

Review

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*Gavotte* (Festive). By Alfred B. Allen.

THIS piece was composed for and performed at Mr. Kuhe's Brighton Festival during the present year. We should imagine that, being originally intended for an orchestral work, its effects are much enfeebled in the pianoforte transcription before us; but the theme is melodious, although we cannot say that the "Trio" is much to our mind, the three consecutive fifths between the inner part and bass, in the 8th bar, being, to us, particularly disagreeable. By the way, we cannot understand why the diminished 7th on G $\sharp$  should be written as a  $\sharp$  6-5 when it resolves to a 6-4 on the dominant. Surely the root is the same whether it resolve to a 7th or a 6-4, and varying notation like this is very apt to perplex a performer. Should Mr. Allen doubt how this chord ought to be written, let him refer to Beethoven's Sonata in E flat (Op. 31, No. 3), where in the 5th bar of the first movement, he would be rather surprised, we think, to find F $\sharp$  instead of G $\flat$ .

*The Silent Land.* Part-song for unaccompanied Choral Singing. The words from Longfellow's "Hyperion." Composed by Alfred R. Gaul.

WE are particularly pleased with Mr. Gaul's part-song. There is a delicacy of treatment in the setting of the words throughout which convinces us that the composer has thoroughly studied his subject before committing his thoughts to paper. The composition is replete with melody, and some phrases are of remarkable beauty, as one instance of which we may cite that ending at the first double bar, to the words "Thither, oh thither, into the silent land." The voice-parts are written with much purity, and consequently flow so smoothly as to offer no undue difficulties to the singers. The song has been given this season by Mr. Henry Leslie's choir; and we also find that it has been sung by the Birmingham Festival Choral Society.

*The Sun in golden splendour.* Four-part Song. Words by H. C. Harrison. Composed by Henry Grimshaw.

WE can scarcely wonder that this song rises not beyond the level of respectable common-place, for the poetry is just of that sort, headed "words for music," to be found in the old magazines especially addressed to the "fair sex." Such an incongruous mixture of well-worn materials we have not met for some time; and for the life of us we cannot make out what the "cloister'd Nuns" have to do with the matter, save to sing "Ora pro nobis, Sancta Maria," at the end of each verse. In justice to the composer, however, we must say that the voice-parts are most carefully written, and the harmonies unexceptionable throughout. Mr. Grimshaw may do better when he works with a more sympathetic partner.

## CLARENDON PRESS.

*A Treatise on Musical Form and General Composition.* By the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, Bart., M.A., Mus. Doc.

As professor of Music at the University of Oxford, we presume that the author of this Treatise is anxious to record his convictions on every point connected with the science, in order that students who present themselves for examination may be previously acquainted with the musical faith of their master. Whether this is an unmixed benefit we will not now stop to enquire, but there can be no doubt that the thoughtful and carefully-written works which have preceded the one before us must inspire the utmost respect for an artist who might, if he pleased, hold his official position in dignified silence. There is evil as well as good in the dissemination of a well-considered book on "Form and General Composition in Music," for, as a rule, persons who have, what is termed a "turn" for composing, are so surrounded by flatterers, and have so little power of judging themselves, that when they have thoroughly laid hold of the principles of "form," as given by such an authority as the Oxford Professor, they are too apt to believe that by mere industry and perseverance they can accomplish all that is necessary to produce works

which shall enlist the attention of the world. On this point, indeed, the author of this book appears to think with us, for he says "it may well be doubted whether the composition of new melodies, worthy of the name, can be acquired by rules or definitions at all;" but as later on he declares "there is reason to believe that the power of originating good melodies is latent in many persons who are ignorant of their own faculties, and have, therefore, never cultivated them," it is obvious that he thinks the rules given in his book will develop this latent faculty, and that *poetry*, in fact, can be drawn forth by teaching a man the measure and form of verses. With an expression of our dissent from this view of the subject, we close any objection which a careful perusal of the Treatise has called up, and passing from the "abuse" to the "use" of the work, give our hearty assent to most of the rules it contains. The little melody, in C major, which is analysed in periods, phrases, and strains, and harmonised in various ways, is extremely well suited for the purpose, and the explanations are most lucidly written. The examples, selected from the works of well-known composers, are very good as illustrations of regular and irregular forms of melody, and the Sonata, composed for the purpose by the author, in imitation, as he states, "of the regular Mozartean epoch," is better than all the letterpress descriptions that can be given of this class of composition. As a help for students who have natural creative genius, the Treatise will be found most valuable; but it will not make composers of those who have waited for such a work to arouse their dormant musical faculties.

