

MEMOIR OF WILLIAM SHIELD, Esq.

WILLIAM SHIELD was born at Swalwell, in the county of Durham, about the year 1749. He received the first rudiments of music from his father, a singing-master, and at the early age of six began to practise the violin, and afterwards the harpsichord, on both of which instruments, but particularly the former, he soon acquired considerable proficiency. When he had attained his ninth year, he had the misfortune to lose his father, who left a widow and four children, with very scanty means of subsistence. As it now became imperatively necessary that he should think of some business as a future means of subsistence, he had the choice proposed to him of becoming a barber, a sailor, or a boat-builder. He fixed on the latter, and was accordingly bound apprentice to Edward Davison, of North Shields. He has often been heard to describe his feelings when he packed up his clothes, not forgetting his violin and little stock of music left him by his father, bade adieu to his mother, little brothers and sisters, and proceeded with a heavy heart to the place of his destination. He, however, found a kind and indulgent master, who so far from checking him in his favourite pursuit, encouraged his love for music, and even forwarded his views, by enabling him in several instances to turn his talents on the violin to account, by playing at the musical meetings of North Shields, as well as at the parties of the principal families of the town.

So soon as the term of his apprenticeship was expired, he resolved to quit the trade of boat-building, and devote himself to an art to which not only his disposition inclined him, but the encouragement he had already received operated as an additional stimulus. He had by this time made such progress on the violin, as to be able to lead the Newcastle subscription concerts, where he repeatedly played the solo parts of Geminiani's and Giardini's concertos. His talents attracted the notice of the celebrated Avison, known by his elegant "Essay on Musical Expression," who, with that kindness which characterized him, gave him lessons in thorough bass. He shortly after afforded a striking proof of the manner in which he had profited by this instruction. A new church was to be consecrated at Sunderland: he composed an anthem for the occasion, which was accepted, and performed by the choir of Durham Cathedral, to an immense congregation. The best judges pronounced it an excellent specimen of church music; the dignitaries of the church invited him to their tables, and his reputation began to rise from this moment.

He was shortly afterwards invited to undertake the direction of the fashionable concerts at Scarborough, and became the leader in the orchestra of the theatre, for which he composed several songs, written by his friend the much-admired pastoral poet, Cunningham, who was an actor in the Scarborough company at that period. Here he became acquainted with those well-known performers Borghi and Fischer, who were so satisfied with his talents and execution, that they strongly advised him to visit London; and afterwards represented his abilities in so favourable a light to the celebrated Giardini, leader of the band

at the Opera House, that an engagement was offered him in that orchestra, which he accepted. He took his station among the second violins; but, the season following, attracting the notice of Mr. Cramer, who had become leader, he was promoted to the rank of principal viola, a post which he retained for upwards of eighteen years.

His first appearance as a dramatic composer was in the year 1778, in the music to the afterpiece of the *Flitch of Bacon*, which obtained great success. The words were from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Bate, afterwards Sir Henry Bate Dudley, being also his first dramatic attempt. Some time after this he accepted the situation of composer to Covent Garden Theatre, in which capacity several of his most popular works were produced. A difference, however, between himself and the manager, respecting pecuniary matters, induced the former, after having filled the situation for several years with great success, to send in his resignation.

In the year 1790, while on a visit to Taplow, he had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Haydn; and he has been heard to declare that he gained more important information in four days' communion with that founder of a style which has given fame to so many imitators, than ever he did by the best directed studies of any part of his life. "I had seen him," says Shield, "at the concert of Ancient Music the preceding evening; and having observed his countenance expressive of rapture and astonishment at the performance of the chorus in *Joshua*, 'The nations tremble at the dreadful sound,' I took the favourable opportunity of asking his opinion of that composition. His reply was: 'I have long been acquainted with music, but never knew half its powers till I heard this. I am quite certain,' added he, 'that only one author, and that author inspired, ever did, or ever could, pen so sublime a composition.'"

