

Review

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its *raison d'être*. The standard of popular skill among both vocalists and instrumentalists has gone up, and with this has arisen an opportunity for readapting the accompaniment of popular works so as to reproduce as many features of the full score as possible. This task, with reference to the Masses now before us, Mr. Berthold Tours undertook, bringing to it, we need not say, all the qualifications necessary for its complete discharge. Let us add, at once, that his success lies beyond the possibility of doubt. Yet that the work was not easy those who have attempted to do the like will be first to grant. It required great taste and judgment in deciding what to include and what to reject, having regard to the claims of the composition on the one hand and the genius of the instrument on the other; but we believe that a comparison of the new pianoforte accompaniment with the full score will show that, while Mr. Tours has added nothing, neither has he omitted anything essential to the author's design. More to the present purpose, however, is a comparison between the edition before us and that of Mr. Novello. We do not go too far when saying that those who know the two Masses simply by the old pianoforte score will scarcely recognise the effect produced by the later arrangement. To estimate the difference let the reader take Mozart's work and place the "Credo" and "Sanctus" of the old edition by the side of the same movements in the new, or contrast the "Qui tollis" of the one with the "Qui tollis" of the other. These examples suffice to show the immense gain accruing from Mr. Tours's labours—a gain not only of effect but of fidelity to the original. Illustrations of equal cogency might be found in Haydn's "Second Mass," but they need not take up our space. Enough that the principle which has guided Mr. Tours in the new edition is one which all lovers of music can appreciate, and that from its carrying out nothing but good has resulted. In conclusion we must congratulate the editor upon the result achieved, and trust that his skill and taste may be yet further exercised in the same direction.

This is the birthday of my love. Song. Words by Sir J. Bland Burgess, 1790. Music by Charles Gardner. [Ashdown and Parry.]

THERE is much refinement of style, as well as true feeling for the quaint poetry chosen for illustration, evidenced in this little song, which, without pedantic obtrusiveness of scholastic knowledge, is evidently the work of an accomplished artist. The flowing theme in $1\frac{1}{2}$ time, with the triplet accompaniment, is happily contrasted with the change of key, the alteration from compound to simple time, and the new figure in the accompaniment on the words "The lovely earth is once a year dressed out in Spring's array." A composition so unpretentious, and yet so obviously the result of mature thought, should find favour with vocalists, even in the present overstocked state of the song-market.

Asking. Song. Words by Mary Cowden Clarke.

Be true to my love. Song. Words by Mary Cowden Clarke. Composed by W. Borrow. [Metzler and Co.]

THE first of these songs has a subject scarcely of sufficient interest to bear being, without the slightest alteration, set for three verses. "Be true to my love" has a better theme; but melody and accompaniment must not walk up from dominant to key-note as we find them do between bars 1 and 2, page 3; and we should like to substitute a G for the B in the bass (bar 10, same page), for, apart from the leading-note leaping down to the third of the tonic harmony, the melody requires a fundamental bass. In other respects the song is melodious and vocal.

Stars. Song. Written and composed by Suchet Champion. [Howard and Co.]

If composers will insist upon writing their own verses without possessing any special gift for the task, they ought not to complain if both words and music of their songs rise not beyond mediocrity; for there is really no more reason why a musician should be a poet than that a poet should be a musician. Our greatest song-writers have been inspired by the poetry existing around them; and the attempt to heighten by a sympathetic musical colouring the effect of words already eloquent in their simple beauty has produced some of our richest vocal treasures. It is certainly

a proof of modesty when a man has but little to say in music, to say that little through verses of his own making; but the question, as a mere matter of art, is whether we want such manufacture at all; and believing that it is really only as an art-work—great or small—that an honest reviewer should consider a composition submitted for his judgment, composers who are content with the "line of endeavour" (as Mr. Carlyle calls it) of Mr. Suchet Champion must not be surprised if we either pass over their works altogether, or take them as themes upon which to express our general convictions upon a very important subject. The song before us is neither better nor worse than many of the same class forwarded to us; but, as might be expected, the music is superior to the poetry. The harmonies are carefully written; but the author's attention should be drawn to the omission of the \sharp before the Gs in the voice part, where the melody commences in A, an error which, curiously enough, again occurs in the second verse.

Spring Flowers. Trio for Female Voices. Words by Knight Summers. Music by Theodore Drew. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

A MELODIOUS and smoothly harmonised Trio, well adapted for drawing-room singing. For the due expression of the words we think that the composer clings too much to his original key, especially as he does not hesitate to give variety of rhythm; but amateurs will no doubt be grateful for a composition which will enable them to give pleasure to their listeners at the expenditure of so little trouble to themselves.

Collection of Elementary and Progressive Pieces for the Pianoforte. In Two Books. By A. Ehmant. [Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

WE have never endorsed the opinion that the study of music should be considered an amusement, and consequently can conscientiously do no more than award that praise due to ingenuity and industry to those who invent "games" by which children in the hours which should be devoted to play are supposed to gain a thorough knowledge of notation, time, and accent. But, on the other hand, there can be no possible reason why the little lessons which are placed before beginners should be dry and uninteresting. That this fact is now beginning to be admitted may be proved by the number of small pieces for children by modern composers, and also by the republication of many in the classical form by the older writers, intended to replace the dreary arrangements of antiquated airs in the conventional "Instruction-Book," or (what may perhaps be considered still worse) easy transcriptions of "Royalty songs," the melodies of which are presumed to have made their way from the drawing-room into the nursery. The collection of progressive pieces now before us we can most decidedly recommend as admirably suited for their intended purpose. The early lessons are carefully considered, and the little sketches which follow—all of which have titles—are melodious and full of character. The Second Book contains some more important compositions, amongst the best of which may be mentioned "Undine," "Valse Mélancolique," and "Dance round the Maypole."

Modern Classics for the Pianoforte. Edited, revised, and fingered, by C. Wilhelm. No. 15, Promenade—Heller. [Wood and Co.]

ALL who know that this piece forms one of a set of sketches by Stephen Heller, called "Promenades d'un Solitaire," must be astonished to find it published in a detached form under the unmeaning title of "Promenade." The fingering is, of course, to amateurs, a boon; and the editing means, we presume, correcting the proofs; but in what manner has the composition been "revised"? Surely the accredited editions of these charming pieces have been before the public long enough to let us know what the composer meant; and although we may wish, for the sake of the art, that they should be from time to time republished, we care not that their original form shall be in the slightest degree disguised. As we see that these "Modern Classics" are to be continued, we venture to hope that in future the "revision" of the works included in the series will be conducted with a due reverence for their composers.