

Review

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*The Organist's Quarterly Journal of Original Compositions.* Edited by William Spark, Mus. Doc.  
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS publication has now reached the very respectable age of thirteen years, and no doubt it has in that time exercised a considerable influence both upon composers for the organ, and performers upon that instrument. In looking back over the long vista of compositions embraced in this period, we find a very fairly representative collection of pieces, the study of which will give, upon the whole, a very good idea of the condition of organ music in at least three of the musical countries of Europe: Germany, France and England. No doubt the difficulty of sustaining a tolerably level standard of excellence in each number is great, but even allowing a generous margin for difference of opinion, there are many pieces to which the words launched at an unfriendly critic in the editor's preface to the current number may be applied with justice. "Cold mechanical music, of great correctness but little beauty, without genuine melody or that tenderness of heart which inspires happy touching thoughts," can not unfrequently be found in the pages of this journal; and, on the other hand, music quite as regrettable, of the light and flippant school, is not entirely a stranger. At the same time it would be very ungrateful not to remember the many excellent and varied examples of organ music which, it is not perhaps too much to say, might not have seen the light had not this periodical been in existence. Of the two numbers now before us we can safely say that they sustain the reputation of this publication. In them is to be found music for musicians of very different shades of thought, and also pieces suited not only to the adept, but to the less skilful player. In the number for July we must single out for favourable mention "Two short and easy preludes," by Charles Joseph Frost, both graceful and interesting, and, as the title suggests, easy; also a Minuet by James J. Pye, Mus. Bac. The Fuga at the commencement of the number, which is of a severer kind of excellence, would make an effective voluntary if played upon a large organ. In the current number the B.A.C.H. fugue, by W. Conradi, is perhaps the most important item.

*Elementary Principles of Music and Elements of Harmony, adapted for those Studying the Pianoforte.* By W. Adlington. [Wood and Co.]

MR. ADLINGTON tells us that he has written this little work especially for those who do not intend to study the whole theory and science of music; and viewed in this light we think he has successfully accomplished his task. The conventional method of writing the minor scale—with the sixth and seventh raised in ascending, and restored to the signature in descending—is given; and the chromatic scale ascending in sharps and descending in flats—without a word as to how it is to be noted when a number of sharps or flats are placed at the signature—also appears, as it has so long appeared in the instruction-books of the past. We will not here stop to discuss these questions, but are certain that the author will thank us for saying that the word *appoggiatura* comes from *appoggiare* (with two "g's"); and that what he calls a "short *appoggiatura*" is an *acciaccatura*. *Appoggiare* signifies to lean upon, and *acciaccare* to crush; and the two musical words derived from these verbs precisely express their meaning. We also wish to call Mr. Adlington's attention to the second exercise at page 44, the key of which would assuredly puzzle any student. These little defects could be easily remedied in a new edition; and as we see by the title-page that the copy of the work forwarded to us belongs to the "fifth thousand," they evidently must for some time have escaped detection. We are glad to find handbooks of this kind increasing; for it is unquestionably good to secure a solid foundation to build upon—even if you should never build.

*O ye that love the Lord.* Anthem. Composed by F. A. W. Docker. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS is an anthem of a very manageable length in three movements. The first opens with a soprano solo in F, 3-4 time, the melody of which is distinctly vocal and pleasing, and also easy of performance. It is then repeated in

harmony by the chorus. We may be allowed to mention that the time-word *adagio* is rather misleading; the metronome mark being 104 to the crotchet. The second movement, which is in the dominant, opens with a vigorous and effective lead for the basses, followed by a second subject for trebles. The first subject is then taken up by the full choir, when this short movement is brought to a close. The following movement, in the tonic, to the words "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous," is, like its predecessor, bright, spirited, and easy, and brings this unpretentious but effective composition to a satisfactory termination.

*There were shepherds abiding in the field.* Easy Anthem for Christmas. By E. A. Sydenham.  
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS is another competitor for favour this Christmas-tide, and in many ways it is well deserving of it. Though it does not exhibit great powers of invention on the part of the composer, yet, on account of its generally melodious character, it may be said to be a gain to music of this class; and choirs of not very great resources ought to be acquainted with this tolerably short anthem before making their selection for Christmas-Day.

*Reverie, in D flat.* For the Pianoforte. By Claudius H. Couldery. [Lamborn Cock.]

