

Review

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*Joseph Joachim.* By J. A. Fuller Maitland.

[John Lane.]

'It is perhaps right that panegyric should be the prevailing note of contemporary biography,' writes the author of this book in the opening words of his preface, and he goes on to say 'it is at all events much easier to discount praise than blame.' All this is perfectly true, and the 'prevailing note' that runs through these sixty-three pages vibrates with no uncertain sound. The contents of the book show that Mr. Fuller Maitland has elected to write more especially upon the violin playing, teaching and influence of Dr. Joachim than in setting forth biographical details, as only about a third of the book is devoted to his career. Those who wish for an exhaustive biography of Dr. Joachim may be referred to Professor Moser's volume, of which an English translation has been issued; but no one will take up Mr. Fuller Maitland's account of the life and works of the great violinist without deriving pleasure and profit from the perusal of his well-written and interesting monograph on a very remarkable man and earnest minded artist. This interesting contribution to the 'Living Masters of Music' series is prefaced by a reproduction of Mr. Sargent's portrait of Dr. Joachim, and five other portraits (one taken with Brahms) add to the attractiveness of the volume.

*Variations on an Original Theme.* By Edward Elgar.  
Arranged for pianoforte duet by John E. West.

[Novello & Company, Limited.]

Pianoforte arrangements of orchestral works serve many useful and, be it added, pleasurable purposes, not the least of which is the gaining an intimate acquaintance with the music that vastly increases the enjoyment of the listener in the concert-room. Sir Edward Elgar's 'Variations on an Original Theme,' commonly known as the 'Enigma' variations—because the theme itself is at present an unknown quantity, not having as yet been revealed by the composer—are probably more often played than any other orchestral composition of recent times, and consequently an arrangement for the household instrument is very welcome. Mr. West's task was by no means an easy one, for the music is essentially orchestral in spirit, and its complexities are many; but difficulties shared are difficulties lightened, and by deft distribution of the parts Mr. West has succeeded in presenting a thoroughly playable version while preserving the salient characteristics of the original. Pianists of average ability will indeed find few executive difficulties, but the variety of rhythm and the occasional entrance of the parts on half and quarter beats demand alertness; in fact we foresee that the practise of this duet will give rise to a more than usual amount of 'counting the time.' Every possible help, however, is given to the executants. In all places where doubt might arise leads are given, and the notes are so accurately placed in their relative position in each bar as to form a great help to the eye. The variations will be found to form an improving and interesting study as well as a series of short pieces full of significance, freshness, and delightful effect.

*The Concert-goer. A handbook of the orchestra and orchestral music.* By William H. Daly.

[Edinburgh: Paterson & Sons.]

Mr. Daly has compiled a very useful little volume of the note-book order, one, as he says, that is 'intended primarily for amateurs, as an easy and popular guide to the comprehension of the structure of orchestral art-forms, and also as an aid in reading orchestral scores.' An immense amount of information is given in these hundred pages; moreover it is clearly and pleasantly set forth, as, for example, when referring to the double bassoon the author speaks of 'its sepulchral' roar in Brahms's (not 'Brahm's' as on p. 23) 'Variations on a Theme by Haydn.' Again, in the chapter on 'The Conductor,' he says: 'A good conductor must possess, above all things, the qualities of leadership and insight—the dash and wariness of a skilled cavalry leader, combined with the sympathetic imagination of a poet,' and

so on. Mr. Daly's book is illustrated with the portraits of seven distinguished conductors of the present day, and three facsimile pages from Weber's 'Der Freischütz' and 'Oberon' overtures. His pages will doubtless find many readers whether they be concert-goers or stay-at-homers.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

*Cherubini: memorials illustrative of his life.* By Edward Bellasis. Second and enlarged edition; 6s. net. (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, Ltd.) *Musical Studies.* By Ernest Newman. Pp. 304; 5s. net. (John Lane.)—*Richard Wagner as poet.* By Wolfgang Golther, translated by Jessie Haynes. Pp. 93; 1s. 6d. net. (Wm. Heinemann.)—*Geschichte der Mensural-Notation von 1250-1460.* Teil II. *Musikalische Schriftproben des 13. bis 15. Jahrhunderts.* von Johannes Wolf. Pp. 150; 8 Marks. (Breitkopf & Härtel.)—*Demeter, a mask.* By Robert Bridges, lyrics and incidental music by W. H. Hadow. Pp. 20; 2s. 6d. net. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press.)—*Bizet's Carmen, Gounod's Faust, and Mozart's Don Giovanni* (Nights at the opera series). By Francis Burgess. Each 1s. net. (Alexander Moring, Ltd.)—*Violin verses.* By Marion M. Scott. Pp. 36; 2s. (The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd.)

## Obituary.

The following deaths are recorded with regret:

On April 20, at 126, South Twenty-Third Street, Philadelphia, U.S.A., MINTON PYNE, Fellow of the American Guild of Organists. A son of the late James Kendrick Pyne, organist of Bath Abbey, and a pupil of Dr. S. S. Wesley, Mr. Minton Pyne was formerly assistant to his brother, Dr. Kendrick Pyne, organist of Manchester Cathedral. Since 1881 he had lived in America, where his organ recitals had gained him a high reputation.

On April 26, at Cape Town, aged forty-two, AMBROSE H. COMFORT, a former pupil of Mr. Oscar Beringer and Professor Prout, and previous to his leaving England for Grahamstown well-known in Bristol and Weston-super-Mare. As a pianist and teacher of the pianoforte Mr. Comfort enjoyed great popularity. His remains were carried to the grave by eight musicians and followed by many sorrowing pupils and friends, whilst tokens of respect were sent from far and near. So highly was he respected that the musicians of Cape Town contemplate erecting a monument over his grave as a tribute to his memory.

On May 6, at Leyburn, Yorkshire, the Hon. A. LUCIEN ORDE-POWLETT, to which reference is made on the opposite page under 'Northallerton.'

On May 24, suddenly, at 31, Beulah Road, Tunbridge Wells, aged sixty-five, Madame FLORENCE LANCIA (Laura Florence Ladbroke Clarke), formerly well-known as a distinguished operatic and concert vocalist.

On June 3, at 28, Elsworthy Road, South Hampstead, aged sixty, NARCISO RAMON DOMINGO VERT, the much esteemed and well-known concert agent.

On June 22, at Morecambe, aged fifty-three, R. G. W. HOWSON, a zealous amateur who was intimately associated with the Morecambe Festival from its foundation in 1891 until the present year. His fine taste and judgment in the selection of music, his exceptional skill as a choir trainer, as exhibited in the highly-refined performances of the Morecambe Madrigal Society, and the business capacity and tact he brought to bear on the affairs of the Festival very largely contributed to the high position the scheme has attained. The memory of his personality will ever be cherished by a wide circle of friends.

Many of our readers may be interested to know that the famous statue of Handel, by Roubiliac, the property of Mr. Alfred Littleton, is now to be seen at No. 1, Berners Street.