

Review

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*Barrack-Room Ballads.* Words by Rudyard Kipling. Music by Gerard F. Cobb. Third series.  
[C. Sheard and Co.]

THOSE vocalists to whom the previous series of these ballads appealed will doubtless welcome the further union of Mr. Kipling's stirring lines with Mr. Cobb's sympathetic music. The present set consists of six songs, "Belts," "The Widow's Party," "Screw Guns," "Gunga Din," "Oonts," and "Snarleyow," and, as in his other settings, Mr. Cobb has well met the essential requirements of directness of musical expression and effective simplicity of accompaniment. Moreover, the music shows that the composer has again caught the wild, exuberant, and reckless spirit which permeates the text, and that he has acquired the power of increasing the dramatic significance of special points.

*Richard Wagner's Prose Works.* Vol. V. Actors and Singers (Kegan Paul). Mr. W. Ashton Ellis continues his unwearied task of translating the Bayreuth master's prose works. He promises three more volumes, the last of which is to be published in 1899, thus completing the series. Although the book before us bears the generic title "Actors and Singers," the contents are of a more solid and interesting nature than this designation might seem to imply. Of special interest to musicians generally are the essays on "Beethoven" and "The rendering of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony."—*John Sebastian Bach*, in relation to his work as a church musician and composer. By Sedley Taylor (Cambridge: Macmillan and Bowes). An interesting lecture delivered preparatory to performances of extracts from some of Bach's church cantatas at Cambridge in 1893. Not the least important feature of this daintily got-up little book is its Appendix, containing a list of particular movements from the Church cantatas "exceptionally worthy of study."—*Two Inaugural Addresses on Music.* By Sir Herbert Oakeley (Edinburgh: James Thin). The first of these addresses was delivered at the University of Edinburgh in 1866, the second in 1884, by the then Professor of Music, and written in his usual cultured style.—*Counterpoint.* By A. Livingstone Hirst (W. Reeves). This little book is said to be "a simple and intelligible treatise in catechetical form." It is perhaps the smallest book on counterpoint ever written.—*Rivista Musicale Italiana* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca). This excellent quarterly periodical worthily maintains its reputation as a high-class magazine devoted to the art of music. An interesting feature is the summary of foreign musical magazines, including the English. The kindly reference by our Italian contemporary to the articles in THE MUSICAL TIMES we much appreciate.

## MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE principal musical event of last month was the May festival concert, organised by the Birmingham Kyrle Society, on the 6th ult. The programme was provided by the Birmingham Amateur Orchestral Society and Mr. Halford's select choir, the principal pieces being Grieg's dramatic cantata "Olaf Trygvason," Beethoven's Symphony (No. 8) in F, and Wagner's Vorspiel to Act III. of "Lohengrin." The vocalists were Mesdames Nellie Wiseman, Alice Lakin, and Messrs. Harry Burman and Ernest E. Sharpe. The latter, who possesses a deep and sonorous bass voice, made his *début* here, creating a favourable impression in Handel's "Honour and arms." A feature of the concert was the brilliant violin playing of Miss Nora Clench, an accomplished artist. Mr. George Halford conducted.

The Royal Society of Artists' musical *matinées* have become quite an institution in the city, and have been the medium of introducing a number of young vocalists and instrumentalists who otherwise would have found it difficult to make a public *début* under such favourable conditions.

The last concert of the third series of the St. James's Choral Society, Handsworth, was held on the 11th ult. The programme opened with the National Anthem, followed by Barnby's "Rebekah," the solos in which were taken by Miss Mabel Grove, Mr. J. T. Birch, and Mr. H. Sims. The second part included solos and part-songs and Gade's

"Spring's Message." Miss Cleobury ably supplied the pianoforte accompaniment, Mr. B. Nock presided at the harmonium, and Mr. Richard Richards conducted.

## MUSIC IN BRISTOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE last concert of the season given by the Bristol Choral Society took place on the 1st ult. In memory of Brahms, who had passed away after the date of the concert had been fixed, the choir sang the beautiful number "Behold, all flesh is as the grass," from the master's "German" Requiem. The overture and the second and third acts of Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" were splendidly interpreted, the slips on the part of the choir of 600 voices being few. The principal vocalists were Miss Esther Palliser, Miss Jessie King, Mr. Hirwen Jones, Mr. Andrew Black, and Mr. Montague Worlock, who discharged their duties with every satisfaction. Probably the finest performance of Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis Night" ever given in Bristol succeeded that of Wagner's work. The delightful choruses were sung with wonderful strength, precision, and clearness, and the instrumental sections were admirably played. Mr. George Riseley conducted.

Bristol North Musical Society gave a concert on April 28, when part-songs were sung, under the direction of Mr. F. Nash.

Bishopston Choral Society sang Mendelssohn's "Lauda Sion" and several numbers from Haydn's "Creation" in the Church, on April 28, to the accompaniment of organ and band, the soloists being Miss Jessie Sweet and Mr. Walker. The *Allegretto* movement from Mendelssohn's symphony to the "Hymn of Praise" was played as a concluding voluntary. Mr. Westcott conducted.

The Cecilian Choral Society, the conductorship of which has passed from the late Dr. Cunningham to Mr. W. J. Kidner, gave a pleasing performance of Dr. E. F. Rimbault's cantata "Country Life," and tastefully sang a number of part-songs on the 5th ult. Miss Marion Harris, Miss Laura Lewton, Mr. W. D. Merrell, and Mr. J. W. Davey were the principal vocalists.

On the 11th ult. St. Mary's (Tyndall's Park) Choral Society gave a concert at the Redland Park Hall, when Gade's "Spring's Message" and Lloyd's "Hero and Leander" were rendered.

Vocal and instrumental pieces filled the programme of the Clifton Pompadour Musical Society at its concert on the 18th ult. Interest centred in a new cantata, "May morning," for ladies' voices, written by Mr. W. Fear Dyer, a local musician, which was favourably received. Madame Probert Goodwin conducted.

A pleasing performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore" was given by children at All Saints' Hall, Clifton, on April 21 and 22; and on the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th ult. the Bristol Amateur Operatic Society, a talented company of players and singers, gave enjoyable representations of "The Gondoliers," under the direction of Mr. Bruce Bedells, at the Alexandra Hall.

The fusion of the Bristol Musical Festival Society and the Bristol Choral Society, or a working agreement between them, to accomplish which negotiations have been long pending, is not yet quite effected. A meeting of guarantors and subscribers was held on the 19th ult., when progress was reported, instructions were given that negotiations should be continued, and the meeting was further adjourned.

Weston-super-Mare Philharmonic Society gave a performance of Gluck's "Orpheus," on the 6th ult., under the direction of Mr. Edward Cook, and so clearly and intelligently sang the melodious music with which the opera abounds that it delighted the large assemblage. Miss Lilian Hovey, who sustained the part of *Orpheus* in the work, gave a splendid exposition of the character, singing the music with rare intelligence and declamatory power. The Misses K. and E. Gerrish satisfactorily filled the minor parts. In commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Handel's coronation anthem, "Zadok the Priest," and a part-song, entitled "The splendour of the reign," by E. A. Dicks, were included in the scheme, the concert terminating with the National Anthem.