elijah," and the first part of Haydn's "Creation," together with a few minor novelties. The performers numbered 300, the chorus consisting of the Cheltenham Festival Society with contingents from societies in union with the County of Gloucester Musical Festival Association, and the band of members of the County of Gloucester Musical Festival Association, with amateur members of the Cheltenham Festival Society. Mr. J. A. Matthews was the conductor. The Festival opened on the 3rd ult. with a performance of the "Golden Legend," which was preceded by half-a-dozen miscellaneous pieces, the most interesting of which was a pleasing orchestral composition entitled "Sevillana" (Scène Espagnole), by Mr. E. Elgar, who conducted its performance. The principals in the cantata were Miss Maggie Davies, Madame Belle Cole, Mr. Lloyd Chandos, Mr. David Hughes, and Mr. T. Woodward, who discharged their duties satisfactorily. Not only was the choir imperfectly balanced, but the singing was uneven. While the Evening Hymn and a few other portions of the work were fairly well rendered, the more difficult choruses went with less pleasing results.

Mendelssohn's "Elijah," on the second day, was also given with a degree of efficiency scarcely up to festival average. The opening chorus and "Thanks be to God" were rendered in a manner deserving of praise; but there was some tripping in the more intricate and impetuous numbers and there was very little marking of light and shade. Mr. Santley sustained the part of the *Prophet* with surprising vigour, and the other principal vocalists were Miss Esther Palliser, Madame Marie Hooton, Miss Susah Harby, and Mr. James Gawthrop.

In the first part of the "Creation," which made up half the programme on the third day, the solos were allotted to Madame Zippora Monteith, Mr. Hamlyn Crimp, and Mr. Henry Sunman. Again the choruses were unevenly

rendered. The body of voices sang with tolerable spirit and correctness the easier numbers, but stumbled at difficulties. The band too was frequently at fault. All the new works were comprised in the second part of the programme. "Morning," a pastoral for soprano solo (Madame Monteith) and chorus, composed by Dr. F. Iliffe for the Festival and conducted by him, proved a well written work which made a very favourable impression. "Cherry Ripe" and "Waken, lords and ladies gay," two part-songs from the pen of Mr. A. Herbert Brewer (who directed their performance), are skilful and effective compositions—particularly the former—and were received with hearty approval. These pieces were sung, perhaps, better than anything else during the Festival, the unity of voices and tone-shading calling for warm commendation. The other new piece was a pleasing *Serenata* for strings and harps, by Mr. H. J. Taylor, which was conducted by the composer and received with cordiality. It cannot be said that the Festival was equal in point of musical efficiency to former meetings. Circumstances may, in a measure, account for some of the shortcomings; but it is hoped that mistakes of omission and commission on the present occasion may be avoided in future.

REVIEWS.

The Morning and Evening Service with the Communion Office in A. By C. Villiers Stanford.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

It goes almost without saying that church music from the pen of Professor Stanford must command respect, and it may be said without delay that the present complete service is in every respect worthy of a musician who has attained a very lofty position in his art. Professor Stanford has, in the present instance, studied the capabilities of fairly well-trained church choirs, avoiding undue elaboration, while at the same time imparting such a measure of freshness as would be looked for from so accomplished a musician. The work is fairly comprehensive, the portions of the Liturgy set being the *Te Deum*, *Benedictus*, *Jubilate*, *Kyrie*, the phrases before and after the Gospel, the *Nicene Creed*, *Sursum Corda*, *Sanctus*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, *Magnificat*, and the *Nunc dimittis*; but not the *Benedictus qui venit* nor the *Agnus Dei*, now so much used during the celebration. Four-part writing is for the most part adopted, but sometimes the composer employs a double choir. Many examples might be quoted in which the music is made to illustrate, or at any rate to suggest, the sense of the words—occasionally in a startling manner; and, speaking generally, this is one of the most noteworthy of the many services issued during the last few years.

Technical Studies for the Pianoforte. By James Price.

[Weekes and Co.]

THESE exercises bear the impress of having been carefully thought out to meet the requirements of modern pianoforte playing, and they have the merit of accustoming the student to transposition of keys. It is to be regretted, however, that the old German fingering with the cross for the thumb has been adopted instead of the first five numerals now accepted as being the best method and generally used.

The Communion Service. Set to music in A. By George C. Martin. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE organist of St. Paul's Cathedral has here presented a very vigorous setting of the musical portions of the Eucharistic Office, including the *Benedictus* and the *Agnus Dei*. The organ accompaniment is bold, and to a great extent independent of the voice parts, in which imitation and *fugato* passages are sparingly introduced. Though nominally in A major, the relatives of this key are much employed, and Dr. Martin is lavish in his use of chromatic harmonies and progressions in which, of course, the skill of a cultured church musician may be perceived. Well rendered by choir and organist, the service should prove extremely effective.