

Review

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Novello's Octavo Edition of Two-Part Songs for Female Voices. Nos. 97-103. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

MR. MYLES B. FOSTER has provided No. 97, which consists of a melodious and graceful setting of some reflective lines by Somerville Gibney, entitled "Lined with gold," which may be described as a new version of the proverb "There is a silver lining to every cloud." No. 98 is of a more ambitious nature, and is one of the series of "Bird Songs." The text is supplied by M. C. Gillington (Mrs. George F. Byron) and the music by H. A. J. Campbell. To the pianoforte accompaniment are added parts for first and second violins, which are necessary for the music to make its due effect; but the vocal portion is simple in character, and could be sung at sight by a fairly-trained choir. The same author and composer have supplied Nos. 99 to 103, severally entitled "Shadow Dance," written in gavotte form and very pleasing; "The old Oak," "Berry time," "The Traveller," and "Night Wind." In all these provision is made for first and second violins, in addition to the pianoforte accompaniment, and successful endeavour has been made in the vocal writing to combine simplicity with effectiveness.

Because the Springtime's here. Song. Words by Clifton Bingham. Music by Frank L. Moir.

The Roving Gipsies. Bolero Song. Words by Maud Sidley. Music by J. Christopher Marks.
[Edwin Ashdown.]

THE first of these songs is a merry-hearted ditty which, if sung by a flexible soprano voice, could be made effective in the concert-room. The episode, *Tempo di Minuet*, materially enhances the interest of the composition. "The Roving Gipsies" are of the conventional ideal type; they "dance upon the village green, with castanets and tambourine"; but the song as a whole is bright and spirited, and will doubtless be acceptable to vocalists with a vivacious style.

Schoumka Ukrainienne. Scènes Russes. No. 1. For the Pianoforte. By Félix Borowski. [Laudy and Co.]

IN the awakening interest now being evinced in Russian music these pleasing pieces will doubtless be widely welcomed by pianists. The two examples of the *Corsaque Dance* are excellent specimens of their kind, and if played with spirit and due appreciation of the varying changes of sentiment peculiar to Slavonic music will be found very effective. The first of the "Russian Scenes" is in waltz form, but it possesses individuality and the rhythm is well varied. All these pieces are easy to read.

The Organ Works of John Sebastian Bach. Edited by J. F. Bridge and James Higgs. Book XII.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE present book completes this fine series of Bach's organ works, with the exception of his Choral Preludes and Choral Partitas, and the editors may be most heartily congratulated on the successful termination of their labours, which must not infrequently have occasioned them much earnest thought and careful comparison. The concluding volume comprises eighteen pieces, the most important of which are a brilliant Fugue in G, a Fantasia and Fugue in A minor—a work of considerable length and considerable interest—and a Fantasia in G, which is really in three movements. The notes and suggestions of the editors, which distinguish and form such a valuable feature of the preceding numbers, are continued in this volume, and will doubtless be read with the greatest interest by all organists. The clearness and excellence of the music type greatly facilitates the execution of the pieces.

Second Album of Songs for Children. Words by William Blake. Music by M. U. Arkwright. [Alphonse Cary.]

NINE songs, well conceived and written, and likely to awaken and sustain the interest of little folks, are included in this volume. The vocal part chiefly employs the best portion of a child's voice, and is well supported by the pianoforte accompaniment. The "Laughing Song" and "Spring," by reason of their exuberant gaiety, will probably prove the greatest favourites of juvenile vocalists.

FOREIGN NOTES.

BAYREUTH.—A complete Symphony by Siegfried Wagner, a portion of which, under the title "Sehnsucht," has already been heard some time since in London, was performed here for the first time during Christmas week. The work, which was very favourably received, is to be submitted to wider musical circles during a Concert tour shortly to be undertaken by the young composer.—Active preparations have been going forward for some time with a view to the performances of the "Nibelungen" Tetralogy during the coming summer. Recently Frau Cosima Wagner superintended a performance of the first act of "Siegfried" at a concert hall here before a small invited audience, the orchestra being represented by two pianofortes, the scenery however being complete. Wagner's son conducted. The two remaining acts are to be rehearsed in the same way. Public interest in the Festspiele would seem to be still on the increase, the applications for tickets this year being more numerous than ever before.

BERLIN.—On December 30, at the Singakademie, a Concert of English music was given, under the direction of Professor Villiers Stanford. The band consisted of the Philharmonic orchestra, and Mr. Leonard Borwick and Mr. Plunket Greene respectively played and sang. The programme was as follows: Tragic Overture, Hubert Parry; Concerto for pianoforte (Op. 59), C. V. Stanford; Songs, "Good advice," Maurice Greene, and "Ye twice ten hundred deities," Purcell; Pianoforte solos—Toccata, Purcell, Nocturne (B flat), Field, "L'allegresse," F. E. Bache; three Irish Folk-songs, arranged and orchestrated by C. V. Stanford; Overture, "Britannia," A. C. Mackenzie; Symphony, "L'Allegro ed Il Penseroso" (Op. 56), C. V. Stanford. The audience, which was large and included many eminent musicians, was remarkably enthusiastic, and the Concert proved in every way a great success, as the press criticisms quoted in another column clearly show.—Herr W. Kienzl's opera "Evangelimann," first brought out in May last, at the Royal Opera (as recorded in these columns), has proved the most successful German operatic novelty of the past year. The work has been repeatedly performed at Cologne, Mannheim, Frankfurt-on-Main, and Prague, and is also being mounted in some eighteen other lyrical theatres in the Fatherland.—Herr Otto Dienel, the distinguished organist of the Marienkirche, is giving this winter a series of free Concerts of sacred music with the co-operation of the choir. The church has just been furnished with a magnificent new organ, the work of Messrs. Schlag Soehne, of Schweidnitz.—Dr. Joachim has composed a new Overture, specially intended for performance at the anniversary of the Sing-Akademie. This institution was founded in 1791 by Fasch, cymbalist to Frederick the Great.

BRÜNN.—A new opera-ballet, entitled "Olga," the libretto by Herr Eugen Brüll, the music by Herr Joseph Bayer, was brought out here last month with great success.

BRUSSELS.—The Théâtre de la Monnaie, which has so frequently afforded to French composers the opportunity of a first performance of their works vainly sought in their own country, brought out, on December 28, a new opera, "Evangéline," by M. Xavier Leroux. The libretto, by MM. De Gramont, Hartmann, and Alexandre, is founded upon Longfellow's celebrated poem, and is divided into four acts. The new work, admirably interpreted, with Mesdames Merrey and Armand and M. Bonnard in the principal parts, met with good success, the score being throughout effective and in parts highly dramatic. M. Leroux, who made his *début* as an operatic composer with "Evangéline," is a pupil of M. Massenet, by whose style he is yet to some extent influenced.—The series of Symphonic Concerts instituted by M. Eugène Ysaye was inaugurated last month in a highly satisfactory manner with an interesting programme, including M. Duparc's "Lénore," the "Marche funèbre pour Guillaume d'Orange," by Huberti, and Beethoven's C minor Symphony. M. Ysaye proved himself a most expert conductor.—In consequence of the success of M. Leroux's "Evangéline" the directors of La Monnaie are now putting into rehearsal a second operatic work by that composer, entitled "William Ratcliff," fragments of which have already been given at one of M. Colonne's Paris Concerts.