

Review

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Cremona inspected by "the magician." After being roused a second time from some other work upon which he was engaged, "Hill at last laid down his tool, and taking the instrument in his hands, gave it one quick glance and a couple of taps; he then deliberately looked in its astonished owner's face, tore off the finger-board, loosened the neck, and drove a knife under the belly. The fiddle was soon in pieces, and he threw the loose fragments aside in a heap, took up his repairs again, and said he would attend to the matter by-and-bye, and the gentleman need not stop; and we got no more out of old Hill that day, who immediately became re-absorbed in his work." No wonder that the owner of the Cremona had a "rueful and amazed look" when he beheld Hill's dissecting operations. But after waiting several months the fiddle came back beautifully restored and "its owner was more than satisfied." Thus does Mr. Haweis pleasantly chat upon the instrument of his affection. Although he frankly admits his indebtedness to previous writers on the subject (including Miss Stainer's "elaborate Music Primer, 'Violin Makers'"), he presents the information here gathered together in a style that is distinctly readable and not a little amusing. Twelve plates of violins, portraits (including Paganini, Tourte, Hill, and others), a view of Cremona, *fac-similes* of violin labels, &c., enhance the value of this contribution to the literature of the violin.

The Willow Song. From Shakespeare's "Othello." Set to music by Alexander C. Mackenzie.

The Sword Song. From "Caractacus." By Edward Elgar.

You'll love me yet. Song for Soprano or Tenor. The poem written by Robert Browning. The music composed by S. Coleridge-Taylor.

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

Desdemona's pathetic song has been set by Sir Alexander Mackenzie in a simple, but in so highly expressive a manner that the words and the music seem to severally be the complement of each other, and to form a perfect marriage between two arts. Although unpretentious, the touch of the master hand is manifest, and English vocalists who sing English songs will do well to add this to their *répertoires*.

Music-lovers who have heard Mr. Andrew Black sing the *Sword Song* from Mr. Elgar's fine cantata "Caractacus" will not need to be told that this is one of the finest baritone songs of modern times, and ambitious baritones and those of vocal means—not always one and the same—will find abundant opportunity to advantageously display their dramatic abilities. Those who take the song to "At homes" should either also take their accompanist or "accidentally" meet someone there with whom they have previously arranged to accompany them, as the music imperatively demands unanimity between singer and player.

It is one of the most promising signs of Mr. Coleridge-Taylor's music that, simple or complex in design or character, it invariably possesses distinctiveness and individuality. His setting of Robert Browning's characteristic poem "You'll love me yet" will present no difficulties to the singer or pianist of average capacities, but from the first bar to the last it shows singular freshness of mind and power of musical expression. Tenors who can speak their words well and have some dramatic perception will find this a very effective song, one that will arouse and sustain the attention of the listener.

The Guardian Angel. Song. Words by E. Nesbit. Music by Liza Lehmann.

My life, my all. (Tristesse.) Song. English words by Raymond St. Leonards, French words by Alphonse Daudet. Music by Guy d'Hardelot.

[Ascherberg and Co.]

SINCE Madame Liza Lehmann gave us the remarkably fine song cycle "In a Persian Garden" every product of her pen has acquired importance. Guardian angels in music generally imply sleep, and in this instance the words are supposed to be uttered by a child who has been carefully "tucked up in bed" for the night. As may be imagined, the vocal part is simple and it is most suitable to a mezzo-soprano. The accompaniment consists of reiterated *arpeggi*,

which perhaps are intended to suggest the harp music commonly associated with celestial visitants.

"My life, my all," is a song of what may be termed the intense school, in which clinging, yearning souls and pale faced moons play an important part. In this instance, however, there is method in the madness of the lover, and his protestations of devotion to the absent one are made to ring with increased truth by the force of the music. Although most suitable to a tenor vocalist the song could, without incongruity, be sung by a mezzo-soprano, only, to make it effective, the lady must be very much in earnest.

Novello's Parish Choir Book. Nos. 386-395.
[Novello and Company, Limited.]

RECENT numbers of this valuable series are No. 386, in which the *Dies Iræ* is impressively set by the Rev. H. G. Bonavia Hunt. The music is laid out in hymn-tune form for four vocal parts, with an organ accompaniment, which possesses some independence. The first four verses are in D minor, the following three are in F major, and are designed for a quartet or semi-chorus. With the eighth verse the tonality is changed to D major, and the first eight bars might be sung by a soprano soloist. The "Tonus Peregrinus" has been introduced for the concluding portion, which is most impressive.

