

Review

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Stubbs, W. G. Forington, Mr. Alfred Hollins (the blind pianist), Miss Daisy Ashton (violinist), and Mr. Woodford Reynolds (violincello). A male voice quartet, under the direction of Mr. R. de Lacy, sang several part-songs effectively, and the accompaniments were played by Mr. Fountain Meen.

THE St. George's Choral Association, Willesden Lane, Brondesbury, concluded their second season on the 10th ult., when Stainer's "Daughter of Jairus" and a miscellaneous selection were given, under the direction of Mr. F. G. Edwards, Conductor of the Society. The vocalists were Mrs. Edwards, Mr. H. L. Fulkerson, and Mr. Charles Copland. Mrs. Smart, the valued accompanist of the Association, gave a tasteful rendering of Chopin's Ballade (Op. 47).

A PERFORMANCE of Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria" was given at the Parish Church, St. Mary, Newington, on Wednesday evening, the 8th ult., by the choir, assisted by the Newington Choral Society. The solos were effectively rendered by Messrs. J. Hudson and Campton, and two of Mr. Stedman's choir boys. The choruses were admirably executed under the direction of Mr. W. Rayment Kirby, Organist and Choirmaster of the Church. Mr. E. H. Turpin ably presided at the organ.

AN interesting Concert was given at the Birkbeck Institution on Friday, the 10th ult., under the able direction of Mr. G. A. Parker, teacher of the ladies' violin classes, when some capital selections were well rendered by the violin and violoncello classes. The vocalists were Madame Belle Cole, Miss Amy Wagstaff, Mr. Arthur Thompson, and Mr. A. Tucker. Violin solos were played by Miss Grace Carter and Mr. G. A. Parker, and Mr. Claude Hamilton gave some recitations.

MISS MAUD LESLIE gave her third annual Concert at the Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell, on Tuesday, the 14th ult., when she provided a miscellaneous programme of an attractive character, contributed by Miss Leslie herself, Madame Reichelmann, Madame Montague Neave, Miss Marchant, Miss Ada Molten (violin), Misses Emily Terry, Kate A. Davies (pianoforte), Messrs. Frank Swinford, James Budd, Sydney Herbert, H. Glynn, R. Rae, and Frank W. Tagg (elocutionist).

MR. ALFRED J. EYRE has been invited to conduct the Salisbury Diocesan Choral Festival at the Cathedral, on Thursday, the 6th inst., and, with the permission of the Directors of the Crystal Palace, has accepted the invitation. The music will include Lloyd's Service in E flat, an Anthem by the late Sir Frederick Ouseley, Handel's Overture to "Saul," and other works; and the choirs will number nearly 3,000 voices, with full orchestra and organ, the latter to be played by the Cathedral Organist, Mr. C. F. South.

THE Choral Society of Merchant Taylors' School gave its fourteenth annual Concert on the 14th ult. The Cantata chosen was Sterndale Bennett's "May Queen." The Conductor was Mr. Edmund Rogers, Organist of St. Michael's, Paddington. The solo parts were sustained by F. B. Wood (*May Queen*), W. W. Dearle (*Queen*), Mr. F. Given Wilson (*Lover*), and Mr. Frederic Penna (*Robin Hood*). The rest of the Concert consisted of part-songs and instrumental and vocal solos.

STAINER'S Cantata "The Daughter of Jairus" was given at St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, on the 22nd ult. The choir was reinforced by the choir of St. Andrew's, Stockwell, and the accompaniments were sustained by a stringed band in addition to the organ. The solo parts were sung by Masters Francis and Gregory, Mr. Dan Smith, and Mr. Salisbury. Dr. G. C. Martin, of St. Paul's Cathedral, presided at the organ, and Mr. E. Thatcher conducted.

THE North-East London Choral Society gave the second Concert of the present season at the Morley Hall, Hackney, on the 22nd ult., when an excellent performance of Cowen's "Rose Maiden" and a miscellaneous selection were given. The soloists were Madame Clara West, Miss Anna C. Smith, Mr. J. H. Mullerhausen, and Mr. John Ortnier; pianoforte, Mr. Alfred E. Izard; harmonium, Mr. Louis B. Prout; Conductor, Mr. John E. West.

MISS ALICE GOMES gave a Concert on Tuesday, the 21st ult., at the Princes' Hall. She opened the Concert with a couple of songs by Franz, and in the second part contributed one by Kjerulf, singing all with rare charm of voice and expression. The Concert-giver was assisted by Mrs. Bertha Moore, Miss Netty Carpenter (violin), Miss Jeanne Douste (pianoforte), Mr. Henry Piercy, Mr. Piunket Greene, and Mr. Herbert Thorndike.

THE annual Concert for the benefit of the Postmen's Rest and Convalescent Home at Brighton took place at St. James's Hall, on the 2nd ult. The following performers gave their services: Mesdames Antoinette Sterling, Minnie Gwynne, Miss Effie Clements, and Miss Lena Law; Messrs. Banks, Donnell Balfe, David Hughes, and McCall Chambers. Violinists: Mr. von Czeke and Miss Freda Marsden. Solo pianist, Miss Lily von Kornatski.

