

Review

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in an inverted form, but there is none of that straining after mere device which makes 'counterpoint' (and justly so) almost synonymous with ugliness. Such a thoroughly devotional tone breathes through the whole motett that it is difficult to believe it comes from the pen of the author of "Faust." Will not M. Gounod while he is amongst us, exiled from his most unhappy country, write some anthems?

*There is a green hill far away.* Sacred Song. Poetry by Mrs. C. F. Alexander. Music composed by Charles Gounod.

M. GOUNOD is so thoroughly earnest in all his settings of sacred words that, even where we are inclined to disagree with him in his method of expressing that earnestness, we cannot but admit that, from his own point of view, he has never for a moment lost sight of that reverence for his subject without which no composer can hope to produce works of any real value, either to art or religion. The song before us, however, can scarcely excite any such difference of opinion; and we have only to record our admiration of those merits of the composition, on a close examination, which appeared fully shared by the audience at the Philharmonic concert, when it was sung for the first time by Mr Santley, and enthusiastically encored. The poetry, which is admirably suited for music, is taken from an attractive little volume called "Hymns for Little Children," by Mrs. C. F. Alexander. The placid opening, in F minor, is deeply devotional; and amongst many points of excellence in the truthful expression of the words, may be mentioned the wailing effect of the minor ninth on the dominant to the line—"He died that we might be forgiven," and the change to the major on the words—"There was no other good enough," the chords which accompany the song up to this point being now replaced by triplets. The conclusion, too, where, between the vocal phrases, the harp is heard for the first time, is extremely beautiful. Of course the song is much enriched by the orchestral accompaniments; but the pianoforte part is excellently written, and we can scarcely doubt that with contralto and baritone singers this latest work of one of the most popular composers of the day, will become an established favourite, both for concert-room and domestic performance.

*Beware. (I know a maiden.)* Song. Written by H. W. Longfellow. Music composed by Charles Gounod.

THESE excellent verses of Longfellow have tempted so many of our native composers to give them a musical colouring which shall sympathise with the archness of the poetry that it becomes curious to see how they have been set by a foreigner. It is almost unnecessary to say that M. Gounod's treatment of the subject is thoroughly original and highly effective. The light symphony which ushers in the opening subject is in good keeping with the character of the song; and the figure in the accompaniment, which runs above the voice, and is carried on with few interruptions, as an independent part, gives much vitality to the vocal theme, which expresses the words of warning with true musical accuracy. A good effect is gained by the frequent pauses on the admonitory phrases, "Take care" and "Beware;" and the few bars of triplets in the pianoforte part form a good contrast with the rest of the accompaniment. The song will require to be sung with a due regard to the meaning both of the poet and composer; but vocalists possessed of such dramatic power may safely rely upon the effect of the composition.

*The Daisy.* Song. The words translated from the French of Alex. Dumas, fils, by Henry Dulcken, Ph.D. Music composed by Charles Gounod.

SHOULD the residence of M. Gounod in this country be merely temporary, he is likely to leave us many interesting reminiscences of his sojourn amongst us; for in addition to the compositions we have already noticed (all of which were written very recently) we have here a vocal trifle which, in its way, is a perfect gem. We should say

that it is simplicity itself, were there not artistic touches throughout the song never to be found in the works of those smooth ballad writers who, with their sugary melodies and obvious harmonies, have done so much towards vitiating the taste both of vocalists and listeners within the last few years. The little poem of Dumas has been so happily rendered into English verse by Dr. Dulcken that we much doubt whether M. Gounod's music does not flow more naturally to the translation than to the original words. The theme is extremely pleasing, and an excellent effect is gained by the measure of the poetry, the short lines adding an irresistible charm to the melody. After the close on the dominant, some transient modulations, as unexpected as they are pleasing, express the feeling of the poetry with remarkable fidelity, and we are led back to the original key by the simplest possible means. We trust that M. Gounod will give us many more of such songs before he bids us adieu.

*O God, whose nature and property.* Full Anthem for Four Voices. By S. S. Wesley.

A SHORT and easy Anthem, ecclesiastical in style, but with plenty of melody. The "Amen," which grows, as it were, out of the closing words of the prayer, forms an admirable climax to this excellent composition.

*I am Thine, O save me.* Full Anthem for Five Voices. By S. S. Wesley.

THIS short Anthem is full of those characteristics of style which Dr Wesley's previous works have led musicians to associate with his name. It cannot be too highly commended.

*Come unto Me all ye that labour.* Anthem. By Sir G. J. Elvey, Mus. Doc.

AS a whole this Anthem will not compare favourably with that charming composition of Stafford Smith to the same words, so well known in our cathedrals, but it has the recommendation of simplicity and "swing" (as it is inelegantly termed), qualities which will, no doubt, to a great extent, atone for its general want of character.

*The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.* Anthem. Composed by Sydney H. Williams.

WE take this Anthem as a promise of better things to come. With a little more definition of purpose and experience in construction, Mr. Williams may make contributions of some value to the stock of English Church music. At present we note certain crudities—and a few errors—amongst much that is commendable.

*Thirteen Hymn Tunes.* Composed by J. Tilleard.

1. *God, who madest earth and heaven.* 2. *Hear our solemn Litany.* 3. *To bless Thy chosen race.* 4. *Brightly gleams our Banner.* 5. *Thy will be done.* 6. *Though nature's strength decay.* 7. *Onward Christian soldiers.* 8. *O Lord God eternal.* 9. *Onward and upward.* 10. *Lead kindly Light.* 11. *Rock of ages.* 12. *Rejoice for evermore.* 13. *Nearer, my God, to Thee.*

OF these Tunes—many of which contain all the qualifications necessary to the making of a good Hymn Tune—Nos. 1, 3, 5, 6, 10 and 13 are the best, being generally marked by a good telling melody, and harmonies which, although modern, (and sometimes a little too modern,) are, upon the whole, satisfactory. Occasionally Mr. Tilleard seems to lose sight of the fact that Hymns are, as a rule, intended for the service of God; as in No. 8, where the initial quavers are somewhat objectionable, and in No. 7, which is decidedly secular. But, on the other hand, he exhibits a warmth of devotional feeling—as in No. 5—which hardly leaves anything to be desired. And again, as a specimen of a good solid Tune, No. 3 is in every way admirable. No. 10 might achieve some popularity were the rhythm reconsidered. As it is at present, a really good Tune is spoilt by an arbitrary and unnecessary adaption of a false rhythm. No. 13 is altogether good—the popular Hymn "Nearer, my God, to Thee," having seldom received a better setting. The sequence near the end deserves the most unqualified praise.