

Review

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*The Lady of Shalott.* A Cantata for Female Voices. The poem by Lord Tennyson, poet laureate. Composed by Wilfred Bendall. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS graceful setting of Tennyson's well-known poem is a worthy addition to the rapidly increasing store of Cantatas for Female Voices, the publication of which has done so much to create an interest in part-singing with drawing-room amateurs, and to substitute for the sickly sentimental ballads of the day some pieces with varied dramatic colouring which shall sufficiently sustain the attention of an audience. The voice parts in Mr. Bendall's work are written with much purity, and although tolerably easy to learn, will require to be most carefully sung and well rehearsed together in order to produce the effect intended by the composer. Preceded by a brief introduction, the Cantata opens with a melodious chorus in A major. This is followed by a soprano solo, with chorus in A minor, one of the best numbers in the work, although perhaps one of the least pretentious. No. 3 contains some effective changes of key, and follows most sympathetically the words throughout. The flowing arpeggios which introduce the fourth number lead with much effect to the choral phrase in D minor, and the manner in which this finale is treated—especially in the Allegro Agitato, "Who is this? and what is here?"—shows that the composer has decided dramatic power, and encourages us to hope that we may again welcome him in a work of greater importance.

*Popular Self-Instructor for the Pianoforte.* Containing the Rudiments of Music, Scales, &c. [F. Pitman.]

WE are always glad to give a good word to cheap works for self-instruction in music, provided the principles laid down are so founded in truth that the student who wishes in after years to extend his knowledge shall at least have nothing to unlearn. In the little book before us all the explanations of the value of notes, rests, time, and the construction of the major scale are exceedingly clear, and the airs which are given are sufficiently popular in character to please a beginner. But unfortunately an attempt is made to teach the minor mode, and this is the manner in which the subject is summarily disposed of: "If we play the scale of C upwards, but make its third note (E) flat instead of natural, it will at once be seen what is meant by a minor scale; for by flattening the E its distance from C is made less than in the ordinary scale of C. The word 'minor' means less; so that a minor scale is simply one that has a lesser or minor third." Now this is positively false teaching, for by totally ignoring the minor sixth of the scale, one of its beautiful characteristics is never understood by the young pupil. It is lucky that even a simple melody is not given in the minor key, or most assuredly this eloquently expressive interval would have a place.

*It was a Lover.* Part-Song for S.A.T.B. Words by Shakespeare. Music by Joseph C. Bridge, M.A., B. Mus. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE composer of this Part-Song has thoroughly caught the true spirit of Shakespeare's words and given a most effective musical colouring to poetry which, from its excessive quaintness, demands something more than smooth four-part writing. We are particularly pleased with the manner in which the oft-recurring "hey nonny no" is treated, and take exception only to the three consecutive chords of the 6-4 in the two bars at the conclusion of the composition.

*Rondeau à la Berceuse.* Pour Piano. Composé et Dédié à Mrs. Edward P. Pope, par Walter Macfarren. [Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

AMONGST the very many graceful trifles for the pianoforte contributed by this composer the Rondeau before us must assuredly take a prominent position. The melodious principal theme, with the effective syncopated accompaniment, is excellently contrasted with the animated second subject—introduced by an enharmonic change—the return to the original melody leading us, without any undue display of profundity, to the conclusion of a piece which both for its inherent attraction and as a study for touch, we heartily recommend to pianoforte students.

*Ride a Cock-horse.* Nursery Rhyme. Part-Song for Mixed Voices. By C. A. Macirone. [Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co.]

AMONGST the many musical settings of Nursery Rhymes by modern writers Miss Macirone's "Ride a Cock-Horse" must take high rank. The holiday moments of so accomplished a composer are seldom trifled away without some pleasurable record of the time; and we can scarcely doubt that this little Part-Song, although merely a *souvenir* of some such bright periods of repose from sterner work, will live long in the memory of all who hear it. It is charmingly written, easy to sing, and instinct with a humour which never degenerates into burlesque. We sincerely hope that it may find a place in the programme of one of the concerts of Mr. Henry Leslie's Choir during the present season.

*Romanzetta.* For Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello. Composed by Henry Smart. Posthumous work. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS lovely, tranquil Andante is indeed a welcome *souvenir* of a composer who, with a well-earned fame for the production of important works, never failed, by his artistic feeling and refinement, to invest the merest trifles with the utmost interest. The piece is extremely simple, but the melodiousness of the theme—assigned in turn to the pianoforte and violin, with a delicate accompaniment for the violoncello—will charm all hearers; and, although it need scarcely be said that it appeals more to the mind than the fingers of the players, there can be little doubt that this Romanzetta will become extremely popular as a high-class drawing-room composition.

*The Hymns of Martin Luther, set to their original Melodies.* With an English version. Edited by Leonard Woolsey Bacon, assisted by Nathan H. Allen. [Hodder and Stoughton.]

"I AM not of opinion," says the great Protestant Reformer, Luther, "that all sciences should be beaten down and made to cease by the Gospel, as some fanatics pretend; but I would fain see all the arts, and music in particular, used in the service of Him who hath given and created them." How earnestly the writer of these eloquent words worked to ensure the realisation of his wish is known to all; but the rich mine of wealth he bequeathed to us, valuable alike in words and music, can only be fully appreciated when placed in a volume like the one before us, which may indeed be regarded as one of the most important contributions to the recent Luther Festival. In the Introduction the Editor tells us "that many of the tunes that appeared simultaneously and in connection with Luther's Hymns were original with Luther himself, there seems no good reason to doubt;" and although in this we perfectly agree, it is a matter of extreme difficulty to know, with the exception of one or two, which were really composed by him. The tunes, however, are in every case most sympathetically wedded to the words, and the collection here presented reflects the utmost credit upon all concerned in its publication. The volume is really beautifully got up, the commencement of the well-known "Ein' feste Burg," in golden notes upon the cover, presenting a most tempting appearance to all lovers of Lutheran music.

*A Day-dream.* Melody for Clarinet, with an accompaniment for the Pianoforte. Composed by C. A. Ranken. [Duncan Davison and Co.]

WE have had the pleasure of noticing most favourably several songs by the composer of this piece, and are glad to be able to award equal praise to a composition written for an instrument which we should much like to see more cultivated by amateurs. The "Day-dream" is a charming little sketch, both the melody and accompaniments being highly attractive throughout. The principal instrumental part is written in G for a B flat clarinet; but merely as a guide to the pianist, we think it would have been better to let it appear in the pianoforte copy as it is played; for performers not accustomed to transposing instruments will doubtless be puzzled when they see it in one key and hear it in another. The title-page informs us that a violoncello part, in lieu of that for the clarinet, is also published.