A. R. GAUL.

ISRAEL

TWO SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE.

LONDON: NOVELLO & CO. LTD.
THE PRINCE OF PEACE
A SACRED CANTATA
FOR FOUR SOLO VOICES, CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA
THE WORDS SELECTED FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE
AND THE MUSIC COMPOSED BY
ALFRED R. GAUL.

In the presence of a large and enthusiastic audience the cantata came to a very satisfactory first hearing at Hanley, on March 26th, at the hands of the Hanley Glee and Matrerial Society. The chorus and band (conducted by Mr. J. G. Gurney) numbered 350. Mr. Gaul was present, and as he took his seat in the balcony was loudly applauded. The principals were Madame Solotro (soprano), Miss Edna Thornton (contralto), Mr. Charles Saunders, and Mr. Francis Davine.

BIRMINGHAM DAILY GAZETTE.

The work made a distinct impression from the earliest numbers, the general excellence of design and style of purpose, which characterises the whole being very noteworthy. Mr. Gaul has in this production passed off with a charm, which, writ being within the power of ordinary choral societies, will be worth the notice of the largest musical organisations.

From this point interest constantly deepens; the well-known texts are music in themselves, and Mr. Gaul has set them with striking reverence and in an art that is always in good taste. "Confess to God," "Never man spake like this Man," "Lo! this is our God," and others of the choruses tells us we are at the seaside. Jesus is sitting there speaking parables. The Prodigal Son is in the air; the story is given; the unaccompanied quartet, "Return, O Wanderer!" is sung by an invisible quartet. The Prodigal returns, his family making merry; the Elder Son, returning from the field, hears music and dancing. This gives Mr. Gaul opportunity for one of the finest and most emotional things he has ever written, a quintet a sparkling intermezzo in the form of an Eastern Dance. A number of beautiful vocal movements follow, and the first part ends with a psalm of praise, "Thou art the King of Glory," a singularly fine chorus, worthy of any composer, living or dead.

Parts begin to interest; the "Roaming Shepherd," and the second intermezzo, a Pastoral, is in order. The "Shepherd" idea is treated at every point with a reverential interest. In praise of the Lord, all ye Gentiles," for an unaccompanied double choir, proceeds with an astonishing success. More favours in the form, follow, set solo, quartet, or chorus: "Hosanna to the Son of Davíd." "Come unto Him," "Lord, what is man?" "Man is like a thing of naught"; a mournful mood soon relieved by cheerful texts: "Yet had I been more mindful." "When All Thy mercies," and "Lo! I am with you always." The cantata, which lasts about ninety minutes, concludes with a final statement of which good choirs will more readily "Praise and extol." No man knows better than Mr. Gaul how to write for voices. Throughout the work we have spontaneity, elevation, and never-severing charm. The cantata, which completes the octave of Mr. Gaul's cantatas, we hold to be the best. If it proves less popular than the composer's "The Holy City," we shall be surprised. Mr. Gaul was engaged on this, his latest work, for about four years, and we believe that all who hear it will agree that the time was very profitably spent.

BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST.

A large and appreciative audience assembled in the Trinity Hall, Old Hill, on Thursday evening, April 4th, and the occasion being the twenty-first concert arranged by the Old Hill Musical Society, conductor, Mr. A. H. Bassano. A special feature of the concert was the performance of Mr. A. R. Gaul's sacred cantata, "The Prince of Peace," this being the first time of performance in the Birmingham district. The work met with a most flattering reception. "The Prince of Peace" is an octavo above "Ruth," the first of the series, being the most modern both in style and treatment of the whole set. Mr. Gaul has felt the influence of the time, and perceived the trend of modern music; so his new work is more closely knit, combines the continuous treatment while preserving the older vocal form, and exhibits a freedom in advance of his preceding productions. The choral writing is very grateful for the singers, and the choruses concluding each part are the most scholarly of all. Every care is paid to detail, and the directions given in the music are clear and easy to follow.

BIRMINGHAM DAILY MAIL.


