

Review

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up. There is no plot. We are shown a company of Irish peasantry keeping watch over their defunct friend and fiddler, 'stretch'd out at his ease . . . holding his fiddle and stick and drest top to toe in his Sunday best.' The motto of it all is:

'Sure life 's like his music and ended soon—

There 's dancing and crying,
There 's kissing, there 's sighing,
There 's smiling and sporting,
There 's wedding and courting,—

But the skirl of the wake is the end of the tune !'

One after another, Judy O'Roon, Kitty O'Bride, Tim Blane, Rose Donnell, Pat Rooney, Shamus the Fool, and Barnaby Blake have their say, and so the night passes.

Mr. Bath's music mingles fun and pathos, with a strong Irish accent. It is full of variety, and at the same time consistent and appropriate. What is equally important—it is practical. The voice parts are such as voices can sing. Four soloists are required, and each has something individual to contribute. After Rose Donnell has played the *drimindhu*, the soprano introduces a passage of captivating melody on the words, 'Oh, 'twas sweet as the crooning of fairies by night.' All the soloists join in, and a dainty undertone is sounded by the choir. This is a 'number' that is sure to make good with audiences. Presently, to the accompaniment of a lively jig, the tenor, as Pat Rooney, entertains the company with the laughable story of the Piper of Clare. And so on to the end where, over a semiquaver bass that is not too academic, all join in sending the spirit of O'Connor up among the saints, where 'He'll pass through their middle, with stick and with fiddle, and they'll give him the *cead mile fealta* up there.' At a time when there is a dearth of new, singable, and enjoyable choral works, a cantata of this description should earn a ready welcome.

Mr. Harvey Grace's 'Fisher-folk lullaby' contains some interesting ideas. Without pretentiousness, it embodies some original thought. Into the treatment of a swaying nine-eighth melody of familiar pattern the composer introduces atmospheric effects of voice and harmony; the one by frequent use of humming with a crooned vowel for vocal accompaniment, the other by a growing chromaticism that glides (where 'hungrily the waves are calling') into the whole-tone scale; or, rather, that portion of the melodic minor scale that is built of whole-tones. The part-song is a clever blend of melody and suggestion. The ending of each verse where a tenor melody in soft canonic imitation of the soprano sinks gently, over a short-cut cadence, into the tonic chord *ppp*, is bound to be highly effective. Mr. Grace's words are straightforward, sensible poetry, addressed by a fisher-wife to her child.

ANTHEMS.

To whom then will ye liken God? By Horatio Parker.

Christ our Passover. By Horatio Parker.

O brightness of the Immortal Father's face. By Mark Andrews.

[New York : The H. W. Gray Co.]

Of Mr. Parker's two anthems the first is by far the finer. It opens with a striking piece of choral declamation, followed by a tenor solo, with a well laid out accompaniment. The final section for soloist and choir is very telling. The work, which is for Advent or general use, is of moderate difficulty. 'Christ our Passover' is simpler, but in its bold and straightforward way is effective. Mr. Andrews's setting of a translation of the well-known evening hymn of Sophronius—familiar in England as 'O Gladsome Light'—is for five voices (S.A.T.B.B.) *a cappella*. The music is well written and suitable for a good average choir, though one or two climaxes would yield their full effect only with a large choral body.

Nocturne for String Orchestra. By William H. Speer.

[London : Stainer & Bell, Ltd.]

A melodious and expressive essay for a string band, not very difficult as to its notes, but requiring refined treatment to do it full justice.

Novello's Anthem Book. A Collection of Popular Anthems for Festival and General use throughout the year. Books Nos. 10-15.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Each book of this series contains twelve anthems, apportioned thus—one for each of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide, and Harvest, three for Lent, and four for general use. Choirs thus have under one cover, at the cost of a shilling, a supply of anthems sufficient for the Church's year. The standard of difficulty is very moderate. A list of the contents of Book 10 will give an idea of the grade:—Advent: 'God shall wipe away all tears' (Field); Christmas: 'Sing, O Heavens' (Mauder); Lent: 'Jesu, Word of God Incarnate' (Elgar), 'Hear the voice and prayer' (Hopkins), 'By Babylon's wave' (Gounod); Easter: 'Unto the Paschal Victim bring' (West); Whitsuntide: 'Our blest Redeemer' (Hall); Harvest: 'Great is the Lord' (Sydenham); General: 'Blessed be the Lord my strength' (Markham Lee), 'Abide with me' (Atkins), 'O how amiable' (Mauder), 'The Lord is exalted' (West). The volumes are published in both notations. Now that unaccompanied singing is practised so much, it might be well to include in future selections at least one *a cappella* work of simple kind.

Prelude and Fugue in D major. For organ. By Alexander Glazounow. Op. 93.

[Breitkopf & Härtel.]

The brilliant Russian composer's début as a writer of organ music is a welcome sign of the interest now being taken in the organ as an independent instrument rather than as an ingenious contrivance for the serving-up of réchauffés of popular orchestral dishes. Evidently, too, he regards it as a medium for music of a severe type. His *Prelude and Fugue* is entirely free from traces of the vivid colour and bizarre rhythm we have been taught to expect from Russia. Instead we have music mainly diatonic, with polyphony which, while thoroughly interesting, is on the severe side. The work is fourteen pages in length, fairly difficult, and will be warmly welcomed by all who care for pure, scholarly organ music.

Four Songs of Tennyson. By A. C. Mackenzie. (a) 'Beat upon mine, little heart'; (b) 'Love flew in at the window'; (c) 'The milkmaid's song'; (d) 'The bee buzz'd up in the heat.'

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

These charming settings of well-known lyrics should be useful additions to the repertory of singers who have at their command considerable freedom of style. All are short, but the composer has managed to include in a small space plenty of interest, both melodic and harmonic. Perhaps the most attractive of the set is the first, a really beautiful little song, full of tender feeling, while the fourth, with its happy little descriptive touches, is also fascinating in a different way. The songs are published in pairs (a) (b), and (c) (d).

Magnificat and Nunc dimittis. Set to Gregorian Tones, with verses in Faux-bourdon. By Orlando Gibbons; by Whitbrooke and Knight; and by 'Anon.' and Thomas Causton. Edited by Francis Burgess and Royle Shore.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

These useful additions (Nos. 897, 898, and 899) of old English music to 'Novello's Parish Choir Book' series are well worthy of revival. The Gibbons is especially fine. The 'Anon.' and Causton settings are for A.T.B.B., and will be useful on occasions when boys' voices are not available.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Memoirs of an American Prima Donna. With forty illustrations. By Clara Louise Kellogg. Pp. xiii. + 382. Price 10s. 6d. net. (London and New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

Stories from the Operas. By Gladys Davidson. Pp. xiv. + 559. Price 6s. net. (London : T. Werner Laurie, Ltd.)

Calendar of the Royal College of Organists, 1913-14. Pp. 316. Price : 10s. 6d. (London : C. Jaques & Son.)