

CHILDE RALPH.

A BALLAD.

CHILDE RALPH is bound for the Holy Land ;
Sunlit waters ripple and flow ;
 He and sweet Agnes part hand to hand,
 The war-horse chafes in the court below.

“ For the Cross of Christ ! for Love’s true meed,
 Over the sea my vassals go ;
 Say, if I call in my utmost need,
 Heart of my heart ! wilt answer or no ? ”

Bright were her eyes as the stars in heaven,
 Love leaped up ’neath their glinting woe ;
 “ All of my heart unto thee is given,
 Call in thy need, I will answer so. ”

II.

Years wore away, and the palmers came ;
Dark and sullen the waters run ;
 Told of disaster, defeat, and shame ;
 Sorrowful tidings, every one.

Many a knight would sweet Agnes wed ;
 Bride so dowered were bride well-won ;
 “ Childe Ralph is dead, ” to her face they said—
 “ Lover and husband then will I none. ”

Lonely she dwells in the old grey tower,
 Saddest maiden beneath the sun ;
 What is the cry that rings through her bower ?
 “ Heart of my heart ! I am spent, death-done ! ”

III.

Forth from the castle sweet Agnes speeds ;
Frosty crystals glimmer and glow ;
 Over the river, across the meads,
 Pathway is none where her footsteps go.

Silent the meadows ; yet soundeth anear
 Faint and low, though the keen winds blow ;
 “ Heart of my heart ! I am dying here ;
 Heart of my heart ! wilt answer or no ? ”

Hard by a bush, on the frozen ground,
 Breathing heavily, breathing slow,
 Childe Ralph she found, with his wound unbound ;
 “ Love ! to this end, I have loved thee so. ”

“ Heart of my heart ! ” and his spirit fled.
 Ah ! but pitiful fell the snow,
 Weaving a veil for the maiden’s head,
 Shrouding the lovers who slept below.

C. E. ROWE.



ENGLAND'S MUSICAL PAST.



EW sub-
 jects
 possess
 greater
 charm
 and inter-
 est for
 every
 British
 musical
 student
 and worker
 than the
 story of the
 rise and
 growth of
 music as an

art in this fair land of ours. It is a wondrous story, one too little known, yet one carrying with it all the romance and all the glamour of an eastern-world tale. We who delight in the study of one or more of the branches of music's delightful art are apt to forget that, just as the story of the heaven and its brilliant orbs fascinate the mind of the young astronomer, or as an

inquiry into the composition and condition of the earth's surface rivets the attention of every inquiring geologist, musical students, we repeat, are apt to forget that an equally thrilling story awaits them in the narrative that tells of

the first beginnings and the slow—sometimes much impeded and harassed—development of musical art and science in dear old England.

No really satisfactory or intelligent progress can be made with any art—particularly music—without a knowledge of how such art has become what it is as we find it ; and, therefore, at a time when so many are studying music as an accomplishment or otherwise—and thousands of our readers are among these—it becomes almost a duty to acquaint ourselves with musical history, especially that relating to Britain, in order that we may become not merely technical and practical but conversational and discriminative musicians.

Little wonder that so entrancing a subject as that telling us how we came by the vast structure of modern music of to-day from the smallest beginnings should attract several narrators. In *The Story of British Music*,* the first volume of which has recently been published, the intention is, to quote the preface, “to tell a connected, simple story, free from technicalities, so that all who will may read and learn something concerning the glorious past, and the excellent present status and promise of musical England.”

This first of three volumes carries the story from the earliest times to the Tudor period, and from the fact that some four hundred pages are occupied in covering this ground, which terminates where all histories of English music begin, it is obvious that Mr. Crowst has gone deeply and thoroughly into his sub-

