

Review

Source: *The Musical Times*, Vol. 50, No. 798 (Aug. 1, 1909), p. 525

Published by: Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/906431>

Accessed: 21-05-2016 03:35 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Musical Times Publications Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Musical Times*

his day; a Fantasia by Francesco Antonio Bonporti, an Imperial Counsellor of Austria and (according to Grove) one of the earliest instrumental composers of importance; and an Allegro vivamente by the justly-esteemed violinist Pietro Nardini. Each piece is, in its way, of interest; but the Allegro of Nardini is likely to be the one most in request.

Violinists in search of an effective concert solo, without accompaniment, may be advised to turn their attention to Max Reger's *Präludium und Fuge* in B minor. It is well worthy of consideration, and is difficult without being by any means inordinately so.

Valse Etude, by D. Alard. Arranged and with pianoforte accompaniment composed by Spencer Dyke.

Rezinka, for violin and pianoforte. By Franz Drdla. [Bosworth & Co.]

Mr. Spencer Dyke has composed an admirable pianoforte accompaniment to a Valse Etude by Alard, with the result that the piece is transformed into a fine violin solo with accompaniment, one that is well fitted for a concert performance.

Few violin composers of the present day have advanced more rapidly than Franz Drdla (pronounced, by the way, as *Derdla*), born on November 28, 1865, at Saar, in Moravia, on the borders of Bohemia. One of his latest works, 'Rezinka,' is in the form of a Mazurka, and gives a fairly characteristic example of the style of many of Drdla's compositions. Brilliance in the violin part, originality of themes, many tenderly persuasive passages, and attractive pianoforte accompaniments, all these combine to make the composer a favourite among violinists.

SONGS.

Odelette. The Dance. Chryssilla. Anacreontic Ode. Composed by E. M. Smyth.

Eight Songs (Op. 14). Composed by Brahms. English words by W. G. Rothery.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

All the originality of Miss Ethel Smyth's style and methods is employed in the composition of her songs. The four latest examples from her pen are designed for and conceived with a view to orchestral accompaniment, and their full merit is not revealed by a glance through the pianoforte score. The orchestral colours not only show the harmonic scheme in a more vivid light, but help to intensify the mood. However, all the virtues that depend least upon the instrumental setting—the ingenious harmonies, the beautiful melodic ideas, the deep expression and pathos, and general strength of conception—all these will meet with their full appreciation through the medium of the pianoforte arrangement skillfully devised by the composer.

The songs are of elaborate design and considerable length. Modern—but not ultra-modern—in style, they belong to some extent to the impressionist school; of 'The Dance' this is especially true. There is, however, little trace of the influence of any other composer. The 'Odelette' and the 'Anacreontic Ode' are particularly strong and individualistic. 'Chryssilla' can be had arranged for a violin obbligato, with which many charming effects could be obtained. French and English words are provided in all the songs. In three cases the French text is by H. de Régnier and the English version by Alma Stretzell. In the 'Anacreontic Ode' the French version is by Leconte de Lisle and the English by Miss Smyth. In all cases the English text is worthy of the original. The range of the vocal parts is that of a mezzo-soprano or baritone voice.

Mr. Rothery's translations continue to provide an element which is bound to exert its influence in popularizing and spreading a knowledge and an appreciation of Brahms's songs. The examples comprised in Op. 14 are mostly Volkslieder. The first book contains 'At the window' ('Vor dem Fenster'), 'The wounded youth' ('Vom verwundeten Knaben'), 'Murray's lament' ('Murray's Ermordung') and 'A sonnet' ('Ein Sonett'); the second selection contains 'Parting' ('Trennung'), 'So secretly' ('Gang zur Liebsten'), 'Serenade' ('Ständchen') and 'Longing' ('Sehnsucht'). 'Murray's lament' is a song of mourning for 'the bonnie Earl,' assassinated in 1592, and is described as coming from Herder's 'Stimmen der Völker.' 'A sonnet' is described as 'Aus dem 13ten Jahrhundert.' The 'Serenade' is well-known for its simplicity and beauty.

PART-SONGS.

Day-dreams. The throstle sings. Composed by Max Meyer-Olbersleben.

By woodland and wayside. When the world is gay. Composed by Ewald Franz.

The nightingale in moonlit glade. The birds are singing. Composed by Hans Sitt.

English words by W. G. Rothery.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Only pleasant dreams are recorded in Mr. Meyer Olbersleben's 'Day-dreams.' The music reflects the glow and not the languor of the noon-day sun and, preserving a swinging rhythm and a graceful melodic style, it provides a pleasant and singable part-song. The same composer's 'The throstle sings' displays similar characteristics. Melody and gratefulness in the vocal parts are the first consideration. In both part-songs the effect is heightened by the simplicity of the means employed.

The feature of Mr. Ewald Franz's 'By woodland and wayside' is the variety of its rhythm. The beat is continuous, but its divisions constantly vary between triple and duple or quadruple. The interest is also upheld by the assigning of a small section to solo voices alone. Abundant expression marks supply a guide to the proper method of interpretation, and if not exaggerated in performance, make for lightness and delicacy. Mr. Franz's 'When the world is gay' is a species of vocal dance. The tenor and bass parts supply a guitar-like accompaniment in the opening sections of each of the four verses, while the soprano and alto voices sing a dainty tune. The tripping rhythm so established is continued when the four voices blend into closer harmony. Accidentals are very few and elementary, and there is an entire absence of anything approaching difficulty.

In 'The nightingale in moonlit glade,' Hans Sitt has devoted his attention and his skill to imparting smoothness and interest to the vocal writing. There is no squareness of construction, the flow of the music being at once varied and carried along by the treatment of the lower parts, which are more than an accompaniment to the melody. Choralists will find many attractive qualities in this part-song. 'The birds are singing' is simpler in the design of its part-writing but is more varied in tonality. Its harmonies are, however, by no means difficult in execution. These two examples of Hans Sitt's writing would go well together in a choral society's programme.

PART-SONGS FOR MALE VOICES.

Walpurga (Op. 30.) By F. Hegar. English words by Rev. Canon Gorton.

Nine Part-songs for men's voices (with tenor lead). By Robert Schumann. English words by W. G. Rothery.

The piper o' Dundee. The Laird o' Cockpen. Pibroch of Donuil Dhu By Granville Bantock.

Bushes and Briars. The jolly ploughboy. Folk-songs, arranged for male-voice quartet (tenor lead). By R. Vaughan Williams.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The vigorous English versions provided by Canon Gorton have been the means of familiarising Friedrich Hegar's male-voice choral ballads in England, especially in the North, where they are frequently used as test-pieces at competition festivals. Their intense dramatic force—of which a well-known example is found in 'The phantom host'—is again typified in 'Walpurga.' The original German words, which Canon Gorton has translated with conspicuous ability and art, are a Ballade by Carl Spitteler. They describe the ill-starred attempt of a headstrong young knight (Roland) to tame the fiery spirit of Walpurga, a virulent wood-pixy, and to win her affections. Plentiful opportunity is therefore provided for vivid musical treatment, of which the composer has fully availed himself, for his setting abounds in light and shade and quick changes of mood. All parts contain something to interest the singers and to display their ability. The highest part is for tenor voice.