

Review

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MR. G. ERNEST LAKE, Organist and Musical Director of All Saints' Church, Kensington, has been presented by the churchwardens and gentlemen of the choir with a handsome service of Wedgwood china, upon the occasion of his marriage. The presentation was made by Mr. Barker, head master of St. Alphage's Choir School, in the unavoidable absence of the Vicar, the Rev. Canon Trench.

THE Clapham Amateur Orchestral Society announces four Subscription Concerts for the twelfth season at Clapham Hall, the date of the first being November 26. At the general meeting, held on the 20th ult., it was announced that a balance remained in hand after paying all expenses. Mr. Ammon Winterbottom is the hon. Conductor.

THE twenty-ninth season of the Monday Popular Concerts is announced to begin on November 1, and will continue, with a short interval at Christmas, to April 4, 1887. The Saturday Concerts will extend from November 6 to April 2.

No fewer than 1,500 students have entered the School of Music connected with the Birmingham and Midland Institute. There are classes in all branches of the art, including orchestral instruments, the fee for elementary study of the violin being as low as one penny per lesson.

A FESTIVAL will be held at St. Augustine and St. Faith's Church, Old Change, E.C., on the evening of St. Faith's Day at 7.30. Evensong, which will be fully choral, will be followed by Dr. Stainer's Cantata "The Daughter of Jairus."

THE St. Peter's Choral Society, Brockley, will commence its second season, under the conductorship of Dr. C. J. Frost, on Tuesday, the 5th inst., when Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" will be put in rehearsal.

REVIEWS.

Rainbow Musick. By Lady Archibald Campbell.
[Bernard Quaritch.]

THIS short pamphlet of thirty-four pages, devoted to the discussion of "harmony in room-decoration," exhibits within its narrow compass the furthest possible divorce of sense from sound, of words from worth, of which "a person of quality" can be deemed capable who is possessed of a considerable command of fantastic phraseology and an imperfect appreciation of the proper use of philosophical terms. There is a sentence on p. 5 which seems to us admirably to describe the general character of this *brochure*. The author is really speaking of modern room-decoration and its shortcomings, which she sums up finally as "confusion everywhere, a jumble in which we may seek in vain the *dénouement*! for theme, or plot, there is none." The rainbow comes in for a much larger share of notice than music, or *musick* as it is spelt on the cover, which fortunately limits the task of the critic to the consideration to those few pages which are devoted to an enthusiastic account of the various projectors who strove to give practical shape to observed "sentic (*sic*) correlations of colour and sound." The first of these whom she discusses in detail was the Jesuit Father, Castel (born at Montpellier in 1688), who published, in 1725, his theory of the ocular harpsichord, based on Newton's discovery "that the breadths of the seven primary colours, produced by the refraction of the sun's rays through a prism, are proportional to the seven differences of the lengths of the eight musical strings." Castel's harpsichord was described by its designer as "an instrument to play upon, analogous to the auricular organ, composed of as many octaves of colour by tones and half-tones, destined to give to the mind, by the eyes, the same agreeable sensations of melody and harmony of colour as those of melody and harmony of sound which the ordinary harpsichord communicates to the ear." The learned Jesuit, however, never perfected his instrument, though it was "theoretically ingenious to a degree," and Lady Archibald Campbell passes on to speak of the treatise on "Colour Music" of a Mr. D. D. Jamieson, published in 1844. This author accounted for the failure of Castel's method on the two following grounds, which we recommend to the careful consideration of our readers:—"1. The spaces of the colours were not commensurate to the time of the notes,

2. It was found impossible, by any practicable extension of inherent colours, to produce a sensic effect equivalent to that of aural music." But Mr. Jamieson claimed to have obviated both these difficulties by his own "mode of illustration." Mr. Jamieson's instrument, as described in his own inimitable style, is strangely suggestive of the dark room of a photographer's studio, fitted up with the glass bottles which stand in a chemist's window, the colours of which are "evolved" singly or in combination by the percussion of the keys of a pianoforte. This and another colour-organ of American origin—melancholy instances of the distorted ingenuity of the human intellect—provoke Lady Archibald Campbell to further speculations on "Colour-audition" and kindred topics. Finally, for the benefit of those whose "soul-feeling is stirred by Nature's harmonies," Lady Archibald Campbell publishes a setting of some words of Tennyson's in a key which she incorrectly gives as B minor, and which we take to be a specimen of rainbow music. This composition is not otherwise remarkable. As to the convertibility of the sensations of colour and sound, and the desirability of combining them through the medium of some instrument, we may be allowed to remark that there is a pretty general consensus of opinion amongst competent critics that a great deal of the charm of music resides in its invisibility, and that the incoherent and rambling rhapsodies of the author of "Rainbow Musick" are about as likely to shake this conclusion as a popgun is calculated to make an impression on the Great Pyramid.

Catholic Hymns, with accompanying tunes. Edited by A. E. Tozer. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

ALTHOUGH hymnology is a branch of sacred art specially appertaining to Protestant forms of worship, it must not be forgotten that many of the most familiar hymns now sung in church, if not in chapel, are adaptations of lyrics by Roman Catholic writers, and in the work before us they reappear in their original form, or at any rate in translations more literal than those to which we are accustomed. Beside the direct appeals to the Virgin and the Saints, which of course are not permissible in the Church of England, these hymns abound in glowing imagery, and are pervaded by a spirit of sensuous realism which would certainly give offence to the average Protestant mind. But other ideas prevail with our brethren of the Church of Rome, and Mr. Tozer's collection of hymns ought to receive a cordial welcome from them. It consists of eighty-lyrics of which all, save seven, are in English. Among the tunes are a number of fine modern examples reprinted from the Hymnary and other collections, and a large proportion of new tunes written expressly for the work, among the composers' names being those of Mr. C. Harford Lloyd, Dr. E. M. Lott, Mr. G. F. Cobb, Dr. A. H. Mann, Mr. Luard Selby, and others of equal rank. The average merit of these is very high, and we have not discovered one example unworthy of its place. The book may be warmly commended to the notice of those for whom it is intended.

Original Compositions for the Organ. No. 54.
[Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THERE would be no great rashness in predicting that the present number of this publication will be one of the most generally popular of the series. It contains a remarkably pleasing Postlude in B flat, by John E. West, written in minuet form and measure, but sufficiently dignified for church use. The middle section, or Trio, is especially melodious and charming, and the comparative simplicity of the piece is not the least important point in its favour.

An Autumn Song. Words by Arthur Platt.

Versailles. A Song in Minuet form.

Composed by Gerard F. Cobb.

[London Music Publishing and General Agency Company.]

THESE songs are so much alike in character—both having flowing accompaniments, in two and three parts, against simple themes in triple time—that we cannot but fear that their composer may fall into a mannerism unless he turn his undoubted talents into another direction. The song in "minuet form" is, we think, the better of the two, but artistic feeling and musicianlike treatment are quite as apparent in the "Autumn Song," which is a very fair setting of some exceedingly musical verses.