

Review

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some others, will be found in every respect admirably adapted for amateurs. Edith's prayer, too, "*Placida notte*," has an elegant, flowing subject, in 12-8 rhythm, which, if not strikingly original, is at least thoroughly sympathetic with the verses; and the Romance (sung with so much effect by Madlle. Marie Roze), "*Beneath a portal*," although merely a melodious dance-tune, will be a real boon to vocalists who can master with ease the constant changes of key. The duet, "*Keep the ring*," is full of true dramatic effect, and never fails to excite the audience on each representation of the work; but whether it might prove a success with smaller singers than Madame Nilsson and Signor Campanini we cannot say; certain, however, it is that the voice-parts are well written, and the duet contains much spontaneous melody of the true Balfe type. We may say, however, that the published version of this composition is considerably abridged from the original, which would certainly be too long for private performance.

STANLEY LUCAS, WEBER AND CO.

Forsake me not. Anthem composed by Ernst Helmer.

THE formality, but not the impressiveness, of a psalm-tune marks the first movement of this piece. The treble solo that follows is disfigured, firstly, by the 7th and 8th of C both descending to the fifth of D, in bars 2 and 3 of the voice part, an ill effect, against which writers should for ever be careful; and secondly, by the extension of the first vocal phrase to nine bars, there being no parallel phrase of like length; and it has little charm to atone for these irregularities. The consecutive 4ths between bass and treble, in bars 3 and 4, score three, page 8, are a specimen of the unmusicianship that distinguishes the last Chorus. We are warned, in all books on musical theory, against the abomination of two 5ths in succession, and two 8ths are as commonly forbidden; some works, however, say nothing of the impropriety of successive 7ths or 2nds, or 4ths with the bass, but their effect is not less objectionable because it is less forbidden. The whole of this composition seems to have been calculated rather than inspired, save where it has been miscalculated in such places as we have cited.

SCHOTT AND CO.

O Salutaris, pour Voix de Basse ou de Baryton, avec Accompagnement d'Orgue, par Alex. Guilmant, Op. 37.

THIS is admirably effective for the voice, and the organ accompaniment adds much to its interest. It is far from charmless as music, and is well worth the attention of any singer who may have the opportunity to introduce it.

R. LIMPUS.

I will alway give thanks. Anthem by Haydn Keeton.

THIS work gained the prize of the College of Organists, in 1873, and we are happy to endorse the opinion of the umpires. It evinces a strong musical feeling, and a fluency of production, that, if well cultivated, should lead the possessor to high distinction. The first Allegro is spontaneous, frank, and hearty. One passage in it is open to objection, and we state this with the kindest intention, aiming to show the author that, with all his strong natural talent, he has still something to learn, and owning the while that the incident in question is but a blemish on a fair surface. It is on page 3, where the phrase, beginning in C, modulates first into G, then into E minor, and returns into G in the very same bar; then, this key of G being clearly confirmed, there is a chord of the dominant 7th upon B, which is resolved upon a chord of C—a progression that would be beyond question were E minor the prevailing key, but that is out of the question in the key of G. We are aware that this progression may be defended on the ground of precedent, but the repetition of a bad thing does not make it into a good one, and like employment to this of the chord of the dominant of E in the midst of a phrase that is in the key of G, has been so often made, that it is now time to protest against it. The key of E minor having occurred in the phrase, makes this use of its most

characteristic harmony still more ambiguous than it would else be, and suggests the thought that the author could not determine in which of the two keys, G or E, his phrase really was. The passage for the voices in unison with harmony for the organ, to the words beginning "*O praise the Lord with me*," contrasts well with what surrounds it. The middle movement, "*O taste and see*," for soprano solo is, without reserve, beautiful. A well-sustained melody, lying effectively for the voice, and accompanied with harmony that is most sweet, and never mawkish, captivates the attention at once, and holds it till the charming song is closed. The expression is faithful to the words, meek and tender, and almost irresistibly persuasive. The final Chorus repeats a greater portion of the first, and towards the end it branches out with some brilliancy into a strange key, returning whence by powerful but natural progressions, it closes [with an expansion of that earnest, rejoicing spirit with which the composition opens. Mr. Keeton, be it known to his honour, and that of those who elected him to his important office, is organist of Peterborough Cathedral, and it is well that such an artist holds such a responsibility.

COOPER, PLYMOUTH.

"O God, my heart is ready" (The 108th Psalm.) A Sacred Cantata. Composed by John Hele, Mus. Bac., Oxon. Op. 2.

THIS is a work of important pretension, and has strongly the air of having been written as an exercise for the Bachelor's degree, of which, the two choral numbers for five voices, and the general emulation of fugalism, are indications. It comprises an instrumental Introduction and Fugue; a Chorus, "*O God, my heart is ready*;" a soprano Air, "*Awake thou*;" a Chorus in fugal form, for four voices, "*I will give thanks*;" a bass Air, "*Set up Thyself*;" a tenor Recitative, "*Hast Thou forgotten me*;" a Solo for the same voice, intermixed with Chorus, "*O, help us*;" and a final Chorus, "*Through God we shall do great acts*." Thus we have the whole of the 108th Psalm, except that passage only which refers circumstantially to the history of Judah, and names the nations with which the Hebrews were in contention. It is a weakness in the outline of the whole, that the several pieces, after the first three, follow according to the order of flats—in the keys of C, of F, of B flat, and of E flat—namely, and the flats are then withdrawn in the verse succession—by three, by two, and by one, from movement to movement. They who wish to learn the order of keys, look rather into an instruction book than into a cantata; and they who have no desire to combine instruction with amusement, become wearied by this purely technical exposition. It is a poverty in the plan of the fugues, that there is in each a full-close in the key of the dominant, instead of a half-close in the key of the tonic, preceding a dominant pedal. It is far away from the purpose which best precedent has established, to have anything so conclusive as the points to which we refer, prior to the termination of a piece in this form; and the efficacy of the rule is strongly illustrated in the cases under notice, where the effect of the fresh start upon the pedal bass is in a high degree prolix. The composer has not done himself justice in his published copy, for it abounds with engraver's errors, such as it should have been his care to correct; and some of these (in page 2, bars 4 and 5, for instance) are of such a nature as to obscure the sense. The work was written for the orchestra, and the accompaniment is effectively arranged for the pianoforte. It is dedicated to the Bishop of Exeter, and is graced with an extraordinarily long list of distinguished subscribers.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THE OFFERTORY AND THE ORGANISTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—Perhaps it may not be wise for me to make the complaint contained in this letter to a musical journal, but as those of whom I complain probably number many