ject ; indeed much perfectly new ground has been opened up with glorious advantage to our musical reputation. How gratifying it is to learn for instance that England, which has long been dubbed, and snubbed, as an “unmusical nation,” was in 1250 two hundred years in advance musically of any other European country. This by virtue of that remarkable composition “Sumer is icumen in,” which as Mr. Crowst says in this *Story of British Music* is “the most remarkable example of early part-music, and if we except a hymn to St. Augustine is probably the greatest musical curiosity extant. It is the oldest piece of polyphonic and canonical composition known to be in existence, and is reputed to be also the oldest song with musical notes attached to it.* It is in the handwriting of the thirteenth century. The words form an old Northumbrian round, and are in praise of the cuckoo, a favourite subject in every age with both poets and musicians. Wanley, an accomplished antiquary and musician, discovered the composition in 1709, and both Burney and Hawkins referred to and produced it in their musical histories, published later (1776). . . . It was copied by a monk of Reading named John Fornsete, a man of light and learning, whose name will ever adorn English musical annals. The latest date of his work is the year 1228, when the original † could not have been very long

* A previous method of notation was the tablature or alphabetical system of note indication on slabs.

† This has red stave lines, not black, as erroneously shown by Mr. Chappell in his *Popular Music of the Olden Time*.

composed. This practically fixes the date of the copy. The author of the music was probably one—whose name has not come down to us—of a small knot of gifted musical workers who constituted the First English School of Music."

This "Sumer is icumen in" MS. can be seen in the British Museum. It is numbered 978 in the Harleian collection, and is well worth seeing as a splendid piece of documentary evidence of the existence of this genuine First English School. The hymn to St. Augustine to which Mr. Crowest refers is in the Bodleian MSS. collection at Oxford. It is set for two voices, and is believed by experts to have been written in Cornwall as early as the tenth century. This composition ante-dates "Sumer is icumen in" by about one hundred and fifty years, than which it is certainly not less striking as an example of polyphonic composition. To quote a writer in the *Musical Times*, "It tells the same tale but in a far more striking way; for if both pieces are measured by the standards of their own time, it will be seen that the art shown in the eleventh century is far more extraordinary than that exhibited in the famous 'round.'"

But much research precedes all this in the course of this "story." For Britain's first musical breathings, Mr. Crowest takes us back "through the ages," as he says, "to that period when Europe was peopled only here and there, to a time long and long before that, when St. Paul is said to have looked into the very eyes of Linus and Claudia, the children of Caractacus, the British chief. Before this, however, great musical things had been done in Albion. The harp had been brought by the Tartars—the troubadours of the East—and according to bardic tradition was introduced into Ireland by Heber and Heremon, the first princes of the Milesian race in Ireland, about the year 1000 B.C. About this time the order of the Druids originated in Britain, continuing till 179 A.D." "Amid the ritual of the Druidical service," to quote the "story," "plaints, and chants—familiar probably to the whole body of assembled worshippers—blended with the sacrificial fires as these lifted to the sun and moon, or to such gods as Ofydd, Mapon, Camulus, Ludd, and Brigantia, which deities the Britons worshipped."

That there was a native music here—probably to the extent of being an established system—long before the invasion of Julius Cæsar," Mr. Crowest says, "is certain. The land itself (Britain), some lovingly say, takes its name from Prydain, son of Aedd Mawr, one of the most distinguished characters of whom bardic memorials are preserved. A host of reputed leaders among the British bards are brought to notice. Plennyd, Alawn, and Gwron were three Primitive Institutional bards, of whom Plennyd was singer, or narratory chanter to King Brutus, who is said to have obtained sovereignty of Britain as far back as 1149 B.C."

Pytheas, Greek navigator and Marseilles merchant (384–322 B.C.), threw the first light

on musical Britain; and later, Venantius Fortunatus (565 A.D.) helps us; but the Welsh triads afford indisputable proof of England's early musical merit and worth. Then came the Roman influence, which, however, did not affect the original British musical style. The first British church music—long and long before the arrival of St. Augustine—is dealt with by the author, and great were the vicissitudes of church musical art in Britain during the operations of the valorous Romans.

The Saxons or Germans were barbarians musically, and great, indeed, were the efforts of the British clergy to combat the immoral

invariably death and confusion to their enemies."

Cædmon, Bede, Benedict, Biscop, and the heads of religious houses, like those at Whitby, Lindisfarne and Iona, lent no small aid to music in these tumultuous times, all of which, in both its secular and sacred aspects, is dealt with at great length and detail in this narrative of England's musical history. Of course the landing in England of Augustine, and the introduction of the Roman service music into the churches here considerably affected ecclesiastical music. This notable event, and all the vicissitudes which church music went through previous to Tudor times are graphically depicted by Mr. Crowest.