No. 387 consists of the "Benedicite," set to a quadruple chant in G by G. F. Wrigley. The first half of each verse is set in unison for the voices, and it is suggested that each of these portions should be delivered by men and boys alternately, a proceeding which, combined with the second half of the verses being sung "full," would certainly secure effective variety. The chant itself is well balanced and constructed with regard to its intended use.

Nos. 388, 389, 390, and 394 are contributed by Arthur Somervell, and are, severally, settings of the *Te Deum*, *Jubilate*, *Communion Service*, and the *Evening Canticles*, in the key of F. In all these the music has obviously been designed to meet the requirements of average church choirs. It is sufficiently melodious to be easily learnt, but without approaching triviality, and the part-writing is interesting to the singers and easy to read at sight. The organ accompaniment possesses some independence, but this only occurs when two or more parts of the chorus are singing in unison, direct support of the voices manifestly having been carefully studied.

No. 391 is a setting of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* in D, by Charles Wood. To a well trained choir of capable singers this music will prove very interesting. It is not difficult, but it imperatively demands precision of attack and musical intelligence. The setting of *Simeon's Song* is most impressive. The organ accompaniment is also admirable.

The *Te Deum*, *Jubilate Deo*, and *Evening Canticles* (*Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*) have been respectively allied, in Nos. 392, 393, and 395, to music of a melodious and effective nature by Myles B. Foster. The key chosen is C, and the masculine character commonly associated with this tonality is found in the music. Contrapuntal complexities have been avoided, and the only vocal entrances which might require more than usual practice are in the setting of the *Gloria*.

A History of the Pianoforte and Pianoforte Players. Translated and revised from the German of Oscar Bie, by E. E. Kellett and E. W. Naylor.

[J. M. Dent and Company.]

"THIS work does not profess to be so much a literal translation as a somewhat free version of Dr. Bie's 'Das Klavier.' The author, writing as he does for a German public, naturally uses a more philosophic style than would be generally intelligible in England. Availing themselves therefore of Dr. Bie's kind permission, the editors, with a view to making the book more acceptable to English readers, have allowed themselves considerable liberty, both in omission and in addition." Thus say the editors in their preface, and they have acted wisely in this method of procedure. It is somewhat strange, though exceedingly gratifying, to find that a German writer starts a book on music with a chapter headed "Old England—A Prelude." Dr. Bie devotes his first forty pages to the domestic instrument in this country during the Elizabethan

period. The drift of this "Prelude" is, "that music is at the present time flourishing more at home than in public; and that the playing of chamber compositions is more popular than the representation of huge operas." Succeeding chapters are entitled Old French dance pieces; Scarlatti; Bach; "The Galanten"; Beethoven; The Virtuosos; The Romantics; and Liszt and the present time, from which the scope and comprehensiveness of the book may be deduced. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to Prosniz's "Handbuch der Klavier-litteratur" and the new edition of Weitzmann's "History of Piano-playing and Piano-litterature." He says: "Thus I have been able in this work, to the exclusion of all dry-as-dust references to authorities, to present the development of piano-litterature from the point of view of culture and of human interest." In this we think he has succeeded. The book is certainly very readable; and, probably due in a large measure to the free translation of the English editors, it is unencumbered with that ponderosity which is all too repelling characteristic of treatises in the German language. A special feature—which in itself would be a sufficient warrant for stating that the book should find a place in a musician's library—lies in the illustrations, which are as profuse as they are interesting and valuable. There are no less than twenty-three full-page illustrations in addition to upwards of 100 engravings in the text—portraits, reproductions of pictures, *fac-similes*, &c., including a Röntgen ray photograph of the hand of Eugène d'Albert, Bülow on his deathbed, two curious caricatures of Liszt, and many others equally varied and novel. An excellent index increases the value of the volume as a book of reference, and the last word is one of well-deserved praise in regard to its handsome get-up and general attractiveness.

Original Compositions for the Organ. Symphony in G minor. Composed by Edwin H. Lemare (Op. 35).

[Novello and Company, Limited.]

