

Review

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removal of its headquarters from Brussels to the French capital. He is one of the best informed of Belgian writers on subjects connected with musical art, more especially in that most modern phase of it which is represented by Richard Wagner. The present volume has every appearance of having been written *con amore*. In it the author traces, with considerable erudition, the origin of the Holy Grail mystery, and its literary treatment and successive transformations of the legend in the "Saint Greal" of Robiers de Borron, the "Percival" of Chrétien de Troies, and the "Parzival" of Wolfram von Eschinbach. In the light of these, its mediæval predecessors, the author then proceeds to examine at some length the characteristics of Wagner's drama as such—*i.e.*, apart from its musical treatment. His review of the latter is reserved to a final chapter, which contains a very able analysis of the score of the work, and of its intricate mechanism of leading or representative themes, through the maze of which he conducts his readers with the ease of one who has mastered its complicated ramifications. The following translation of a passage, taken at random from the volume, may suffice to sum up the author's standpoint in regard to Wagner's last music-drama: "Profoundly touching, by dint of the emotions it stirs within us; dramatic in the highest sense through the mighty conflict of passions it represents; intensely human in the grand philosophical idea it embodies: 'Parsifal' is distinctly a creation of Beauty—beautiful in its poetic conception, beautiful in its form, and in the moral elevation of its artistic atmosphere." Intending visitors to the Bayreuth Festspiele cannot do better than study M. Kufferath's book. If it is somewhat exuberant now and then in its enthusiasm, it will prove none the less a most trustworthy guide to the intelligent appreciation of an undoubtedly noble and unique art-work.

*O God of Bethel.* Anthem.

*The Morning, Communion, and Evening Service.* Set to music in the key of F, by Edwin D. Lloyds.  
[Chappell and Co.]

THE composer of this Anthem and Service has favoured those simpler forms of construction which do not appeal in vain to unambitious singers. In the pursuit of this idea he occasionally lapses into conventionality, but it is creditable to him to find that he never actually drifts into the commonplace, though at times his modulations are not free from the suspicion of having, like Swiss soldiers, done duty for other leaders. The Morning Service consists of the Te Deum and Jubilate; of the Communion Service only the Kyrie, the Gloria Tibi, and Laus Tibi are set, the Credo and the Gloria, the more important portions of the Service, not being included in the publication. The Magnificat and Nunc dimittis of the Evening Service are among the most successful portions of the setting. The Anthem is composed to Doddridge's well-known hymn.

*Bayreuther Taschen-Kalender für 1891.*

[Berlin: Bote & Bock.]

THIS handy and very neatly got-up almanack contains, in addition to the requisite calendar and diary, a series of interesting and instructive articles relating chiefly to "Tannhäuser," in view of the forthcoming first performance of that work this year at the Bayreuth Festspielhaus. The "Tannhäuser" legend, its dramatic treatment by Wagner, the music, and, finally, the history of the opera since its first production in 1845 at Dresden, are here dealt with at some length; a table of the principal representative themes being appended to facilitate the appreciation of the score. That these latter have here been labelled with such extravagant designations as "Die Sündensucht," "Der bannende Blick," &c. (which we shall not attempt to translate), can however scarcely be said to be adding eloquence to the poet-composer's musical characterisation, and moreover, they are totally uncalled for in this early work of his, with its comparatively few recurring themes. The present being the centenary year of the death of Mozart, a short article devoted to that composer will also be found here. The "Taschen-Kalender" is published under the auspices of the directors of the Allgemeiner Richard Wagner Verein, and is adorned by the phototype portrait of the Prince Regent of Bavaria, the chief patron of the Festspiele.

*Webster's Dictionary.* A new edition.

[George Bell and Sons.]

THE new edition of this most remarkable work is a perfect library in itself. It contains in addition to the dictionary of words, with their pronunciation, etymology, and various meanings, illustrated by quotations and numerous woodcuts, several valuable appendices, comprising a Gazetteer of the World; Vocabularies of Scripture, Greek, Latin, and English Proper Names; a Dictionary of the noted names of Fiction; a Brief History of the English Language; a Dictionary of foreign Quotations, Words, Phrases, Proverbs; a Biographical Dictionary with 10,000 names, and other matters of value in reference. On the principal of *ne sutor ultra crepidam*, search has been made in the work for those references which are chiefly connected with music, and these have been found to be both concise and accurate. If, therefore, by one it is possible to judge of all, it must be said that the new edition of this well-known standard dictionary is among the most complete and exhaustive works of the kind now before the public.

