

Review

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Feis Ceoil Collection of Irish Airs (hitherto unpublished). Edited by Arthur Darley and P. J. McCall. Vol. i.

[Feis Ceoil Association, Dublin, 1914.]

In the Introduction to the present collection it is stated that this is the first instalment of a large number of airs that had been selected by the editors (Arthur Darley and P. J. McCall) as 'hitherto unpublished.' From 1899 to 1913 three prizes have been awarded annually for the discovery of unpublished Irish airs, and, as may well be supposed, an enormous amount of material accumulated. However, after the publication of the 'Complete Petrie collection' (three vols.) and of Dr. Joyce's 'Old Irish folk-music' (1909), quite a large number of airs had to be set aside. As the net result of much sifting, eighty-five airs have been selected, and are now presented to the public. An Appendix gives a brief note stating the immediate source of each air.

From an examination of these eighty-five 'unpublished' airs, at least seventeen have been previously printed, while half-a-dozen others are pleasing variants. Let us go into detail.

No. 1 is a version of No. 4. A different setting of the latter under the same title ('The death of Staker Wallace') has been published in Roche's 'Collection of Irish music' (1911). No. 7 is a variant of 'Polly Oliver,' which, by the way, is of Irish provenance, although appearing in English collections. No. 10 has already been printed by Roche as 'The Suishen Bawn.' No. 34 is a variant of 'The croppy boy.' No. 6, in a pleasing variant, will be found as No. 325 in Joyce, and No. 8 is also in Joyce, No. 573. No. 12, 'Gallagher's lament,' is merely a slow version of Joyce's 'Gallagher's frolic' (No. 350). No. 13 is a modern version of 'O'Donnell abu.' No. 25 has been printed by Joyce as 'Irish Hop Jig' (No. 840). No. 37 appears in O'Neill's Collection (No. 1488) under the title of 'O'Reilly's greyhound.' No. 42 is a second version of 'O'Donnell abu.' No. 49, 'Old Ireland, a long farewell,' is a corrupt version of 'Burns's farewell' as printed in 1797. No. 53, 'Peggy Levin,' has been printed by O'Neill (No. 140) as 'Margaret ni Labhain.' No. 57, 'Sheela O'Gara,' will be found in a purer form in Kane O'Hara's 'Midas' (1762). No. 61, 'Farewell to the cot on the mountain,' has been printed by Joyce (No. 665) under the title of 'Has sorrow thy young days shaded,' but correctly noted in $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythm instead of $\frac{3}{8}$. No. 65, 'Follow me down to Carlow,' has been printed as 'Follow me up to Carlow,' but there is grave doubt that the air goes back to the 16th century. No. 68, 'Drocketty's march,' is given by Joyce (No. 659) in a finer setting, under the title of 'The lark in the morning,' but he prints it in the key of D, whereas it is evidently A with the accidental seventh. No. 69, 'Nancy wants her own share,' was one of the marching tunes of the Irish Volunteers, in 1782, but it is an old 17th century Irish air, which wandered over to Scotland in the 45 period, and was printed in 1756. It is also known as 'Maggie Pickens' and as 'Whistle o'er the lave o' t.' No. 70, 'The Topsy House Reel,' is a variant of 'Templehouse Jig,' as printed by Levey in 1873, and by O'Neill. No. 76, 'The Toper's Double' is a variant of the well-known 'Kennedy's Jig,' printed in Joyce's 'Ancient Irish music' (No. 19) in 1873. No. 79 was printed in a slightly varied form in the Stanford-Petrie Collection (No. 478).

However, the present collection is very interesting; and certainly, the rescue from oblivion of many of the airs is distinctly to the credit of the Feis Ceoil. In particular, the airs taken down from the late Mr. John McCall are gems of their class. The editing has been well done, and the volume is most attractively produced by the Dublin University Press.

Lord of the world above. Anthem for Festival or general use. By John E. West.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

For the words of his anthem (composed for the Wellingborough and District Choral Festival) Mr. West has gone to a fine hymn of Isaac Watts. After a bold declamatory phrase associated throughout with the opening words, we have four melodious pages in which the imitative writing is notable for skill and absence of effort. A middle section, with suave passages for the voices and an admirably-written

organ part, provides good contrast, and the close (*più mosso*) introduces some new material as well as dealing with some from the first section. The music throughout is vocal in character, and only moderately difficult. Its breadth makes the anthem an excellent work for choral Festival use. The organ part, it need hardly be said, is an effective feature.

Six Part-Songs. For mixed voices. By Edmondstoune Duncan (Op. 120).

[The Walter Scott Publishing Co.]

It does not need the suggestion of the opus number of this collection to prompt the belief that Mr. Edmondstoune Duncan is an experienced writer for choral voices. He scores with considerable freedom of movement, while his texture and general outline remain simple. The search for an individual idea often makes for a tonal restlessness that does not seem to justify itself, but undoubtedly the individuality is achieved. That Mr. Duncan can conceive felicitous effect is shown by the expression of gentle contentment in 'Echoes' (Moore's 'How sweet the answer Echo makes'), the piquant setting of the words 'There's fairy tulips in the East, the garden of the sun' in 'O lady, leave thy silken thread,' and similar instances. The remaining part-songs are 'I sing the birth' (Ben Jonson), 'O mistress mine,' 'The young May moon,' and 'Song of flight' (Christina Rossetti).

Impressions. Vocal Suite for soli and chorus of ladies' voices. By Gustave Ferrari. Poem by Tristan Klingsor. English words by W. G. Rothery.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Mr. Ferrari's Suite consists of five numbers: 'Springtime' (S.S.A.A.), 'The Beggar' (mezzo-soprano or baritone solo), 'The Sandman' (S.S.A.A. and soprano solo), 'The Fiddler' (soprano solo), and 'Marguerite at her wheel' (S.S.A.A. and soprano solo). The music is modern in style, with traces of present-day French influence in places. While not unduly difficult, it needs a capable body of voices to sing it with the requisite finish. All five numbers are charming, with the first and last perhaps as the best. The solos and the pianoforte part are rather difficult, but they give good results for the trouble. Schools and singing classes requiring a work out of the beaten track will find it in this Suite.

The Pilgrims' Progress. Narrative tone-poem for organ. By Ernest Austin. Op. 41.

[J. H. Larway.]

This elaborate piece of programme music is in four parts (published separately). While many of the points are to be appreciated only by the aid of the analytical programme thoughtfully provided by the publisher, there is still much admirable music that makes its appeal quite apart from the story. The work is modern in style and only moderately difficult.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The White Gate, and other poems. By Lorma Leigh. Pp. 42. Price 1s. 6d. net. (London: James Hewetson & Son).

Gilbert, Sullivan, and D'Oyly Carte. By François Cellier and Cunningham Bridgeman. Pp. 442 + xiii. Price 12s. 6d. net. (London: Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd.)

Orchestration. By Cecil Forsyth. Pp. 517. Price 21s. net. (London: Macmillan & Co., and Stainer & Bell.)

Poems and Legends. By Charles Stratford Catty. Pp. 385 + ix. Price 5s. net. (London: Smith, Elder & Co.)

Indian Music. By Shahinda (Begum Fyzee-Rahamin), with Preface by F. Gilbert Webb. Pp. 96. (London: William Marchant & Co.)

On June 3 Miss Margaret Morris and her pupils gave, at her Chelsea theatre, the first of six performances of a choreographic interpretation of Beethoven's seventh Symphony.