The Danes were even less musical than the Saxons, but the period is full of interest respecting music in Britain at the time. The landing of Augustine, and the introduction into England of the Gregorian service music, had given a great stimulus to religious music here; but secular music had also grown apace. The bards had increased amazingly, so much so that Howel Dha, or Howel the Good, had found it expedient to frame the *Leges Wallicæ* or Welsh laws for their protection and government. Numerous are the stories and incidents related of Kings Alfred, Athelstan, and such ecclesiastics as Dunstan, who caused so many organs to be made for the churches—notably one for Winchester—which was the musical wonder of the age. "King Alfred," Mr. Crowest tells us, "with his harmonious tendencies and culture, greatly aided church music, and no doubt it was as much in the cause of sacred as of secular art that he founded the Chair of Music at Oxford, which James Monachus, Friar John of St. David's, was the first to fill." Canute was musical. "One day," to make another quotation, "attended by the Queen and his court, he was journeying by water towards Ely, where he was to attend the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin. Passing by the abbey church, he heard the monks chanting their 'hours,' and as the sound of the music grew closer, it so charmed the king, that he commanded those who were rowing the royal barge to stay their oars, in order that attention might be directed to the singing. Some writers say that the king was so enraptured, that

he then and there broke into song, and sang the following extempore lines:

'Sweetly sang the monks of Ely

While Cnut, the king, was passing by;
Row to the shore, knights, said the king,
And let us hear these churchmen sing."

Full with such word-pictures is this first volume of *The Story of British Music*. Mr. Crowest has only taken us to the time of Caxton's invention of printing, which had a vast effect upon music, as upon everything else in this country. Space prevents our following him in such chapters as "Late and Early Norman Music," "Minstrelsy from Norman to Lancastrian Times," "First Polyphony, or Part-Writing," "Musical



THE MINSTRELS' PILLAR.

bearings and tendencies of the songs which these sea-wolves and robbers brought with them as they flocked across the channel. Mr. Crowest says, "What could their musical sympathies be? One characteristic that marked them all was their jovial, boisterous nature; whether Jute, Saxon, or Angle, all were alike in their fearless, adventurous disposition. They came first on plunder bent, and soon proved 'barbarians' indeed. Clambering into osier and skin vessels, which held a hundred or so, they ploughed the ocean and channel by day and night, armed with brown shining swords, long-handled spears, and battle-axes which dealt destruction to every obstacle. Then arose the coarse song and drunken chorus, the drift of which was

Grammar and Authorship," and the "Second Period English School to Tudor Times." The second volume, when ready, will treat on the Elizabethan period—a glorious epoch in English musical history—and a third volume with the Victorian Era. But the volume before us contains so much that is new, and which can be found in no other book, that it cannot fail to alter the hitherto accepted notions respecting England's musical poverty, and to place this country high in the councils of musical Europe. Indeed, it was with this end, and to call attention to and vindicate England's great musical position in the past, that the work was written.

The illustration which we reproduce is from the chapter on "Minstrelsy." It represents the minstrels' pillar in St. Mary's Church, Beverley, which the late Mr. Chappell described, but declared to be in Beverley Minster. This pillar, in St. Mary's Church, is the easternmost pillar of the nave on the north side. Its history is as follows. "In 1520 the central towers of the church fell, and destroyed a great part of the nave, especially the north aisle. The restoration of this was effected by various voluntary offerings, and the corbels of the pillars which now support the nave bear inscriptions recording the names of those who gave to the rebuilding. Thus

on the two westernmost pillars we read 'Klay and his wife made these two pillars and a half.' On the fourth and fifth pillars, 'These two pillars made good wives.' On the sixth, the 'minstrels' pillar, 'This pillar made the minstrels.' Just below the capital, on a series of small brackets, on the shaft of the pillar, are sculptured, and still dimly-coloured, figures of five minstrels. And it is supposed that they represent members of a certain guild or fraternity of minstrels, or gleemen, which flourished in Beverley." In those times music was recognised by provincial cities and boroughs as a proper subject on which money should be spent.