ACCORDING to the definition in Stainer and Barrett's valuable "Dictionary of Musical Terms," a Symphony is "a composition for an orchestra," and this is its generally accepted indicative sense in England when applied to modern compositions. Widor and other French composers have, however, applied the term to their organ works, and so Mr. Lemare in a measurable degree is justified, although in our opinion it would have been more satisfactory to have styled his work a Sonata. The music is laid out on orthodox lines, and the design and treatment indicate earnestness of purpose and skilled craftsmanship. The first movement, however, appears somewhat dry, but amends are made in the next number, an *Adagio cantabile*, which opens with a graceful and expressive theme effectively treated. The *Scherzo* is French in style and demands considerable executive ability to do it justice. It is doubtful, indeed, if the semiquaver pedal passages could be played at the *tempo* indicated by the composer, and still more doubtful if so executed that they would be effective. The best movement is the *Finale*. This also demands considerable command of the organ, but the ingenuity with which the fugue subject is treated will prove attractive to musicians. The chief theme possesses dignity and strength, and a well worked-up climax leads to an imposing conclusion.

MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ON Sunday, May 28, a new cantata by Mr. S. Richards was produced at St. Mary's Church, Bearwood. The work is entitled "Jesus" and is in six parts, but only three parts were performed. The composer conducted, and Mr. H. R. Richards was at the organ. The composition is for solo voices, chorus, and organ.

The terminal concerts of the School of Music connected with the Midland Institute took place on the 8th and 12th ult. The first was devoted chiefly to chamber music, and some talented young violinists were heard. At the second concert the programme was largely made up of songs, relieved by solos on the pianoforte, violin, and organ.

At a recent meeting of the Court and Alley Concert Association, it was resolved to place the undertaking on a permanent footing. The Lord Mayor (Alderman C. G. Beale), chairman of the meeting, was asked to accept the presidency of the Association, and consented to do so. Among the vice-presidents is the Countess of Warwick, who has promised her active support to the movement. The concerts began on the 5th ult., and audiences of 3,000 people throng the larger courts in the City. The cleaning and decorations that take place in every district visited by the Association must have a good moral effect; and, hand in hand with the music, brightness and joy are infused into those hitherto dark places in this city. Three concerts are given each week.

MUSIC IN BRISTOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE series of musical afternoons at the Fine Arts Academy, Queen's Road, was brought to a termination on the 10th ult. The Spring exhibitions were in former years rendered additionally attractive by means of occasional concerts, but music during the season just closed has been more relied upon for securing public patronage than at any prior period. There were thirty-three concerts, some of which were organised by Mr. W. E. Fowler, and others by Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Roeckel.

There are no firmer supporters of the Incorporated Society of Musicians than Mr. and Mrs. Roeckel, and at a meeting held on the 3rd ult. it was announced that the amount of £75 was realized at a drawing-room bazaar held at their residence, Worcester Lawn, Clifton, a short time before. Of this amount a portion was contributed to the Orphanage of the Society and a portion to the Teachers' Provident Fund founded by Mrs. Roeckel.

The season of band concerts at the Zoological Gardens, Clifton, commenced on May 29, and Mr. George A. Webb was again appointed conductor. This year the balance of the band has been slightly altered.

The Bristol Orpheus Glee Society had an enjoyable outing on the 17th ult., and, making the Hydro at Limpley Stoke their centre, the members and friends spent the afternoon in visiting places of interest. After tea the party assembled on the lawn of the Hydro, and, under the direction of Mr. George Riseley, a programme of favourite glees was gone through, to the delight of all the visitors assembled at the Hydro, to whom this musical treat came unexpectedly. The air was perfectly calm and the trained voices of the singers could be heard at such a distance that most of the villagers came hurrying up to enjoy the sweet sounds.

MUSIC AT CAMBRIDGE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE principal concerts this term have been, as usual, choral. On the 8th ult. Dr. Mann's Choir gave "Israel in Egypt" in King's Chapel at its annual "Festival Service." The chorus, augmented from Lynn, Hunstanton, and other places, was very powerful, and the work was impressively rendered. Miss Gleeson White, Mrs. O. Morgan, Messrs. J. Reed, W. Higley, and L. Sickert were the soloists.

The University Musical Society provided an interesting programme on the 9th ult. Beethoven's "Mount of Olives" was the principal feature. Somewhat neglected at the present time, this work well deserves to be heard, for it is full of beautiful music, even though the treatment of the subject is curiously and conventionally operatic. It requires exceptional soloists, and these were forthcoming in Miss Agnes Nicholls and Mr. William Green, whose efforts were beyond praise. The work, as a whole, was very well rendered. In addition, Verdi's "Stabat Mater" was given with great refinement, and Dvorák's "New World" Symphony provided an exhilarating conclusion to the concert. Dr. Gray conducted.

Two chamber concerts of the Cambridge University Musical Society call for notice. On April 28 Dr. Ernest Walker and Miss Gates gave a pianoforte and viola recital,