"Having afterwards been presented with a manuscript score of *Il ritorno di Tobia*, by its author, I endeavoured to make some suitable return, by requesting his acceptance of a copy of *Jephtha*. On expressing my admiration of the recitatives in Haydn's works, which abound in the finest specimens of the enharmonic, this great man proved his liberality and judgment, by exclaiming 'Ah, Sir, what is all this to the deep pathos, and contrasted power of the 'Deeper and deeper still!'" (*Rudiments of Thorough Bass*, p. 69.)

He also relates the following anecdote of the father of modern harmony. "When Haydn accepted an engagement to set accompaniments for a violin and violoncello to one hundred Scotch songs, and when he viewed some of the words and passages, which generally appear uncouth to foreigners, he condescended to refer to me, instead of a glossary, while he played his accompaniments on the piano-forte, and sang the melodies. The violin part to the air *Todlin hame*, proved so delighting, that with it and the melody we formed a vocal duet. He observed, that when first requested to harmonize this air, he proposed to relieve its monotony by a progression of some of its rela-

tive keys; but the attempt convinced him, that modulations and contrasts would destroy its character, and prove less pleasing than its repeated passage. He used to say, that he had blotted many a quire of paper to no purpose, in attempting to compose a second strain to that fine little air, *The Broom of the Cowden Knows*. This leads me to mention an anecdote, communicated to me by a most respectable traveller. He says, that so highly did Haydn think of our Scotch, Irish, and Welch melodies, that he had a number of them, with his own symphonies and accompaniments, framed and hung on the walls of his apartments. So singular a compliment to our national music, from so great a man, is surely worthy of being recorded." (*Ibid.* pp. 30, 31.)

In the summer of 1791, Mr. Shield paid a visit to his native town, where his aged parent was still living, and over whom he watched with a solicitude that furnishes one delightful proof, among many that might be adduced, of the excellence of his heart. He took advantage of this occasion to collect several of the airs that are still traditionally sung in the counties of Durham, Westmoreland, and Northumberland, which, he says, in his infancy he was taught to play and sing, and were then known by the appellation of *Border tunes*. Several of them he has introduced in his "*Rudiments of Thorough Bass*," (pp. 35—38.) "These hitherto neglected flights of fancy," says he, "may serve to augment the collector's stock of printed rarities, and may, perhaps, prove conspicuous figures in the group of national melodies."

He had long been upon terms of intimacy with the eccentric critic and editor, Joseph Ritson, who was a native of the same county. In the autumn of 1791, he invited our composer to accompany him to Paris; a proposition which was accepted. In that city he formed acquaintance with several foreign composers, as well as countrymen of his own. Many of these being anxious, like himself, to improve their musical taste in the native land of song, a party was made to Italy; and Turin, Milan, Bologna, Piacenza, Parma, Lodi, Modena, Florence, Sienna, and Rome, were visited in turn. At the latter place, he was induced to take up his residence for a time, in order to profit by the friendship and example of some of the great masters of that capital, and to obtain a more perfect insight into Italian Music.

On his return to England, in the autumn of 1792, he renewed his engagement with the manager of Covent Garden Theatre; but another difference of a pecuniary nature arising, he entirely relinquished that situation, and devoted his time to other musical pursuits. His residence in Italy, though short, was followed by the most important results to him, as a musical critic and writer on the principles of the art, for it removed many prejudices at that time not uncommon among English musicians, and furnished him with abundant materials for thinking, of which his active and intelligent mind made the best possible use. But it is quite erroneous to state that as a composer he derived much advantage from this tour: his two best operas, namely, *Rosina* and *The Poor Soldier*, were produced several years anterior to his Italian journey. In these he displayed that genius for melody, which no study, no intercourse with even the greatest of foreign artists, could have imparted, or in any considerable degree have improved; and melody was his forte.

Of the advantages gained from his Italian journey he gave no mean proof, a few years afterwards, by the publication of his well-known *Introduction to Harmony*. The

principal object of this work is, to facilitate the acquisition of practical knowledge of harmony, by simplifying its laws, and divesting the science of that forbidding complexity which deters so many from venturing into its precincts.

