

Review

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evolution of music. The exposition of the several themes herein enunciated will doubtless be interesting to those among musicians for whom philosophy does not hold out its attractions in vain. On the whole, however, the subject and its treatment will scarcely appeal with any force to practical musicians, inasmuch as the majority of the authorities quoted by Mr. Donovan are unknown to all but those who work in the side-walks of musical art. Moreover, the treatment is too deep, and the language is too subtle for ordinary minds. His views concerning Wagner attribute a power to that musician which all the world will not accept. His statements concerning the passivity of women in music are not wholly borne out by facts. Like most of the writers who know a little about music and desire to pose as æsthetical exponents, his language sometimes is involved and at times needs a commentary. The sentence "woman could have felt none of that strong impulse to listen again, whenever she happened to hear a few different tones given in accompaniment with rhythmic beats—no impulse sufficient to make her take the trouble to find more intervals," is almost as obscure as the very opening sentence of the book. The following sentence may be read over and over again with an ever-increasing astonishment at the boldness of the writer who could hope to obtain acceptance for words which involve no recognisable grammatical principles: "Few men have been whose death has done less toward softening the attitude of the opponents of his principles and methods than Richard Wagner's." This reads like a poor translation. If it is original it reads as though the tongue in which the author wrote was foreign to him.

*Divine Love.* A Church Oratorio. Composed by Charles B. Rutenber. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE plan of this work is arranged in three sections, each forming a musical division, and each serving as an index to the treatment. The parts are severally entitled "The Wisdom of Creation," "The Grace of Redemption," and "The Glory of Heaven." There are twelve musical numbers altogether, the chorus having a large share of the work. There is a short instrumental introduction, followed by a chorus for male voices, "In the beginning," very effectively written. This leads to a second chorus for the whole choir, "O Lord, how manifold." A finely designed bass solo, "Before the mountains," follows, and is in turn succeeded by a solo for soprano, with a chorus, "Worship Him." This concludes the first part. The second opens with a chorus for female voices, "Thou art of purer eyes," to which succeeds a tenor solo, "The Lord looked down," which is followed by a contralto solo, with chorus for male voices, "They are all gone aside," and then soprano and bass solos, each with chorus. The third part, "The glory of heaven," begins with a solo tenor, duet and chorus, and an elegantly written unaccompanied quartet precedes the final chorus, "Glory be to the Father," a bold, massive, and effective composition. So far as the musical design is concerned, there is nothing which is not according to the ordinary character of works of the class to which it belongs. The division into separate parts, each having reference to some point of doctrine in the Christian Church, makes it particularly suitable as an accompaniment to a religious service, where the principles may serve as themes for special verbal exposition. As a musical production it will doubtless be received with favour wherever it is known. The ideas are earnestly set forward, the vocal parts are thoroughly singable, and quite within the means of choirs accustomed to sing together. There is earnestness of purpose in every line of the music. The elaborate accompaniments point to orchestral effects, and in the arrangement of these portions the composer has sought to gain more varied colour even than that which is attempted in the writing for the voices. The general style of the music is more in conformity with the designs left by Mendelssohn and Spohr than in any more modern writer; but there is enough of the individuality of the composer to command attention for this, or for any future work he may produce.

*Gleanings from Old St. Paul's.* By W. Sparrow Simpson, D.D., F.S.A. [Eliot Stock.]

DR. SIMPSON writes about St. Paul's Cathedral like one with whom familiarity has augmented respect, and even affection for his subject. The consequence is that his book

is as fascinating as a novel and as trustworthy as honesty itself. It would be quite possible to write a long and elaborate essay upon the several chapters of the book, which tell of the College of twelve minor canons, of the library of which the author is the present custodian; the tonsure plate in use in St. Paul's Cathedral during the thirteenth century, the stained-glass windows, a verger's note-book of the seventeenth century, plays acted by the children of the choir, some early drawings of old St. Paul's, the western part of the churchyard, lotteries, executions, music in the Cathedral, to which subject four chapters are devoted; and mention is made of the organ, the anthem, the choir, cantus organicus, cultivation of music, musical pressgangs, musicians, Redford to Barnard, from the Interregnum to Brind, Charles King to the present time, and a variety of miscellanies. The musical references are of course those to which our readers would naturally turn, and in the pages set apart for notices of these matters connected with the Cathedral, there is a quantity of the most interesting records of the organists and other musicians, whose lives and labours have shed lustre upon the establishment as well as upon musical art. The geniality of the style of the author carries the reader in willing captivity throughout, and though there is little that is new to be said concerning the musical worthies associated with the Cathedral, there is much that is novel in the manner in which their labours are related. Quotation might excite a desire to read the book, but it would also create an injustice to the author. All who are interested in the history and life of our ancient Cathedral churches, and their associates in general, and of St. Paul's in particular, must read for themselves, and so extend their knowledge, satisfy their interest, and complete their education on the subject.

*The Star in the East.* An Oratorio. Composed by Frank J. Sawyer, Mus. Doc., Oxon.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

IN a note by way of preface the composer states that "many of the numbers of the earlier scenes appeared in a previous work, 'St. Mary.' Instead of re-issuing the latter, it has been thought advisable to re-model the work." Whatever may have been the peculiarities of the former Oratorio, the present is compact and interesting as it stands. It is arranged in four scenes—namely, "The Annunciation," "At St. Elizabeth's home," "The Nativity," and "The Epiphany." The whole consists of sixteen numbers, made up of solos for soprano, contralto, and tenor, and some choruses. It is impossible for those who read the book to banish from the mind entirely all thoughts of Handel's "Messiah" or Mendelssohn's "Christus," the plan of the composer (who has compiled and furnished his own libretto) running parallel with certain portions of both works. There is however no resemblance in the music, which is bold, expressive, and as far as possible original. The solos display a commendable feeling for melody, the accompaniments are picturesque, and the choruses are vigorously designed and wrought out. For an oratorio it is short, but the manner in which the interest is connected and sustained should make it popular with choral societies and useful for church purposes, especially at the seasons of Christmas and of the Epiphany.

*Jesus, now will we Praise Thee.* Cantata by John Sebastian Bach. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

BACH's sacred Cantata for New Year's Day ("Jesu, nun sei gepreiset"), arranged to English words by the Rev. Dr. Troutbeck, will be heartily welcomed by all lovers of the music of the great Leipzig Cantor. It is replete with characteristic work, the ingenuity of the construction of which will not fail to excite the admiration of the student, while, at the same time, he will scarcely fail to be attracted by the charm which surrounds the whole design. The opening chorus is a beautiful, elaborate, and multiple counterpoint upon the choral which, treated in simple harmonies, forms the concluding chorus. This opening chorus, the most lengthy and complicated number in the Cantata, is followed by a beautiful and expressive solo for soprano, "O grant us, mighty Lord"; then after a quasi-recitative of the pattern familiar to those acquainted with the St. Matthew "Passions-Musik," is an elegant and tuneful aria for tenor of the Italian pattern. This is