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Review

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Mannerings.' If this be so, he would have had to sing the soprano solo in 'The Chough and Crow' at the age of twenty-one! He subsequently played at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Norwich, Belfast, Dublin, and elsewhere, 'progressing but slowly as an actor and singer.'

In 1842 he returned to London, and, after appearing at the Grecian Theatre, under the name of 'Mr. Johnson,' he joined Macready's company at Drury Lane Theatre. The playbills show that he was the *First Shepherd* in 'Acis and Galatea' (produced with Stanfield's 'scenic illustrations'), as one of the *Minstrels* in the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' the *First Warrior* in Purcell's 'King Arthur,' and other minor parts. His voice at this time was baritone. He then went to Paris, where he studied under Bordogni, and subsequently to Milan. Here, after a course of valuable study under Mazzucato, he made his *début* at La Scala as *Edgardo* in 'Lucia di Lammermoor' with marked success.

Most of the biographers are in error in stating that Sims Reeves made his re-appearance in London after his Italian triumphs, in December, 1847. As a matter of fact, he re-appeared, but as a fully fledged tenor, at a 'Grand Concert Monstre' for the benefit of Vincent Wallace, given at Drury Lane Theatre, May 16, 1847, the playbills announcing him as 'Mr. J. S. Reeves.' Moreover, he appeared as a *concert* vocalist at the Ancient Concert of June 23 in the same year, when his name in the programme is plain 'Mr. Reeves,' and sang Mozart's 'Davidde Penitente,' and in a quartet from Méhul's 'Joseph.' But it was not till the 6th of the following December that he came into the full blaze of publicity, when, under Jullien's management and the conductorship of Hector Berlioz, who paid a high tribute to his capabilities, he made that memorable appearance as *Edgardo*, in Donizetti's familiar 'Lucia.' (By the way, it may not be generally known that he was always subsequently called 'Gardy,' a contraction of *Edgardo*, in his home circle.) Not only did he at once make his reputation as a tenor of the first water, but he possessed remarkable histrionic gifts. The English Opera playbills of that time—Drury Lane, December, 1847—show the metamorphosis of his name: first as 'Mr. S. Reeves,' and later, Mr. 'Sims Reeves.' The 'Sims' addition was suggested by Madame Puzzi as being a very euphonious prefix to Reeves.

It was at the Norwich Festival of 1848 that Reeves first set his feet on the oratorio pathway where he was to gain such well-merited renown. Those who were fortunate enough to hear him in his prime will not readily forget that rich mellow voice, so perfectly natural and absolutely free from any artificiality. And the power and the pathos of that voice! How exquisitely beautiful the phrasing and the poetry which attended every strain! 'The enemy said—with what thrilling forcefulness he would glorify that noble song; not, mark you, as though it were a matter of merely *pursuing*, but of *overtaking*. And then the sigh in his delivery of the initial word in 'Oh! that I knew where I might find Him.' Again, the worked up agony in the *Watchman* scene ('Hymn of Praise'). 'Thrilling' is hardly the word for it, for in spite of the knowledge of what was coming, his interpretation of that reiterated enquiry was such as to make one feel cold down one's back. And, yet again, the tears in his voice as he gave utterance to 'Deeper and deeper still' and 'Tom Bowling.' Yes, Sims Reeves was a consummate artist, and in the retrospect of one's musical experiences the charm of his lovely voice and the spell of his ideally poetic interpretations will not easily fade from the memory.

MR. ADOLPH POLLITZER, Director of the London Academy of Music, and well known as a teacher of the violin and a former leader of several London orchestras, died, after a very short illness, at 43, Hamilton Terrace, on the 14th ult., aged sixty-eight.

DURING the winter months it has been arranged to give on every third Sunday a special Musical Service at Rectory Road Congregational Church, Stoke Newington. Works such as Schubert's 'Song of Miriam,' Mendelssohn's 13th Psalm, 'Lauda Sion,' and 'Hear my Prayer,' and Stainer's 'Crucifixion,' form part of the *répertoire*. Mendelssohn's 'Lauda Sion' has already been given.

REVIEWS.

CHURCH MUSIC.

The Office of the Holy Communion in G. By James Shaw.

Lift high the Cross. By J. Lionel Bennett.

Benedicite, omnia Opera. Settings by C. W. Smith, C. E. Miller, F. Iliffe, H. B. C., J. Stainer, F. Champneys, C. H. Lloyd, George J. Bennett, Arthur E. Godfrey, and Edwin H. Lemare.

(Novello's Parish Choir Book.)

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

MR. JAMES SHAW'S music for the Communion Service is manifestly designed for choirs of average means. Two settings of the Kyrie, which might be used alternately, are provided. The Nicene Creed is chiefly set for the choir in unison, but at the words 'And sitteth on the right hand of the Father,' the music bursts into five-part harmony, the sopranos being divided. The succeeding phrase is given to basses only. The next sentence is sung by the tenors, altos, and sopranos in four parts, and unisonal singing is not resumed until the closing words. By these means monotony is avoided and impressiveness secured. Two sopranos are required in the Sanctus. The opening of the Benedictus, laid out for tenor solo, makes little demand on the vocalist, the highest note being E flat, and the music is melodious and sympathetic. The Agnus Dei, too, is deeply devotional. The Gloria, vigorously written, is in solid four-part vocal harmony until the Amen is reached, when the composer has indulged in four bars of effective counterpoint. The organ accompaniment, though possessing considerable independence, is admirably designed to support and assist the voices.

'Lift high the Cross' is a hymn, originally written by the Very Rev. G. W. Kitchen, Dean of Durham, for a Festival of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, held in Winchester Cathedral. Its musical setting, by Mr. J. Lionel Bennett, is simple but effective, and thus it would form an admirable processional.

The ten settings of the 'Song of the Three Children' present a variety that can scarcely fail to meet every requirement of church choirs. It is unnecessary to do more than to point out certain features of some of the arrangements. Mr. C. W. Smith's, in C, is laid out in five vocal parts, those of the tenor being doubled; but a version in four parts only is added in the same number. Mr. C. E. Miller's, in E flat, consists of three double chants. The setting in D, by Dr. G. J. Bennett, is written out at length for voices in unison with varied harmonies in the organ accompaniment. Mr. Arthur E. Godfrey has composed a double quadruple chant in C of melodious and flowing character. The feature of Mr. Edwin H. Lemare's music in B flat is the effective contrasts produced by the varied employment of the voices.

Six Classical Pieces for Church use. Arranged for small military band. By Thomas Brown.

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

'CHURCH Parade' has a peculiar fascination for visitors to a garrison town, and so has also the subsequent military service when the regimental band supplies the instrumental music. It is for such occasions that Mr. Thomas Brown has arranged these 'Six classical pieces,' for use as voluntaries at 'Church Parade Services.' The score is set out for flute, solo clarinets in B flat, 2nd and 3rd clarinets in B flat, 1st and 2nd Bassoons, 1st and 2nd horns in E flat, 1st and 2nd cornets in B flat, euphonium and trombone, and basses, in addition to a part (in compressed score) for the conductor or organist. The six pieces consist of Handel's March from 'Scipio,' Schumann's 'Träumerei,' Mendelssohn's 'O rest in the Lord,' a movement from Gluck's 'Orpheus,' Spohr's 'Blest are the departed,' and Haydn's Gloria from his first Mass. It is only necessary to add that the selection and the arrangements go hand in hand in regard to utility and effectiveness.