*Original Compositions for the Organ.* Nos. 137-140.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE four numbers of this useful series of organ pieces at present calling for notice are quite up to the average in merit and general utility. No. 137 contains an *Andante Grazioso* in B flat, by Mr. P. W. Pilcher, smoothly written in the legitimate organ style and suitable for an opening voluntary. The next number consists of a very brief *Andante con moto* in F, by A. Hopkins Allen, within the means of elementary players. No. 139 is more important, consisting of an Air with Variations in A flat, by W. G. Wood. This is an extremely showy but not undignified composition, well adapted for recital or concert purposes. Mr. Wood knows how to combine musicianlike feeling with general effectiveness. The last of the present instalment consists of a second set of Six Easy Voluntaries, by Kate Loder, for the most part fresh and genial in character, if somewhat suggestive of Spohr in the numerous chromatic progressions. They will prove excellent as voluntaries or as teaching pieces for comparative beginners.

*Novello's Collection of Trios, Quartets, &c., for Female Voices.* Nos. 231 to 240. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE most recent additions to this excellent, useful, and valuable series of pieces for female voices are, "Sweet tender flower," from Stainer's "Daughter of Jairus"; Rossini's compositions, "La fede" (Faith), "La speranza" (Hope), and "La Carita" (Charity), with Italian and English words; Marie Wurm's Trios, "Oh, Spring," "Albion," "Hope," "To the March winds," "Fly not, summer hours," all of which, furnished with German and English words, are specially attractive for their melodious character and effective writing. To these may be added Mr. Barnby's fine Quartet, "Sion heard of it," from his masterly setting of the 97th Psalm, each and all of which tend to show that there is an earnest desire on the part of the publishers to provide for the growing needs of female choral societies and classes.

*Handlung und Dichtung der Bühnenwerke Richard Wagners.* By H. P. [Berlin: Trowitzsch und Sohn.]

THESE are concise and pleasantly written essays, designed to initiate the reader into the subjects of Wagner's music-dramas, and the historical or legendary lore underlying them; with useful hints as to the musical treatment thereof, and a list of the respective "leading motives" at the end of each drama. The six as yet published—*viz.*, "Tristan und Isolde," "Die Meistersinger," and the four dramas comprising the "Ring des Nibelungen," are issued separately, and recommend themselves to the generality of lay readers on account of the popular style in which they are written and the very moderate price charged for them.

*Six Violin Pieces.* (Op. 177.) By Cornelius Gurlitt.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE name of Cornelius Gurlitt is well-known as a capable writer of melodious music, well calculated to help the student in his progress towards perfection in his art. The

present set of six violin pieces, consisting of a Zigeunertanz (Gipsies' dance), a Barcarolle, a Berceuse, a Notturmo, a Polonaise, and a Romance, are ably designed to promote educational advance, as well as to furnish the means for delight to hearers and players alike. The violin part in each is gracefully and artistically written, and the pianoforte accompaniment, not overburdened with difficulties, is exceedingly helpful in augmenting the general effect. The Romance, one of the most attractive of the six pieces, is published separately.

*Symphony* (No. 4) in F major. Composed by C. Villiers Stanford (Op. 31). Pianoforte arrangement (four hands) by Charles Wood. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

DR. STANFORD'S fourth *Symphony* has commended itself to foreign as well as native critics, having been performed in Berlin in January, 1889, with marked success. It is a work which represents the genius of its gifted composer in its most mature as well as most genial form. The reduction of the score to the dimensions of a pianoforte duet has been entrusted to Mr. Charles Wood, who has already won his spurs by creative work of real merit, and he has performed his task with conspicuous loyalty to his master as well as with that scholarly thoroughness which characterises all his work.

*Sixty-one Melodies and Unfigured Basses.* By Rowland M. Winn. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

BOTH the melodies and the basses are designed with no little ingenuity, and form the means of bringing out in the student all the amount of skill of which he may be possessed. They are intended for use by those advanced in knowledge, or who may be candidates for diplomas, and although the author states that they are intended to be harmonised in four parts, they are capable of bearing a larger number, if the ability of the student is equal to the task of furnishing them.

