

Review

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## REVIEWS (Continued from page 248).

*August Manns and the Saturday Concerts.* A memoir and a retrospect. By H. Saxe Wyndham.

[The Walter Scott Publishing Company.]

Non-creative musicians—conductors, instrumentalists, and singers—are at a disadvantage compared with some composers, in that they pass away and are more or less soon forgotten. Therefore it is desirable that eminent practical musicians, such as August Manns was, should be biographically honoured in a permanent form. The life of Manns was so closely and honourably identified with the Crystal Palace and its music that it is impossible to think of the man without the place where he acquired well-merited fame. Mr. Saxe Wyndham has, however, obtained access to an autobiographical sketch found among the distinguished conductor's papers at his death. This, with the aid of the biographical sketch of Manns which appeared in the issue of the *Musical Times* of March, 1898, and the splendid record of the Saturday Concerts, furnish ample material for the life-story of August Manns.

The book records a strenuous and art-loving life, not without its ups and downs, but animated with earnestness of purpose in the cause of music, and especially, let us add, of the music of his adopted country; for this the name of August Manns will long be held in grateful remembrance. Some of the letters here printed are very interesting. One—written in his seventy-seventh year—is to Sir Hubert Parry, in which he quotes the following poem as an incentive to the students of the Royal College of Music:

## THE FOUR P'S.

Patience, Perseverance,  
Prudence and Pluck,  
They who practise these shall always have luck;  
Those who neglect them,  
Whatever they be,  
Shall never succeed on land or on sea.

The somewhat common sensitiveness of executive artists to criticism was not absent from the temperament of the Crystal Palace conductor. In this connection is printed a highly characteristic letter of Mr. Bernard Shaw, whom, as musical critic of the *Star* in 1888, Manns endeavoured to take to task for an unfavourable notice of a Saturday concert. With what success, the reader is referred to Mr. Saxe Wyndham's book.

It is a pity that the proofs of this volume were not more carefully read. We have always thought that Leamington was in Warwickshire, not in Worcestershire; *Tannhäuser* is persistently printed *Tannhäuser*; the omission of commas on p. 3 (note) makes nonsense of some of the names; Chorley is credited with being *The Times* critic, instead of the *Athenæum*; and the quotation on p. 166 is erroneously attributed to Sir George Grove instead to Mr. Joseph Bennett. To issue a book of this kind without an index is nothing short of a literary sin. The memoir is not without some good points, but it should undergo careful revision before a second edition appears. The various portraits of Sir August Manns are an attractive feature of the volume.

## VIOLIN MUSIC.

*A Modern School for the Violin.* By August Wilhelmj and James Brown. Book 6B. (Sixth Book of Studies.) 30 *Caprices pour le violon seul.* Par John Chits.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Messrs. Wilhelmj and Brown's 'A Modern School for the Violin' is brought to a conclusion with the Sixth Book of Studies. This, the last section, presents four advanced studies in extensions, firmness of stopping, double stopping and octaves, and concludes with Bach's 'Chaconne' in D minor, admirably edited, with copious notes on the method of practising it.

In a final criticism of the completed 'Modern School,' one cannot refrain from expressing high praise for the inception and carrying out of this great work—by far the most exhaustive of its kind. Starting with the very best principles for acquiring a perfect knowledge of the rudimentary art of violin playing, the student is carried systematically and

carefully through every difficulty, until he finally arrives at the most advanced stage of technical and artistic skill to which any 'school' can legitimately carry him. Throughout the whole of their work the authors have conscientiously adhered to the two cardinal principles laid down in their initial preface: 'To present the simple before the complex,' and 'To teach one thing at a time.'

Mr. Louis Zimmermann states in a short preface to '30 Caprices for the violin,' by the talented Dutch violinist, John Chits, that they furnish excellent material for study. Not only do they contain much that is useful for the right arm, but they are also fine, original pieces written with excellent musical taste. We can cordially endorse this statement. Only violinists of advanced ability can attack these grand studies, for they deal almost entirely with such difficulties as are met with in concertos and elaborate concert solos. One of the great pianists of the last century invariably played through every morning some fifty of Cramer's studies to 'prepare' himself for an evening concert performance. By analogy these caprices by Chits can be confidently recommended as an excellent preparation for a violinist; but their technical difficulties are as far in advance of those of Cramer for the pianoforte as, say, the Tchaikovsky Violin concerto is to one by Mozart.

*Seven Scottish airs.* Arranged by G. von Holst. No. 28 of Novello's Albums for pianoforte and stringed instruments.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Mr. Gustav von Holst has skilfully arranged seven Scottish airs as a Quintet for pianoforte and strings. The setting should find favour in school circles where there are string orchestras. With the exception of 'Auld lang syne,' which effectively concludes the whole, the chosen tunes are well away from the beaten track, and include such gems of melody as 'My love's in Germany,' 'O how could ye gang, lassie,' &c. The string parts present no special difficulties.

## FOLK-SONGS.

*Eighteen folk-songs from Somerset* (School-song edition). Collected and arranged by Cecil J. Sharp.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The growing popularity of these examples of native airs is a gratifying reward for the labours of Mr. Sharp and his fellow enthusiasts. Eighteen of the Somerset songs are now issued in separate numbers, in a cheap and handy form, as well as in albums. 'I'm seventeen come Sunday,' 'The keys of Canterbury,' 'O no, John,' and several others in this collection will need no introduction. The artistic nature of Mr. Sharp's accompaniments is well known.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

*Beethoven's Letters.* A critical edition, with explanatory notes, by Dr. A. C. Kalischer. Translated, with preface, by J. S. Shedlock, B.A. Two volumes, with illustrations and facsimiles. Pp. xxxii. + 439; xx. + 486. 21s. net. (J. M. Dent & Co.)

*Old Irish Folk Music and Songs.* A collection of 842 Irish airs and songs hitherto unpublished. Edited, with annotations, for the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, by P. W. Joyce, LL.D., M.R.I.A., President of the Society. Pp. xxxvi. + 408; 10s. 6d. net. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

*Edward MacDowell.* A Study. By Lawrence Gilman. Pp. xvi. + 190; 5s. net. (John Lane.)

*The Psychology of Singing.* A rational method of voice-culture based on a scientific analysis of all systems, ancient and modern. By David C. Taylor. Pp. xix. + 373; 6s. 6d. net. (New York: The Macmillan Company.)

*The Flute and Flute-playing.* By Theobald Boehm. Translated and annotated by Dayton C. Miller, D.Sc. Pp. ix. + 100; \$1.50. (Sold by Messrs. Rudall, Carte & Co.)

*The Music of Speech.* By Florence Farr. Pp. 27; 2s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews.)

*The Leveller.* A musical romance. By Alexander McArthur. Pp. 287; 6s. (Stanley Paul & Co.)