

Review

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by time. The fervent expression of the words, the beautiful figure which runs through the accompaniment, and the artistic manner in which the *obbligato* part—almost equally well suited for any of the instruments named—is woven in with the voice, lift the composition so far above the songs of the day as to secure its admission into the classical concert-room, where artists to execute it, and audiences to appreciate it, will most surely be found. We shall indeed be glad to welcome any number of such compositions as “Annette” from the pen of Mr. Lloyd.

*Service of the Holy Communion, for first and second soprano voices.* By the Rev. J. Baden Powell. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

ACCORDING to a note this service was written for week-day celebrations at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, when the tenors and basses are not available; and it is very reasonably suggested that it may be useful for other choirs similarly situated, and also for sisterhoods and schools. The good qualities to which we have drawn attention in previous notices of church compositions by Mr. Baden Powell, are even more prominent in this service. Its general character is bright and cheerful, and though the composer employs the traditional intonations for the Gloria and Credo, his style is modern and melodious. Very little, if any, trace of amateurishness may be discovered, and to sum up we fancy the service will supply a distinct want, and that in a highly acceptable way.

*Scène de Ballet; The Gipsies.* Composed by H. M. Higgs. [Metzler and Co.]

THESE three pieces, although evidently written for the orchestra, will be most acceptable to pianists who can fully enter into the dramatic feeling they demand. No. 1, Allegro, in E minor and major, has many interesting points, the dreamy opening, the two bars of 5-4 time, and the burst in the tonic major, being not only extremely effective, but free from that affectation of profundity which disfigures so much modern music of this class. No. 2, Moderato, has a restless Introduction, which eventually settles down in the key of G major, with a melodious theme, accompanied by a running semiquaver bass; and No. 3 is a tuneful and extremely graceful Waltz. All these movements are sufficiently well contrasted to sustain the attention of an audience; and we can well imagine that at the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts, where this “Scène” was performed, the exceptional merit of the composition must have been fully recognised.

*Lullaby. Welcome.* For the Pianoforte. By G. A. Macfarren. [Edwin Ashdown.]

THESE two pieces, forming Nos. 4 and 5 of Six Romances, cannot be too strongly recommended, both as highly finished Sketches by an artist who has sufficiently proved his power in works of greater importance, and as valuable Exercises for students. “Lullaby” is a tranquil melody for the upper part of the right hand, with a sympathetic flowing semiquaver accompaniment, played chiefly with the lower part of the same hand, the punctuation throughout being so distinctly marked as to admit of no doubt of the composer's intention. In “Welcome” the theme is given to the right hand, the thumb only occasionally touching a single note of the left hand *arpeggio* accompaniment. As companion pieces these charming trifles will doubtless be often played by those who have sufficiently trained mind and fingers to do them the justice they merit. The due rendering of the several parts in both these pieces will be much facilitated by careful attention to the fingering of Mr. Walter Macfarren.

*The Altar Hymnal.* With music compiled and arranged by A. H. Brown. [Griffith, Farran and Co.]

ACCORDING to the title this is “a book of song for use at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist,” and a glance at the general preface by the Rev. T. T. Carter shows that it is intended for places where full ritual prevails. Such terms as “Proper of the Seasons,” “Sequences,” “Post-consecration,” and “Ablutions” are scarcely familiar to the majority of churchmen. Obviously criticism in this place has only to do with the music of the work, which

seems well selected for its special purpose. Two tunes are given to every one of the 180 hymns, one plain song and the other modern—we may add, very modern—abounding in dotted notes and quavers, and generally somewhat sensuous in character.

*Awake, O Happy Nation!* National song and chorus. Composed in commemoration of Her Majesty's Jubilee, 1887. Words by Henry Rose. Music by J. Munro Coward. [Metzler and Co.]

OCCASIONAL songs, especially designed for popular use, scarcely appeal to coldly critical judgment; but we may say that Mr. Coward's contribution to the national rejoicing is in every respect admirably suited for singing in large gatherings; and as it may be performed in public “without fee or licence,” there can be little doubt of its extensive appreciation. The band parts are published, and it is also arranged as a four-part song, or anthem, both in the Tonic Sol-fa and the Old Notation.

*The Congregational Psalmist Hymnal.*

[Hodder and Stoughton.]

APPARENTLY the making of hymn books has no end, for scarcely a month passes without our attention being called to one or more examples, designed of course to meet some alleged want not hitherto supplied. The present, however, is only an enlarged edition of a work first published as far back as 1858 for use in Nonconformist places of worship. The new edition may claim to be the largest collection that has yet appeared, as it contains no fewer than 921 hymns with tunes. The former are edited by Dr. Allon, and the latter have been revised by Dr. W. H. Monk. It is noteworthy that while the Established Church has lately concerned itself far more than formerly with congregational singing, Dissent has at the same time busied itself with levelling up, and there is really very little in the present book to distinguish it from a church hymnal. All the most popular lyrics by modern writers are included, and as with the words, so with the music. The florid abominations which were once heard alike in church and chapel are conspicuous by their absence, and we wish the editor had also sternly excluded all adaptations from secular works, though happily these are few in number.

*Grand March for the Organ.* By F. Robinson. [Wood and Co.]

WHAT constitutes the difference between a grand march and an ordinary march we do not profess to know. However, waiving its ambitious title, Mr. Robinson's composition has some good points, though it is defaced by certain crudities. One of these occurs in the principal theme, where the dominant thirteenth in F minor is followed by the triad of B flat minor with harsh effect. The brief middle section, or trio, is the best part of the March, and, speaking generally, Mr. Robinson shows ability, though at present it is somewhat in the rough.

*In After Years.* Song. Words by Churchill Sibley.

*Two Hearts.* Song. Words by Churchill Sibley.

*The Gondolier.* Song. Words by Madeleine L. E. W. Composed by Churchill Sibley. [Ambrose and Co.]

THE first of these songs has a flowing melody, vocal, and well adapted to the words, but the thin accompaniment, with the voice throughout, becomes wearisome. “Two Hearts” preserves the same character in the pianoforte part, the harmony however, and the change of time somewhat redeeming the conventional style of the composition. We like “The Gondolier” better than its companions, although it is evident that the composer has an objection to making the pianoforte do much more than support the voice. The change to the tonic minor is effective and gives a freshness to the principal theme on its return. “Gondolier” songs, however, with the inevitable Requiem from the “holy voices” of the singers at a convent, are so terribly overdone that we shall be glad to welcome composers in something that will awaken a new train of ideas, and as Mr. Sibley has sufficiently shown by these songs that he might prove successful if he were to turn a little from the beaten track, why should he not make the attempt?