#### FOREIGN NOTES.

AMONG the customary annual performances in Germany of sacred oratorio during Lent, one which took place in March last, at Meiningen, of Bach's "St. Matthew" Passion Music merits a brief reference in this journal on account of some special features of interest presented by it. The performance was held at the ancient Stadt-Kirche, under the direction of Herr Fritz Steinbach, the successor of Dr. Hans von Bülow in the conductorship of the Meiningen Opera, and the director also of the excellent Choral Society of the Ducal residence. The latter body, numbering some 160 voices, had in the present instance been greatly strengthened by the accession of the Gesangverein of the neighbouring Hildburghausen and of the Kirchen-Chor of Salzungen, with its noteworthy contingent of admirably trained boys' voices. The orchestra was the famous one of the Hof-Theater. With these forces under his command, the Conductor was enabled to carry out the original design of the great Leipzig Cantor in affording the congregation an opportunity of participating in the proceedings. Thus a detachment of the chorus—viz., twenty boys and seven adults—took up position in the immediate vicinity of the congregation, in order to lead the singing here of the unaccompanied chorales Nos. 16, 23, and 31 in the first, and Nos. 46, 53, and 63 in the second part, the congregation heartily joining. The effect produced by this co-operation is described as having been almost overpowering. The remaining sixty boys' voices had been stationed in the uppermost portion of the choir of the Stadt-Kirche at some little distance from the main body of the chorus. Here also the *Evangelist* was placed, in close proximity to the organ, which accompanied his recitatives. The recitatives of the *Saviour*, on the other hand, were accompanied by the string quartet, and the singer to whom they were assigned, as well as the two female soloists, were stationed at right and left of the Conductor. "The entire arrangement," says a writer in the Berlin *Allgemeine Musik Zeitung*, "proved a most excellent one, and con-

tributed not a little to the profound impression which the performance of this powerful religious drama manifestly produced upon all present. The opening double chorus 'Kommt ihr Töchter, lasst uns klagen,' with the interwoven chorale 'O Lamm Gottes,' sung in unison by the boys' voices from their elevation, admirably sustained as it was throughout in all its varied dynamic gradations, produced a stupendous effect, and gave an earnest of the altogether masterly interpretation of the entire work which was to follow." The writer concludes by paying a just tribute to the Conductor for the indefatigable zeal which he had for weeks previously displayed in the rehearsing of the work with the combined choirs; and to the latter for having, as in a recent memorable performance of "Fidelio" at the Meiningen Hof-Theater (alluded to in our last number), set aside all class distinctions otherwise existing between its different constituent elements, being united in that enthusiastic devotion to their task by which alone truly artistic results can be obtained.

"Les Folies Amoureuses," an operatic version in three acts of Regnard's celebrated comedy, the music by M. Emile Pessard, was produced at the Paris Opéra Comique on the 15th ult., as the first novelty under M. Carvalho's lately resumed management. Although the subject of the piece is almost identical with "Le Barbier de Seville," and therefore constantly recalled Rossini's famous setting thereof, the new work was completely successful, the music being described as abounding in melodiousness and effective orchestration.

M. Ernest Guiraud has been elected a member of the French Académie des Beaux Arts in the room of the late Leo Délibes. The other candidates were MM. Paladilhe, Victorien Joncières, and Emile Pessard.

M. Eugène Bertrand, the present manager of the Théâtre des Variétés, has been appointed to the management of the Paris Opéra. M. Bertrand will enter upon his management, which is for a term of seven years, in January next, when the contract of MM. Ritt and Gailhard expires. He undertakes to bring out, *inter alia*, Wagner's "Lohengrin" and "Die Meistersinger," Verdi's "Otello," and Rubinstein's "Nero"; and among French operas, Berlioz's "Prise de Troie," Reyer's "Salammbo," Massenet's "Hérodiade," and Saint-Saëns's "Samson et Dalila," the mere reference to which latter works points out the fact of the small measure of encouragement which has been afforded to native operatic composers on the whole by a national institution which is in receipt of a Government subsidy of £32,000. M. Colonne, it is understood, will be the Musical Director, but will only wield the *bâton* on special occasions.

A new Mass by M. Felix Godefroid, and called by him "Messe de la Résurrection," was performed at St. Eustache, Paris, on Easter Day, and was very highly praised.

Handel's "Judas Maccabæus" was twice performed last month at Toulouse, with a band and chorus of 400 executants. The fact deserves to be specially noticed, since the performance of Handelian Oratorio is a matter of very rare occurrence in France.

"Lohengrin" was received on March 31, at Bordeaux, with an enthusiasm which far surpassed that lately accorded to the work at other French provincial towns. M. G. Pillod, the editor of the *Journal de Bordeaux*, has just published an interesting *brochure* respecting the performance, which also contains an able analysis of the work. M. Lamoureux, who was present at the second performance here, declared his determination to shortly remount "Lohengrin" in the capital.

M. Catulle Mendès, one of the most fervent admirers of Wagner in France, has recently delivered some public discourses on the music-dramas of that master at Toulon, Bordeaux, Nice, and elsewhere, his eloquence meeting everywhere with a most sympathetic audience. The ideal aim of M. Mendès is the performance, in Paris, of "Tristan und Isolde," a dream which is probably nearer its realisation than might be supposed from present appearances.

"Figaro's Heyrath, ein Singspiel in vier Aufzügen," was the quaint announcement of the playbills at the Hamburg Stadt-Theater, April 4, 1791, when Mozart's immortal "Le Nozze" was first produced here. The centenary was suitably commemorated by Herr Pollini with a gala performance of the work in question.