THE Clapham Choral Society (Conductor, Mr. Walter Mackway) gave the last of its Subscription Concerts this season on the 6th ult., at Belmont Hall, Clapham. The programme consisted of madrigals, part-songs, and solos by Miss Hilda Wilson and Mr. Braxton Smith; accompanist, Mr. Sydney Hann. The unaccompanied singing of the choir was worthy of great praise.

ON the 8th ult., Bennett's "May Queen" was given in the Defoe Rooms by the West Hackney Choral Society, under the direction of Mr. F. L. Kett. The soloists were Miss Julia Jones, Mrs. Harding Taylor, Messrs. Mullerhausen and J. Webb. Mr. W. Davis presided at the pianoforte. The second part of the Concert comprised a solo by each of the principals and several part-songs by the choir.

MENDELSSOHN'S "St. Paul" was given on Sunday afternoon, the 19th ult., at St. John the Evangelist, Waterloo Road, when the solos were taken by Master H. Warren, Miss Louie Lancaster, Mr. A. Davey, and Mr. Frederick Winton. This was the tenth and last performance given during the winter months at the church.

At a meeting of the Directors of the Royal Academy of Music, held on the 27th ult., Mr. Joseph Bennett was unanimously elected a member of that body.

## REVIEWS.

*The National Dance Music of Scotland.* Arranged for the pianoforte by Alexander Mackenzie, with additions by his son, Alexander Campbell Mackenzie. Dedicated by express permission to the Queen. (Pianoforte Albums, Nos. 32, 33, 34.) [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

SINCE the days when Oswald published his first Collection of Scottish Melodies, some century and a half ago, his example has never lacked enthusiastic followers. The Collection of Reels and Strathspeys, published by Bremner in 1758; those of Nathaniel Gow (1766-1831); and of the famous Niel, his son (1796-1823); Johnson's Museum, with McGibbon's Scots' tunes; Donald Macdonald's Ancient Martial Music of Scotland, called "Piobaireachd"; the admirable Collection of Strathspeys, &c., by J. T. Surenne; Thomson's Collection, Aird's Reels, Rutherford's Dance Tunes, Albyn's "Anthology," 1816-1818; George Farquhar Graham and John Muir Wood's Collection of Scottish Songs, and other collections of melodies of the north are full of most interesting specimens of this class of music. Books like those of Graham and Wood, accompanied as they are by most copious and learned annotations concerning the history of the tunes given, their authors when known, and the circumstances surrounding them, are among the most valued treasures of the cosmopolitan musical student. Such a collection as that now before us is very welcome. It was compiled by one who in his time was unrivalled for his skill as a performer of the old Scottish tunes, and whose extensive knowledge of them was unequalled. There are three books, containing altogether two hundred melodies, Strathspeys and Reels alternately, with other dance measures. The harmonies are simple, yet full of character, and the tunes are arranged in a convenient order as to key. They begin with melodies in G major, which are followed by others in E minor, G minor, and B flat major, these forming the first book. The

second book (No. 33) opens with tunes in D major, followed by some in B minor, in F major, and D minor. The third book has tunes in A major, A minor, and C major. Some of the airs belong to such an accommodating character that they have been claimed as English and even as Irish. "Petticoat loose," given in this collection, is a jig tune which has been printed many times in dance books from about the year 1758. There are English words to it, and the air has been claimed to be Irish. Other melodies here given, such as "Speed the plough," "Orange and the Blue," known also as "Kitty Jones," might be singled out as of the same doubtful origin. It is enough to know, however, that their popularity has been preserved in Scotland, and the spirit of their melodic phrases will make them welcome to wider circles through the medium of their present form. If a suggestion may be made, it would be that an arrangement for the violin with the pianoforte would be very acceptable, and would greatly assist in making known, in a very useful form, one of the best and most copious Collections of the National Dance Music of Scotland that have been given to the world for many years.

*Chopin, and other Musical Essays.* By Henry T. Finck. [London: T. Fisher Unwin.]

