

Review

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pianoforte. Byron's poetry has tempted many composers before, but the setting now before us is one of the most sympathetic we have seen. Commencing with a symphony in D minor, the arpeggios which accompany the melody are carried on when the voice begins, an unexpected change of key giving much effect to the text. The long holding D for the voice (treated as the fifth of the chord of G minor), with the final phrase in the original key, on the words "and the lulled winds seem dreaming," may be cited as really beautiful points in a highly meritorious song.

Flow down, cold rivulet. Trio for female voices. Poetry by Lord Tennyson. Composed by Luard Selby.

Morning Hymn. Chorus of Priestesses from the Opera "La Vestale," English version by the Rev. Dr. Troutbeck. Music by Spontini.

Quiet Hours. Trio for female voices. Poetry by E. Saxby. Composed by R. B. Addison.

[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THESE three pieces are published in Novello's Collection of Trios, Quartets, &c., for female voices, and will be welcome additions to the store of such compositions especially suited for drawing-room performance. Mr. Selby's Trio, if somewhat overlaid in the accompaniment, is well written, effective, and sympathetic with the words in the voice parts. Spontini's Chorus from "La Vestale" is so full of dramatic feeling as to need no recommendation on our part. A good pianist will be required to do full justice to the intention of the composer; and something more than the correct singing of the notes is demanded from the singers. In its way, it is a perfect little gem. "Quiet Hours" is a good specimen of an unpretentious Trio. The words are happily expressed throughout, and the flowing accompaniment brightens, without interfering with, the voices. Mr. Addison has evidently been trained in a good school.

Barcarole. From the Fourth Concerto of Sterndale Bennett. Arranged for the organ by E. M. Lott.

[E. Ashdown.]

THIS lovely movement has long been a favourite with organists, and no doubt Mr. Lott thinks there is room for another arrangement. He has carried out his task in an artistic spirit on the whole, though in a few matters of detail there is room for question. The use of the high F on the pedals (a note not always to be found) in the principal subject is objectionable, and on how many organs will Mr. Lott find an 8-foot trumpet on the pedals?

Ten Songs for Children. Written by Edward Oxenford and Henry Hersee. Composed by Carl Reinecke.

[Forsyth Brothers.]

THE melodious flow of the verses of these songs fits them admirably for simple musical setting, and it need scarcely be said that Herr Reinecke, in contributing his share to this "Children's Offering," has proved himself a true friend to the little vocalists for whom he writes. No. 2, "The Five"; No. 3, "Where are you going, my pretty maid?" No. 6, "Ding dong, bell"; No. 9, "The Birthday congratulations"; and No. 10, "The Sleigh Ride in the Room"—with the attractive *glissando* passages for pianoforte—may be especially commended. The accompaniments offer no difficulties, even to very young pianists.

Queen of the May. Cantata for ladies' voices. Composed by Alfred J. Caldicott, Mus. Bac., Cantab.

[Weekes and Co.]

THE subject of this Cantata is sufficiently explained by its title; and although the incident has so often been treated both by poets and musicians, Mr. Caldicott's setting has every right to take a high place, not only by its simple melodiousness, but by the truly artistic feeling which asserts itself, without obtrusion, throughout the work. We do not know whether the composer is responsible for the words, but we may say that they flow smoothly enough for the unpretending music to which they are wedded, although we could wish that in some parts they were a little less conventional. Neither in the vocal nor the instrumental part will the powers of the executants be much taxed; but in drawing-room Cantatas, especially for ladies' voices, this can be scarcely considered an objection; and in proof that

the composer has endeavoured to meet any difficulty which may stand in the way of a performance of the Cantata by amateurs, he tells us that if, in the opening chorus, three voice parts cannot be procured, the lower part may be omitted. The little song "'Tis even so," the duet "How quickly doth the daylight fade," the Processional March and Chorus, and the Finale, "Round the Maypole," may be cited as good specimens of the simple and pleasing style of the work, which we conscientiously recommend for small gatherings, where there may be some desire to escape the gushingly sentimental or mournful vocal effusions which too often form the *répertoire* of a "musical evening."

O Lady, leave thy silken thread. Trio for female voices. Words by Thomas Hood. Music by Stephen Kemp.

[Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

THIS is one of the most graceful little part-songs we have seen for some time, and will certainly prove most acceptable to female singers who can do justice to its merits. The melodious flow of the voice parts (with here and there some effective passages of imitation) most sympathetically colours Hood's charming verses, which indeed are in themselves instinct with musical feeling. The change from E into C major at the *poco meno mosso* may be cited as one amongst many points worthy of praise.

Album of Six Songs. Composed by Whewall Bowling. [Marriott and Williams.]

