

Review

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## ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER APPOINTMENTS.

- Mr. William J. Comley, organist and choirmaster of St. Margaret's (the Parish Church), King's Lynn.  
 Mr. Alexander Hendry, organist and choirmaster, West Church of St. Nicholas, Aberdeen.  
 Mr. Leonard Salisbury, choirmaster of St. Michael and All Angels, Stoke Newington Common.  
 Mr. Oswald Sneade-Carling, organist of St. James's Church, Bermondsey.  
 Mr. John Stubbs, organist and choirmaster, Adlington Parish Church.

## Reviews.

*Forty years of song.* By Emma Albani.

[Mills & Boon, Ltd.]

The termination of Madame Albani's long and honourable career has been fittingly marked by the occurrence of a great benefit concert at the Albert Hall and by the issue of this book. 'Forty years of song' is the record of continuous brilliant success in almost every country of the world where music obtains a hearing. It teaches some useful lessons. The aspirant to vocal fame should note that although the great gifts of Miss Emma Lajeunesse, as Madame Albani was christened, were recognised and appreciated from her early youth, she nevertheless did not shrink from a long and assiduous course of study. The second lesson which emerges frequently from Madame Albani's account of her travels and acquaintances, is that of charity and kindness towards artistic rivals. It cannot be said that Madame Albani extracts from her career much that is of historical or general interest; her reminiscences have a tendency to descend towards 'small talk.' But they occasionally introduce a good story and an instructive little side-light on affairs. She dwells with pardonable fondness upon her extensive acquaintance with royalty, extending from Queen Victoria to the King of the Sandwich Islands. The great honours and the great triumphs of her life are, however, described with exemplary modest directness and often ingenuousness of diction. As a book-compiler Madame Albani is unfortunate in having no misfortunes or vicissitudes to describe as a contrast to her successes. She stepped immediately into her place in the firmament and never came behind a cloud. The volume is illustrated by portraits of the author and her distinguished acquaintances, and some facsimile autographs.

*O harken Thou.* Anthem composed by Edward Elgar.

*The Te Deum and Jubilate.* Set to music for men's voices in the key of E major. By Charles Macpherson.

*Communion Service for Men's Voices.* Set to music in the key of F. By R. W. Robson.

*Hail! Festal Day (Salve! Festa Dies!).* Composed by the Rev. James Baden Powell.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Sir Edward Elgar's Offertorium was a very important feature at the Coronation Service in June last and, by the addition of a second verse, the work is most suitable as an anthem for general use. Any difficulties in the vocal parts soon disappear, while the accompaniment may be made exceedingly effective by a cultured organist upon an instrument of ordinary resources.

Mr. Macpherson's music is always original, and distinguished by strong rhythmic device, while his unerring instinct in the matters of harmonic progression and treatment of his organ part invest whatever he does with unusual interest. He rightly employs three voices in this setting, thereby gaining a more accurate balance than could be obtained by dividing the tenors. Music for men's voices, when intended for church or cathedral settings, is always difficult to write; but Mr. Macpherson has most successfully striven for variety, and we doubt not that, given a competent choir and organist, his service will prove most effective.

Mr. Robson's service should be useful for its straightforward character and interesting organ part, and also for the reason that few settings of the service have yet been written. We prefer three to four voices, in view of the fact that in most

cathedrals the number of voices is limited, necessitating the division of the tenors of both sides of the choir. Larger compass for each of the three parts is also secured, ensuring greater interest for the singers, which is no small matter.

The old English Processional Proses for the Feasts of Easter, Ascension, Whitsun, and Dedication, also for 'Corpus Christi,' and a new Prose for Christmas, with 'Lift High the Cross' (to melodies of the Dedication 'Salve'), form the contents of Mr. Baden Powell's volume. His music to 'Hail, Festal Day' has been in constant use for very many years, and the additions now published will no doubt become as widely popular. In view of the approaching Festival of Christmas, the processional music to the fine words written by the Rev. Arthur J. Morris will be very welcome.

*Come, winds of God.* Unaccompanied hymn. Composed by M. L. Wostenholme.

[E. Donajowski.]

The words of this hymn are by the Rev. Henry Burton, and their undoubted beauty has inspired the composer in his setting of them to an unusual degree. The part-writing is excellent, and we only regret the occasional high note in the alto part, which might give trouble to falsetto voices. With this difficulty overcome, the hymn (or anthem, as we should prefer to call it), should command the attention of many choirs.

*Theorie der pneumatischen Orgel-Traktur und die Stellung des Spieltisches (Theory of the pneumatic Organ action and the position of the Console).* By J. Biehle.

[Breitkopf & Härtel.]

It is not often that church acoustics are made the subject of scientific research. We all know what deplorable results in the building of churches and the construction of organs are caused by the want of a thorough mastery of this all-important but also much neglected subject. All the more credit is due to the author of the above pamphlet for having made church acoustics the subject of a life-long study, to which he has devoted much time, labour and industry, the results of which he has made known in several German publications. His name, moreover, is not quite unknown in England, since at the recent International Congress of Musicians in London, he delivered an address on the Theory of Church Architecture, which was received with general approval.

In the above quoted pamphlet of some forty pages he deals with the question from the standpoint of the organ builder and organ player. He maintains that the introduction of pneumatic action in the construction of modern organs has a perfectly new bearing on tone-production and tone transmission greatly differing from the old system. We fully agree with the author, and have no doubt that the results of his scientific research will be of the utmost value to all concerned. We only regret that the German pamphlet is not published in English as well, and so ensure it a wider circulation.

The pianoforte works reviewed in our last issue, p. 656, are published by Messrs. Elkin.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

*How to acquire ease of voice-production.* By Charles Tree. Pp. 61. Price 3s. 6d. (London: Joseph Williams. New York: The Boston Music Co.)

*Pianoforte playing.* By Charles F. Reddie. Pp. xi. + 113. Price 3s. (London: Joseph Williams.)

*Constructive harmony; together with a book on Form.* By T. H. Yorke Trotter. Part I., Diatonic harmony and elementary construction. Pp. 86. Price 2s. (London: Bosworth & Co.)

*Ear-training and sight-singing gradus. (The Rhythmic method.)* Grade I. By T. H. Yorke Trotter. With exercises for use with the 'Rhythmic gradus' and 'Constructive harmony' by the same author. Pp. 11. Price 9d. (London: Bosworth & Co.)

*Two hundred opera plots.* By Gladys Davidson. With sixteen illustrations. Two volumes. Pp. xx. + 451. Price each volume, 3s. 6d. (London: T. Werner Laurie.)