IT is not often that in passing through the mass of pianoforte music forwarded to us for review our attention is arrested by a composition upon which we can conscientiously bestow more than qualified praise; but Mr. Couldery's *Reverie*, although simple and unpretending, is so full of melodic grace, and the theme is so tenderly and artistically treated throughout, that we unreservedly commend it to those amateurs who, whilst wanting something both new and "pretty," are not disappointed when they find that a piece is a little out of the groove into which our "drawing-room music," as it is termed, seems rapidly settling down. Apart from the tunefulness of the principal subject, we are especially pleased with the ornamental passages which grow around it. At the pause towards the conclusion, the two short cadences are most effective, and the coda is in thorough sympathy with the character of the piece. We are glad to welcome a composer who can by such legitimate means invest a mere trifle with so much interest.

*Holy Worship.* A Sacred Song. Words by L. C. C. C. Composed by A. E. Tozer. [Novello, Ewer, and Co.]

THERE is good feeling for sacred music evidenced throughout this song, but the prayer of the choirboy—"Open Thou our lips, O Lord, and our mouth shall shew forth Thy praise"—requires something more than smooth and faultless writing to arrest the attention. The truth is that texts like these are sufficiently sanctified without the aid of musical setting, and it is genius alone which can intensify their effect upon the mind by such means. The quaver accompaniment in the portion which leads up to this prayer wants relief. The best part of the song is where the modulation into B major occurs, on the words "For he knew that Christ was there."

*Call the ewes to the knowes.* Duet. The words adapted from Robert Burns. Composed by John Bulmer, M.A. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE only defect in this Duet is its monotony. The melody is attractive, with just enough Scottish character to adapt it to the words, and the harmonies are well written throughout; but the effect of the voices singing separately and then together almost the same notes becomes tiresome, even with the slightly varied accompaniment. Certain indications in this unpretending vocal piece seem to suggest that the composer might do better things.

*The King and the Miller of the Dee.* Poetry by Charles Mackay. Music by Alfred Blume. [B. Williams.]

AS baritone singers are by no means plentifully supplied with effective songs, they will be glad to hear of this really excellent addition to their stock. The bold modulations in the music give much force to the conversations of the

happy Miller with "King Hal"; and in every case the accompaniments are in perfect keeping with the words, which we need scarcely say are good enough to lighten materially the task of any composer. We are pleased to find that Signor Foli has already sung this composition in public, and trust that other equally competent vocalists will follow his example.

*March.* For the Pianoforte. By Fred. A. Dunster.  
[A. Cox.]

A MARCH original enough to make its way through the crowd of such pieces published in this prolific musical age is indeed a rarity; but Mr. Dunster has at least given us a bold theme in C minor, with a second part in the relative major, and a trio in A flat major, which contrasts well with the principal subject. In the last page, where the accompaniment in octaves occurs, we could wish that the interrupted close on the sixth of the scale, which is taken twice over, had been written without the consecutive fifths, a defect easily remedied by doubling the third of the second chord.

#### FOREIGN NOTES.

THE recent stage representation of Liszt's oratorio "St. Elizabeth," given in honour of the composer's seventieth birthday at the Hoftheater at Weimar, has proved but a moderately successful experiment. The performance was conducted by Herr Lassen before a very numerous audience.

Herr Angelo Neumann's projected "Lohengrin" performances at the French capital have met with opposition on the part of M. Lamoureux, the late *chef d'orchestre* of the Grand-Opéra, who claims the right of first production of the work in Paris. An action-at-law has, it is said, been instituted by Herr Neumann to decide the question, but, whatever the result, it appears certain that Wagner's masterpiece will be introduced to Parisian audiences during the coming year.

A correspondent writes to us from Dresden: "On the 12th ult. the Dresden Hoftheater presented for the one hundredth time Weber's 'Euryanthe,' an opera which has since been hardly heard of there. A curious feature of the present commemoration was the printing of the original programme of the opera—of March 31, 1824—by the side of the new one. What was then styled the 'Königliches Deutsches Schauspiel' has since been converted into the 'Königliches Hoftheater,' and the highest prices have risen from 16 groschen (1.60 marks) to 5.50 marks. But the programme says nothing of the enormous changes which have taken place in Dresden during these fifty-seven years, among which not least ranks the design and completion of the splendid opera-house itself."

A new Requiem by Friedrich Kiel was produced for the first time by the Berlin Singakademie on the 20th ult. We render an account of the event in another part of our present issue.

The Berlin *Musik Welt* contains in two of its recent numbers some interesting analytical observations on the music of the first and part of the second act of Richard Wagner's latest music-drama, "Parsifal." The analysis (from the pen of Herr Paul Schumacher) is based upon the pianoforte score of the work, so far as it has been completed by Joseph Rubinstein, and which is now in course of publication by Messrs. Schott, of Mayence.

The executors of the late Johann Maria Farina have, the *Signale* says, handed the sum of 18,000 marks to the treasurer of the Cologne Conservatorium, for the purpose of founding two free scholarships at that institution, which will bear the name of the testator.