OTHER PEOPLE'S STAIRS.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO, Author of "Her Object in Life," "A King's Daughter," "By Still Waters," etc.

CHAPTER XX.

A SINKING HEART.



those weary, weary months! And it seemed to Morag that nothing she could do could satisfy the young ladies. She did not note that the nagging and gibing rose to its pitch from the date of the entertainment, nor if she had, would she have been any the wiser as to the reason.

For it had struck the Misses Garth painfully that Algernon Fisher never called after the "entertainment," though they had each told him most cordially how delighted they would be to introduce him to mamma, who had been a school-friend of his mother's cousin and remembered her so fondly!

The Misses Garth attributed Algernon's remissness to something appertaining to Morag. Remembering what the club girls had whispered concerning the flaunting, befeathered creature whose appearance had so excited Morag, Miss Griselda was inclined to think that the gentleman knew something not

to Morag's credit, and being surprised to find her in their service, held himself aloof, that he might be guilty neither of reserve towards them nor yet of making any attack on the character or the past of a poor working girl. "It is the kind of chivalry which gentlemen like Algernon Fisher cannot shake off," she decided.

Miss Elsa believed that the young man did not make his appearance because he was ashamed of having been so outspoken in his foolish admiration of the prettiness of a servant girl—their servant girl. "Men do not care to expose their weak partiality for mere physical charm," she said.

"I don't think that any man need blush for admiring beauty," bridled Miss Henrietta. "It asserts itself before mind or nature can become known. But mind and nature form the style of beauty, of course. And I do not understand what he could see in her."

No housemaid was engaged till just before Christmas. Miss Griselda often remarked to Morag on the terrible difficulty of obtaining good servants, and that a house was better without those of the other sort. "They would make your own work harder rather than easier," she said. But Morag remembered Christina's words, and was not at all surprised when a housemaid was found just in the nick of time before the Christmas and New Year parties came on.

Jane Riddell was a professional servant; just that and nothing more. She was housemaid rather than woman. She was prepared to weigh out her pound of flesh to her employers, but let them beware how they attempted to draw a drop of her life blood with it!

"There's nothing human-like about Jane," whimpered poor old Mrs. Grieve when Jane broke off the story of the bad leg and the club money, by a crisp inquiry as to the day when stores were given out, and as to the weekly allowance of tablecloths and napkins.

Jane had engaged the Garths quite as much as they had engaged her. A judicious interview at a neighbouring registry office and some gossip among the servants on the terrace, had made her mistress of the position. Her questions rattled like well-aimed shells on the weak places of the Garth domes-

ticities. With the exigencies of the festive season full upon them, they surrendered helplessly to her relentless power.

"Had they a bath-room?" she asked innocently.

With sinking hearts they admitted they had not.

"And I daresay you each have a bath in your rooms?" she went on suavely.

"Yes, they did."

"Then the place won't suit me," she replied in a tone of mournful conviction, and rose to depart.

Miss Griselda and Miss Elsa exchanged glances. "The parlour-maid has been doing that duty lately," said Miss Griselda in a propitiatory tone. "She has never complained" (that was not quite true! though Morag had uttered no determined protest against what she had made up her mind she had to endure). "It can continue as part of her work. You may relieve her of something more suitable to you. You will find her a very obliging and biddable girl!" (How astonished Morag would have been to hear an opinion of herself so contrary from that which the Garths' manner constantly impressed on herself.)

Then Jane Riddell, pre-informed what the Garths paid their housemaids, made a stand for the sum she fixed for herself.

"She had never taken less. She had always lived in good families. She could scarcely go down in wages now, when she was just in her prime."

She spoke plaintively. But under all the respectful manner there was a "take me on my own terms or leave me," which the Misses Garth could not fail to understand. The sisters held a hurried colloquy. They wanted just such a woman at this season; they computed that she was not likely to remain for many months in such a house as theirs, therefore for that time, they could afford to give her what she asked. And so Jane Riddell walked triumphantly into possession.

In after years, Morag could never quite tell how she lived through the following months into the spring. She got through her work mechanically. She ate and she slept, without enjoying either food or rest. She wondered