In 1809 Mr. Shield printed a volume of Ballads, Rounds, Glees, Duets, Terzettos, &c., under the title of *A CENTO*, but being published by subscription, its circulation was rather limited, and very little of its contents,—we may almost venture to say, not a single piece—is now known, except to a small number of those who never allow any work of merit to escape their notice*.

A second edition of his *Introduction to Harmony* appeared in 1817, dedicated to his present Majesty, then Prince Regent. In this he says, "Those who have been fortunate enough to hear the judicious remarks of your Royal Highness on the musical productions of the moderns, and even of the ancients, must have felt that they could proceed only from a person possessed of an accurate ear, a tenacious memory, and a taste delicate and refined. For my own part, indeed, it is but justice to assert, that they have assisted me greatly in distinguishing what to admire, and what to condemn, what are imitations and what plagiarisms."

In the preface to Part the Second, he observes, "Compositions are frequently overrated as well as undervalued by prejudice; therefore, it has appeared to me the most liberal plan to let every musical illustrative example recommend itself by its own intrinsic merit, and not by the name of its author. Beauties are often found in strains which are seldom heard, and many of the most popular compositions are not entirely free from defects; but I should have betrayed a malignant mind, if I had made my selection to exalt a friend, to depress an enemy, or to diminish the happiness of any contented family, by an attempt to injure its supporter in his professional practice."

The tone in which he concludes his observations is highly sensible and praiseworthy: "if this book should exceed expectation, and prove the best of its kind, I hope it will not continue to merit that distinction long; for although the necessary endowments to form so great and good a musical historian, as the one we have recently lost†, may never again adorn an individual, we have still many living professors, excellent lecturers, classical translators, profound theorists, and didactic authors, whose pens will, I hope, be constantly employed to facilitate and extend the harmonic art." He adds, "I lie under particular obligations to my much-honoured master, Sir W. Parsons‡, (indeed so do all grateful musicians,) whose merit and conduct have given a consequence to a profession, which it never before experienced, at least in England."

Speaking of songs, he remarks,—"*Harmony should never destroy the character of melody. The conclusion of a composition in three or four parts, without a major third being heard in the chord immediately preceding the final key-note, is displeasing to modern ears—those of Scotchmen or Irishmen excepted. I hope I shall not be misunderstood, however, by any one supposing that I am arraigning the taste of the Caledonian or Hibernian bards, whom I venerate; for had I not been partial to their ori-*

* From these we have selected four, which appear in the present Number, as specimens, in addition to the many extant, of a genius that so long charmed, and still continues to delight, every unsophisticated admirer of genuine song to whom his compositions are known.

† Alluding to Dr. Burney.

‡ Then master of the King's Band, of which Mr. S. was at that time a member, and therefore calls Sir W. P. his "master."

ginal simplicity, I should not have succeeded in those imitations of it, which have by many been denominated my happiest compositions."

The same year appeared his *Rudiments of Thorough Bass for Young Beginners, &c.*, a work of considerable interest as well as utility. This is inscribed to John Crosdil, Esq.,* "as a testimony of regard for his superior talent, and of gratitude for his generous friendship, under the roof of whose residence the following pages were chiefly written." A note informs us that this was at Escricke†, "where the author not only experienced the gratifying advantage of hearing the best music, but also of examining the best foreign theories, with accomplished linguists, and many other encouraging auxiliaries, which can never be erased from his memory."

In the concluding chapter are the following observations:—"The harmony of a well-arranged score is the picture which charms the mind of a well-educated musician, who in silent admiration feels and appreciates all its beauties. But the ear must have been previously formed to the true intonation, and the eye to the accurate perception of harmonic combinations."

On the death of Sir William Parsons in 1817, the Prince Regent, (His present Majesty) advanced Mr. Shield to the situation of Master of the Band of Musicians in Ordinary to the King. This appointment was given in a manner as creditable to the feelings of the illustrious personage who bestowed it, as to the professional and general character of him on whom it was conferred. The Prince, who had long known Mr. Shield's value, both as a musician and as a member of society, seized the first opportunity that presented itself of serving a distinguished artist and a man whom he esteemed, without waiting for even the slightest request; and when Mr. S. attended at the Pavilion to express his gratitude, his Royal Highness interrupted him in the midst of his acknowledgments, by the flattering words,—“My dear Shield, the place is your due; your merits, independently of my regard, entitle you to it.”

