

Review

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with in Waltz music; and some legitimate effects are gained by the crossing of the hands. It is evidently written by a composer who thoroughly understands her instrument; but we can imagine that it would be additionally attractive if scored for a band. We can cordially recommend this piece, not only for the Ball-room, but for the Drawing-room.

*Three Part-songs for Male voices.* Composed by S. J. Rowton.

MR. ROWTON'S Part-songs flow on without anything to offend, but at the same time anything especially to please. No. 1, an Even-song, is carefully harmonised, and expresses the words well, a good point especially being made on the phrase "Pray, oh pray" at the conclusion of the song, the return to the key of C, after the pause on the chord of E major, being extremely effective. The next piece, although called a "Drinking Song," commences with a somewhat lugubrious bass solo in G minor, the other voices joining after the first phrase. The whole of the changes of key in this song have a somewhat unsatisfactory effect; and we question whether "my boys" who are called upon to drink to Mr. Rowton's music would thank the composer for the trouble he has taken on their behalf. No. 3, "In the distance gray," although perhaps the most unpretentious, is in our opinion infinitely the best of the three songs. The melody is vocal, and the harmonies are quiet and appropriate throughout. The composer has evidently simply aimed at setting the poetry (for which he is indebted to Schiller) with a due reverence for its beauty; and we may say that, although he has followed at a respectful distance, our sympathy is awakened for the goodness of his intention. Although, as we have said, these songs do not startle by any attractive novelty, either in subject or treatment, they are indicative both of musical feeling and aptitude for smooth part-writing. They are all intended for an Alto, two Tenors and Bass.

*The Sun upon the Lake.* Song. Words by Walter Scott. Music by R. Payne.

It is of course always commendable in a composer to select good words for songs; but it must be remembered that when conventional music is wedded to first-rate poetry, the disparity between the two provokes a criticism which would scarcely be called forth where the author of the words and the composer of the music are on a tolerable equality. This truth was forced upon us by examining Mr. Payne's song, which although carefully written, both in the voice and pianoforte part, unquestionably falls below the level of the poetry. The melody is smooth and vocal; but the phrase commencing "In the calm sunset," with the arpeggio accompaniment, is feeble, and does not flow in sympathy with the feeling of the words.

LAMBORN COCK AND CO.

*Variations for the Pianoforte on the old English Air "Drink to me only with thine eyes."* Composed by Westley Richards.

MR. RICHARDS reminds us that we have English airs, worthy too of admiration, and so national in feeling as to make us wonder that British composers should continue to model themselves upon the productions of foreigners, instead of endeavouring to stamp a definite character upon native music, and compelling it to take that independent place which many years ago it appeared destined to occupy. Any person who plays over the melody in this piece cannot fail to be struck with its being unlike any modern air composed in this country; and there can be no question that this arises from the fact of its author being totally free from foreign influences and prompted only to set the words as he felt them. Mr. Richards's piece is one which can be strongly recommended both to teachers and players; for good honest variations on a good honest English air, are not to be met with every day. They are by no means easy to play, but they will be found excellent practice, and will well repay the trouble demanded. We

think it a pity that the commencement of the variation in A minor should be so like the first, but in all the others there is much variety, and the final one, in Waltz measure, will be sure to please every listener.

*La Penserosa.* Third Nocturne, by Walter Macfarren.

THE title of this piece will sufficiently indicate that it appeals rather to the expressive, than the executive, powers of the pianist. As may be expected from the antecedents of its composer, it abounds in passages which cannot be successfully interpreted by any whose touch has not been carefully trained; and this quality, apart from its intrinsic worth, should recommend it to all conscientious teachers. The graceful principal theme is materially aided by the excellent harmony with which it is accompanied; and the second subject is also extremely attractive. The enharmonic modulation from D flat to A major—produced by changing the D flat to C sharp—is exceedingly fresh in effect; and the return to the original key is equally well managed. This was one of the pieces performed by the composer at his Recitals last season, and the applause with which it was received proves that our opinion on its merits was fully shared by the audience.

*Expectation.* Song. Words by Arthur Hugh Clough.

*Slumber Song.* Words by Miss Wordsworth.

Composed by Marina.

THESE songs show just enough feeling for the composition of vocal music to make us wish that Marina had studied more. The melody and accompaniments seem to have been picked out at the pianoforte, rather than composed; and presuming that this was the process employed, the result is perhaps as good as can be expected. The first song, with its change of tempo, has the effect of being broken up into musical fragments, although in many parts there is an evident indication of the possession of a talent for melody. The "Slumber Song" has a strangely brief theme, the last four bars disappointing us in their rhythmical character, after the eight bars which precede them. The melody however is pleasing; and, were it not for the awkward harmony to the F in the voice part (last bar but one) we should have little fault to find with the accompaniment. We have hopes that Marina may still do better things.

*Two Songs.* Poetry by Eliza F. Morris. Composed by Charles Henry Shepherd (Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.)

TWO vocal compositions by another Associate of the Academy, sufficiently artistic to prove that the training of the Institution is in the right direction. The melody of the first song is extremely pleasing, and the accompaniment is light and fanciful, our only objection to it being that many extensions are used which perplex the player, and do not by any means aid the effect. In the second song, "The merry summer days," this defect is still more observable; and so melodious is the composition itself that we long to simplify the accompaniment, and place it within the reach of the hands of those amateurs to whom we presume the composer (like most other composers of the present day) mainly appeals for support. Mr. Shepherd has sufficient musical feeling to justify him, not only in composing, but in publishing; and in future works he may perhaps think the kindly meant hint we have given him worthy of consideration.

B. WILLIAMS.

*Don't you remember love?* Ballad. Written and composed by Charles Lawrence.

It is not often that we counsel song-writers to persevere in the path they have chosen, because the so-called composers who glut the market with these manufactures are so numerous that it would be no kindness on our part to endeavour to add to the number; but then it does not often happen that so genuine an English ballad as this by Mr. Lawrence comes before us. Neither words nor music aspire to do more than express simple ideas in a graceful and attractive form; and we may say that this is