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A Short Festal Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, in the Key of E Flat by George Garrett  
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in "Elijah") we have met with no direct imitation; and the coincidence in the case we have noted is probably accidental. The Cantata contains twenty-one numbers, consisting of an overture, six choruses (four of which are in eight parts), a chorale (also in eight parts), a quartett, seven recitatives, and five airs. Among the movements which we like best are the choruses "Let us eat, friends, and drink," and "Who can stand before His indignation," and the songs "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit?" "Sing, O daughter of Zion," and "The Lord is righteous." The final chorus, "There is joy in the presence of the angels," is also extremely well written; but it suffers from too much similarity of rhythm to the first chorus in the work. The part-writing and harmony are throughout very good; and, so far as can be judged from the indications in the pianoforte accompaniment, the orchestration appears very judicious. We consider Dr. Roberts's Cantata decidedly above the average of compositions written as exercises for a degree, and congratulate him upon its production.

*A Short Festal Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, in the key of E flat.* By George Garrett, Mus. Doc. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

MANY of our readers will, like ourselves, be familiar with Dr. Garrett's Church music. To them no recommendation of a new Service from his pen will probably be required; but for the sake of such as may not be acquainted with his previous publications, it may be well to say that he is one of those musicians, unfortunately not too numerous, who know how to combine modern forms with the old spirit. In the present Service will be found no mere reproduction of the "cut and dried" cathedral style of two centuries ago; but though the music is by no means old-fashioned in style, it is never secular. Many modern writers of Church Services commit the mistake of making "part-songs" of the canticles, or, if they avoid this error, they give instead a mere series of chords, which resemble nothing so much as the exercises of a student in thorough-bass. The large number of sacred compositions sent to us for review, but which terminate their career in the waste-paper basket, mostly find their way into that much-frequented depository for sinning in one of these two respects. Dr. Garrett, happily, steers clear of both faults. There is plenty of tune in his music; it is certainly not dry, and on the other hand it is never trivial or undignified. It has the further recommendation of not being difficult: any average choir can manage it without trouble. We recommend it heartily.

*The Birth of Christ.* A Service of Sacred Song. Compiled by the Rev. Gus. M. Burton, M.D. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE idea of this little service is unfortunately far superior to its execution. It consists of a selection of hymn-tunes, chants, and anthems, with two organ voluntaries, designed to be sung in church and interspersed with the reading of passages of Scripture. If the present service is ever performed in our neighbourhood we hope we shall not be within earshot. It contains nine psalm-tunes (four of which are composed by Dr. Burton), three chants and a collect (also from the pen of that gentleman), two anthems (by Messrs. J. H. Greenwood and J. Ives), and two voluntaries. The only good things in the book (except a recitative by Handel, of which we shall speak directly) are the five psalm-tunes which are *not* by Dr. Burton; all the rest of the music is, to a greater or less degree, trash. Dr. Burton's own compositions are comparatively harmless, though they are clumsily harmonised, and bear, so to speak, the word "Amateur" written in large letters across every one of them. But if Dr. Burton chastises us with whips, Messrs. Greenwood and Ives chastise us with scorpions. It is long since we met with anything worse than their two anthems. Mr. Greenwood has set the words, "O thou that tellest," &c., and, with remarkable modesty, has prefixed Handel's recitative, "Behold a virgin shall conceive," to his own music. He appears to have considered a preliminary study of harmony altogether superfluous; so many glaring faults we have seldom met with in the same number of bars. But we beg Mr. Ives's pardon; we are doing him an injustice, for he fairly rivals

his colleague; and if we were forced to say which anthem was the worse, we should be sorely puzzled in deciding. The two voluntaries are two atrocious mutilations and distortions of Handel's choruses, "Glory to God," and "For unto us." If a service of song is to be of any use at all, it must be much better than this one.

*The Souls of the Righteous.* Anthem for All Saints' Day. By Charles L. Williams, Mus. Bac., Oxon., Organist of Llandaff Cathedral. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THIS composition opens with a short septett, containing some good part-writing, though Mr. Williams (evidently by a slip of the pen) has given consecutive fifths in the last two chords between second tenor and second bass. A soprano solo, "In the sight of the unwise," is followed by a five-part chorus, interspersed with passages for solo voices on the same words. The music is throughout interesting, and by no means very difficult. The only thing likely to be prejudicial to its popularity is the fact of its having two tenor parts throughout. Many choirmasters know only too well how difficult it is to get this department of a choir adequately filled.

*A New Method for the Piano.* After the "Klavier-unterrichts-briefe" of Aloys Hennes. Second Course. Translated by H. Mannheimer. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

WE have already noticed the First Course of this well-digested work, and are bound to acknowledge that in the Second Course, now before us, the author pursues his plan so steadily and logically as to defy any criticism save upon the plan itself. The directions for the students are carefully written throughout; the lessons are excellently suited for their purpose; and the thought exercised upon the minutest point merits the warmest commendation. Our only question is whether the pupil will not get utterly weary of his journey before he gets half through it. It is true that the mind will not be burdened with too much at a time; but there is a possibility of carrying this method of instruction too far; and when we say that it is not until the commencement of this "Second Course" of the book that any information is given about the bass clef, or indeed about any clef at all, we are certain that many eminent teachers will agree with us in questioning the policy of so long a silence upon a matter of such importance. Our opinion—formed upon many years of experience—is that pupils have but small trouble in learning the treble and bass notes at once; and that from the moment the hands are placed upon the keys, the two clefs should be read simultaneously. To dismiss all possible objection that we feel it our duty to urge against Herr Hennes's method, we may also say that we cannot agree with the system recommended for counting the dotted note, on page 128. A bar is given containing a group of four quavers—G, A, G, A—and a minim—G; and we are told that when each of the quavers is dotted, and followed by a semi-quaver, we play "G to one; A shortly before two, and immediately afterwards upon counting two, the G which follows." Quite true; but the great difficulty is to know when we *are* to count "two." In truth, the portion requiring to be counted is the space *between* "one" and "two," and then the "two" will take care of itself. The place of the semiquaver is not in the slightest degree determined by saying that it is to be played "shortly before two," unless we can feel when to count "two," and this can only be done by halving each beat and counting one, and two, and, when every note *must* be placed in its correct position. In conclusion, we must give Herr Mannheimer every credit for the able manner in which he has translated the work, the value of which, as we have hinted in our review of the "First Course," is attested by such high authorities as to render further criticism, we should imagine, almost superfluous.

*Six Short and Easy Sketches for the Pianoforte.* Composed by H. A. Harding. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THESE Sketches are certainly both "short" and "easy;" but, fully recognising the difficulty of making such trifles also interesting, we feel the necessity of not being over-