

## IN MEMORIAM.

OUR readers, we feel sure, will be distressed to learn that one of our contributors, and the foremost of the women composers of our time, has been suddenly taken away from us by death. We speak of Mrs. Meadows White, who has published so much under this and her maiden name of Alice Mary Smith. It is remarkable that there have been so few women composers of any real importance, for one would think that, from their very nature, women could really rival men in certain styles of composition, as they certainly have done, although in limited numbers, in the writing of hymns.

Alice Mary Smith, daughter of the late Richard Smith, Esq., of Guildford Street and of Littlehampton, was born on May 19th, 1839. She studied music under Sir Sterndale Bennett and Sir George Macfarren, and first attracted attention as a composer by some songs published by the firm of Lamborn Cock in 1859. In 1861 she produced a pianoforte quartet at one of the trials of new compositions by the now defunct Musical Society of London, at whose meetings a string quartet from her pen was performed in the following year, and a Symphony in C minor in 1863. Two more quartets were produced at the *soirées* of the new Philharmonic Society. The Overture to *Endymion* (1864), and an Introduction and Allegro for piano and orchestra (1865), as well as a Pianoforte Trio (1862), were introduced by the Musical Society of London. The first work of hers which was heard at the Crystal Palace Concerts was the *Overture to Endymion*, which she had re-written, and which was produced in 1871. Two other overtures were subsequently performed at Sydenham, that to Longfellow's *Masque of Pandora* in 1878, and that to *Jason; or, the Argonauts and Sirens*, in 1881. Both these works had been previously heard at the concerts of the New Philharmonic Society. More recently the composer turned her attention to vocal music with orchestra. Her first essay in this direction was the setting of Kingsley's *Ode to the North-East Wind*. This work was sung with pianoforte accompaniment at the Musical Artists' Society in 1878, but its first production with full orchestra was by the Borough of Hackney Choral Association in 1880. Her next important choral work was the *Ode to the Passions*, first given at the Hereford Festival in 1882, and subsequently performed at St. James's Hill and elsewhere with considerable success. Her latest published work is the "Song of the Little Baltung" (words by Kingsley), for male chorus and orchestra; but we learn that Messrs. Novello and Co. have now in the press another work of similar character, a setting of Kingsley's ballad, "The Red King." We have named only the more important of her published compositions; she has besides left in MS. a second symphony, the remaining music to *The Masque of Pandora*, completed with pianoforte accompaniment, but not orchestrated, and an unfinished cantata, *The Valley of Remorse*. In 1867 the

composer married Mr. F. Meadows White, Q.C., Recorder of Canterbury, a brother of the Rev. Lewis Borrett White, D.D., Rector of St. Mary Aldermary, and Secretary of the Religious Tract Society.

Mrs. Meadows White's society was much courted by her friends on account of her great charm of manner and vivaciousness of disposition.

The *Athenæum* says that "Mrs. White's music is marked by elegance and grace rather than by any great individuality. That she was not deficient in power and energy is proved by portions of the *Ode to the North-East Wind* and *The Passions*. Her forms

They were of many kinds—kings, queens, and famous people, country scenes, and, not least, delightful pictures of animals, drawn by Mr. Harrison Weir, to illustrate anecdotes.

I took the pictures as they came, and the little one listened with great attention to my account of each and all. But after a while she turned her winsome little face, and said in the most polite way, "Please would you never mind telling me about the fine ladies and gentlemen, and tell me all about the doggies and things?"

Like every tender-hearted and right-minded wee maiden, she loved dumb animals, doggies being deservedly first favourites, and would rather hear about their wise-like doings than about all the royal finery in the world.

So we confined our attention to the "doggies and things," and were very happy until we came to the very tail end of our animal tales. Then my little maiden was distressed that there were no more; so I looked amongst some unprinted papers, and found two letters, written years ago to my own little folks, from Heidelberg, and in 1874. They were vastly delighted with them at the time, and my small friend opened her large eyes wider, and clapped her hands and laughed as I read them to her. This made me think perhaps some other quite small girls would like them too. That is, if there are any children left young enough! For, alas! the small people go to school so very soon, and learn so many "ologies," and talk so wisely themselves, that sometimes I feel ever so much younger than my own little friends. I cannot imagine them doing the foolish things that I did, as a child; with my garden for instance, I can remember sowing seeds and planting cuttings, and turning the ground over a couple of days afterwards, to see if the seeds were springing, or gently drawing up the cutting to see if there were signs of a root! How a child of the same age would curl her lips and turn up her bit of a nose now at the idea of my being such a simpleton! And, old as I am, how very small I should feel if she did so!

Well, in the hope that there are some children left young enough to laugh at a little

true incident told in the shape of a nonsense story, I will write two such, and send them to THE GIRL'S OWN, for that is the paper read by all the nice young people, and all the still-young old ones.

The first will just be a copy of portions of those two letters—"A Mouse's Tale;" the other a proper "Doggie Story."

LETTER I.—LONG TAIL, ESQUIRE, IS INTRODUCED.

MY DARLING CHILDREN,—Once upon a time a gentleman mouse lived with Mrs. Mouse and a charming family of four small mice in this old city of Heidelberg, where we are now staying. He was a very good sort of fellow, only he was rather inclined to express a better opinion of his human neighbours than they deserved. This is not at all a common fault amongst human animals, for



MRS. MEADOWS WHITE.

were always clear and her ideas free from eccentricity; her sympathies were evidently with the classical rather than with the romantic school. Devoted to her art, Mrs. Smith was alike free from affectation and conceit; and in the roll of female musicians her name will hold an honourable place."

## TWO CHAPTERS FOR THE LITTLE PEOPLE.

By RUTH LAMB.

### CHAPTER I.

A MOUSE'S TALE.

I WAS sitting one day with a dear little girl on my knee, amusing her by telling her stories about the pictures in a book before us.