

Review

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good wig, a brown dress-coat, figured velvet vest, and black pants, white kids and patent leathers, the critic proceeds thus: "He bowed unlike an actor, but like a gentleman. He was quite self-possessed, and looked as if he tho't he should please his audience. He opened his MS. note-book, and then glanced steadily around the house, as if he would say, 'Now, if you are ready, I am, and will begin.' The audience understood the look, settled themselves comfortably into their seats, and listened." Then he sings "Sally, in our Alley," and the writer continues his remarks: "No man would dare to sneeze in such a silence as reigned during the first verse, and fifty men might sneeze unheard in the enthusiastic burst of applause that followed the last note of the verse. While he sings they listen entranced; when he ceases they shake the building with applause and 'Encore! Encore!' resounds, until even echo, awakened by the shout, cries out 'Encore.'" Of such panegyrics as these is this volume made up; and if Mr. Templeton, therefore, is not proved to be as great a vocalist as the compiler of the book would desire, it certainly is not his fault. But we fail to see the object of the production of such a work. Malibran, when she came to this country, found Mr. Templeton the best tenor procurable, and was too glad, therefore, to accept him as her stage-lover; but that she worked hard to inoculate him with a portion of her own dramatic power, and even *pinched* him occasionally in the hope of stirring him into something like a passion on the stage, are matters well known to all who remember those days; and to those who do not, such reminiscences can have but little interest. Madame Malibran has only a small share in the book; and that portion devoted to her is chiefly occupied with extracts from her correspondence with Mr. Bunn; most of her letters, however, almost exclusively treating of subjects which can scarcely command public attention—such as the haggling about money transactions, and the refusal to sing certain parts which were submitted to her. "I would willingly," she says, in one of her letters, "accept your offer to play the *Sonnambula* in English for one night, but on the terms of *two hundred and fifty pounds sterling*, payable on the morning of the representation. I thought it right to let you know at once my intentions, so as not to lose time in correspondence and meetings, which would in no wise change my views." This is certainly a business letter, and very much to the purpose; but the writer could, we think, hardly expect that it would be reproduced in a book professedly devoted to a review of her artistic career. All who like to look back to the time when Opera in English was struggling to maintain a position before the lovers of music in this country, will doubtless like to read something about a tenor who, to a certain extent, helped on the good work; but there can be but little doubt that this volume would never have been published had the compiler not been able to couple the name of Templeton with that of Malibran. In every respect the work is well got up; and three portraits—two of Templeton, and one of Malibran—are good enough to be preserved apart from the book.

*Magnificat and Nunc dimittis*, in F. By Charles Edward Stephens. Op. 23.

"The Lord hear thee." Anthem in eight parts, by Hamilton Clarke. [Weekes and Co.]

THE music sung at each recurring Festival of the London Church Choir Association is composed expressly for the occasion, and the above works were written for the eighth festival, on November 4 last. By this regulation the Association enlarges its sphere of usefulness, for we may reasonably look for some valuable additions to our store of service music from time to time. Mr. C. E. Stephens is recognised as one of the best of living English musicians, and it is needless to say that his setting of the evening canticles is marked by sound musicianship. The eighteen bars of symphony, in which a bold figure is used sequentially, at once proclaim the festive character of the service; and this is maintained until the end of the fourth verse. The composer adopts time-honoured precedent in setting the fifth verse as a quartet or semi-chorus; and also in the *fugato* to the words, "He hath scattered the proud." The crashing chords and chromatic passages in the accompaniment to the latter are very effective. After another quartet in B flat, a progression is made to the dominant harmony

of D, in which key the original figure returns, leading by a fine *crescendo* back to F, for the entrance of the "Gloria." The second verse of this savours rather of flippancy, but the close is at least pompous, if not dignified. The Nunc dimittis opens quietly, and nothing worthy of note occurs until the last verse, when the basses again introduce the initial figure or *leit motif*. The Gloria is the same as before. On the whole, this is a vigorous and excellent Service, and its difficulties are by no means great. Mr. Clarke's anthem opens with a suave flowing chorus in 3-2 time. The second A in the accompaniment of the thirteenth bar of page two, is obviously a misprint for F, and in the seventeenth bar of the same page, the progression from the leading note triad to the 6-4 on the dominant is open to objection. In this movement the voices are in four parts, but in the succeeding chorus, "We will rejoice in Thy salvation," they are employed antiphonally, though with but little contrapuntal elaboration. A cursory analysis again reveals great laxity in the part-writing, as, for example, the consecutive fifths between first tenor and bass, four bars before the end. The treble solo which follows, is the most pleasing portion of the anthem. In the last chorus there is a *fugato* in four parts, and the work ends with seventeen bars *lento*, the voices being subdivided and almost unaccompanied. Mr. Clarke's anthem cannot be considered a great success, the technical blemishes being unatoned for by any exceptional interest in the musical ideas.

*Popular Classics for the Pianoforte*. Selected, Edited, and Fingered by Walter Macfarren. Sixth Series. [Ashdown and Pary.]

OUR prediction respecting the success of these excellent extracts from the works of the classical pianoforte writers has been thoroughly verified. There are many amateurs who are willing enough to test their power of performing the standard compositions, provided they can have a list of such pieces selected for them by a competent authority, from which they can choose according to their taste. The Sixth Series, now before us, commences at No. 61 and ends at No. 72. From Beethoven we have the Bagatelle in E flat—perhaps one of the most popular of these charming trifles—the variations on "Quant 'e più Bella," and the "Andante" in F; from Mendelssohn the "Two Sketches," and "Variations Sérieuses"; from Weber the last movement of the Sonata, Op. 24, known as "Il moto continuo"; from Schumann the "Schlummerlied"; from Hummel the "Capriccio" in F; from Schubert the Menuetto in B minor (from Op. 78); from Handel the Variations on "The Harmonious Blacksmith"—in which we are glad to find that the original time, 24-16, has been retained where the semiquaver triplets occur; from Clementi the Sonata in B flat (Op. 38, No. 2); and from Dussek the "Rondo Scherzo" (from the Sonata, Op. 45, No. 1). There has been much discrimination shown in the choice of these works, for they are so varied in style that we can quite imagine a purchaser, beginning by selecting from the number, will end by taking the entire set. We sincerely hope that the work will be steadily continued; and shall be glad if the next Series were to include some of the standard pianoforte duets.

*The Paragraph Psalter, arranged for the use of Choirs*. By the Rev. Dr. Westcott, Canon of Peterborough. [Cambridge University Press.]

THERE are so many Psalters in vogue at present, some of which have obtained such a sure footing, that the Editor of a new one must advance some decidedly original and equally good arrangement before he can hope that his book will meet with anything like success. The object of the above Psalter is (as its name suggests) to divide the Psalms into paragraphs, grouping the verses together as we should sentences in any literary publication. Dr. Westcott informs us in his preface that the Psalter has been used with success at Peterborough Cathedral during the last six years, and his own words will best explain his reasons for publishing the work. "Sometimes," he says, "the verses are separately complete; sometimes they are arranged in couplets, sometimes in triplets; sometimes they are grouped in unequal but corresponding masses. . . . If, therefore, the Psalms are sung antiphonally on one method in single verses, or in pairs of verses or half