At the late coronation, he, in his robes of office, conducted the musical part of that ceremony in Westminster Abbey; but as the performance of an ode at St. James's Palace on the King's birth-day and New-Year's-day never was called for during the time he held the appointment of master of the band, he had no opportunity of shewing his zeal in the execution of this, the most important part of the duty that used to attach to the office. He enjoyed his two hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and Mr. Southey, the poet-laureat, his one hundred pounds, (the latter being a commutation for a butt of sack) rather as the reward of past services, than as a retaining fee for services never, perhaps, intended to be required.

Mr. Shield was one of the original members of that body which has wrought so remarkable a change in the musical taste of this country, the Philharmonic Society, though he never took any active share in its management. Indeed he began to feel the infirmities of age rather earlier than usual. He was naturally disposed to corpulency, the tendency to which was not diminished by the sedentary habits that grew on him. During the few latter years of his life, his health and strength visibly declined, and in

the beginning of last winter, symptoms of water on the chest assumed too decided a character to be mistaken. The disease made rapid progress, and on the 25th of January last, he expired at his house in Berners-street, where he had long resided, leaving a widow, but no children, to lament his loss*.

His remains were interred in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, permission for this purpose having been most liberally and promptly granted by the Dean, Dr. Ireland, who, as a further proof of his respect for genius combined with virtue, also allowed the corpse to be placed in the choir while morning service was performed, (an honour rarely conferred on any but members of the church) during which the lay-clerks, or gentlemen of the choir, assisted by the children of the Chapels Royal, and many professional friends of the deceased, sang the fine anthem of Dr. Greene, appropriated to such occasions, “Lord! let me know my end:” the funeral service being afterwards read by the Precentor, William Dakins, D.D.

Mr. Shield was endowed by nature with a lively imagination, and a strong, inquiring mind. Though his early education had been rather neglected, his thirst for knowledge led to exertions which enabled him to teach himself much more than, in all probability, he would have learnt in the time-wasting routine of a grammar-school. He devoted all his spare hours to reading, and well digested what he read: added to which, he lived during the greater part of his life much with men of letters, whose society was his delight, and to whose conversation he was indebted for a large portion of that cultivation which all who knew him, and could appreciate his acquirements, readily acknowledged. His moral character stood unimpeached—Detraction herself never ventured to assail it. He had, in fact, no enemy, for such was the uprightness of his conduct and the sweetness of his temper, that he won the confidence of honest men,—awed without offending less scrupulous persons, and appeased the most irascible and vehement.

As a composer his genius was for melody; and the great, the captivating feature of his melodies is simplicity. The natural manner in which they flow, and the facility with which they appear to have been produced, lead some to imagine that they have only to make the attempt to become equally successful: but the moment the experiment is tried the illusion vanishes, and they then learn the truth of Carissimi's reply, “Ah! questo facile quanto e difficile!” Another great merit in his airs is accuracy of rhythm: his periods are so well proportioned that expectation is never disappointed. To this we may add, that his words are always set with a strict regard to their meaning, and a never-failing attention to accent. The placidity of his mind is reflected in his compositions: in the bustling scene where loud obstreperous music is required, and in scenes of deep passion which demand appropriate harmony, he is comparatively unsuccessful. The rural opera was most congenial to his feelings, and in

* The celebrated violoncello-player, but who had long retired from the profession.

† *Escricke*, near York, the seat of the late Richard Thompson, Esq., and which was almost the home of Mr. Crosdil for many years.

