

Review

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THE recent trial of new compositions at the Musical Artists' Society, which took place at the Royal Academy of Music, fully evidenced the possession of a talent amongst our countrymen which, with such an opportunity as this Institution affords, cannot fail to assert itself. On the present occasion a String Quartett in A, by Mr. J. Lea Summers, another in G, by Mr. H. Baumer, and a Pianoforte Sonata in F sharp minor, by Mr. H. C. Banister (excellently performed by the composer) were received, as they deserved, with much favour by a most critical audience; and many vocal pieces were also given with marked success. The admirable manner in which this Society is managed should secure for it that attention and patronage which alone can render its influence permanently beneficial to the healthy development of English art.

ON Tuesday, the 16th ult., a concert was given at St. John's Schools, Waterloo Road, the proceeds being in aid of the restoration of the organ at St. John's Church. A very satisfactory programme was provided, amongst the most prominent attractions of which were the vocal pieces of Mrs. Miles Doughty, Miss R. Lee, Mrs. Cushett, Messrs. Knapp and Courtney, and the Drayton Family; the latter elicited much applause. The pianoforte accompaniments were well given by Miss C. Nott and others.

A SERIES of Organ Recitals are being given by the Managers of the Bow and Bromley Institute on Saturday evenings. Amongst the well-known performers who have already appeared we may mention Mr. F. Archer, Mr. E. H. Turpin, Mr. A. Carder, and Mr. W. H. Monk. The Recitals are interspersed with vocal solos, which have been rendered by Miss Helen Standish, Miss Minnie Curtis, Messrs. Stedman, Chaplin Henry, &c. The audiences have been large and appreciative. The managers deserve support in their endeavours to provide music of a high class at a cheap rate of admission.

A VERY successful concert was given at St. James's Hall on the 16th ult., in aid of the Metropolitan District Telegraph Messengers' Band Fund. Several well-known artists appeared, including Mesdames Lemmens-Sherrington, José Sherrington, Liebhart, Mott, Messrs. Vernon Rigby, Stedman, Lewis Thomas, Chaplin Henry, and J. C. Kent. The conductors were Messrs. W. H. Thomas, Henry Parker, W. H. Callcott, and Michael Watson, and the bandmaster Mr. H. R. Edwards. So many people were unable to obtain admission that a repetition of the concert is announced.

ON Friday evening, the 5th ult., the second concert of the season was given by the Crouch End Choral Society, at the Drill Hall, Crouch End. The vocalists were Mrs. Alfred Dye, Messrs. Stedman and A. G. Lawson; solo violin, Mr. Grimson. The first part was sacred, and comprised "Angels, ever bright and fair," "In native worth," "Honour and arms," "Judge me, O God," &c. The second part consisted of ballads, part-songs, &c. Mrs. A. Dye and Mr. Stedman were encored in the duet "Ah morir" (Ernani), and were also very successful in a duet, "Maying," by Alice Mary Smith. Mr. Stedman gave a new song by Mr. A. Dye, entitled "Love's offering," in which he was accompanied by the composer, and which was much appreciated. Two violin solos by Mr. Grimson, and several part-songs by the choir were also performed with good effect. Mr. A. Dye conducted, and also played Beethoven's Sonata Pathétique, as a piano solo.

WE have been informed that several eminent vocalists have kindly consented to give their services at a concert in aid of the Commercial Travellers' Benevolent Institution; and it is hoped that many instrumentalists will grant the same favour. It is also anticipated that large wholesale firms in the City will aid the undertaking by every means in their power.

AN old relic of the Hanover Square Rooms has departed. James Fitzgerald, the carriage attendant for the last thirty years at the Queen's Concert Rooms, and for many years at the Royal Academy of Music, died on the 4th ult., (aged 74). He was the oldest man in that line of business, and was well known and much respected.

REVIEWS.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

The Chandos Te Deum, in vocal score, composed about the year 1719, by G. F. Handel. Edited, and the pianoforte arrangement by Joseph Barnby.

It is as though the deathless Handel were born again into the world, to have this magnificent work reproduced, of which even the name has passed out of general knowledge, and the music itself is totally unknown. Dr. Busby, who has been for many years deceased, writes, "It is forty years since I heard them at Covent Garden by Dr. Arnold; my ear still retains the impression of their charm, and my mind of their grandeur," in allusion to the two settings of the *Te Deum* and the twelve orchestral anthems, composed by the master during his residence with the Duke of Chandos, at Cannons, a few miles up the Edgware Road, between 1718 and 1720. This helps one to guess how very long time has elapsed since the great works in question have been heard in public. The present *Te Deum* is the setting in B flat, which has not, we believe, been printed with pianoforte accompaniment till now. To dismiss this accompaniment with a word, we must use a strong one, and say it is in every respect admirable, being well fitted to the instrument and highly effective. As to the work itself, we may confidently state that the composer never surpassed it; for elaboration, for fire, for power, for effect, and for poetical treatment of the subject, it would be all alone in excellence, but that Handel himself wrote other works, which, and which only, can compare with it.