## AUGENER AND CO.

*We return no more.* Song. Words by Mrs. Hemans. Music by H. L. M.

As we may charitably suppose the composer of this song to be an amateur, we cannot conceive why he should court criticism outside the circle of his admirers by sending the composition for review. The ignorance of the commonest rules displayed in almost every bar of this effusion may be accepted as a proof that the author has not even studied enough to be doubtful of his powers; and we advise him therefore, before venturing again into print, to take counsel with those who know better than himself as to the advisability of endeavouring to gain that "little knowledge" which may convince him of his "danger." In justice to the publisher, we must not omit to mention that the song is "Author's property."

## J. B. CRAMER AND CO.

*Strive, wait, and pray.* Song. Words by Adelaide Procter.

*Sea Swallows.* Song. Words by George March.

*Hush? The Murmur of the River.* Song. Words by Russell Gray.

*True for ever.* Song. Written by the Lady John Manners.

Composed by Virginia Gabriel.

PRESUMING it necessary that songs made up of the commonest materials must, for commercial purposes, be written, it is good, at least, that they should be as inoffensive as those before us; for whatever may be said of their artistic value, we have not to arraign the composer for any glaring violation of grammatical rules. The first on our list is, we think, the least attractive, the dragging crotchets in the accompaniment at the commencement imparting a heaviness to the melody scarcely in sympathy with the character to the words. "Sea Swallows" is much better, the simple theme, in F minor, contrasting well with the more impassioned phrases which follow; although the conventional burst in the tonic major, with the triplet accompaniment, is perhaps somewhat losing its effect, by such constant repetition, even with a drawing-room audience. We have copied the note of interrogation after the word "Hush" on the title-page of the third song, although we have not the faintest idea what it means. The soft triplets running throughout

this composition in the accompaniment give some little interest to the melody; but the disguise is too thin to deceive any but those for whom the music is manufactured. "True for ever" is, to our mind, the most genuine ballad of the four; for, if we except a somewhat abrupt modulation from C to E flat, and back again, in the space of four bars, both melody and accompaniment flow smoothly and agreeably throughout. Certainly, little is attempted, but that little is well done.

CHARLES E. HUTCHINS, MEDFORD, MASS., U.S.

*The Sunday School Hymnal and Service Book.* Edited by the Rev. CHARLES E. HUTCHINS.

THOUGH there exists an extensive literature of hymns for children, there are, we believe, but few collections in which provision is made for music as well as for words. One has been compiled, if we are not mistaken, by Mr. Curwen, who, by his Tonic Sol-fa movement, has done so much to popularise music among the young; and last year a Children's Service Book, containing many excellent features, was published by the Rev. H. Martyn Hart. The present volume is of interest, as showing what is done across the Atlantic for a similar object.

In a note accompanying the volume, its editor, with a modesty by no means too common, says, "I do not venture to think that it has merit enough to entitle it to any notice in your valuable paper." We are very happy to be able to disagree with him. The book is a really commendable effort to enlist the sympathies of children in divine service. Its contents are very varied. We have first a form of prayer for opening and closing school; then a short choral service for morning and evening prayer, the words of which are taken, with some slight modifications, from our Book of Common Prayer, the music being Tallis's. We next find the Litany and two or three Offertory Sentences with music. Then come the Canticles, &c.—the Venite, Gloria in Excelsis, Te Deum, Benedicite, Jubilate, Benedictus (abridged), Magnificat, and others. Some of these which are directed to be sung as Canticles are not so used in our English Service, *e.g.*, Psalms 92 and 103, both of which, however, appear in a considerably shortened form. After this is given a selection of Psalms with Chants, occupying in all some twenty-four pages. The music is all familiar to us in this country, being by well-known Cathedral writers, and the pointing of the Chants is clear and good. After a nearly, if not quite, complete collection of the Collects from the Book of Common Prayer, we reach the Hymns and Tunes. Of these there are 174; and the volume is completed by the addition of 42 Carols for various Church Festivals.

