

Review

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little purpose! In the canonic variation (No. 4) the lines from note to note clearly distinguish the several parts when they cross each other; but nothing can make clear in sound the progression of parts that are greatly entangled, and such clearness is necessary to the realisation of the composer's design. It is a great mistake of organ-players—and organ-writers are prone to the same error—to put down as many notes belonging to the harmony as can be touched at once, thickening thus the effect, it is true, but clouding the part-writing.

*Prelude and Fugue in D minor, for the Organ, by G. F. Hatton.*

A CLASS of music is often written for the organ, which would be accounted dry were it assigned to any other means of exposition to an audience, but which has considerable interest from the variety of effects it yields, by reason of the diversity of its passages and the different quality of the stops employed for it. To this class, the present piece belongs; were the same amount of matter put into a pianoforte sonata, a string quartet, or an orchestral symphony, one might feel that it wanted subject and was deficient in melody; but, the character of the ideas and their distinction are such as we frequently meet in organ music, and the work is to be judged as that for which it is intended, not by any other standard. The prelude, *Andante con moto*, reaches to half the length of the work, which the fugue, *moderato*, completes in 11 pages. In the former, the twice recurrence of the key of A minor might have been avoided with advantage, and almost any other key employed in preference to one that had already been exhausted. The fugue is fluently worked. The piece was composed for the pianoforte, and it has been most effectively adapted for the organ by Mr. W. T. Best, who gives thus a testimonial to its merit. It will be well worth the study of any one who is devoted to the instrument, and who wishes for practice in all its resources. The author is the son of the well-known Mr. J. L. Hatton, whose just fame is an inheritance of which any young musician may be proud. He may be congratulated on the importance of this early essay of his powers and on its success; let us trust that the best works of his father will be his constant emulation.

*Pensées Intimes, pour le Pianoforte. Par Jacques Blumenthal.*

THE composer of these clever little sketches has, judiciously we think, not invited too elaborate criticism by giving fantastic titles to each, but has contented himself with merely numbering them, leaving the pieces to speak for themselves. If therefore a "poetic basis" is necessary for the true appreciation of music, it must in this case be supplied by the listener; and as we have heard one of Mendelssohn's "*Lieder ohne Worte*" called by one person a "Drinking Song," and by another a "Funeral March," we can imagine that there will be a variety of opinions upon the real meaning of each. No. 1, in A flat, although melodious and well written, is scarcely perhaps equal to its companions either in the originality of the theme or its treatment. The phrase, in the relative minor, is uninteresting; and we care not for the progression of dominant sevenths, with the chromatic inner part, which occurs twice, as if the composer liked it. No. 2 has an excellent subject, with a characteristic accompaniment. Here, too, we have contrast, the syncopated bass before the return to the original melody, being an agreeable change from the prevailing flow of semiquavers. No. 3 may also be commended for many good points; but the composer improves as he progresses. No. 4, an *Adagio*, in G minor, with an accompaniment syncopated almost throughout, is extremely beautiful, a Song "without words," indeed, but so eloquent as to invite the hearers to supply them. A good effect is gained, after the pause on the dominant harmony, by the concluding phrase, marked "*Lento assai*," which ends in the tonic major. No. 5 will unquestionably be the favourite, and is good enough, we think, to be published separately. A melodious subject singing at the top of a triplet accompaniment for the right hand, with a simple bass, runs throughout the piece; but the harmonies are so cleverly

varied as to prevent any sense of monotony. We particularly admire the manner in which the gradual progression to the dominant seventh, for the return to the opening theme, is managed; and may also cite the last few bars of the coda as a most effective point. No. 6, in A major, has a light and playful subject, which is well contrasted with a *legato* melody, accompanied with *arpeggios*, divided between the two hands. Occasional changes in the character, and even in the *tempo*, give much variety to this piece, which makes a fitting termination to the series. We are glad to find a composer of Herr Blumenthal's reputation daring to be as simple and unpretentious in a work marked "Op. 83."

CRAMER, WOOD AND CO.

*Minuet in G minor.*

*O let me dream that dream again.* Song. Words by Mrs. M. A. Baines.

*Fallen Rain.* Song. Words by R. W. Dixon.

Composed by William Metcalfe.

EXPERIENCE in critically examining a large number of modern musical compositions proves to us that the great difficulty with writers is to combine the inventive power with grammatical accuracy; for, as a rule, composers either give us an attractive melody feebly accompanied, or parade their knowledge of the resources of harmony to cover a weak melody. Mr. Metcalfe, although belonging to the latter of these divisions, shows so much musical feeling that we select his pieces for notice, believing that he is sufficiently in earnest to profit by kindly-meant advice. His *Minuet* starts with a melody which inspires us with hope; but as he proceeds the passing notes and chromatic progressions accumulate to such an extent that the theme is almost overwhelmed. The major subject would be highly effective if it could be allowed to assert itself; but here again the harmony becomes an encumbrance, and in the return to the minor it is even more complicated. We may also mention that the difficulties to amateurs will be increased by the omission of accidentals—as, for instance, the natural before the E, in the melody of bar 7—for it can scarcely be expected that persons unacquainted with the chords can supply these by ear. The first song on our list contains many good points, but the fatal habit of harmonizing every note distresses the singer, and in many parts of this composition thickens the melody to an extent which will materially interfere with its effect upon the listener. "*Fallen Rain*" is a very much better song. The accompaniment here forms an integral portion of the piece, and no patches of harmony interfere with the onward march of the subject. The song shows that Mr. Metcalfe can do better things if he can learn to reserve his power: we know that this is a difficult task, but a study of literature, as well as music, will prove that the great authors are those who indicate their knowledge, and the small ones those who display it.

*Grand March, "Crusader,"* by Charles W. Smith.

THIS March, by the Pianist to Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, is well-written throughout; but what it has to do with a "*Crusader*" we cannot imagine; certainly the title would lead us to expect something at least with more character. The subject is scarcely bold and striking enough for a March; but it is harmonized with care and contains no perplexing difficulties. We prefer the theme in the subdominant, and a good effect is gained on the return to the original key by the alteration in the accompaniment to the melody. We perceive that this piece is also published for an orchestra.

C. JEFFERYS.

*Bourrée in F.—Gavotte in B flat.—Bolero in A minor.—Tarantelle in B flat.—Polonaise in C.—Passepied in B flat.*

Composed by Michael Watson.

ALTHOUGH we are much inclined to favour the revival of those forms of composition into which the classical authors threw their genius, it must always be recollected that they wrote in the language of their day, and there is