The first number is a Chorus, of which to say that it is Handelian is appropriately to use a word that has been adopted into our language to define the utmost of musical grandeur. The next is a Chorus interspersed with Solos beginning in E flat, "All the earth," with that picturesque treatment of the words for which the author is remarkable, that gives in this case an idea of the concurrence of vast multitudes in the act of worship. Continuous of this, "To Thee all angels" is given first by a solo alto, and presently by the full choir. A soprano Solo at the words "To Thee, Cherubin," and the repetitions of this sentence, flows on with a meaning sufficiently obvious, through the truly sublime ejaculations of the chorus on the thrice "Holy;" and the sequel of the universal song is unbroken. The movement ends in B flat, and so is a pendant of the first, rather than an independent piece. No. 3, "The glorious company," assigns each description of the lauding throngs to a solo voice, and the chorus personifies these with its joyful vociferation of "Praise Thee." The acknowledgment by the holy Church has a full-voiced statement, and the three articles of belief, set to a change of movement, are so rendered as to give essentially the figure of Trinity in Unity by the working together of the themes appropriated to each, the expression here being solemn in the highest degree. The Chorus, "Thou art the King" has a fugal treatment of each section of the text, both of which are closely elaborated. No. 5, the only Air, is for treble, and is a charmingly melodious setting of the section, "When Thou tookest," which beautifully contrasts the majestic breadth of the foregoing. The next passage is set as an unaccompanied Quartett with exquisite tenderness; it is one of those fantasia movements wherein the course of modulation is entirely free, being directed solely by the course of the expression. "Thou didst open" breaks in with excellent brightness, the full body of voices and the brilliant key of C helping the animation of the idea to complete the musical picture. New means were necessary to the prolongation of the scene of heavenly glory, if this was to be effected without monotony; a series of Solos accordingly introduces "Thou sittest at the right hand," in which the singers' personality opens a new interest, and the chorus enters presently as the culmination of the thought, and then the iterating of the word "Thou" seems forcibly to declare that He singly, who is addressed, owns the seat of highest distinction. No. 9, "We believe" is deeply pathetic; the exclamation of the word "help," occurring again and again through the continuance of other

phrases, is beautifully suggestive. The next number comprises two movements, "Day by day" being given out with great vigour, and "And we worship" being set as a powerful fugue. It is a notable point in the design of the whole, that the key of D, with all its glittering characteristics, is reserved for this return to the act of praise. The transition into G minor helps greatly to the tone of plaintive deprecation that marks the next number, which is begun by a solo tenor, to be afterwards joined by the chorus. Who knows the wonderful treatment of this passage, "Vouchsafe, O Lord," in the popular work to commemorate the victory of Dettingen, may think that no other music could render it with equal interest; but let them know this, and they will perceive that it is as like the other in beauty as it is unlike it in notes. It curiously anticipates a rhythmical and harmonic point in "Farewell, ye limpid," an Air in Jephthah, the master's latest production, written forty years after the present work. No 13, is the final Chorus, a noble piece of fugue writing, and a fitting end to a glorious composition. "O Lord, in Thee" is set to a fine broad subject in B flat, which is copiously worked before the introduction of a second subject in F, "Let me never," which, having been elaborated alone, is then combined with the former, and the complexity of the fugue is increased while its clearness is undiminished by the addition of yet another theme to the first words.

Now that the oratorio is menaced with expulsion from the church, it is the right moment to call upon every person who has a voice in the administration of musico-ecclesiastical affairs, to seize upon such works as this, few, very few as they are, and bring them into standard use for festal occasions, before the highest class of music be exiled from her native home, and a precedent becomes established for excluding every work of our art from holy uses that exceeds a limited number of minutes in performance, or requires more than a limited number of executants. It would be vain to conjecture as to whose is the disgrace that the great work before us has been for tens upon tens of years unheard in Church service; the loss has been all theirs who have had no opportunity to hear its performance; nay, more, it has been theirs too who might have been stimulated by its magnificent example, if never to bring forth music equal to Handel's, at least to aim at the mighty mark, to raise themselves while exalting their art, and to do much for the true edification of the world at large.

Handel's Jubilate, composed for the peace of Utrecht in the year 1713, in vocal score, with a separate accompaniment for the pianoforte, arranged by W. T. Best.