It will be seen from this summary that the work before us is very complete. With the selection of the Hymns, &c., we are of course less immediately concerned than with the musical portion of the book; but it may be said in passing, that the editor appears to have exercised very good taste in choosing not only such hymns as are suitable for the young, but also such as are of acknowledged excellence, and in many cases of considerable poetical merit. From a musical point of view also, the Sunday School Hymnal is on the whole very satisfactory. Many of the best tunes from our modern collections are to be found in it, and sufficient care has been taken to select such as are of a melodious character, and likely to be popular with children. Only in a few cases, which it is needless to particularise, are we disposed to take exception to any of the music admitted. One or two trifling slips (probably oversights) in the harmony have caught our eye as we examined the book; but these are so few that we can on the whole recommend the arrangement no less than the selection. From the fact of the copy before us bearing on its title the words "twentieth thousand," it is evident that the book has had a large sale in the United States. We may add that it deserves it.

## ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

### DR. STAINER'S "HARMONY."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

DEAR SIR,—In your March number, in answer to an inquiry, an explanation of a chord in Gounod's "Faust" is given. Two selections of this dark problem are offered, Richter's system being doubtless preferable by its simplicity, but I would, with due deference both to Stainer and Richter, attempt a yet more simple explanation. In these days of Teutonic *furor* it may seem like heresy in music to offer the Italian system of Counterpoint as an expositor of knotty questions in dispute, yet, in this instance, it offers us a helping hand to get out of this apparent slough of despond. The chord in question



cannot be considered as a *legatura di nono* (suspension of the ninth), because *that* would require preparation as well as resolution. The Do sharp need give no trouble, for it is simply an augmented fifth and has no influence on the character of the chord whatever. What is the chord then, you ask? The Sol is an *appoggiatura* having no value or consideration in harmony; the Do sharp is an augmented fifth to be treated in harmony as if Do natural; the Mi flat is the minor seventh to the dominant Fa which ascends to a tonic Si flat. Thus it is nothing more than a *cadenza semplice*, and the only wonder is that it should have created such a pother with any educated musician. This explanation is made according to that system which was studied and practised by Leo and Durante, Sarti and Tomaso Trajetta, the two Scarlattis and the two Guglielmis, Pergolesi and Cimarosa, Cherubini and Mercadante, Feneroli and his pupil Phil. Trajetta, my beloved master.

Truly yours,

ALBERT G. EMERICK.

Philadelphia, March 21, 1876.

### ALOYS HENNES'S "NEW METHOD FOR THE PIANO."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—In justice to myself and to "Hennes's System of teaching music," I trust you will insert the following lines in your largely circulating and valuable paper. Your reviewer alludes to "some error in my translation here and there," and as a proof of his assertions he quotes the following sentence, the meaning of which he asks to know:—"Pieces (written) in E, B, F#, A#, D# sharp and G# sharp must be introduced in the materials for instruction (Unterrichts material, French: morceaux d'étude) just as frequently as those in C, G, D, A, F, B and E# sharp." Every English musician will agree with me that this means simply: pieces with 4, 5, 6 sharps or flats must be practised by the beginner with the same facility as such in C, or with only 1, 2, or 3 sharps or flats. Perhaps such kind of pieces your reviewer, with that of the "Choir," may find "*particularly interesting*." What might your diffident critic have said if he had seen another not less formidable list of the most celebrated *English* musical authorities, such as F. E. Gladstone, Turle, Dr. Spark, Dr. Garrett, Fred. Archer, Esquire, Sir Fred. Gore Ouseley, Sir Robt. Stewart, Sir Julius Benedict, and many more; as well as of the English Press, headed by our excellent *Concordia* and the severe *Figaro*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Standard*, *Court Journal*, *Public Opinion*, *Illustrated London News*, *The Queen Newspaper*, who all find Hennes's Method attractive and adapted for the purpose. And why, I may ask, have musical authorities like Carl Reinecke, M. M. Gevaert, Samuel J. Grégoire, and F. E. Gladstone, Esq., adopted