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Missa Cœlestis by Arthur Henry Brown

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Juvenile Album. Eight Characteristic Pieces (four hands). (Novello, Ewer and Co.'s Pianoforte Albums, No. 26.) By Berthold Tours.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

IN this addition to the Pianoforte Albums the firm produces a new edition of a clever and valuable work. There are eight characteristic pieces for four hands, the primo part being generally within the compass of five notes. Each is distinguished by a personal name, such as Hector, Grace, &c., as though it was intended to typify some child-like character indicated by the title. By these means a considerable amount of variety is obtained, while the object of education is kept steadily in view. Little hands may perform the upper part, while more experienced fingers are required for the accompanying harmonies. These are set forth with the greatest possible artistic skill and musicianly feeling, so that the duets will serve a higher purpose than that of utilising the limited powers of young players. They will literally educate; that is to say, will lead out the minds of the pupils and develop the taste for the enjoyment of more ambitious efforts. In this respect they are worthy of the highest commendation.

Twelve Single Chants, &c. By Robert Brown-Borthwick.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE composition of an effective single chant, simple as it may appear because of its limits, is by no means an easy thing. So many have been written by many musicians, that it is difficult to find a sufficiently new succession of notes to form an original melody, without exceeding the needful compass which should confine it. In this respect the composer of these chants may be congratulated upon his success. The chants are good, capitally harmonised, and quite within the range of ordinary capacities. The double chant written for Psalms xiii. and xxxviii. is very pleasing, but the treble part exceeds the bounds of an octave, which many count a fault in this form of church melody. A chant for the Benedicite, and the Dresden Amen, with two Responsive Amens, in which the original melody has been inverted and variously harmonised, are likewise cleverly and effectively done.

Espérance. Réverie Caprice. Impromptu Hongrois. Marche Arabe. Pour Piano, par Polydore de Vos.
[Edwin Ashdown.]

ALTHOUGH all these pieces show much freedom in writing, and a thorough knowledge of what may be termed "drawing-room" effects on the pianoforte, they are by no means equal in merit. "Espérance," though based upon an attractive theme, is both conventional and monotonous. The "Impromptu Hongrois" is very much better, and indeed may be made effective by a good player; but the "Marche Arabe" is the best of all. Here we have decided character; and if the key—E flat minor—do not prove a barrier to its general acceptance, it should become extremely popular, especially as it is by no means difficult of execution.

Missa Cælestis. By Arthur Henry Brown.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE title of this work suggests the idea that it is a setting of the Roman Catholic Mass, but such is not the case. It is merely an extremely simple Communion Service with the traditional intonations for the Sursum Corda, the prefaces for festivals, &c. Mr. A. H. Brown has produced a quantity of music specially adapted for churches where high ritual prevails, and we have no doubt the present service will meet the needs of many places where elaborate music is neither possible nor desirable, his original portions being as little ornate as can well be imagined.

Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in D. By Alfred J. Dye.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THOUGH there is nothing remarkably original in this setting of the Evening Canticles, it is a good scholarly piece of work in the orthodox English Church style. There are no solos, and the writing, both for voices and accompaniments, is studiously simple. The most effective portion is the Nunc dimittis.

Te Deum and Jubilate in C. By Henry Cohen.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE title page informs us that this service was written for Jubilee celebrations, and it is dedicated to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It is rather a curious setting, being partly in simple four-part harmony, partly in melodic unisonal phrases, and partly in recitation or monotone. The mixture of style extends to the accompaniment, which, for the most part severely simple, occasionally takes the form of ornamental arpeggios. These matters, however, need not be regarded as defects, and, on the whole, Mr. Cohen's service is certainly effective and by no means difficult.

A Message to Phyllis. Glee for four voices. By Gerard F. Cobb. (Op. 12.) [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

TO this glee was awarded a prize offered by the South London Musical Club. Mr. Cobb's compositions are always musicianly, and he has set Thomas Heywood's quaint lines in a very appropriate manner, the voice parts abounding in old-fashioned figures of imitation, while the accompaniment is, for the most part, independent, and in the peroration it greatly aids the effect. Glee societies will be glad to make the acquaintance of this excellent example of a school of music more distinctly English than any other.

Lead Thou me on. Sacred Song. Written by Cardinal Newman.

The Carver. Song. Words by Frederic E. Weatherly. Composed by Theodore W. Barth. [Weekes and Co.]

MR. BARTH has an evident feeling for sacred music, his first song, although extremely unpretentious, being in excellent sympathy with the verses. "The Carver" has a bold and characteristic subject in D minor, to which the theme, in the relative major, forms a good contrast; but we question whether the music happily expresses the kneeling "in silent prayer" which afterwards nerves the sculptor to his work. The song has, however, many good points.

Jerusalem, my Happy Home. Hymn. Set to music by James A. Moonie. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS is a setting of the old popular hymn, which brings it within the range of the anthem or cantata. A short introduction, quasi-recitative, for a soprano voice, to words selected from the Bible version of the 84th Psalm, precedes the music to the hymn, which is set in four-part harmony with an accompaniment. The music is good and expressive, and may be used at either public or private devotions.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem. By the Rev. E. V. Hall. (Octavo Anthems, No. 316.) [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS is a seasonable anthem, being intended primarily for Harvest Thanksgivings, though it is equally suitable for general use. The composer, who is Precentor of Worcester Cathedral, writes in a solid, straightforward manner, avoiding difficulties of every kind. The most pleasing section is a solo for tenor or soprano. The whole concludes with the Old Hundredth Doxology.

Awake, put on Thy strength. By James Loaring.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS little anthem is specially suitable to the Advent season, which will soon be with us once more. The composer knows the art of gaining effects by simple means, his music being as pleasing and melodious as it is unpretentious. The anthem may be recommended to the notice of choirmasters whose forces are of modest capabilities.

Morning Service in the Key of D for Four Voices. By Henry J. B. Dart. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE composer has aimed at simplicity in the setting of the Te Deum and Jubilate, and by not introducing effects which may be inconsistent with his object has produced a setting which is not deficient in dignified reverence. Church choirs of unambitious tendencies will be glad to add this Service to their *répertoires*.