

Review

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distinction to be made, which is not generally understood. It is the *old* Italian method which is here referred to, and not its florid and superficial excrescences of the last century. The old Italian method began to flourish at the period of and in connection with the birth of Italian opera, when Caccini, the composer of the "tragedia per musica," "Euridice," published (in 1602) his "Nuove musiche," a series of madrigals, with a preface stating the author's views concerning vocalisation and the artistic task to be accomplished by the vocalist. The most prominent representatives of the old Italian method—Ottavio Durante, Claudio Monteverde, Francesco Moncini, Pistocchi, and his greater pupil, Bernacchi di Bologna—all flourished during the seventeenth, or the earlier part of the eighteenth century. Their method, from the purely *technical* point of view, was by no means based upon physiological research; it was merely the result of practical experience, and of an intuitive sense of accuracy and purity of tone-production peculiar to a people specially gifted in this direction. Modern science has fully endorsed the teachings of the seventeenth century masters, and quite recently their method has found an advocate in Sir Morell Mackenzie in his excellent practical treatise on "The hygiene of the vocal organs." As regards the *artistic* aims, on the other hand, of the old Italian School, these may be summed up in the advice given to singers by Caccini: "Try to enter as fully as may be into the spirit of the poetry you wish to interpret; make yourself master of the idea pervading the poem, and you will then render it in accordance with the intentions of both poet and musician." It is the object of the present most ably written and well-timed volume to set forth the merits of the old Italian method, both in its technical and artistic aspects, and to trace its history from its origin, through its various phases of development and subsequent partial corruption, to the present day. In the course of his exposition the author quotes extensively from the original and not generally accessible works of the old masters of the art, while there is also appended to the volume a number of exercises and *solfeggi* taken from the same sources, which cannot fail to prove of great service to both teachers and students of the art. In conclusion, it need scarcely be said that Dr. Goldschmidt's work is not a "Gesang-Schule," or vocal instruction book, but a careful historical survey and analysis, from which, nevertheless, many a practical lesson also may be gathered by the intelligent reader.

*The Orpheus.* New Series. Nos. 213 to 227.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE high standard of excellence reached by former numbers of this popular series is in no danger of being lowered by the fifteen pieces now before us. No. 213 is a setting by W. A. C. Cruickshank, of "O mistress mine," from Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," the voice parts of which flow with an easy grace that is very pleasant to hear. No. 214 is an arrangement for male voices of Oliver King's "Soldier, rest" (Sir Walter Scott's words), already published for S.A.T.B. in THE MUSICAL TIMES, and in that form so well known that comment upon its merit is unnecessary; a remark that applies with even greater force to No. 215, Pearsall's "Hardy Norseman." No. 216, "The Ladies," and No. 218, "To a brother artist," are "toasts" written by S. S. Stratton and set to thoroughly genial music by Dr. A. C. Mackenzie. The last-named contains some particularly effective rhythmic contrasts. No. 217, a brightly written "Bacchanalian" by Theodore Distin, has a jovial Old English ring about it that is very refreshing. The next number, "Sunset," possesses a melancholy interest, both words and music being from the pen of the late editor of this journal, the much-lamented W. A. Barrett. It is, moreover, a charming composition, full of feeling and admirably laid out for the voices. No. 220, a musicianly setting of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Shepherds, rise," by H. Lahee, obtained the ten guinea prize offered by the Apollo Griffin Glee Club in 1889. No. 221 is an appropriately tender setting by Claude Barton of Shelley's "Good Night." Dr. C. H. Lloyd contributes No. 222, "Like apple blossom," in which Mr. W. Besant's words from "Dorothy Foster" are set to music graceful as themselves. C. Lee Williams is the composer of the two numbers

which follow, "Peace," a five-part setting of words translated from Goethe by Lord Houghton, and "The Song of the Pedlar," in which the words by Shakespeare are wedded to music of a particularly taking kind. In No. 225, "There is a garden in her face," A. Herbert Brewer has happily caught the flavour of the words, which date from 1606. The next two numbers, Haydn's humorous Serenade for T.T.B., "Maiden fair, O deign to tell," and A. J. Caldicott's "Cab" Catch, for four voices in canon, are likely to be responsible for much hilarity during the coming season.

*Schuberth's Musikalisches Conversations Lexikon.* Herausgegeben von Professor Emil Breslaur.

[Leipzig: Y. Schuberth and Co.]

THIS is the eleventh edition of a very handy and useful dictionary of music and musicians, which has stood its ground well for a number of years, and that notwithstanding the publication, in recent times, of several more or less meritorious new German compilations of a similar character and scope. In its present edition the Lexikon has been entirely remodelled, under the able editorship of Professor Breslaur, of Berlin; special care having apparently been bestowed upon the scientific and historical sections of the work. The biographical articles, too, are, on the whole, distinguished by accuracy and relative completeness. We may, however, point out here a few of the errors which we have noticed, with a view to their rectification in a future issue. Thus the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, though, doubtless, not uninfluenced in his earlier career by the style and artistic personality of Mendelssohn, was never a "pupil" of that master. Neither is Sir Arthur Sullivan "the principal of the Royal Academy of Music"; the notice devoted to this leading English composer being in other respects also most unsatisfactory. Again, the operatic stage with which the brilliant career of the tenor Nachbaur is associated is not that of Stuttgart, but of Munich. Louis Ehlert is not the author of a work entitled "Briefe aus der Tonwelt," but has published a popular volume of "Briefe über Musik," and another of very charming essays entitled "Aus der Tonwelt." The date of Czerny's death (July 15, 1857), we may also add, is here omitted. It is scarcely necessary to state that the above and a few other minor shortcomings do not, however, seriously detract from the general usefulness as a book of reference of a work in the compilation of which absolute reliability, though it should certainly be aimed at, cannot justly be looked for in every instance. The general get-up of the volume is in every respect a highly creditable one to the publishers.

*Exercices Préparatoires pour Piano.* Par J. Philipp.

[Paris: J. Hamelle.]

THIS is one of the most ingeniously devised sets of exercises for developing the strength and independence of the hands and fingers that we have yet seen. Each exercise is based on the same succession of chords—a series of "diminished sevenths" built on each note of the chromatic scale. With this simple material—and brains—M. Philipp has constructed no less than three hundred different forms of exercise for the fingers and wrists, and has so varied these that it is difficult to believe that any possible position of the hand remains unprovided for. But the intelligence as well as the fingers would be developed by the use of this thoughtfully designed work. Only the first harmonic form of each exercise is given, the remaining eleven transpositions having to be thought out by the player, who is by this means prevented from practising in that dull, mechanical way which so often acts disastrously on the musical instincts of even the most gifted. We cordially recommend these exercises to the attention of teachers.

*Sixième Sonate "Capricieuse" and Septième Sonate "Héroïque" (Op. 52).* By Eugen Woycke.

[Edinburgh and London: Paterson and Sons.]

THESE Sonatas are modelled on the usual lines—that is to say, each one has a principal movement, with first and second subjects, development and recapitulation, followed by three other movements, one of which is an *Adagio*. The "Héroïque" Sonata has, in addition, an introduction formed of a stately hymn-like theme, which is afterwards