The cantata, which lasts about ninety minutes, concludes with a final statement of which good choirs will more readily "Praise and extol." No man knows better than Mr. Gaul how to write for voices. Throughout the work we have spontaneity, elevation, and never-severing charm. The cantata, which completes the octave of Mr. Gaul's cantatas, we hold to be the best. If it proves less popular than the composer's "The Holy City," we shall be surprised. Mr. Gaul was engaged on this, his latest work, for about four years, and we believe that all who hear it will agree that the time was very profitably spent.
"The first performance of a new work by a composer of established reputation is an event of such unfrequent occurrence in this locality that the production of Mr. Alfred R. Gaul’s new sacred Cantata, ‘The Ten Virgins’, at South Shields, on Wednesday night, must not be passed over lightly. We have been in this city occasional performances of works conducted personally by their composers; we have pleasant recollections of the latter Henry Barnatt, Mr. Edgerton, Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, Mr. Ebenezer Frost, and Mr. Hanham MacCunn visiting us under such circumstances. But in all of those cases was the performance the first production of the work. In the present instance, not only did Mr. Gaul conduct his work personally, but, as we have already said, the performance was the very first occasion upon which the Cantata had been heard in public. Usually the first production of a work in the city is reserved for one of the great festivals, or at least for the leading society of one of our great provincial centres, as in the case of Mr. Gaul’s ‘Holy City’, which was produced at the Birmingham Musical Festival a few years ago, and the same composer’s ‘Jean de Coin’, which was entrusted for a first performance to the Birmingham Festival Choral Society. The honour conferred, therefore, upon the South Shields Choral Society by Mr. Gaul, in entrusting them with the first production of his latest work, was a great act of confidence which the members of the society should, and believe do, appreciate very highly. We may here mention, in order that our readers may better estimate the importance of the occasion, that the audience all the way from Birmingham, Staffordshire, and other distant parts were present at the performance of the work. It is very gratifying to know that Mr. Gaul was immensely pleased with the manner in which his work was performed, and paid very high compliments to the chorus, soloists, and orchestra.

In our issue of Tuesday last we gave at some length a description of the new work, together with such an opinion of its merits as could be gathered from a perusal of the score. All that remains for us now, therefore, is to see how far our opinions are confirmed upon hearing the work performed, and to pass a few remarks upon the work and its performance. In the first place, let us assure our readers that the Cantata is not only to our satisfaction, but realises our expectations. As we said in our preliminary notice of the work, the parallel of the Ten Virgins is not to be found in the old Testament, and in dealing with the story Mr. Gaul has shown considerable discretion and knowledge, which is the outcome of much study and research. Mr. Gaul’s use of Miss Winkworth’s translation of the ancient German chorale, the appropriateness of which cannot be questioned, is admirably adapted to the chorale—and particularly the opening phrase, which is used as the text upon which the Cantata is founded, and which in many other circumstances is introduced into the principal situations as the work develops—must have been pleasant music to listen to. The performance on Wednesday night, Miss Winkworth’s translation, which differs materially from that of Mr. Mendelssohn in his ‘St. Paul’, is an extremely fortunate one that might easily imagine that the words had been expressly written for the work. The version runs as follows:

Shall I wake? a voice is calling,  
Midnight hears the welcome voice,  
And the stars answer 'Bravo!'

Come forth, ye Virgins, night is past;  
Then sinners, wake;  
Your lamps with gladness take.

And for His marriage feast prepare,  
For ye must go to meet Him there.

It was an equally graceful thought to have made Lord Tennyson’s beautiful poem commencing ‘Late, late, so late!’ the basis of the overture. The illiterate is indeed much more interested in the simple words that the more learned poet would be the fortunate possessor of attainments other than those ordinarily found in a musician.