"Queen Anne is dead," and some things that were great and good in her days, if they survived her for a while, have not come down to our time. One of these was the practice, that when an event of great public interest befell, there was straightway a grand celebration of the same, wherein music held a conspicuous place. So, the many years' war in which all Europe had been involved, came to an end on the 31st of March, 1713, the treaty between England and France was signed on the 7th of April, preparations were then set on foot for a public thanksgiving at which Her Majesty with both the Houses of Parliament was to be present, and Handel was engaged to compose a Service for the occasion. The solemnity took place on the 7th of July, but whether in St. Paul's Cathedral or in St. James's Chapel Royal is uncertain. The music of Handel is now identified with the circumstance that called it forth, in being distinguished by the name of Utrecht, the place of the agreement for the peace and the signing of the treaty. In our own time, wars have been in the Crimea, in India, in Ashantee, and peaces have been ratified under the auspices of a sovereign lady; but people had to offer up their private thanks from their own homes, and no great artist has been permitted the opportunity to build himself a reputation by doing honour to these events. It is asserted that art is at a low ebb in England—an assertion that is easier than its proof; but as little as there can be great Generals without wars, so little can there be great musicians without occasion for the exercise of their artistry. It was the habit of old, happily revived in these last years, to engage a complete orchestra for the solemnisation of most important occasions

in our royal and mother churches; hence, Purcell's Service and his Anthems, the Anthems by Weldon, and the ecclesiastical music by Handel, are written for the full band in addition to the complement of solo and choral voices. The Utrecht Jubilate, accordingly requires all the instruments for its performance that were in use a hundred and sixty years ago; but this is not an insuperable hindrance to its presentation now, since, like other works by the same mighty composer and by others, its accompaniments are susceptible of adaptation to the organ. That it is so little known and so never performed is a subject for wonder, since it is all as fine as, while very far shorter than, the Dettingen Te Deum, so that it is even more available than that masterpiece for high church festivals. Nay, it would be difficult to discover a more noble composition from the hand of its great author; and, if not from his, from whose workmanship might its parallel be sought! One might suppose that, having been only able to display his power among us in the lightest forms of the Italian opera, Handel seized the first opportunity to assert himself in the severest class of music, and to prove himself as gigantic as he had previously been charming. We rarely, even in his oratorios, meet with such careful elaboration as is here manifest; and it is not the severity of scholarship more than the vitality of genius that gives superlative interest to the composition. The alto Solo of the opening seems to call upon the nation to unite in triumphant rejoicing, and the chorus then takes up the strain, like the many-voiced uttering of a great people, conscious of right and certain of victory. Sequent upon this superb Introduction, is a fugue on two subjects—the first florid, to the words, "Serve the Lord with gladness," the second in long notes that peal trumpet-tongued through the massy counterpoint of the other, to the words "and come before His presence with a song." Much of this is in six vocal parts, with occasionally independent orchestral accompaniment; but, with a freedom that some contrapuntal writers (Bach for instance) never allowed themselves, Handel sometimes joins several of these parts in unison to give prominence to the second subject, and thus in spirit anticipates a principle of modern orchestration, which sanctions the duplication of voice with voice, and instrument with instrument, to bring out a significant point. This piece is in D, as are many of the same jubilant character by the author, being written with evident regard to the broad brilliancy of string instruments in a key that includes all their open notes, and to the then normal key of the trumpet, which seems not to have been pitched in F, as at present, until long after. A Duet in A minor, for alto and bass, follows, "Be ye sure" which is cheerful and hearty, in spite or by reason of its greatly misunderstood modal minority. The imitative style of the voice writing is animated in effect while grave in manner. The next piece, a four-part Chorus in F, is a prodigy of art. The first subject, "O go your way," is worked at first as a canon in the 4th and 8th below and 5th above; another subject, "and into His courts," is then introduced, and presently worked against the first; anon, a third independent theme, "Be thankful unto Him" gives further variety to this admirably diversified piece; and when the three are wrought together, there is an effect of sublimity not to be surpassed. True to the Cathedral uses of the day, there is a trio for alto, tenor, and bass, "For the Lord is gracious." It was then common to dissociate the adult singers from the boys for solo pieces of the character of this, wherein the attraction lies more in the closeness of the vocal responses than in the melodious beauty or the expression. Not rarely in his after works does our composer suffer such sympathetic words as these to elude his equally sympathetic treatment; here is another appropriation of the minor mode to cheerful use, but we admire more than we are carried away by the music. Perhaps the grandest portion of the whole is the "Glory," forming the final chorus in two movements. In eight parts, the voices sustain the word of exultation for many bars, during the diverse motion of all the instruments; again and again this is iterated, each time on a different chord, and then the threefold name of the Deity is enunciated with the same stupendous grandeur. The fugal treatment of "As it was" is interspersed with exclamatory Amens in plain counter-