

Review

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first order. Such indignation is perfectly intelligible; for ourselves, we agree with Mr. Statham's estimate. But note that the most effectual of Mr. Statham's retorts is one which recoils like a boomerang on his own head. He lays great stress on the profound veneration in which Beethoven held Handel. That in itself is an excellent point. But it is a point which can be made with equal force at Mr. Statham's expense in the case of Schubert, whom he writes down as a second-rate composer—"bourgeois to the backbone." "Poor Schubert," writes Mr. Statham, "had no touch of the heroic or chivalresque in or about him, and the heroic note is not in his songs." Poor Mr. Statham! But this is not all. "Schubert used to sleep in his spectacles that he might be ready to compose the moment he awoke, either in bed or out of it. The inference as to the toilet is pretty obvious." This fact seems fairly to have overcome Mr. Statham. What possible good could come out of a man who slept in his spectacles? The thought is too appalling! And yet Beethoven—who, by the way, was almost as slovenly in his habits as Schubert—declared that Schubert had in him the divine fire; while Schumann's and Liszt's eulogies are too well known to need repetition. Mr. Statham has set out in this article with the resolve to "smash" Sir George Grove's eulogy of Schubert in his Dictionary. "Foolish," "absurd," "bombastic" are the epithets which he bestows on Sir George Grove's biography. Nothing could be in worse taste than the tone and temper of this essay, unless it be the consistent disparagement of the "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," to which, by the way, Mr. Statham was himself a contributor. All this is the more to be regretted inasmuch as Mr. Statham's appreciations of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven are well written and interesting, and the chapter "About the Organ" embodies a great deal of valuable information. If the title of the book is to be taken—as it very well may—to indicate that the contents represent the author's views on music and musicians as a whole, Mr. Statham must be set down in the category of those who hold that nothing of any value has been achieved in the last half-century. Schumann is only alluded to as a critic, and Brahms's name is only mentioned once. The rest is silence. He has not a word for the modern English school, good, bad, or indifferent.

Six Songs. By F. Cunningham Woods (Op. 1).
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE words of these songs have been selected from the poems of Moore, Tennyson, G. W. Thornbury, and Lord Lytton; the music shows a nice feeling for melody if not a distinct declaration of its powers. The several songs are fairly well constructed, but there is a deficiency of original treatment in the voice part and the pianoforte accompaniments are made to be too large a factor in the sum. The attention of the hearer is drawn away from that portion of the song which should claim first consideration as a song, and is almost forcibly directed to that which should be subordinated to the prime design. As the first work of the composer the songs show good teaching well applied and sufficient reason to justify encouragement to pursue the path he has set out upon.

Original Compositions for the Organ, No. 141.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS number consists of a Fantasia Sonata on the ancient melody "Dies Iræ," by Mr. Luard Selby. The composer has transposed the traditional tune to G minor, but he preserves the characteristics of the Dorian mode by avoiding F sharp. His Sonata is in three movements, of which the second, in B flat, an original and charming *Allegretto* headed "Lacrymosa dies illa," is the most attractive. There is, however, a great deal of effective writing in the extended *Finale*, the close being especially striking. Mr. Luard Selby's work will please those who like organ music not constructed on conventional lines.

The Day of Rest. A Cantata for female voices. By Josiah Booth. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

PART-MUSIC for female voices only would seem to be in great and increasing demand, judging from the large mass

of compositions of this nature which at present come before us. The words of this Cantata, by Mr. Edward Oxenford, are for the most part hymn-like in character, and are studiously simple, being suitable indeed for very young singers. Mr. Booth has written several successful Cantatas for use in school, but not one more pleasing than "The Day of Rest." Of course, the music is unpretentious, but it is at the same time artistic as well as melodious. Two soloists, soprano and contralto, are required, and the choruses are almost invariably in two parts only.

For Home and Liberty. Part-song for male voices (T.T.B.B.). By Frederick Leeds.

[Hart and Co.]

THIS is a clever and spirited setting of stirring words, comprising a call to arms, conflict, flight of the enemy, lament over the fallen, and song of victory. Such a poem obviously makes considerable demands on the composer, and the fact that these are well met by Mr. Leeds' music is no slight testimony to his dramatic perception and musicianly skill. The part-writing is thoroughly vocal and of sufficient variety to sustain the interest of a well-trained choir. The effectiveness of the work is enhanced by a clever pianoforte accompaniment.

Short Settings of the Holy Communion Office, No. 19. By J. R. Alsop, in E. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE characteristics of this Service are flowing melody and tasteful modern harmony combined with chaste expression and church-like dignity. Mr. Alsop writes like a musician who is well versed in all schools of sacred music and has culled something from each, preserving, however, the sober earnestness which has ever been a prevailing feature in our National Church music from the time of the Reformation onwards.

Lord of the Harvest. Anthem. By Ethel May Clapton. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE composer has selected a metrical hymn for the words, and has set them to music which is particularly noteworthy for its vigorous and expressive treatment. The opening tenor solo, though melodious, is not altogether so happily dealt with as is that portion in which the chorus is employed as accompaniment. As a whole, however, the composition is good and worthy of high praise.

FOREIGN NOTES.

THE Mozart Centenary was commemorated in a worthy manner at many of the leading musical centres of the Continent. At Vienna the cycle of the master's operas was inaugurated on November 28 with "Idomeneo," which was followed during last month by his remaining great operatic works, and in addition, as had been announced, on the 23rd ult., by the two early operettas "La Finta Giardiniera" and "Bastien und Bastienne." Special performances were also given by the Viennese Philharmonic Society. At Berlin a cycle of Mozart's operas, comprising the seven last operatic works of the master, was begun on the 5th ult., the performance being preceded by a prologue from the pen of Herr Taubert. There was also a commemorative Concert on the same day, given by the Berlin Singakademie, the programme of which included an Offertory, "Misericordias," composed in 1775, the "Adoramus," "Ave Verum," and the "Requiem." Professor Joachim played the A major Violin Concerto. Similar performances, operatic and otherwise, took place at Leipzig, Dresden, and elsewhere in Germany. At St. Petersburg a week was devoted to the interpretation of some of the master's music, including three performances of the "Requiem." There was, however, no commemorative operatic performance here or at Moscow.

Frau Amalie Joachim completed, in the last week of November, the interesting series of four Recitals illustrative of the development of the German *Lied*, the final one having been devoted to the composers since Schubert up to the present day. The Concerts were attended by a numerous and enthusiastic audience, and the press organs speak in