

Review

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VOCAL PART-MUSIC.

It comes from the misty ages. By E. Elgar.

England, glorious England. By G. F. Huntley.

The Clarion Sounds. ('The Romance of the Roses.')
By Oliver King.

(*Novello's Octavo Choruses.* Nos. 777, 779 and 780.)

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

THE above compositions are peculiarly appropriate to passing events. Mr. Elgar's chorus is the epilogue from the 'Banner of St. George,' and is a stirring choral march, in which the pulse of patriotism beats strong. It is also excellent music—music that, if well rendered, would rouse the spirit of enthusiasm in any audience.

'England, glorious England,' is an excerpt from Mr. G. F. Huntley's cantata 'Victoria,' and sings the praises of our 'right little, tight little Island' with jubilant elation, the angels being asked to lend assistance. Need anything more be said?

It is scarcely necessary to describe the character of Mr. Oliver King's composition. Naturally when 'the clarion sounds, the charger bounds,' and the rest can be left to the intelligence of the reader. In this case the 'charger bounds' in polonaise rhythm, and goes 'away, away, while trumpets bray' with all the vigour of the god of war.

MUSICAL LITERATURE.

Organ Construction. By J. W. Hinton.

[The Composers' and Authors' Press, Ltd.]

IN the preparation of this book the object of the author has been twofold: (1) 'To state concisely the main principles of organ-building; and (2) to assist organ students, organists, and candidates for diplomas and certificates.' This he does in a series of seven chapters, in addition to a slight historical introduction and an appendix. The practical nature of the volume is unquestionable. Dr. Hinton treats of organ stops (with their ridiculous Tower of Babel nomenclature), tuning, new organs and reconstructions, scales of various stops, and so on. Fourteen plates, as well as eighteen illustrations in the text, are useful aids in grasping the contents of the letterpress, which, of necessity, is more or less technical in its subject-matter. One chapter is devoted to the questions on organ construction set in the examination papers of the Royal College of Organists from 1888-97. These interrogatories are answered by Dr. Hinton, and to intending candidates the usefulness of the replies is obvious. We notice that the author gives the following reason for not furnishing a reply to one of these Royal College of Organists' questions. To do so 'would require at least two pages of very involved explanation, together with a diagram, and could be of no service to students.' Examiners, please note. One of the diagrams is that of a propped-up tree, having as its roots '32 and 16,' its trunk 'diapasons 8 feet,' its branches harmonic-flute, clarabella, &c., the timber supports being '12th,' '19th,' and '26th.' All the branches are in foliage, except the *voix cèleste*, which, in its twin twig delineation, has a withered and woe-begone appearance. The 'reeds' stump growing by the side of the full-leaved tree reminds one of a scarecrow. The book is one that will prove very useful in many an organist's library. We notice (p. 5) that Dr. Hinton gives the name of the clockmaker to whom the introduction of inverted ribs is assigned as 'Cummins, or Commis': it should be Cumming; also (p. 100) that the birth year of the late Dr. Gauntlett is given as 1806, instead of 1805. There is a good index.

The Pianist's A B C Primer and Guide. By W. H. Webbe.
[Forsyth Brothers.]

APART from its merits and demerits, this book claims attention by reason of its being a product of Greater Britain. The author is, we believe, a professional musician in practice at Auckland, New Zealand, and this volume certainly speaks volumes for his industry and patient toil. The 727 pages practically form an encyclopædia of pianoforte teaching, and it is but bare justice to the compiler to state that he has produced a work of distinct value as a book of reference.

Within the limits at our disposal it is impossible to give a detailed notice of the contents of this 'A B C.' But as giving some idea of its scope we may mention a few of the headings of the twenty-eight chapters, including the appendix:—General faults in pianoforte playing, the art of practising, the pedals, sight reading, &c., hints to teachers, the pianoforte, musical history, some music to play, musical journals, and books for musicians, in addition to several chapters on pianoforte technique and the theory of music. Not the least valuable aid that can be rendered to a teacher is a list of suitable teaching pieces. In the section headed 'What music to play,' Mr. Webbe devotes thirty-three pages to titles of tutors and technical studies, and seventy-eight to graded lists of pieces. This is an excellent feature. The selection is, however, too large by reason of the inclusion of several pieces that can scarcely be regarded as desirable to give to pupils, whose artistic tastes ought to be carefully formed and nurtured. This duty is one of the teacher's greatest responsibilities, and the selection of artistic music is one of its most important features. The doctrine of the evolution of the great staff of eleven lines from the two five-line staves, *plus* an extra line, is suggestive of topsy-turvyism: it should, of course, be the other way about, or some teachers might be misled. But the shortcomings of Mr. Webbe's book—which may be rectified in another edition—should not blind us to the many excellent points of this industriously compiled manual.

Duality of Voice and Outline of Original Research. By Emil Sutro.

[New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons.]

IN spite of a hardihood born of a diligent study of many modern theories of voice production, we confess to feeling staggered on reading this astonishing book. The author has persuaded himself that by dint of incessant efforts at physical introspection he has acquired the capacity to literally see inside himself, and he claims to have discovered that the voice is made not merely by the lungs and larynx, but that 'the original source of tone production has its location in various vessels of the viscera—in the lungs, the kidneys, and the bladder for the most part' (p. 46). These organs act through the œsophagus, and the tongue acts as a vocal cord or lip in fixing the pitch. The tone is also produced by the lungs *via* the trachea and vocal cords, the two processes uniting in the mouth and constituting the 'duality of voice.' Mr. Sutro naturally considers this discovery one of the most remarkable ever made by mankind and he foresees wonderful developments. So impressed is he with the mysterious nature of his achievements that he has sometimes doubted whether a higher power intended such matters to become known, and, therefore, whether he had a right to go on with his investigations! It is impossible here to discuss the innumerable and complex questions raised by the book. We must be content to indicate its principal contention. The author's earnestness and belief are unmistakable. The style of the writing is discursive to the irritating point, but when all is said on that score there is enough in the book to stimulate thought on many interesting matters connected with utterance and speech generally.

MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE Festival Choral Society held its annual meeting at the Midland Institute, on July 25, when Dr. George Robertson Sinclair was unanimously elected conductor, in succession to the late Dr. Swinnerton Heap. The concert scheme for the forthcoming season was presented, the works to be performed being Gounod's 'Redemption' and 'Faust,' Coleridge-Taylor's 'Hiawatha' Trilogy, and Schumann's 'Paradise and the Peri.' Mr. A. J. Cotton, the Society's able accompanist, was appointed assistant chorus-master, to act in Dr. Sinclair's absence. Feeling allusion was made to the loss the Society had sustained by the lamented death of Dr. Heap.

The Festival chorus re-assembled, after a short vacation, on the 20th ult. Considerable progress has already been