

Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 15, No. 340 (Jun. 1, 1871), p. 116

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3353765>

Accessed: 07-01-2016 10:46 UTC

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lently fitted to the syncopated effects of Italian heart-broken music.

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. Composed by D. Macpherson.

THIS setting of the Evening Canticles displays much musicianship, and, occasionally, considerable power; but, unfortunately, the power is not sustained, and thus unity—one of the first essentials—is wanting. Were Mr. Macpherson to write often, and fly at less high game—at least, to begin with—he could hardly fail, with his powers, to produce work of much value.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. An Anthem, composed by the Earl of Mar.

AN unassuming and carefully phrased little work, showing much promise, but here and there giving evidence of inexperience. Owing to its simplicity, it will no doubt find a sphere of usefulness.

House of Israel. Full Anthem. Composed by Charles Henry Shepherd.

A SUFFICIENCY of good and appropriate ideas, with, at the same time, indications of a lack of experience in their expression, form the chief characteristics of this Anthem. The opening phrase, although flowing and ingenious in its counterpoint, begins and ends a little abruptly, and is not altogether free from consecutive perfect fifths—the *bête noir* of young composers. A point of imitation is afterwards led off by the basses, and treated freely. Subsequently, a few quiet, solemn harmonies bring the Anthem to an effective close.

Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting-place. Anthem. Composed by B. Agutter, Mus. Bac., Oxon.

IT is, doubtless, an advantage to young composers who have not fairly tested their own powers to seek assistance by the adoption of an antecedent style. This appears to have been an invariable rule with composers, great and small, and Mr. Agutter is no exception to the rule. It is a question, however, whether it is a good thing, in sacred composition, to go so far back in the choice of a style as Mr. Agutter seems to have done. A succession of somewhat old-fashioned sequences is hardly calculated to awaken devotional feelings in the mind of the average worshipper. Fortunately, however, Mr. Agutter's real musical feeling breaks out now and then, giving certain promise of better things to come, when he shall have acquired the power of giving free expression to his own inspirations.

Original Compositions for the Organ, by E. Silas. Nos. 4 and 5.

THE first of these is a charming *Andante* in A \flat , full of good melody and graceful modulation. It cannot but be welcomed by the many genuine organists who are craving for a literature peculiar to their own instrument. The second, a Fantasia in E minor (No. 5), suitable for a concluding voluntary or a concert piece, consists of an introduction, in which arpeggio passages are ingeniously used as accompaniments to a theme, followed by a *fugato* movement, which works up admirably. The two numbers are calculated to supply two distinct wants among organists, and are both so excellent of their kind that formal compliments would be a waste of words.

Six Variations on Mendelssohn's "O Hills, O Vales," for the Pianoforte. Composed, and inscribed to Miss Grote, by Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew.

MENDELSSOHN'S beautiful Part-song has here received that sympathetic treatment which might have been expected from so accomplished a musician and so warm an admirer of the composer as Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew. The variations are all well written, each having a thoroughly distinctive character, which is well preserved throughout. No. 5, in the tonic minor, is excellently harmonised; and the final one, in which the theme is put into triple rhythm, contains some highly effective points.

Suite, pour le Piano, composée par Adolphe Schloesser. No. 1. Prelude. 2. Menuet. 3. Courante. 4. Gavotte. 5. Gigue.

THESE pieces are appropriately dedicated to Mr. Cipriani

Potter, an artist who, by precept and example, has had the most beneficial influence upon the musical taste of this country; and who, in his position as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music (a post which he so ably occupied for many years), has educated a host of missionaries, who are now engaged in spreading the result of his valuable teaching throughout the length and breadth of the land. A "Suite" in the present day is a novelty, but is no less welcome on that account. It is good that students should hear such pieces as Herr Schloesser has given us in this selection, even if they cannot themselves play them; and it is also good that composers who can throw off elegant and light trifles adapted to the taste of the time, should occasionally prove by such works as the one before us that they can write in the more severe and solid school in which the best creative artists have been trained. It is true that the words "*Courante, Gavotte and Gigue*" do not abstractedly convey any notion but that of music appropriate to dances; but the treatment of such pieces by the greatest apostles of counterpoint in a past age has thrown a halo of classicity around them which cannot but materially influence writers who desire to compose similar works in the present day. Herr Schloesser has thoroughly caught the style in which compositions of this class should be moulded; and, although he has evidently studied good models, there is much originality observable in several of his pieces. The Prelude, in D minor, commences with a strongly-marked subject, which is well sustained, both hands being equally employed, according to the method which prevailed before amateurs were appealed to by writing works in which their weak left hand was merely used to support the right. The change into the tranquil theme, in the dominant, is in good contrast with the opening subject, and its recurrence in the original key is extremely effective. The Menuet, in F major, follows well after the Prelude. The principal theme has much grace; and the *Trio*, with its clever passages of imitation, is sufficiently melodious to delight even those hearers who cannot appreciate the excellent part-writing which pervades the movement. The Courante, commencing in G minor and concluding in the tonic major, apart from its intrinsic attractiveness as a piece, will be found a highly useful study for both hands, the elegant semiquaver passages being tolerably evenly divided, the other part moving, meanwhile, in *legato* quavers. The change from minor to major has a wonderfully fresh effect. The Gavotte is, to our mind, the best of all the pieces. The opening subject, in D minor, is extremely original; and the left hand octave passages give much vitality to the second theme. The *Trio* in D major has a melody which cannot fail to please; and although there is much point in the writing for both hands, the movement is by no means difficult to play. The Gigue, in D major, opens with an elegant phrase, which is effectively repeated in the left hand, the counterpoint throughout this little piece being indeed remarkably good. Although, perhaps, scarcely as attractive in the subjects as the other numbers in this "Suite," it is by no means inferior in workmanship; and, well played, it will form a fitting finale to a work which should be welcomed by all who desire that the classical forms in musical art shall not be permitted to die out.

Trois Morceaux Caractéristiques, pour Piano, par Anselm Ehmant. No. 1. Zingarella. 2. Tristesse. 3. Allégresse.

THESE three sketches, dedicated to Mr. Charles Hallé, are healthy specimens of a good school of writing, and will well repay the amount of earnest practice which must always be brought to bear upon such music. The first, in B minor, commencing upon a key-note pedal, is perhaps the most pleasing of the three numbers; the second subject is flowing, and the part-writing shows much care throughout. The mournful theme of the second piece is aided by a broken accompaniment for the left hand, which is occasionally well contrasted by brief *legato* passages of quavers. Some effective modulations are introduced, which will require careful attention on the part of the