THAT Mr. Finck—who has already made his mark by a clever work on "Romantic Love and Personal Beauty"—has no affinity with the critical temper of his namesake, Schumann's contemporary, is speedily apparent from the tone of the first essay in this interesting volume. In it he advances claims to pre-eminence on behalf of Chopin which are all the more noticeable because he is at the same time an ardent Wagnerite. His opinions are often heterodox, even audacious, but they never offend one, because, though an enthusiast, he is happily not a bigot. He never seeks to extol his favourite musical divinities by disparaging or vilifying the idols of others. And he is always suggestive—he sets one thinking. Not the least interesting portion of his thoughtful essay on "Music and Morals" is the fragment of autobiography on page 157-8: "It was the irresistible power of Wagner's music that first made me go to Europe, and changed the whole current of my life. After graduating from Harvard I had only a few dollars in my pocket; but instead of trying to find employment and earn my daily bread, I recklessly borrowed five hundred dollars of a good-natured uncle and went to Europe, for the sole purpose of attending the first Bayreuth Festival. . . . It was the wild enthusiasm inspired in me by Wagner's earlier operas that led me irresistibly to Bayreuth, and I really would have been willing to toil as a slave for years rather than miss this Festival." As an instance of the catholicity of Mr. Finck's taste we have mentioned his simultaneous devotion to Wagner and Chopin. The reason why the latter has been denied a foremost position he finds in what, "for want of a better term, may be called æsthetic Jumboism"—in other words, the exaggerated admiration for mammoth dimensions. On this text Mr. Finck enlarges with much force and point. He ascribes the tendency to depreciate Chopin, still to be found amongst ultra-Teutons, to the natural antipathy between the Slavonic and Teutonic mind, and has no hesitation in proclaiming him to be "as distinctly superior to all other pianoforte composers as Wagner is to all other opera composers." We cannot agree with Mr. Finck on this point, but as we have said above, his freedom from animosity disarms hostile criticism, and on many other topics we find ourselves in complete unison with his attitude. For example, all he has to say on the inadvisability of arranging Chopin's pianoforte pieces for orchestra strikes us as most sensible and discriminating criticism. "Chopin," he says, "spoke the language of the pianoforte. His pieces are so idiomatic that they cannot be translated into orchestral language any more than Heine's lyrics can be translated into English." On the legitimate use of the *tempo rubato*, again, Mr. Finck's remarks are excellent. He is to be congratulated too on the choice of interesting subjects for his essays. That on "How composers work" is full of interesting information for the lay reader. He shows, for example, what a notable part the personal element has played as a motive power of inspiration, and treats the subject of improvisation at considerable length and in a most intelligent fashion. *Apropos* of the stimulating effect that locomotion seems to exert on the

creative faculties, he might have mentioned the case of Berlioz. Of Wagner he mentions several characteristic traits communicated to him by Herr Seidl, the eminent Conductor; but his defence of Wagner's mania for millinery does not seem to us very effective. Under the title "Schumann," Mr. Finck has given a very readable summary of the contents of the two volumes of letters recently published by Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel. Papers on the "Italian and German Vocal Styles" and "German Opera in New York" complete this decidedly attractive and welcome addition to the *belles lettres* of music.

*Twelve Songs.* By Dora Bright. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE words of these songs have been selected from Herrick, Shakespeare, Longfellow, Moore, Charles Kingsley, and others, and their musical setting shows a commendable amount of constructive talent and thoughtfulness. There is also an apparent endeavour to avoid the tendency exhibited by some young composers to write their songs more in the form of pianoforte solos with vocal accompaniment, than to adopt the reverse process observed by the old writers whose songs have achieved a lasting popularity. For this we owe a debt to the modern German musicians, who were probably driven to the device by the peculiar qualities of the national vocal organs and the tempting luxury of the tones of modern pianofortes. It would be unfair to expect composers, especially if they be pianists, to be altogether oblivious of the claims of the instrument with which they propose to accompany their vocal designs; but it would be as well if all who write songs were to follow, and, if possible, improve upon the model these twelve songs offer.

*Chant du Soir* ("Evening Song"). For violin and pianoforte. By J. Jacques Haakman. Arranged as a string quartet by the Composer.

*Souvenir.* Morceau de Salon for Violin and Pianoforte. By J. Jacques Haakman.

*Three Character Pieces: Prière, Meditation, Espoir.* For Viola or Violin. By J. Jacques Haakman.

*Élégie pour Viola (ou Violon ou Violoncelle),* avec accompagnement de Pianoforte. Par G. Saint-George. [Charles Woolhouse.]

THE Evening Song has already appeared as a violin solo with pianoforte accompaniment, and it is now issued arranged for a string quartet. The subject is eminently suited for the purpose of a quartet, and its beauty is augmented rather than diminished by the arrangement. None of the component parts present technical difficulties, therefore it should meet with favour amongst performers who wish for a means whereby to display their powers of expression rather than execution.

*Souvenir* is a charming little morceau; and, although somewhat Wagnerian in treatment, it is an excellent piece of writing. The melody is introduced by a short *Andante* accompanied by *arpeggio* chords, and the principal theme then follows accompanied by triplets. This effect is very good, but the use of triplets leaves an impression that the climax has been anticipated, which even the doubling of the part does not remove. On the whole, the merits rather than the demerits of the composition are its prominent features, while the entire work is musicianlike and attractive. Each of the Three Character Pieces has its especial attraction, for they are tuneful and respectively characteristic. The thanks of viola players are due to Herr Haakman for giving them some more solos to add to the small *répertoire* of suitable pieces already published. These compositions, on account of their beauty and excellence, should be in the hands of all viola players. Mr. Saint-George's *Élégie* for viola (or violin or violoncello) is of a kind which is at once graceful, artistic, and popular. It will make an excellent solo for performers on any of the three instruments for which it is arranged, but the *Élégie* will be found most effective and most useful as a viola solo.

#### FOREIGN NOTES.

UNDER the auspices of Signor Sonzogno, Gluck's "Orphée" was revived at the Paris Théâtre Italien on the 9th ult., with Madame Hastreiter in the title part, so successfully sustained by that lady during last winter at Rome, when the opera in question obtained a considerable