THESE six songs so evidently evince not only a decided feeling for melody in their composer (whose name is new to us), but a desire to escape from the ordinary groove of pretty song writing, that we may conscientiously recommend them to the attention of vocalists. We cannot altogether acquit Mr. Bowling from the charge of occasionally degenerating into ungraceful phrasing in the voice part in order to persevere with a figure in the accompaniment, but these figures are generally abstractedly attractive; and it is by no means easy to write a perfect song for voice and pianoforte where both shall be indissolubly united. No. 1, "Come thou to me" (words by Elizabeth H. Whiteman); No. 2, "From afar" (words by "A. M. H."); No. 4, "My tears are mine alone" (words by Aubrey de Vere), and No. 6, "Farewell" (words by Heber) are, in our opinion, the most spontaneous compositions of the set; Nos. 1 and 4 being especially sympathetic with the verses.

Over the sea our galleys went. Chorus for Male Voices. Words by Robert Browning. Music by Ethel Harraden. [C. Jefferys.]

IF well sung, this composition could not fail to prove successful; but Miss Harraden has been somewhat unmerciful in her vocal writing, and should not, therefore, complain if her very clever musical ideas are not satisfactorily realised. We are, indeed, very much pleased with many points in this work, and shall be glad again to meet with so promising a composer in choral music somewhat more grateful to the singers.

Evening Service in D. By Matthew Kingston. [Birmingham: Rogers and Priestley.]

THIS is an extremely meritorious setting of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis, being at once musically, pleasing, and unpretentious. Though some of the progressions, both of melody and harmony, have a modern flavour, the general style is church-like and refined. The service is within the means of parish choirs, and at the same time quite worthy of performance in a cathedral.

In Shadowland. Song. Poetry by Rea.

Don't forget me. Song. Written by Helen Marion Burnside. Composed by Ciro Pinsuti.

[Robert Cocks and Co.]

WE know not why these songs are sent to us for review, as for years they have been favourites; but it is never too late to say a word of praise upon really good music; and certainly to both the compositions we can accord unqualified commendation. The first one, "Shadowland," is somewhat gloomy; but drawing-room audiences like gloominess in vocal music, and this quality, therefore, will be no bar to the popularity of an attractive and thoroughly artistic song. "Don't forget me" is just one of those

simple ballads which haunt the memory and make us believe in the eloquence of that style of writing of which our countryman, Balfe, produced so many excellent specimens, and which so few of his successors have continued. By the publication of any number of songs as good as the one before us, Signor Pinsuti need not fear that he will wear out his welcome.

Mon Bijou. Caprice pour Piano. Par Carl Bohm.
[Edwin Ashdown.]

So unpretentious and graceful a little sketch as "Mon Bijou" will be welcomed not only by listeners, but by teachers who are desirous that their pupils shall enjoy a little "light refreshment" after the more solid fare upon which they should be musically nourished. The principal theme is appropriately light and melodious, and the passages lie well under the fingers.

Two Andantes for the Organ. By Battison Haynes.
Op. 14.
[Leipzig: Kistner. London: Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE high level of excellence reached in the previous organ works of Mr. Haynes is well sustained in these *Andantes*, which are well-developed movements, not mere trifles such as any ordinary player could improvise. The first, in D flat, is very German in character; and the second, in B flat, 3-8 time, is the more attractive and melodious of the two.

Sonatina, No. 2, in C. By Arthur B. Plant.
[Weekes and Co.]

THE author of this composition has been unduly modest in terming it a Sonatina, as it consists of three movements of fair dimensions. Of these the first is the most satisfactory, alike in subject-matter and treatment, being written in a broad and vigorous style without any excessive technical difficulties. The *Andante con moto* is pleasing, but the *Fughetta* is somewhat feeble as a finale.

FOREIGN NOTES.

THE Paris correspondent of the *Times* writes, under date the 20th ult.:—"The Opéra Comique, the theatre to which is chiefly confided the representation of works of the essentially French kind wherefrom the house takes its name, and which for that very reason is subsidised, reproduced yesterday with great success "*Zampa*," a comic opera by Hérold, played fifty-four years ago, and which reached its 554th representation. The interest of the performance lay in the rôle of *Zampa*, the pirate, played by the celebrated baritone Maurel. He performed the part in a very lively and original manner, and secured a real triumph in the air of the second act, "*Il faut céder à mes lois*," which he gave with the ability of a great musician and great actor. It is said that Cholet, who created this part in 1831, and who is now eighty-six years of age, was present in a *baïgnoire* at this brilliant representation. There was another triumph for the orchestra, which Danbé conducted admirably, and which was applauded for ten minutes after the brilliant execution of the overture—one of the prettiest of the French school. The piece is very elegantly got up. The theatre was crowded by a select audience, and the revival was quite a success."