Having been fortunate in his choice and treatment of a subject, it is not surprising to find that Mr. Gaul has entered heart and soul into the spirit of his work. One of the most pleasing features of the Cantata is, to our mind, the thoughtful and reverent way in which he has treated his subject musically. The devotional setting of portions of the Lord’s Prayer, and of such lines as ‘Then art the Guide of our youth,’ and ‘Wisdom crieth in the streets,’ is most affecting, and could scarcely fail to reach the heart of the attentive listener. The musician will admire the skilful use which Mr. Gaul has made of the first phrase of the chorale ‘Sleepers, wake!’ to which reference has already been made. We have already likened Mr. Gaul’s method in this work to that of Mendelssohn in his ‘Lehensgesang,’ but Mr. Gaul makes, perhaps, a greater use of his principal theme than did the composer of Elijah. Thus we find that the theme is heard in the introduction to the work, whilst the chorale in its entirety forms the greater part of the first chorus. It is afterwards frequently heard, notably in the duet ‘They that trust in the Lord’ (the opening phrase of which is founded upon it, in the Intermediate, in the Fateful March, and at the close of the final chorus. There are other themes also somewhat extensively used, such as the opening phrase of the Fateful March, which is heard frequently, after the manner of the Intermezzo, when reference is made to the marriage. The four choruses, too, which introduce the Narrator will not escape notice among many other features of interest. We do not, however, intend to go over the ground already covered in our former notice of the work; suffice it to say that all the beauties of the Cantata then pointed out were intensified by the performance, and that our predictions of the success of the work were more than verified. Among the most successful numbers we may mention the tenor solo, ‘Thy kingdom come,’ the words of which are a portion of the Lord’s Prayer, during the singing of which the audience rose from their seats and remained standing. The setting of the prayer is most impressive, and was listen to with rapt attention. The chorus, ‘Let your loins be girded,’ with its exquisite quartet, ‘Blessed are these servants,’ and its remarkably fine closing movement, also had a marked effect upon the audience, who would probably have demanded its repetition but for the fact that it leads directly into the duet ‘They that trust in the Lord,’ and there was consequently no opportunity for applause. The devotional character of the solo, ‘Thou art the Guide of our youth,’ was most impressive, as also was the interpolated solo, ‘Son of my soul,’ which is to be incorporated in future editions of the work. But it is impossible in the limited space at our disposal to enumerate all the interesting features of a work that contains so many good things. We should like to dwell upon the fine solo, ‘How long, O heavenly Bridegroom!’ the charming dialogue, ‘Give us of your comfort, O God, great is Thy goodness,’ ‘Glory and worship,’ ‘Ascribe unto the Lord,’ ‘The wicked are like the churning, the wicked are like the bubbling brook.’ The work was rehearsed with the utmost enthusiasm, and upon the Fateful March, which was so enthusiastically encored that it had to be repeated, we cannot but say, want of space prohibits our doing so.

Undoubtedly in this work we have in Mr. Gaul a voice is calling, a voice is calling.

Price, paper cover, 2a. 6d.; paper boards, 3a.; Cloth, gilt, 4s.; Tonic Sol-fa, 15s.; Vocal parts, each 1s.

ENT. STA. HALL.]

Words only, 5s. per 100.

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and NOVELLO, EWER AND CO., NEW YORK.
The Ten Virgins
A SACRED CANTATA
FOR FOUR SOLO VOICES AND CHORUS
BY
ALFRED R. GAUL
(Or. 42)

"PHILHARMONIC AND ST. PAUL'S CHORAL UNION.—Two of Mr. Alfred R. Gaul's Cantatas, 'Joan of Arc' and 'The Holy City,' have been previously performed in Leamington. The verdict on 'The Ten Virgins' must be that it quite fulfills the rich promise of these former musical essays. There are the same excellent orchestral writing, the same melodious solo numbers, the same massive choral effects; and in some respects there is a noticeable advance on the previous works—a still greater unity of design, the finer touch of the true artist-musician. The libretto of 'The Ten Virgins' has been compiled with admirable taste from the Scripture narrative of the parable, and from other portions of the sacred writings. To these there are some happily selected additions, of which the most noticeable are Miss Whitworth's translation of the German chorales 'Sleepers, Awake!,' and Lord Tennyson's 'Ten Lamps.'

The tenor aria of the poem of 'The Idylls of the King.' The composer has made use of the chorus in the happiest manner imaginable, while the chorus from Lord Tennyson has received a musical setting which it is the highest compliment to say is in every way worthy of the poet. There is a pleasant absence of musical pyrotechnics and tricky effects in 'The Ten Virgins,' and a welcome return to the first musical principles which gave us the great compositions which are always likely to stand unrivalled before the world. The chorale writing in 'The Ten Virgins' is alone something to be thankful for, and as we have intimated, it is only one of the many musical virtues of the Cantata. . . . The soprano aria 'Sun of my soul,' one of the gems. . . . The soprano air 'Wisdom crieth in the streets,' a truly beautiful composition. . . . The contralto air 'God willeth not the death of a sinner,' a strikingly dramatic air. . . . The tenor air 'Thy kingdom come,' one of the 'purple patches' of the work. . . . The quire contains a &c.; a little very charming music. —Leamington Chronicle.

