

THE fault of those well-meaning but mis-directed authors who seek to guide the young intellect through the mazy intricacies of the science of music, generally lies in their want of moderation and lack of discernment. Seeking to do too much, they end by encompassing little or nothing, and, instead of helping the student along the thorny path, they place positive obstructions in his way—fresh difficulties having to be encountered at each turn, which ought not to be met at all in a preliminary course. Miss Louise Gibson has discovered where others have erred, and her "First Book" contains nothing but what is absolutely essential to a general and comprehensive understanding of the subject in its primitive form; everything is clearly and definitely stated, and the facts are left unencumbered by useless matter, argumentative or reflective. Perhaps the one weak point in the booklet is the fact of its being cast in a catechetical form. This may be all very well, and appropriate enough, for the juveniles for whom the work is ostensibly written; but a treatise of such excellence should have a wider sphere of usefulness, and appeal to those children of a larger growth who have not been taught to "lisp in numbers." In the *Theory of Music* we have a compilation of facts, the knowledge of which is indispensable to the pianist, the vocalist and the general scholar. In fourteen short chapters able explanation is given of the notes and their value; rests; dotted notes and rests; the various clefs; the position of the hands, arm and fingers when playing on the pianoforte; the separate kinds of time, and tables of signatures; triplets, rhythm, accent, emphasis, and syncopation; ornamentation and embellishment such as the *appoggiatura* and *acciaccatura*, turn and shake; marks of expression; intervals consonant and dissonant, major and minor augmented and diminished, and table of intervals with their inversions, diatonic and chromatic; scales, transposition, fingering, melody, and harmony. We may point to the chapter on clefs as a very simple and excellent elucidation of one of the subjects which has hitherto formed a stumbling-block in the way of aspiring young musicians; but, indeed, what is true of this section, applies with no inconsiderable degree of force to the whole work. We see that it has already been adopted at the South London Musical Training College, and at other schools for girls in London and the provinces, and we see no reason why its value as an educating medium should not be still more widely recognised. Miss Gibson does not let the subject rest here, and her second and third books, treating of melodic and harmonic progression, sequences, suspensions, &c., and dissonant harmony, or chords of the 7th and 9th, &c., will doubtless be found quite as worthy of commendation. A couple of shillings could not be better disposed of than in the purchase of Miss Gibson's *Theory of Music*.

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