

Review

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'Minnelied,' in the Schools of the Meistersingers, rest now in the holy aisles of the Church. A great number followed the progress and crowd of the Wittemberg Reformer, and took refuge from the incense and mystic gloom of the Catholic Cathedral in the clear, bright abode of the Protestant Church. He who travels and mixes much with people, undergoes more or less change, assumes here and there something of speech and custom, and may be taken in a foreign land for a native and in his own home for a stranger. Exactly so is it with our wandering tunes. They never, or very rarely, remain what and how they were. The metamorphosis has no end. Their forms are ever varied and new, but yet they preserve sufficient of their recognisable features to show their origin. They are the common property of the world, and never lose their individuality, even though they be manipulated by such masters in the craft of music as Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, or Mendelssohn."

*The Naiads.* A Cantata for female voices. Written by Edward Oxenford. Music composed by Oliver King. Op. 56. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

ALTHOUGH the author of the words advances no new idea for his Cantata, and the kind of story upon which he bases his subject has been employed in various forms over and over again, by himself as well as others, his lines are smooth and have been associated with some elegant and graceful music by Mr. Oliver King, so that the work has only to become known to secure a wide popularity. The construction is ingenious and the effect is full, though the choruses are only in two-part harmony. The accompaniments are brilliant and interesting, and add no little to the charm of the Cantata. In the twelve numbers of which it is composed, there are some melodious airs for soprano and contralto soli, besides some elegantly-written duets for the same voices, with accompanying and separate choruses. The Intermezzo, "Dance of the Naiads," would alone make the success of the Cantata in performance, even if the rest of the work was of inferior quality; but, as a whole, it is worthy to be counted among the happiest efforts of the composer, and also as one of the best works of its kind available for teaching, for study, or for pleasure.

*Beethoven.* By H. A. Rudall. Great Musician Series. [Sampson, Low and Co.]

THE fact that nothing new has been discovered about Beethoven is demonstrated in the pages of this new addition to the many existing biographies of him. The charm of Mr. Rudall's version of the History of the Life of Beethoven consists in the clear, lucid, and graphic manner in which the story is told. With a due amount of enthusiasm for his theme, the writer carries the reader from page to page in the pleasant converse of one who is relating a personal story. The book is not a mere list of artistic productions, or a detailed record of their origin. The author has wisely only mentioned those which had a particular bearing upon the composer's career. The consequence is that the narrative is unbroken by needless statements which may testify to the desire for accuracy on the part of the author, even though they materially hinder the interest in the subject. There is an appendix containing a catalogue of works, based upon Nottebohm and the Dictionary of Music and Musicians, and this suffices for all needs and makes the little book complete within its own covers as far as possible.

*Vocal Duets (including those from his larger works).* Composed by Robert Schumann. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

A NEW, beautifully-printed, and cheap edition of Schumann's vocal duets such as the present will be gladly welcomed by the many admirers of the composer and his labours. It would be quite possible to occupy much space in speaking of these productions in detail. This task is needless as the majority of the duets are well known and even familiar. It is, however, a great advantage to be able to have them in one collection such as the present, where the original words by various German poets are accompanied by careful and even poetical versions in English by Lady Macfarren, Miss Vance, and John Oxenford. There are thirty-five in all, including the duets from "The pilgrimage of the rose," the "Minnespiel," the "Spanische

Liebeslieder," separate duets with words by Burns, Grün, Ruckert, Kulmann, and others, the whole forming a complete and elegant collection such as can scarcely fail to create a large measure of delight for the opportunity it affords for the study of one of the most acceptable phases of the genius of the composer.

*Serenata for two Violoncellos and Pianoforte.* Composed by Alfred Piatti. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THOSE who have heard the composer as a player will find in this ably-written work much of the grace and elegance of thought which may be considered as parallel to his unequalled performance. The masterly style in which the ideas are expressed display a perfect knowledge of the violoncello and its characteristic qualities, and a happy method of conveying that knowledge in writing. There is a charm of spontaneity in the manner in which the ideas are set down, so that the whole appears to be the result of an unprompted and even an inspired effort. The effects are gained by the most simple yet legitimate means, while the art and ability of the composer is apparent in every bar. As might be expected, the chief interest in the *Serenata* is centred in the passages given to the two chief instruments, the part for the pianoforte being of the most modest character. As a Concert piece it would be very effective, and as a medium for study and practice it should not fail to prove valuable.

*Wright and Round's Amateur Band Teacher's Guide and Bandsman's Adviser.*

[Liverpool: Wright and Round.]

THIS is an excellent, compact, and common-sense collection of precepts which will be found of the utmost value as a guide to those who desire to form a brass band, and to keep the members together. It gives hints how to commence the formation of a band. It instructs the tyros how to blow; tells the conductor how to arrange hymn tunes for a young band; how to manage the practices from the initial lesson to the highest point of artistic playing, and all in the clearest and most comprehensive manner. It is written in a genial and pleasant style; there is nothing redundant or superfluous, every word is of weight and value, and the *Band Teacher's Guide*, which is published at a very small rate, deserves to be popular with bands formed or forming, prospected or established, and to be read by all interested in the cause of music, whether they be bandmen or not.

*Complete Works for the Pianoforte.* Composed by Robert Schumann. Edited and fingered by Agnes Zimmermann. Vol. I. Octavo. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

A FEW words of commendation will be sufficient to call the attention of all who are interested in the music of Schumann to this instalment of a new edition of his pianoforte works. It is in all respects the same as the folio edition that has been already favourably noticed in these columns. The only difference is in the size, the octavo form—so acceptable to many—having been selected for this present publication. Miss Zimmermann's preface and biography of the composer are prefixed to this first volume, and each piece has the advantage of her careful editing and fingering of the passages, so that it is one of the most elegant in appearance, accurate in form, and easily accessible as far as price is concerned.

*Sérénade Napolitaine.* For Violin, with accompaniment for Pianoforte. By G. Saint-George.

[Charles Woolhouse.]

MR. G. SAINT-GEORGE has already shown himself possessed of a large fund of melody, combined with much ability for the treatment of his themes. The present example evinces no falling off of that power. If the "*Sérénade Napolitaine*" contains more technical difficulties than any other of his previous pieces, the effect gained will compensate the young violinist for his effort in conquering them. The demands upon the skill of the player are in no way great; but they have the result of making the composition excellent for public performance, and so it is one which should receive the attention of all players who desire to become acquainted with something new.