

Review

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*Edition populaire française, M. Clementi, Gradus ad Parnassum.* Résumé, choix de 36 Etudes. Par I. Philipp. *Recueil de douze Etudes de Virtuosité.* Par I. Philipp. [Paris: Richault et Cie.]

THERE are certain educational works which, like certain instruments, improve with age. Of such are the Studies of Muzio Clementi and J. B. Cramer. The great service rendered by these two composers is universally acknowledged; and, indeed, without these earlier guides, Chopin and Liszt, the two lofty peaks of the Parnassus of modern pianoforte playing, could never be scaled. M. Philipp, in his excellent selection of studies from the "Gradus" has not only given useful phrase and finger marks, but has added practical hints for practice; some studies, for instance, are to be transposed, retaining the original fingering; another in octaves is to be played in three different ways. The "Etudes de Virtuosité" cannot fail to interest pianists who wish to be up to date; there are, among others, three by the great French pianist, V. Albran, and two by Liszt, including the famous transcription of Schubert's "Erl-König." Alexander the Great, it is said, wept when he found no more worlds to conquer; and a pianist who masters this "Recueil" would also probably shed tears, but of joy, on finding that he had no more technical difficulties to conquer. These Etudes form the *ne plus ultra* of pianoforte virtuosity.

*Eight Songs from Poems by Heine.* The music by Frances Allitsen. [R. Cocks and Co.]

THESE compositions have been justifiably placed by the publishers in their "Series of Artistic Songs." They belong to the now large class of vocal works of all kinds by native composers which aim at supplying words of real poetic merit with music that shall intensify their force and help in bringing out the feeling which pervades them—which, in short, are poems in word and tone, and not simply verses to which a more or less good tune has been fitted. Heine's words are here accompanied by English translations, which have been supplied by Sir Theodore Martin, James Thomson, Dr. G. Macdonald, and others. In No. 1, "A pine-tree standeth lonely," the music ably suggests the deariness of the poetic picture; but a finer song than this is No. 2, a setting of "Sapphires are those eyes of thine." In No. 3, "Diamonds hast thou and pearls," the charm and delicate irony of the words have been admirably caught by the composer. No. 4 is a dramatic setting of "Die Botschaft," here called "King Duncan's Daughters." The remaining four—"Since my love," "Fathoms deep may drift the snow," "Oh, Death, it is the cold, cold night," and "Katherine"—have each their merits, but space forbids further detail.

*Romance for Violin and Pianoforte.* By Eugen Philips. *Cavatine for Violoncello and Pianoforte.* By Eugen Philips.

*Lamento pour Violin, Violoncello, and Pianoforte.* Par J. Th. Radoux.

*Romance for Violin and Pianoforte.* By Leo Schrattenholz.

*The Song of the Egyptian Girl.* By Walter Alcock. [Charles Woolhouse.]

THE Violin Romance by Mr. Philips is a thoughtful, well-designed piece, and effectively written for the solo instrument. His Cavatine also deserves praise. The composer studies effect, but without descending to the commonplace. The pianoforte parts are good; in the first piece, there is a successful canonic imitation in the seventh of the opening of the principal theme. The "Lamento," by Mr. J. Th. Radoux, Director of the Liège Conservatoire, is a pleasing piece, and is drawing-room music in the best sense of the word. The introductory symphony is somewhat curious in the matter of tonality; it opens in the key of E minor, but closes at the eighth bar on the dominant of G minor, the real key of the piece. The mixture of French and English on the title-page is unfortunate. Mr. Schrattenholz's Romance is a clever and interesting piece; the Romance is evidently of a serious nature. Mr. Alcock's song is simple and graceful; the opening notes of the melody, however, sound familiar.

*Seven Songs.* By J. Stainer.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THESE short songs are simple in form and refined in feeling. In aiming at simplicity many composers fall into the commonplace, but of this there is here no trace. Rich use is made of chromatic notes and chromatic chords in the accompaniments, but the tonality always remains clear. The songs are German in character, and Sir J. Stainer has followed the excellent example set by Schubert and Schumann, and made his accompaniments both interesting and grateful to the player. All the numbers are good, but the "Rose-bush," with its tender grace, and "An Leukon," with its fresh, Volkslied character, seem to us specially worthy of mention. Six of the songs have both German and English words; one is a setting of Jules Bue's French translation of Heine's "Du bist wie eine Blume." At a time when so much vocal music of little value is published, these songs of Sir J. Stainer, pure in form and delicate in workmanship, deserve full recognition.

*Nine Transcriptions from Sullivan's "Golden Legend."* For violin and pianoforte. By Berthold Tours.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

AMONG modern works Sir Arthur Sullivan's "Golden Legend" occupies a high place in public estimation; and, by common consent, ranks among the composer's highest achievements. To dilate on the merits and beauties of so well known a composition is unnecessary; it will be more profitable to name some of the contents of this album. There are the two solos, "My Redeemer and my Lord" and "It is the sea"; the duets, "Onward and onward" and "We are alone"; the beautiful Evening Hymn, "O gladsome light"; and the spirited concluding chorus, "God sent His messenger the rain." The name of Mr. Berthold Tours is a sufficient guarantee that the transcriptions are good. The violin parts are not difficult; the writing for the pianoforte is very effective. This selection will serve both as a reminiscence of the "Golden Legend" and as an introduction to those still unacquainted with the work.

*Summer on the River.* Cantata for Female Voices. Words by Shapcott Wensley. Music by F. H. Cowen.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE subject of this cantata is merely a cheerful song of maidens enjoying a summer holiday on the river, anything like a connected story or plot being carefully avoided. The music is written for soprano and contralto soli and for two-part chorus; one number, however, having an alternative setting for three solo voices, or chorus. Though Mr. Cowen has studiously avoided difficulties of every sort, especially in the voice parts, his music is not written in commonplace thirds and sixths, with accompaniment in common chords and arpeggios. Bright, dainty, and piquant from the first to the closing bar, the cantata would be certain to please at the "breaking-up" entertainments which will be general towards the close of next month.

*Twelve Songs.* Set 2 (Stimmungsbilder), with pianoforte accompaniment. By Karel Bendl (Op. 101).

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS is a pleasing collection of songs, all of which have both German and English words. The high opus number shows that the composer is no novice in the art of composition; the music, indeed, shows a practised hand. In some of the numbers the inspiration may not be very strong, but they all have merit of some kind. No. 4, "Night," is particularly neat in form and successful in chromatic colouring. Nos. 6, 8, and 9 are taking. The last one, "Her Grave," has well-selected plaintive harmonies.

*King and Slave.* Song. Words by Adelaide Procter. Music by Frances Allitsen. [R. Cocks and Co.]

THIS is an example of the passionate love song, and undoubtedly shows power. Among its merits may be mentioned bold modulations and a rich, full, and effective accompaniment. To our thinking, however, the pianistic manifestation of passion is here so extravagant as to occasionally approach vulgarity.