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Praise God in His Holiness. Anthem for Four Voices by Berthold Tours
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with these masterpieces. Up to the present time one hundred cantatas have been published by the society, and anyone who will take the trouble to examine them will feel that nothing that has been said in their praise is in the least an exaggeration.

The two cantatas now lying before us are specimens of two very different styles. The former, "Bide with us," begins with a very quiet chorus in the key of C minor, accompanied by strings, two oboes, and *oboe di caccia*, a now obsolete instrument, the modern representative of which is the *Corno inglese*. The tranquil beauty of this first chorus, which is by no means of remarkable difficulty, will impress itself at once on the mind of the hearer. It is followed by an alto air, "Thou whose praises never end," accompanied by an elaborate *obbligato* for the *oboe di caccia*, in a style frequently adopted by the composer, but which is more interesting from its skilful counterpoint than from its intrinsic beauty. The third movement of the cantata is even more characteristic of Bach. It is a treatment of the old choral "Ach, blieb' bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ" for soprano (whether solo or chorus is not stated in the score), with florid accompaniment and interludes for the violoncello. This piece is identical with an arrangement of the same choral for the organ, which will be found in the sixth volume of Griepenkerl's complete edition of Bach's organ works. It is, however, more effective in the form in which it appears here, as the choral is given to the voice instead of to an organ stop. A bass recitative and a tenor song, "Lord, to us Thyself be showing," accompanied by the string quartett, follow the choral, and the cantata concludes, according to Bach's custom, with a verse of a choral harmonized for full choir, with unison accompaniment for the orchestra. The choral which the composer has chosen here is Luther's fine old melody "Erhalt' uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort."

"A stronghold sure" may most unhesitatingly be pronounced one of the very finest of all the cantatas which Bach has written. The choral upon which it is founded is one of the best known both in Germany and in this country. It is almost needless to remind our readers that it forms the basis of the finale in Mendelssohn's "Reformation" Symphony, and also plays an important part in Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*. In this cantata it forms, so to speak, the keystone of the entire composition, appearing in four out of its eight numbers. The opening chorus, "A stronghold sure our God remains," accompanied by a large orchestra, including three trumpets and drums, is one of those masterly pieces of writing which are peculiar to Bach. Each phrase of the choral is treated separately, in free fugue by the voices, and towards the close of every section the choral is introduced on the high notes of the trumpet, above everything else, answered in canon at one bar's distance by the double-basses and the pedal reeds of the organ, the latter being expressly indicated in the score. The effect of the combination would be magnificent, could we but hear it as Bach intended; but, as recently noticed in the article on the Mass in B minor, his trumpet parts are unplayable at the present day. Even with the voices and a good organ accompaniment, the chorus would be very grand, though much would of course be lost in the absence of an orchestra. In the following duet for treble and bass, "Our utmost might is all in vain," the second verse of Luther's hymn is treated in a totally different manner to the first. The choral is now sung, with many florid embellishments, by the treble voice, while the bass has an entirely different, and even more florid, melody of its own. The two movements which come next, though interesting, are hardly equal to the preceding; but the unison choral (No. 5), "If all the world with fiends were filled," is of enormous power. Here the whole chorus in unison and octaves sings the third verse of the hymn, accompanied by the full orchestra with trumpets and drums in the freest and most varied counterpoint. A tenor recitative leads to a very charming duet for alto and tenor, "How blessed then are they," with accompaniment for violin and *oboe di caccia*; and the last verse of the choral, "That word shall still in strength abide," is then sung in conclusion in plain four-part harmony. The whole cantata is worthy of the attention of some of our choral societies. The necessary

additions and modifications in the orchestral parts could be made with comparative ease by an experienced musician; and if adequately performed there can be no question as to its great popularity. It is one of the most readily appreciable and enjoyable of Bach's compositions.

Praise God in His holiness. Anthem for four voices. Composed by Berthold Tours.

THERE has been of late years an evident tendency on the part of our younger composers to emancipate cathedral music from the somewhat stereotyped form, which, until recently, appears to have been considered alone appropriate to it; and while there is some danger lest in the attempts to obtain freshness and variety a secular tinge should be given to the music, there is no reason why this need be the case. Indeed the present author furnishes a decisive proof that it is possible for a composer to avail himself of the modern developments of harmony without overstepping the limits of what is considered sacred music; though, by the way, it is far easier to feel than to define exactly what those limits are. No one who heard Mr. Tours's anthem, without knowing the composer's name, would for a moment attribute it to Croft or Boyce. It is unmistakably modern in tone and feeling, but there is nothing in it which can be pronounced inconsistent with the requirements of divine service. It opens with a broad chorus in G major, introduced by four bars of prelude for the organ, which instrument has an independent part throughout. As an instance of the unconventional yet effective style of treatment of the harmonies adopted may be cited the passage on the second line of the third page, where chromatic chords are introduced with good judgment, yet without too great a tax on the singers. The second movement, "Young men and maidens," an *andantino quasi allegretto* in E minor, $\frac{3}{8}$ time, pleases us less than the first, because $\frac{3}{8}$ is a peculiarly difficult rhythm to treat with dignity; and at the *tempo* marked ($\text{♩} = 63$) the music falls into a swing which seems hardly in keeping with what has preceded. With all deference to the composer, we would venture to suggest that we think the movement would gain considerably if taken at a slower pace than that indicated. The final movement of the anthem, "Let the saints be joyful with glory," is again excellent throughout. The whole work is by no means difficult, and not being very long, will be found useful for festival services.

Six short and easy Full Anthems for Parish Choirs. By Frederick Iliffe, Mus. Bac., Oxon.

THESE six little anthems are decidedly superior to many of their class. In attempting to write down to the ability of an average parochial choir, many composers seem to think that to be easy it is also necessary to be commonplace. Into this error Mr. Iliffe has not fallen. His melodies are pleasing, and his harmony worthy of a "Mus. Bac., Oxon." He seems to have a partiality for beginning with the dominant rather than the tonic chord, as we find this peculiarity in three out of the six anthems before us; the effect, however, is by no means unpleasant. The anthems show real musical feeling, and may be recommended for general use, especially as they are quite within the reach of any choir making the least pretensions to musical efficiency.

The Te Deum, easily arranged for Parochial Use, with Single and Double Chants. Composed and selected by Alexander S. Cooper.

THE present collection of twenty-one different settings of the *Te Deum* to various chants requires no detailed notice. In many churches where chants are used instead of more elaborate music for the canticles, there is a want of variety in this portion of the service. Either the same chant is used for the whole *Te Deum*, or at best, the same set of chants is used on nearly all occasions. Mr. Cooper's various arrangements will be found useful in relieving the monotony existing in such cases. The chants are well selected, with due regard both to unity of effect and to variety. Each setting is provided with at least two: the first for verses 1 to 18, 24, 25, and the last verse; the second for verses 19 to 23, and 26 to 28. In some cases a third chant, or, to speak more accurately, a variation of the second, is provided for the last verse.