A new work from the pen of the composer of 'The Holy City' and 'Joan of Arc' will be heartily welcomed by all who love the art of music.—Newcastle Journal.

"Mr. Gaul is to be seen with a new Sacred Cantata, and Choral Societies are piously concerned therein, for they admire the Midland composer because he gives them good music without putting too great a strain upon executive means. The work will certainly go through 'Festivity,' in the wake of its predecessors from the same pen."—London Daily Telegraph.

"Most astound popularity wherever heard, and will assuredly soon be placed among the greatest works of this kind by present-day writers, . . . treated in a thoroughly artistic manner, . . . a perfect workmanship, and striking individuality of style. Iminitely superior to any previous effort of the composer."—Liverpool Daily Chronicle.

"A very large audience assembled in the Town Hall (Newcastle-on-Tyne) on Monday night. . . . The first part of the programme was devoted to Gaul's new Cantata 'The Ten Virgins.' The opinions expressed on the occasion of its production at South Shields we still maintain, further acquaintance only serving to confirm them. The Cantata is replete with charm of music that each school of every one can appreciate, and which found so distinguished a master in Mendelssohn. If composers would have their works popular with choral societies, it is only reasonable to expect that they will bestow a fair share of their attention upon the choruses. The old masters knew this, and there is no doubt that the fact has much do to with the long-continued, popularity of their works; and there is equally little doubt, we think that the principal cause of the failure of so many works produced now-days is the uninteresting nature of the choruses. Compare the choruses of the three most popular works ever produced—'The Messiah,' 'Creation,' and ' Elijah'—with a large number of modern works, and our meaning will be clear. If we mistake not, such thoughts as these passed through Mr. Gaul's mind when he set himself to compose those works which have placed him in the front rank of English composers—the 'Holy City,' 'Joan of Arc,' and 'The Ten Virgins'—and that the public endorse his views is proved by the enormous sale which these works have had."—Newcastle Daily Journal, Dec. 17, 1890.

"The subject is an excellent one for a Cantata . . . a stronger work than 'Joan of Arc' . . . Melodious, vocal, and of moderate difficulty, and, like Mr. Gaul's earlier Cantatas, will be eagerly welcomed by societies in search of new works having these characteristics."—Newcastle Daily Leader, Dec. 16, 1890.

"BOW AND BROMLEY INSTITUTE CHOIR.—On the 2nd ult., this Society came forward with the first performance in London of Mr. Gaul's new Cantata 'The Ten Virgins.' The hall was overcrowded by an audience that was disposed to encore every other number of the work. If the verdict of this miscellaneous audience, that could have no possible reason for being favourably prejudiced, is of any account in estimating the merit of a new work, a career that will rival that of the last composer's 'Holy City' may be predicted for 'The Ten Virgins.' That Mr. Gaul should have secured this undoubtedly popular success with a work far more contrapuntal than any of his former works, is a remarkable tribute to his power of welding science and beauty into one whole."—Musical Times, Dec. 1, 1890.

"Not only full of good music, but displays individuality of style. Mr. Gaul's powers of melodic invention still hold good. The chief characteristic of the voices is as noteworthy as ever for neatness of wordmanship and knowledge of effect. . . . a distinct advance upon any of its predecessors."—Birmingham Daily Post.

"That 'The Ten Virgins' is a much finer work than the evergreen favourite 'Holy City' we have no doubt whatever. Mr. Gaul has aimed at fine outline and telling colouring, and all that he has aimed at he has achieved."—Birmingham Daily Gazette.

The above Cantata has been specially planned to meet the requirements of Musical Societies, the greater portion being choral, including three numbers for Sopranos and Contraltos (The Virgins). In the matter of the Orchestral parts, the following plan has been adopted—i.e., when the Strings are fazed, instead of employing rests, anything that is written for other instruments will appear in small notes in the string parts, and a similar plan has been adopted with regard to the reed instruments—i.e., any Clarinet or Oboe Solo will be expressed in small notes in the Flute part. This arrangement, it is hoped, will make it possible to give a fair rendering of the work with a limited orchestra.

Price, paper cover, 2s. 6d.; paper boards, 3s.; Cloth, gilt, 4s.; Tonic Sol-fa, 1s.; Vocal parts, each 1s.

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The gratuitous loan of instrumental parts may be had on application to the Composer, and full liberty is given to perform this Cantata and to insert the words in any programme without further permission.