

Review

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impassioned scenes are rendered into English; for in all cases, not only is the original meaning well preserved, but the words are so carefully fitted to the notes that any artist accustomed even to the Italian version could very readily sing from this translated copy. The paper, printing and general arrangement of this Opera are in every respect fully equal to the high standard originally contemplated and so successfully adhered to in these editions.

*May-day.* A Cantata for Soprano Solo, Chorus and Orchestra. Written by John Oxenford. Composed by G. A. Macfarren.

CHORAL societies will be glad to hear that this melodious and thoroughly English Cantata is now published in Novello's well known Octavo Edition, and at a price which will place it within the reach of all. The work is divided into four numbers—"The choosing of the Queen;" "The Hunt's up;" "The Queen's Greeting;" and "The Revels"—all of which are full of character, and written with that intimate knowledge of the resources of voices and orchestra which must always make them acceptable both to executants and listeners. The first chorus, "Who shall be Queen of the May?" with its incidental solos, although simple throughout, as such music should be, is full of variety; and this is followed by an excellently written Part-song, which has so light an accompaniment that, detached from the work, it may effectively be given with the voices alone. The very charming *Song with a Burden*, "Beautiful May," has an unmistakably national ring which has already earned for it a wide popularity; and the final chorus, commencing in A minor, with a key-note pedal (representing the tabor), is overflowing with rustic mirth, the change into the tonic major adding much freshness and vivacity to the concluding portion of the Revels. We can scarcely doubt that "May-day," as it becomes more extensively known, will do much towards proving that we have living composers who have the will and power to write in the art-language of their country.

*March for the Organ.*

*My soul is dark.* Song. Words by Byron.

Composed by Alfred Alexander.

Born these works are deserving of much praise, for they show not only that their composer has musical feeling, but that he writes sufficiently out of the conventional track to arrest the attention of a cultivated audience. The song is thoroughly German in character, and evinces an intimate acquaintance and sympathy with the best models of that school. The symphony, in C minor, introduces the voice part with much effect; the accompaniment throughout is in excellent keeping with the varied shades of feeling in the poetry, and although the transition into the tonic major at the conclusion is somewhat abrupt, it seems to have been well considered by the composer, who is no doubt fully prepared to justify the musical necessity for the change. The March, in D minor, may be commended as possessing not only melodious leading subjects, but much originality in their treatment. The second theme, in the relative major, is exceedingly attractive. Mr. Alexander has sufficiently won his way in these two compositions to ensure a cordial welcome on his next appearance.

*Valse Gracieuse,* pour Piano, par Siegfried Jacoby.

We are glad to see that the composer of this waltz has the courage to call it by its right name, instead of "Budding Tulips," or "Mournful Moonbeams," or any other title equally fanciful and equally inappropriate. The next reform, we hope, will be the printing of the title-page in the language of the country in which the music is published. For this, however—judging from the confusion of tongues used by English composers in most of the pieces which come before us—we shall have to wait some time. The author of this graceful little dance deserves much praise for the musicianlike manner in which he has treated his theme, and the care with which his harmonies are written throughout. The subject, in

the sub-dominant has much quaintness, the dropping on the *appoggiatura* upon the second beat of each bar having an excellent effect; and, moreover, is a little out of the beaten track, if not strikingly original.

*Ave Maria*, for Mezzo Soprano or Baritone; with Piano-forte or Organ accompaniment.

*O Salutaris*, for Solo and Chorus, with Organ or Pianoforte.

Composed by Wilhelm Schulthes.

THE "Ave Maria," commencing with a few introductory bars, for organ or pianoforte, "quasi recitative," has a calm and devotional subject, harmonised with the skill of a practised musician. The phrase, beginning with the words "Sancta Maria," is extremely beautiful; and the changes in the character of the accompaniment prevent any feeling of that weariness so often experienced in the settings of sacred words. We hardly like the shake on the first syllable of the final "Amen;" but we should no doubt be in a minority if the opinion of a mixed audience were taken. There is some effective writing in the second piece, "O Salutaris." The leading theme, given out by the soprano, is followed by a short *tutti*, a solo for the soprano, afterwards joined in imitation by the tenor, is again succeeded by a *tutti*—this time of greater length—and the principal subject for the solo quartett, with a flowing *arpeggio* accompaniment, leads to the concluding *tutti*, the dying off of the "Amen" being a point of much interest. This composition especially shows that Herr Schulthes has true feeling for religious music.

*Two Loving Hearts may sever.* Words from the novel "The Heir of Redcliff."

*Take back ev'ry token.* Words by Captain Urquhart.

Composed by Wilhelm Schulthes.

THERE is much originality in both these songs, neither of which appeals to the admirers of the sentimental "Claribel" school. The words from the "Heir of Redcliff" have been most thoughtfully set, the whole spirit of the composition being thoroughly German. The declamatory phrases are well contrasted with those of a more melodious character, and the accompaniment is sufficiently varied to increase the interest, without disturbing the flow, of the vocal part. The second song, after a few bars of recitative, has a more marked melody, with a triplet accompaniment. The change into the tonic major, after the pause on the dominant seventh, has an excellent effect, and the lengthening out of the final phrase, "Go, be happy! fare thee well," is in true sympathy with the poetry. These compositions are healthy specimens of a style which should be encouraged, if only as a protest against the colourless ballads which are still too prevalent in musical domestic circles.

*Four Characteristic Pieces*, for the Pianoforte, by E. H. Thorne. No. 1. Regrets. 2. Prayer. 3. An Eastern Tale. 4. Spring Song.

THESE pieces are exceedingly favourable specimens of Mr. Thorne's power of writing those elegant descriptive little sketches which are now so popular in our drawing-rooms. No. 1 has a graceful melody, not without a tinge of melancholy, as may be inferred from the title, accompanied with arpeggios divided between the two hands. The theme is distinctly marked out in large notes throughout, so that, although the passages will require careful practice, it will be the performer's fault if the composer's intention is not perfectly realized. No. 2 may be made extremely effective by a pianist who can take extended chords with ease. The subject has much religious feeling; and although containing little variety in the treatment, the interest is amply sustained for so short a piece. The "Eastern Tale" is in our opinion by far the best of the set; and we trust that the printer's error in the time (3 being marked instead of 2) will not puzzle those who desire to acquaint themselves with its merits. The highly characteristic theme, in F minor, is excellently contrasted with the legato melody in the relative major, with the triplet