

Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 14, No. 324 (Feb. 1, 1870), p. 371

Published by: Musical Times Publications Ltd.

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3351846>

Accessed: 27-10-2015 11:35 UTC

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Communion this Creed may prove attractive. But to our mind it is simply unpalatable. Genuine old work is always interesting because, at any rate, it was new when first done. But sham antiquities have fortunately never (except in music) been held in high esteem; and even in music the imitation is beginning to be very properly despised.

The Nicene Creed (Ely Prize Setting). Composed by Alex. S. Cooper.

WE have long ago been convinced of the futility of expecting any good result from offering prizes for musical compositions. Of the number of works which have obtained prizes during the last quarter of a century there is not one which stands before the public as a successful work; we might almost ask if there be one which is worth the trouble of performance. In the present instance the adjudicators have been more fortunate, for Mr. Cooper's setting is a good, church-like composition, with a tender and devotional setting of the Incarnation and Crucifixion sentences. A monotone setting of the Creed, by the same composer, is not quite so much to our taste.

God be merciful unto us (Psalm 67). Composed for Eight Voices, without accompaniment, by Berthold Tours.

IT is a matter of considerable pleasure to us to find the ranks of the church composers swelled by such recruits as Mr. Tours. Assuredly the old stigma "raw" recruit cannot be applied to the composer of such a work as this, which many a veteran might be proud to acknowledge as his own. It is jubilant, pathetic, solemn, and dignified as the varying character of the words require, and yet it never loses its unity of feeling. It is modern, without being secular, bright in colour, without being garish, and a careful adaptation to the peculiarities of the human voice is not one of the least marked of its characteristics.

I heard a voice from heaven. Anthem. Composed by John Goss.

THIS Anthem is an amplification of the last movement of the Burial Service by the same composer, which was noticed in this paper some time ago. We have little to add to what we then said, except perhaps to mention that the rather delicate task of enlarging has been performed without the slightest sacrifice of interest. It now appears as an anthem of the simplest kind, but full of the most deep devotion and touching pathos.

We declare unto you glad tidings. Anthem for Easter. Composed by J. Frederick Bridge.

WE had occasion a short time ago to speak in terms of approbation of a secular composition by Mr. Bridge—the first which had come under our notice. We are now in a position to add a few words of commendation for a sacred composition—also the first we have seen. If the part-song was somewhat satisfactory, the anthem is more so, being bold, tuneful, and fresh. A climax just before the return of the first subject is singularly vigorous and strong. On the whole we cannot fail to recognise indications of considerable talent in Mr. Bridge.

O Lord correct me. Full Anthem for four voices, and *Grace* (Honos, Laus et Gloria). Composed by James Coward.

THE Anthem is a composition exhibiting much cleverness of construction, and—what is better—great musical feeling. It so far follows the ancient rule that every part forms a distinct melody in itself. But here its resemblance to ancient work stops; and for the rest, it is all purely modern, and very properly bears the impress of the nineteenth century upon it.

The *Grace* is a spirited composition for men's voices, with a strongly marked melody and bright modern harmonies. Here and there are bold modulations, producing a singularly good effect, and so skilfully managed as to present few or no difficulties to the amateur singer. Altogether we strongly approve of these two specimens of Mr. Coward's talent.

Not unto us, O Lord. Anthem composed by Joseph Robinson.

THERE are one or two features about this anthem which render it somewhat remarkable. First the key is D flat major (and afterwards minor). In the second place the solo voices for which it is cast are alto, tenor, and two basses. And in addition to these it requires two complete chorus choirs to give it due effect. We may fairly say the twelve vocal staves on the last few pages present a most formidable appearance. They also suggest an enquiry as to what cathedral establishment this could have been intended for, seeing that six or twelve lay-clerks are almost as many as are to be found in any of the English cathedrals. Apart from all this, however, we have to say that the composition is exceedingly melodious, and calculated to produce a considerable effect.

Sing Praises unto the Lord. Anthem. Composed by Irvine Dearnaley.

THE chief characteristic of this anthem is a certain promise of future excellence on the part of its composer, rather than a complete fulfilment of the requirements of anthem writing. Little weaknesses continually peep out, not the least of which is a constant hankering after worn-out points of imitation, and a somewhat clumsy treatment of the same. The best thing we could recommend to Mr. Dearnaley is that he should submit his compositions before publication to the mature judgment of some well-known professor. Had this been done in the case of the present anthem, we are persuaded it would never have attained to the dignity of print; and its composer would have had one cause less for future regret.

Judge me, O God.—Psalm xliii.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?—Psalm xxii.

Why rage fiercely the heathen?—Psalm ii.

Composed by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

THESE cheap editions of works already too well known to need comment, will render them still more popular, and enable Choral societies all over the kingdom to become thoroughly acquainted with their excessive beauties. Whatever may be said of the rapid spread of music, there can be no question that many country choirs are still devoting their energies to the practice of compositions which can scarcely afford an equivalent for the trouble bestowed upon them; and which, indeed, are too often selected, not so much on account of their intrinsic value, as because they are easily procurable, or perhaps in deference to some local influence. The publication of these three Psalms—amongst the most beautiful of all Mendelssohn's smaller sacred compositions—at a price within the reach of every lover of choral music, will do much towards educating the taste to the appreciation of the highest works. The extreme popularity of the first Psalm on our list, "Judge me, O God," at the metropolitan concerts, is a convincing proof that Choral classes have only to persevere in giving good music, and an audience will be certain to accept it with pleasure.

First Sonata, for Pianoforte and Violin. By Walter Macfarren.

IT is a healthy sign of the times that English composers, with every temptation to write for the public, should occasionally write for the art. And we may also say that, remembering the number of musical aspirants who have begun and ended with an Oratorio, we are pleased to welcome an author who tries his "prentice hand" on pieces of comparatively small pretension, and reserves his "First Sonata, for Pianoforte and Violin" until the requisite knowledge and power for the composition of such a work have grown up gradually by years of experience. In every respect, we may pronounce Mr. Macfarren's Sonata an excellent addition to the few productions of this class contributed by modern composers. The first movement is by far the best. Based upon a *Cantabile* theme, of