

Review

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Goring Thomas, Cowen, Loder, and Sullivan are conspicuous by their absence. The name of the author of the book is English, but the language he employs to describe the plots of the operas is rather like a child's translation from the German. Here is a specimen of the composition, taken from a description of the last scene of "Der Freischütz." "Everybody believes that *Max* has shot his bride, but she is only in a swoon; the bullet has really killed the villain *Caspar*. It was the seventh, the direction of which *Zamiel* reserved for himself, and Satan having no power over the pious maiden, directed it on *Caspar*, already forfeited to him." The contradictory character of the book is thus displayed, for English words are employed and yet the language is not English.

Favourite Hymns set to Special Tunes. Composed by W. S. Hoyte. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE best of Mr. Hoyte's hymn-tunes are constructed upon the plan necessary to secure popularity. The compass of the melodies is within that limit of range to which the average voices of the singers in congregations are confined. In one or two melodies, such as those to "Blessed City, heavenly Salem," No. 5; "A living stream," No. 13; "Lauda Sion," No. 16; and "O, Shepherd of the Sheep," the help of a trained choir is suggested. The tunes are all associated with well known words, and include processional songs for the great festivals, and metrical litanies as sung at All Saints', Margaret Street.

By Northern Seas. Song. The words written by G. E. Troutbeck. The music composed by Oliver King. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

It is often said that modern composers do not trouble themselves to write songs which shall display their musicianship so much as to exhibit their desire to hunt for popularity by concocting phrases which fall upon the ear with ready sweetness. Here, however, is a fine song, full of melodic attraction, effective for the voice, and exhibiting musician-like qualities in every bar. It requires to be well sung, but vocalists, baritones or tenors, in search of an admirable and well written song, are advised to make acquaintance with this and to test the public taste by frequent performance of it.

FOREIGN NOTES.

WITH regard to the present performances at the Friedrich Wilhelmstadt Theatre of Berlin of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Yeomen of the Guard," Herr Otto Lessmann complains in his paper, the *Allgemeine Musik Zeitung*, of the intolerable mannerisms of the modern burlesque opera being introduced into a work of such distinctive merit. Says the German critic, *inter alia*: "We talk here so glibly about 'unmusical England,' and what not, but when you have witnessed the performance of one of Sullivan's Operettas at the Savoy Theatre, in London, and compare it with what we are accustomed to in our most 'musical' capital, you will not hesitate to give the palm to the former, both as regards the carefully worked-out *ensemble*, and the combined vocal and histrionic qualities of the interpreters. . . . It is an idle question, whether the music to the 'Yeomen of the Guard' is more pleasing than that of the 'Mikado'; it is sufficient for us to acknowledge that both works are of a type far superior to the dance tune operetta now in vogue with us."

"Die Fürstin von Athen," a new comic opera by Friedrich Lux, the Mayence Capellmeister, met with great success on its recent first performance at the Frankfurt Stadt-Theater.

A new string quartet, by Johannes Brahms, is shortly to be performed for the first time in the Austrian capital.

Dr. Wüllner, of Cologne, will be the future Conductor of the Silesian Music Festivals in the room of the late Ludwig Deppe. The system of pianoforte tuition, so successfully instituted by the latter, will, we understand, be perpetuated at Berlin by several of his most talented lady pupils, who have already gained some distinction as teachers.

The "Beethoven Haus," at Bonn, in which the great composer first saw the light, and which some time since became national property, has just been opened to the

public. In it there are exhibited a great variety of treasures and mementoes relating to the master, amongst the most interesting being his quartet of string instruments, the grand piano last used by him, which is in excellent preservation, and the several mechanical appliances to obviate his deafness constructed for him (alas! to little purpose) by Maelzel.

The production of Berlioz's "Les Troyens" at the Carlsruhe Hof-Theater is now definitely fixed. "La Prise de Troie" will be performed on the 2nd inst., and "Les Troyens à Carthage" on the following evening. The work will be given in its entirety, the leading parts being sustained by Mesdames Reuss and Meilhac and Herr Oberländer.

The scenic decorations now being painted by the brothers Brückner, of Coburg, for next year's "Tannhäuser" performances at Bayreuth, are said to be of a magnificent description, surpassing any previous similar work produced by these gifted artists.

An interesting article, entitled "Moltke und die Musik," is contained in a recent number of the *Neue Musik Zeitung*, wherein the author, Dr. Adolph Kohnt, furnishes some highly characteristic details concerning the more than intelligent appreciation of our art on the part of the great Field Marshal.

A new symphonic poem, entitled "Macbeth," from the pen of Richard Strauss, the Weimar Capellmeister, was enthusiastically received on the occasion of its first public performance.

Among the novelties promised at the Munich Opera during the season are Franchetti's "Asrael"; "Le Cid," by Peter Cornelius; Kretzschmer's "Die Folkunger," Mozart's "Idomeneo," and Liszt's "St. Elizabeth." The last-named work has been so successful on the stage in Germany that it appears to be more effective as an opera than as an oratorio.

On the 4th ult., the anniversary of the death of Mendelssohn, a commemorative performance was given by the Leipzig Conservatorium with the following programme—viz., Organ Sonata (F minor), String Quartet (Op. 12, E flat major), Variations Concertantes for pianoforte and violoncello, Variations Sérieuses for pianoforte, Duet from 95th Psalm, and Hymn for soprano chorus and organ accompaniment; all the above numbers being from the pen of the lamented master and former principal of the institution.

One of the most interesting objects of the De Witt collection of antique musical instruments, lately referred to in these columns, is the favourite clavier of Johann Sebastian Bach (a wing-shaped instrument, with a quill mechanism), which has lately been skilfully restored by a German artisan, and may be considered in as good a condition now as when, say, the famous "Wohltemperirte Klavier" was written by its original possessor.

A Wagner Festival is to be instituted at Carlsruhe, at which the master's early works, which are never likely to be produced at Bayreuth, are to be performed.

Once more two Parisian art-lovers have taken heart of grace, and boldly propose to bring out Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde" at the Eden Theatre during the winter season. The names of the gentlemen in question, MM. Henri Bauer and Catulle Mendes, should be recorded at once, as their excellent scheme is likely to be indefinitely postponed, albeit the leading parts are already said to be cast and M. Lamoureux is mentioned as the Conductor.

A new opera, entitled "Orlando Furioso," by the Maestro Sangiorgi, is to be brought out shortly at the Argentina Theatre, of Rome.

At the Paris Odéon an adaptation of the "Alcestis" of Euripides is being prepared by M. Alfred Gassier. Portions of Gluck's "Alceste" will be introduced with M. Lamoureux's orchestra.

The important library of the late George Kastner, the musical *savant* (a native of Alsace) has been presented by his son to the Paris Conservatoire on condition that it be kept in a room by itself. The collection comprises upwards of 10,000 volumes.

A committee has been formed in Paris for the purpose of erecting a monument at the French capital to Bizet, the composer of "Carmen." Subscriptions for the purpose are said to be flowing in fast.