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Das moderne Musikdrama. Für gebildete Laien by Ludwig Nohl  
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AT the annual General Meeting of the Cheltenham Musical Society the Committee elected Mr. A. Von Holst Conductor, in place of Dr. A. E. Dyer, who resigned at the close of the season. A vote of thanks to Dr. Dyer for his invaluable services as Conductor of the Society for the last nine years was unanimously passed, accompanied by an expression of regret at his resignation of the office. With a view to enlarging the Society—which will commence its twenty-ninth season next month—it is now thrown open as regards membership.

A CONCERT was given at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley Street, on July 24, by Mdles. Schow-Rosing and Otta Brønnum (vocalists), and Mdlle. Thekla Nathan (pianist), assisted by Messrs. Clifford Hallé and J. T. Hutchinson, and Mr. Kornfeld (violin). The Concert-givers received much applause for their selections and the Concert was an artistic success. Sir Julius Benedict and Mr. W. Ganz acted as Conductors.

MR. EDWIN BARNES, Organist of Holy Trinity Church, Paddington, gave an Organ Recital at the Royal Albert Hall, on July 31, when an excellent programme of works by Mendelssohn, Spohr, Handel, Rossini, &c., was provided. On the 13th ult. the same artist played a selection of classical organ compositions at St. James's, Westgate, Margate, in aid of the organ fund for the church.

MR. SINCLAIR DUNN gave an interesting lecture on the Jacobite times, illustrated by the songs of the period, at the Birkbeck Institution on the 6th ult. Mr. Dunn, who sang the well-known old ballads with much effect, was assisted by the Misses Fenn, and Messrs. Noldwitt and Penton. The entertainment was received with marked favour throughout.

THE monthly Organ Recital at St. John the Evangelist's, Waterloo Road, was given, on the 12th ult., by the Organist of the Church, Mr. Henry J. B. Dart, who played an interesting selection from the works of Bach, Mendelssohn, Raff, Smart, Hiles, and Guilman, and the whole of Barnett's Orchestral Suite, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel."

A LIST of the principal lyrical works written by Mr. Edward Oxenford, just published, contains the names of 60 operas, &c., and 900 songs and ballads. We doubt whether any author of Mr. Oxenford's age can produce so extensive a catalogue of the productions of his own pen.

WE understand that Messrs. Ward, Lock and Co. are on the point of publishing an exhaustive treatise on the Violin and Violin-making, by Mr. Ed. Heron-Allen, the author of "The Ancestry of the Violin," "Violin-making; as it was, and is," &c.

IN the list of successful candidates for the A.C.O. diploma at the Midsummer Examination of the College of Organists, given in our last number, "J. Firth, Shirley," should be J. Firth, Shipley.

THE Rev. Dr. Simpson, Sub-Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, has consented to become President of the London Church Choir Association, in the room of the late Right Rev. Bishop Claughton.

## REVIEWS.

*Das moderne Musikdrama. Für gebildete Laien.* By Ludwig Nohl. [Wien: Karl Prochaska, 1884.]

DR. NOHL, it must be admitted, wields a most prolific pen. Throughout the length and breadth of the field of musical history there is scarcely a topic upon which, in books, pamphlets, or journalistic contributions, he has not enlarged. He has moreover written a meritorious, if somewhat lengthy, life of Beethoven, and a sympathetic biographical portrait of Mozart; and he would undoubtedly have presented the world of amateurs likewise with a "Handel," a "Bach," and a "Haydn," had he not been forestalled by standard biographies of these great masters from other authors. Such, however, being the case, Dr. Nohl's literary energies have in a great measure become diverted into channels where he can scarcely hope to do

justice to his undoubted ability—viz., the columns of not one, but of almost every existing German, and of many foreign, music journals. Literature of this description, however able it may be, is proverbially of an ephemeral character, and when individual literary labour has to be distributed over so extensive an area it is scarcely to be wondered at if Dr. Nohl's multitudinous journalistic efforts frequently bear the impress of a mind fully conscious of this ephemeral nature of his task.

We should scarcely have prefaced our notice of Dr. Nohl's book with these remarks were it not for the sincere regard which we entertain for his ability as an exponent of musico-historical subjects; an ability which, whenever fully engaged and brought to bear upon a given task, as in the case of the present volume, is sure to meet with due recognition. The perusal of the work before us has afforded us the most unqualified pleasure. The man who could thus enthusiastically, yet lucidly and concisely state the case and plead the cause of modern musical development, and more especially of the *Musikdrama*, should reserve his enthusiasm and powers of exposition for similar concentrated efforts, for by so doing he would render far greater justice both to himself and to the art he reveres. We have, as yet, but few able advocates of advanced musical thought, as represented in the works of Wagner and Liszt. Nor, we feel confident, will the admonition conveyed in these lines be disregarded by a writer of Dr. Nohl's far-sightedness and elasticity of mind. The present work, as its title indicates, addresses in the first place the "educated layman," but it may also be read with advantage by the professional musician to whom the most modern views in regard to the ultimate capacity of musical art are as yet "a mystery and a myth." In his survey of the progress of the cultivation of our art, the author proceeds with laudable impartiality. He even finds a place for Handel, *side by side* with Bach, which, it should be stated, is a concession not to be overlooked on the part of a writer of the Wagnerian school which, as a rule, all but ignores Handel, tracing true musical progress in a direct line from Bach to Beethoven, and thence to Wagner; the three forming the great landmarks of conscious artistic development. In a similar sense, it is refreshing to meet here with passages like the following: "As in nature the elementary and unconscious animal world by no means disappears after the crowning act of creation had produced man, so likewise are all those different forms and styles, which have preceded our present most directly appealing (*persönlichste Rede*) musical language, not lost, nor even are they mere preparatory steps, but co-existing, independent, and enduring"; an assertion which, if open to a charge of arrogance, from some quarters, at least shows the breadth of the author's treatment of the subject from his own standpoint. That by far the greater portion of the book is devoted to Richard Wagner—the originator of the "musikdrama" specially so called—need scarcely be said. Here again the "educated layman" in matters musical will meet with a great deal that is interesting and instructive, calculated to initiate him into the somewhat complex musical strivings of the present day. Among the chapters likely to afford him most direct information in this respect may be instanced those entitled "Der Musikalische Styl R. Wagners," "Die Idee eines Deutschen National-Dramas," and "R. Wagner und die Religion." Some interesting letters of Wagner, addressed to the author and published here for the first time, complete the attractiveness of a volume which cannot fail to be widely read and appreciated.

*Mozart's Klavier Sonaten.* Phrasirungs-Ausgabe von Dr. Hugo Riemann. [Berlin: N. Simrock.]

THIS is an interesting addition to the many existing editions of the great master's pianoforte Sonatas. Its distinguishing characteristic consist in a number of ingeniously devised signs interspersed in the text, by the due observance of which the pupil cannot go far wrong in interpreting these gems of classical musical literature much as they were presumably intended to be rendered by their composer. At all events, he will do so *intelligibly*, if not *intelligently*. The latter will depend very much upon the capacity of his teacher, and upon his own qualifications. There are marks here for absolute expression, as well as for the mere