Among the numerous tokens of esteem received by Ferdinand Hiller on the occasion of his recently celebrated seventieth birthday was a laurel wreath presented to him by his Viennese friends, inscribed with the names of Brahms, Brüll, Goldmark, Bauernfeld, Laube, Hanslick, and many others well known in the artistic world.

Marie Wieck, the excellent pianist, and sister of Clara Schumann, is just now engaged upon a most successful concert-tournée in Sweden and Norway.

Eduard Lassen, the composer of incidental music to Goethe's "Faust," has just completed the composition of

similarly illustrative music to Calderon's "Circe," which is to be performed (with Otto Devrient's version), during the present month at the Hoftheater of Weimar.

We extract the following from the *Allgemeine Deutsche Musik Zeitung*: "The Imperial opera of Vienna has just celebrated an interesting anniversary. On November 3, 1821, *i.e.*, sixty years ago, Carl Maria von Weber's opera 'Der Freischütz' was produced for the first time here at the Hoftheater, near the Kärnthnerthor. The opera met with great success, and was given on February 2, 1829, for the one hundredth time. An especially brilliant performance of the work took place on May 17, 1846, at the Theater an der Wien, when Jenny Lind sang the *Agatha*, Tichatschek was the *Max*, and Staudigl the *Caspar*. At the new Imperial Opera House the opera has received, from January 1, 1870, to September 23 of the present year, ninety-one representations. At Berlin five hundred performances of 'Der Freischütz' have so far taken place. In Italy also, in spite of its purely German melodies, the opera has made many friends. In 1872 'Der Freischütz' was brought out at the Teatro della Scala of Milan, under the title of 'Il Franco Cacciatore.' The Teatro Apollo, of Rome, was the second Italian stage where Weber's masterpiece was produced, *viz.*, on November 25, 1874; but, according to Italian custom, a ballet in nine tableaux had to be introduced between the second and third acts."

The first numbers of a weekly illustrated music-journal, entitled *La Musique Populaire*, have just been issued at Paris. The new periodical is edited by M. Arthur Pougin, the well-known critic.

"Christophe Gluck et Richard Wagner" is the title of a pamphlet from the pen of M. de Briquerville, which has just been published by Jules Gervais, of Paris.

M. Ed. Gregoir, of Paris, who has been engaged for some years past in the collection of material concerning the life and works of Grétry, will, it is announced, shortly publish the result of his elaborate researches in a volume entitled "Documents relatifs à la Vie et aux Œuvres d'André Ernest Modeste Grétry," which is looked forward to with much interest in musical circles.

A number of hitherto unpublished letters from the pen of Hector Berlioz will, it is said, shortly be issued from the Paris press, with an introduction written by M. Gounod.

We read in the *Daily News* of the 1st. ult.: "A statue to Bellini, and another to Verdi, have been inaugurated in Milan. The committee entrusted with the arrangement of the proceedings telegraphed to Verdi, who is at Busseto, his native place, near Parma, informing him of the applause with which the honour to the illustrious dead and illustrious living was received. A telegram of thanks from the veteran composer was despatched in reply, and also one from the town council of Busseto, who expressed themselves as grateful for the patriotic demonstration of the city of Milan with regard to their illustrious fellow-citizen."

Wagner's "Rienzi" and "Lohengrin" will be produced during the present season at the Teatro Fenice, of Venice.

A new comic opera, "Le Nozze Prigione," by Usiglio, has been extremely well received on the occasion of its recent performance at the Teatro Vittorio Emanuele, of Turin. A new operatic work by Cortesi, entitled "L'Amico di Casa" will shortly be brought out at the Teatro Nicolini, of Florence.

Anton Rubinstein has undertaken the direction this winter of the first three concerts of the imperial Music Society at Moscow. Later in the season the eminent pianist-composer will, it is announced, conduct a number of compositions by Russian musicians at one of M. Pasdeloup's Concerts Populaires in Paris.

We subjoin, as usual, the programmes of concerts\* recently given at some of the leading institutions abroad:—

Paris.—Concert Populaire (October 30): Fragments from "Il Seraglio" (Mozart); Symphony in D minor (Schumann); Scena from "Oberon" (Weber); "Le Dernier Sommeil de la Vierge" (Massenet); Nocturne and Tarantelle (Chopin). Châtelet Concert (October 30): "Le Désert," symphonic ode (F. David); Overture, "Francs Juges" (Berlioz); Ballet from "Roi de Lahore" (Massenet); Venusberg (Wagner). Nouveaux Concerts (October 30): Symphony in A major (Beethoven); Duo from "Béatrix et Bénédicte" (Berlioz); Concerto

\* Contributions intended for this column should indicate clearly the place and date of performance, as otherwise they cannot be inserted.