We also extract the following from a correspondence of the *Daily Telegraph*, dated January 21:—"Great enthusiasm was displayed last night in the Salle Erard, where Herr Joachim gave the first of two private Concerts. The room was very well filled by all the most eminent professional and *dilettante* musicians in Paris, although very little previous notice had been given of the Concert, and the seats were 20 francs each. Such was the prodigious effect produced by Herr Joachim's playing that the audience were wild with delight. Seriously, I have never, in the experience of a quarter of a century, witnessed such enthusiasm at the playing of any soloist. . . . Herr Joachim is to play at the Châtelet next Sunday, and at his own Concert on the following evening." The programme of the Concert above referred to included Beethoven's Quartet in E minor, Schumann's Quartet in A major, and, amongst the solo pieces by the concert-giver, Bach's

"Chaconne," and a selection from Brahms's "Hungarian Dances."

M. Gounod is engaged upon the composition of an Oratorio entitled "Jeanne d'Arc," which is to be first produced in the Cathedral of Rheims.

On the occasion of the recent third repetition of M. Massenet's new opera "*Le Cid*," at the Paris Grand Opéra, the receipts amounted to 22,000 francs, the highest figure on record at that establishment.

The most conflicting rumours prevail in Continental journals concerning the already so much talked about new opera by Verdi. According to the information of some of our contemporaries, "*Iago*" is to be positively produced, during the present season, at the Paris Grand Opéra, while the journal *Le Temps* as positively asserts that the work has been preserved for La Scala, of Milan, to be brought out in the *stagione* of 1887. At the same time, we are informed, from another quarter, that the veteran Maëstro has favoured some of his intimate friends with a sight of the complete score of the new work, adding that he should never allow it to be performed in public. Upon being asked the reason why, then, he had written it at all, Verdi is said to have replied, laconically, "*Per mio diletto*" (for my personal enjoyment). We would fain hope that the last quoted report, as far as the Maëstro's dictum is concerned, will prove incorrect; but in the presence of so many divergent statements, we may well ask, in the words of Donna Anna, in Mozart's opera: *A chi si credera?*

The Italian Maëstro Pietro Pinelli has been inspired to the composition of three Symphonies by the study of Dante's "*Divina Commedia*," and of Milton's "*Paradise Lost*." Under the collective title of "*Dante and Milton*," the works are to be shortly produced at Brescia.

Auber's graceful opera, "*Fra Diavolo*," written in 1830, appears to meet with a somewhat tardy recognition in Italy. At the Nicolini Theatre, of Florence, the work has lately been performed twenty times in succession, and continues to attract large audiences.

A correspondent writes to us from Rome:—"At an Invitation Concert of the German Club here on Saturday (16th ult.), when the performers were pupils of Liszt, the Abbé was prevailed upon to play a pianoforte solo, amidst tremendous enthusiasm. The Maëstro was also present yesterday afternoon (18th ult.) at an Organ Recital given on the fine organ of the American Church. The programme consisted chiefly of compositions by Liszt, who expressed himself much pleased with the performance."

We hear from Florence of Signor Ciro Pinsuti's opera "*Margherita*" having been produced there for the first time at the Pergola Theatre, on the 16th ult., before a numerous audience. The work was very well received.

Mr. William Nicholl, a young English tenor, who gained the Parepa Rosa gold medal at the Royal Academy of Music in June last, and who is just now pursuing his studies under Signor Vannuccini, at Florence, gave a very successful first Concert in that town on the 12th ult. High praise is bestowed upon his performance in some of the local journals. Mr. Nicholl will, we understand, shortly return to this country.

An exhibition of antique musical instruments is shortly to be opened at the museum of Milan, and a series of Historical Concerts are to be given in connection therewith.

Signor Marchetti's new Opera, "*Don Giovanni d'Austria*," has met with brilliant success at the Teatro Costanzi, of Rome, the composer being called before the curtain no less than thirty times, and several numbers were redemanded.

The Carnival Season was inaugurated at leading Italian theatres with the following operatic works—viz., at the Apollo, of Rome, with "*Aida*"; at the Scala, of Milan, with "*Carmen*"; at the San Carlo, of Naples, with "*Mefistofele*"; at the Carlo Felice, of Genoa, with "*Aida*"; at the Regio, of Turin, with "*La Juive*"; at the Pergola, of Florence, with "*Mignon*"; at the Fenice, of Venice, with "*Aida*"; and at the Regio, of Parma, and the Politeama, of Palermo, with "*Gioconda*."

Twenty-eight new operas and operettas by native composers have been brought out in Italy during the year 1885.