

Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 36, No. 634 (Dec. 1, 1895), p. 819

Published by: Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3363817>

Accessed: 07-05-2016 23:27 UTC

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time of its appearance and, naturally, considerable ill-feeling. There are some hard sayings in it, and prejudice is written in large letters all over it. The attack on Meyerbeer is bitter; one might, indeed, say unfair. On the other hand, the references to Mendelssohn are couched in very careful language. As a man Wagner speaks of him as "of the finest and most varied culture, and of the highest, tenderest sense of honour." The "Mémentos of Spontini" form very attractive reading. There is a Berlioz-Mémoires touch in the story of the "magnificent" Triumphant March in "La Vestale." Wagner asked the composer why he had introduced no trombones into it? "Est-ce que je n'y ai pas de trombones?" asked the composer; and on referring to his score, and finding there were none, he is said to have requested Wagner to write out parts for those instruments in time for the next rehearsal. This story may, we think, be taken *cum grano salis*. The "Music of the Future" ("Zukunftsmusik") is one of the most valuable of Wagner's writings. The author expounds his views in, for him, singularly clear language. In the preface, Mr. Ellis refers to the "able translation" of that article by Mr. E. Dannreuther. The letter on the performances of "Tannhäuser" in Paris, in 1861, is also another interesting feature of the volume. It was published in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* within a month of the *fiasco*. The failure was owing to party opposition; when Wagner withdrew his score the house had been "already sold out for several performances in advance." The hostile reception then given to the work has been fully atoned for by its recent careful, and, we may add, successful production in the French capital. Mr. Ellis, following the plan of his earlier volumes, has given a convenient summary of contents; and, besides, a very full Index, for which all readers will be grateful. With the translation one may not always be quite satisfied. But it must be remembered that the translator's task was one of extreme difficulty; there are even passages in Wagner's writings in which the exact meaning is by no means clear. And, again, Mr. Ellis has always been anxious to reproduce, so far as was possible, Wagner's peculiar and, at times, crabbed style; not in any way to soften or conceal it. The mere fact that he has ventured on such an undertaking as the translation of all Wagner's writings argues courage of no ordinary kind.

Robert Schumann's Works for the Pianoforte (complete). Edited and fingered by Agnes Zimmermann. Vol. 3. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE publication of this volume completes Miss Zimmermann's edition of the pianoforte works of Schumann, so that we have now an English edition of the composer's productions for his favourite instrument worthy of his position in the esteem of music-lovers. Miss Zimmermann's name is itself sufficient to recommend the edition as regards accuracy in the important matter of phrasing marks, &c., and the suggestion of appropriate fingering; but the fact that in her delicate task she has also had the advantage of advice from the greatest living authority on the subject of Schumann's intentions naturally increases one's confidence. In another respect also—less vital, indeed, than that just referred to, but still of considerable importance in an age when few can claim to be completely independent of the optician's aid—this edition will commend itself to the musical public. The print is large and clear to an even greater degree than usual with the publications issued by the same firm. The space allotted deprives even the most "crowded" passages of that "entangled" appearance that affrights so many whose spirit is willing but whose flesh is weak. The volume contains, if not the greatest, yet surely the most attractive of Schumann's works for the pianoforte. Its complete contents are set forth in another part of this journal, but we may select from them, in proof of our contention, the "Faschingsschwank aus Wien" ("Carnival freak from Vienna"), the "Three Romances," Op. 28, the *Studies* and *Sketches* for pedal pianoforte, the famous "Album for the Young," the delicious "Forest Scenes," the *Albumblätter*, the marvellously fine "Pieces in Fughetta Form," in which the influence of Bach is so strikingly shown, and the noble "Songs of the Dawn." These works include several of the most picturesque and individual of the master's utterances, and embrace, of course, the productions of his ripest period.

The Irish Song Book, with Original Irish Airs. Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by Alfred Perceval Graves. [T. Fisher Unwin.]

THE interest in national music of all kinds is ever on the increase, and this volume forms a welcome addition to works concerning the "immortal melodies of the Emerald Isle." The writer, in the Introduction, praises Professor Stanford for having sought inspiration "from those well-nigh inexhaustible sources"—*i.e.*, the great collections of ancient Irish music. Dr. Parry, whom he quotes, has described that music as "probably the most human, most varied, most poetical in the world." Whence are to be obtained the purest settings of old Irish airs?—a question of importance—is discussed briefly. From the harpers and other instrumentalists, says one school of critics; from the ballad-singers, says another. In favour of the latter it has been remarked that the rhythm and metre of the words must have imposed restraints upon the singers, whereas instrumentalists could alter or invent at their own sweet will. Singers, however, are not immaculate, and, like Mr. Silas Wegg, may occasionally have dropped into a little poetry on their own account. Still the balance is in their favour. Dr. Petrie, in the preface to his great collection, declares that he found versions differing so greatly, that they could with difficulty be recognised as being the one air. Mr. Graves has married some of our best lyrics, ancient and modern, either "unmatched or ill-matched to music," to some of the finest old Irish airs. Dealing with the later lyrics, he tells us, is "extremely delicate work." And he expects "to be roundly attacked" for having, in some cases, omitted or transposed a stanza. But ballads, unreasonable in length, must be compressed, unless they be taken as texts for cantatas. This interesting "Irish Song Book" has already appeared in two editions. The compiler has contributed some graceful lyrics of his own. Besides an ordinary table of contents, there is a convenient list of authors and anonymous songs, with dates.

The Captive Lover. Song by Henry Purcell. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

IN view of the absorbing interest now shown in the writings of Purcell the publication of this song is very opportune. The value of this edition is much increased by its having been edited from the Autograph by Professor Bridge, to whose recent patriotic researches we are so greatly indebted for several important discoveries concerning the life and works of our great composer. Apart, however, from the historical interest of the song, it possesses a naïve charm of its own that will appeal to all sympathetic singers, into whose portfolios the expressive little ditty should speedily make its way.

Rondo in B minor. For Violin and Pianoforte. By L. Spohr. Op. 145, No. 6. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS is the last of a series of pieces for violin and pianoforte which might with advantage be played in our Concert rooms, instead of excerpts from this master's concerted works, when no orchestra is available. The Rondo now under notice is in Spohr's most characteristic style and possesses a second subject of great sensuous charm. The clearness of the printing will be much appreciated by those who have to read at sight the chromatic pianoforte part.

Twelve Pieces for Pianoforte. By P. Tschaikowsky. Two Books. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE Russian composer whose career came so suddenly to an end in 1893 wrote, like Rubinstein, many songs and short pianoforte pieces which have already attained world-wide celebrity. His "Pathetic" Symphony in B minor was produced at a Philharmonic Concert, under the direction of Sir A. C. Mackenzie; and this important work has shown him worthy of a high place among the symphonic writers of the present century. It has, indeed, materially increased his reputation in this country, so that anything from his pen is now welcome. The pieces in this collection are exceedingly attractive. In Book 1 we have a clever and showy