

Review

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*Six Italian Songs.* For a Mezzo-Soprano voice. Arranged, English words written and adapted, by J. Stainer. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

No little of the great musical progress made of late in England may be attributed to the revival and consequent study of the music of past generations, and the re-issue of excerpts from the old masters undoubtedly exerts a salutary influence on the musical taste of the day. The above selection of songs is well calculated to excite interest in music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The first example is a canzonetta by Cavalli, whose real name was Caletti-Bruni, and who was a singer at St. Mark's, Venice, in 1617. The canzonetta, entitled "*Dolce Amor*," is an excellent specimen of that tender and pathetic expression which placed its composer in the front rank of early opera writers. Alessandro Scarlatti furnishes the next song, entitled "*Non dar più pene*," which is taken from the opera "*La Rosaura*." There are two copies of the opera in the MSS. of the British Museum, but in one of these this song is completely spoiled by omissions and curtailments; and in the printed edition by Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel the opening of the vocal part of the song has been marred by the introduction of an obvious false note which is not found in either MS. copy. The words are of a pathetic character, the music simple and expressive, and, in common with Scarlatti's writings of this nature, extremely well laid out for the voice. "*Fier Destin*," by Gasparini, is derived from an opera, "*Antioch*," a work which was very popular in London during the first half of the last century. The fourth song is "*L'Immago tua Vezzosa*," by Emanuele, Baron d'Astorga, who spent the greater part of his life as a diplomatist, but who was also a musician of no mean attainments. This is well attested by the example in question, which is one of the most attractive of the selection. The "*Danza Fanciulla*," by Durante, who was a pupil of Scarlatti in Naples, is a sprightly arietta with which a cultured vocalist could scarcely fail to enchant her listeners. The volume is concluded by a charming pastoral song from the opera of "*Il Filosofo di Campagna*," by Galuppi. This lyric was very popular in England in the middle of the last century, and was constantly sung by the then favourite vocalist, Miss Brent. All these songs are furnished with English translations of the Italian text, and musicians will appreciate the perfect appropriateness of Sir John Stainer's pianoforte accompaniments, which for the most part have only been indicated by the composers. It should be added that the selection includes some excellent historical notes, and that the songs "*Non dar più pene*" and "*Fier Destin*" are also published with a violin *obbligato*, which is justified by the original arrangement, and which, it is hardly necessary to say, increases their effectiveness in performance.

*Six Original Compositions for the Organ.* By J. W. Elliott. [Edwin Ashdown, Limited.]

MR. ELLIOTT has hitherto been known chiefly as a composer of highly meritorious church music and in connection with his admirable arrangements for the harmonium. Many of his friends have often wondered why he did not still further exercise his talent in writing for the organ, which he plays with consummate taste and skill. These six pieces are, therefore, very welcome. Such titles as "*Patronal Festival March*," "*Intermezzo*," "*In the old abbey*," and "*Wedding Music*" have in them an attractiveness which is fully endorsed by the excellence of the music, and we cordially commend this collection of pieces to the attention of organists. They are dedicated to Sir John Stainer.

*Novello's Parish Choir Book.* Nos. 298—310. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE quantity of sacred music is ever on the increase, and for this, of course, there is a good reason: there is an ever-increasing demand for it. No. 298 of the above-named series is a plain, yet effective setting of the favourite hymn "*Abide with me*," by W. T. Best, the great organist, who has so recently passed to his rest. No. 299 is the solemn *Dies Iræ* by the same composer, with Latin words, and English translation by the Rev. Dr. W. J. Irons, for voices

unaccompanied. The music, with its quaint tonality and alternation of phrases in unison and full harmony, is impressive. No. 300, a *Te Deum Laudamus*, second series (Gregorian Tones), by Sir J. Stainer, with its voices in unison and voices in harmony, is chaste and dignified. The few chromatic harmonies in the organ accompaniments are of good effect. No. 301, *Benedicite*, omnia Opera, in chant form, by Sir J. Stainer and B. Blaxland, is broad and flowing. Some of the verses are set by the one, some by the other composer. No. 302, entitled "*Faith, Duty, and Prayer*," by Myles B. Foster, has music of simple character "for the use of Children in School, at Worship, or in the Home." No. 303, a *Jubilate Deo* in F, by Bruce Steane, is bright, melodious, and carefully written for the voices. No. 304 is a *Cantate Domino* and *Deus Misereatur* (in C) by Sir John Goss. The first is a simple, yet fine, vigorous composition; the second, opening quietly with the old ecclesiastical phrase so often used in their works by the great masters, offers excellent contrast. In both numbers the voices are throughout in unison. No. 305, a Harvest carol, "*Make melody within your hearts*," by the Rev. F. A. J. Hervey, is fresh and pleasing. No. 306 is a Harvest carol, "*Sowing and Reaping*," by J. Maude Crament, of a simple and tuneful character. No. 307, *Benedictus*, third series (Gregorian Tones), by Sir J. Stainer, has both charm and dignity. No. 308, *Te Deum Laudamus* in D, by Dr. Chipp, shows skill and character. The harmonies in the accompaniment of the passages in unison are bold, yet not extravagant. No. 309, a *Benedictus*, also in D, by the same composer, is of a quieter, though fairly similar style. No. 310, a *Jubilate Deo* in E flat, also from the same pen, is short, and the harmonies throughout are diatonic.

*In Praise of Music.* An anthology. Prepared by Charles Sayle. [Elliot Stock.]

THE compiler of this volume has founded his anthology on "*The Praise of Musicke*," attributed to Dr. John Case, and dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh by the printer thereof, which appeared in 1586; and the method of the book is formed on that of the late Alexander Ireland's valuable "*Book lover's Enchiridion*." Mr. Sayle goes to the Bible for his earliest extracts, and these are followed by quotations from the writings of Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, and many other classical authors, through a long line of writers and poets of various periods and nationalities, down to William Watson of our own day. The compiler almost disarms criticism in the motto he has prefixed to the work: "*Nihil est inventum et perfectum simul*"; and an admission that some authors have been omitted by monetary considerations (presumably of copyright), and others "by an oversight," seems to show that he himself is not fully satisfied with the selection. In this connection it is surprising to find that less than four pages are devoted to Shakespeare, while more than seven are occupied with a sermon by Kingsley! Some of the extracts—e.g., those from Plato, Horace, Luther, Berlioz, and others—appear in their original languages, but as these are not all translated, the usefulness of the book is thus far limited as regards the general reader. In some cases it might have been difficult to get even a fairly adequate translation, but such a characteristic utterance of St. Augustine as that beginning "*Quantum flevi in hymnis et canticis tuis*" ought surely to have had an English version. These, however, are comparatively unimportant shortcomings of a book which is distinctly valuable, not only by reason of its intrinsic merits, but as a delightful companion to all who can appreciate the thoughts emanating from the minds of great men "in praise of music."

*The Song of Jubilee.* A Thanksgiving Cantata for solo voices, chorus, orchestra, and organ. By Jacob Bradford. [Novello, Ewer, and Co.]

THE composer of this work, which was performed at one of the Jubilee concerts in the Royal Albert Hall, on Saturday, the 19th ult., is unfortunately no more. He was born in London in 1842, and after being a chorister at St. Paul's, Walworth, he became organist in succession of several churches and devoted a considerable portion of his time to composition, among his works being an oratorio,