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Review

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the straw has been scattered on the four winds of journalism, and has had to be gathered up in the by-ways of Russian musical literature.'

We may therefore leave the biographical portion of the book as a tale that was told from scanty material eight years ago, and pass on to the supplementary matter (226 pages) contributed by Mr. Edwin Evans, Senr. This addendum consists of six chapters devoted to 'The relation of Tchaikovsky to art-questions of the day,' four chapters containing 'Analyses of selected works,' and 'Indices for student use.' Mr. Evans's elaborate dissertations have already appeared in the columns of the *Musical Standard*, but those who have a penchant for such things will be glad to peruse these critical opinions in a collected form.

Melodious Technique for the Pianoforte. Books I. and II.
By J. A. O'Neill.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The inferiority, in strength and agility, of the fourth and fifth fingers of the hand (counting the thumb as a finger) is all too well known to students of the pianoforte. As Miss O'Neill says: 'It is obvious that additional and special training is needed for these two defective fingers.' Material for this strength-acquiring requisite the author seeks to supply in the twelve studies which constitute these two books of pianoforte technique. They consist of exercises for each hand, on repetitions, triplets, intervals of thirds, shakes, and for turning over the second and fourth fingers, with or without holding down the thumb. While the main purport of the books has been steadily kept in view, the author has relieved the dreary monotony so often attending such things by making these studies melodically attractive—in a word, they are musical as well as technical. No better tribute to their excellence can be furnished than the testimony of M. Vladimir de Pachmann, who says: 'I cordially recommend these original Studies . . . I consider them quite superior to any other exercises of the kind . . . I was much struck by their originality, both in conception and in the clever manner in which the idea is carried out!' Need anything more be said?

Six songs, with German and English words; Unexpected Joy; When songs have passed away. Music by Maude Valérie White.

[Chappell & Co., Ltd.]

To take up a song by Miss Maude V. White, is to be sure to find it well written, whatever part inspiration may play in the composition. This highly necessary but vague quantity is present in very varying degree in the above volume of six songs. The first, entitled 'The star,' is a setting of a poem by Heine with an English translation by Adrian Ross, and proves one of the best of the series, the voice part reflecting the emotional sentiment of the text and the pianoforte accompaniment being interesting. 'Among the roses' is less satisfactory. The words, translated by the composer from the German of Hoffmann von Fallersleben, seem to have been written after the music, and it is scarcely fair to ask a vocalist to finish a song on the top G, with the word 'stillt'; and though, as usual, the English word given, 'Spring,' is more vocal, to sustain it for nine bars certainly suggests a long and trying season. The next song, entitled 'Divine Providence,' is Italian in style and musically is attractive owing to the independence of the pianoforte part. The strongest number of the series is 'The earth will wake from wintry sleep,' the text by E. Geibel, with an English translation by Adrian Ross. This song calls for a dramatic singer, by whom it could be made very effective. Its conclusion is broad and dignified, the optimistic spirit of the words being exhilarating. 'A child's evening prayer' is a simple and unaffected ditty, and the concluding song, 'Spring has come,' has much the character of a German folk-song.

'Unexpected Joy' shows Miss Maude V. White's talent at its best. The tender amorousness of the text, by Roger Gay, taken from the Persian of Haviz, finds a sympathetic echo in the music which is graceful and expressive. 'When songs have passed away,' words by Ellis Walton, if less distinctive, may be recommended to vocalists of limited resources.

PART-SONGS FOR MALE VOICES.

Where lies the land? By Roland Rogers.

My heart is sair. By H. Elliot Button.

The hen and the carp. By Willy von Moellendorff.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The part-song 'Where lies the land,' by the organist of Bangor Cathedral, is a setting of a poem by Arthur Hugh Clough, which admirably lends itself to musical treatment. The idea of comparing life to a ship on its voyage is scarcely new, but the treatment in this instance is full of poetic suggestiveness, and the contrast between calm and storm, combined with the opening question 'Where lies the land to which the ship would go?' has been taken good advantage of by the composer, whose little work is remarkable for variety and musical interest. Laid out for first and second tenors, and first and second basses, the music demands crisp attack, but careful rehearsal will be well repaid by the effects produced.

The melody, so very Scotch in character, of 'My heart is sair,' has been arranged in four parts by Mr. Elliot Button with due regard to the diatonic nature of the tune, and the setting should find much favour.

'The hen and the carp' belongs to what may be called the humours of the countryside. In this instance a carp, described as 'without a sorrow or a care,' reproves a hen for cackling so persistently over the proof of her industry, and a considerable portion of the part-song is devoted to the persistent demonstrations of her maternal pride. The music shows a lively sense of humour and, provided that a body of basses can be found to repeat the word 'cluck' eighty times *allegro vivace* without getting the 'k' mixed up with the 'l,' the part-song would certainly provide entertainment; in any case it will prove an excellent exercise for 'the unruly member.'

Six Sacred Songs for Soprano.

Six Sacred Songs for Contralto.

Six Sacred Songs for Tenor.

Six Sacred Songs for Bass.

Sets I. and II. Edited by Alberto Randegger.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Whoever originated the publication of these eight books must be credited with a happy thought; therein will be found excellent vocal material suitable for organ recitals and sacred concerts, and, of course, for the home circle. Among the older composers represented in the selection are Bach, Handel, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert, while the moderns are sampled by two beautiful compositions—'All my heart, inflamed and burning' (*Inflammatius*), from Dvorák's 'Stabat Mater,' and 'Thou, O Lord, art my Protector,' a charming soprano air by Dr. Saint-Saëns, which can be sung with a violoncello obbligato. Mr. Randegger has added breath-marks and expression indications whereby the selections become valuable for teaching purposes. As each book, containing six beautifully engraved songs, is sold at two shillings, the cost per song works out at the modest sum of—fourpence!

Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in G. By Ernest Newton.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

The setting of the evening Canticles by Mr. Ernest Newton is for the usual four voices. Being of unpretentious character, it will meet the requirements of the majority of church choirs. The music, which presents no reading difficulty, is richly harmonized.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Drama of life. Sonnets and music. By William Platt. (Evan Yellon.)

Dramatic Music: catalogue of full scores. Library of Congress. Compiled by Oscar George Theodore Sonneck. Pp. 170. (Washington: Government Printing Office.)

Memories and Music: letters to a fair unknown. Pp. viii. + 209; 3s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews.)

La main et l'âme au piano. By Aline Tasset. Pp. 88; 3fr. 50c. (Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave.)