* Musicians seldom die rich, and Mr. Shield is no exception to the rule, though he has left his widow in a state of independence. But there is a legacy in his will deserving of notice. In terms highly respectful and proper he bequeaths his fine viola, or tenor-violin, to the King, humbly entreating his Majesty to accept it as a testimony of his gratitude. This being communicated through Sir Frederick Watson, by the testator's executor, Thomas Broadwood, Esq., the King was pleased to signify, in the kindest and most condescending terms, his acceptance of the legacy; but at the same time directed that the utmost value should be set upon the instrument by competent judges, it being his Majesty's determination that Mr. Shield's widow shall be no sufferer by a bequest which so strongly proves the attachment and gratitude of his late faithful servant.

this he is yet unrivalled; witness his *Rosina*, his *Poor Soldier*, his *Marian*, his *Woodman*, and his *Farmer*: for *Love in a Village*, which might be put in competition with these, is a pasticcio, a delightful one certainly, and not the production of a single mind like the foregoing, but a selection from the favourite works of many eminent musicians, though the credit of the whole is almost universally ascribed to Arne.

His instrumental music wants the condiments of the modern school. It was not inferior to most of its class when written, but would now fail to keep attention alive. Haydn was only beginning to be known when Shield first composed; the fame of Mozart had not passed the Danube; and the slender overtures—sinfonias as they were called—of Galuppi, Paisiello, &c., were the models on which most others were formed. In truth, Shield's strength lay in vocal music; in the ballad principally; though some of his sea-songs are excellent, and two or three of his hunting-songs have not less claims to notice.

His finales, and small number of concerted pieces, (for the latter were but rarely introduced in his day) are, when compared with those of the present period, feeble. What, however, we have said of his instrumental music may justly be applied to these. His was the age of melody; ours of harmony; and as beautiful melody is perennial in its nature, and cannot permanently lose the power to please, so Shield's airs will never be wholly discarded, but, like those of Arne and Purcell—the former of which have stood the test of seventy years, and the latter of nearly a century and a half—be often re-produced,—will appear at each revival in unfaded loveliness, and recover that influence which was gained by their early charms.

The following is a list of the principal of his published works:—

"An Introduction to Harmony," 4to. London,	1800
A second and augmented edition do.	1814
"Rudiments of Thorough Bass," do.	1815
A CENTO, &c.	1809

<i>Fitch of Bacon</i> , comic opera, acted at the Haymarket Theatre		1778
<i>Lord Mayor's Day</i>	Covent Garden	1782
<i>Rosina</i>	ib.	1783
<i>Poor Soldier</i>	ib.	1783
<i>Harlequin Friar Bacon</i>	ib.	1783
<i>Robin Hood</i>	ib.	1784
<i>Noble Peasant</i>	Haymarket	1784
<i>Fontainebleau</i>	Covent Garden	1784
<i>Magic Cavern</i>	ib.	1784
<i>Nunnery</i>	ib.	1785
<i>Love in a Camp</i> , musical farce	ib.	1785
<i>Choleric Fathers</i> , comic opera	ib.	1785
<i>Omai</i>	ib.	1785
<i>Enchanted Castle</i>	ib.	1786
<i>Marian</i> , musical entertainment	ib.	1788
<i>Prophet</i> , comic opera	ib.	1788
<i>Highland Reel</i>	ib.	1788
<i>Crusade</i> , historical romance	ib.	1790
<i>Picture of Paris</i>	ib.	1790
<i>Oscar and Malvina</i>	ib.	1791
<i>Woodman</i> , comic opera	ib.	1792
<i>Hartford Bridge</i> , operatic farce	ib.	1792
<i>Harlequin's Museum</i>	ib.	1793

<i>Midnight Wanderers</i> , comic opera	ib.	1793
<i>Sprigs of Laurel</i>	ib.	1793
<i>Travellers in Switzerland</i>	ib.	1794
<i>Netley Abbey</i> , operatic farce	ib.	1794
<i>Arrived at Portsmouth</i> , mus. entert.	ib.	1794
<i>Mysteries of the Castle</i>	ib.	1795
<i>Lock and Key</i> , musical entertainment	ib.	1796
<i>Abroad and at Home</i> , comic opera	ib.	1796
<i>Italian Villagers</i>	ib.	1797
<i>The Farmer</i> , musical farce	ib.	1798
<i>Two Faces under a Hood</i> , comic opera	ib.	1807

Shield also published a *Concerto*, a set of *Six Canzonets*, a set of *Trios for two violins and a bass*, and another of *Duets for two violins*.

Among his numerous detached songs which still remain popular, we may mention *The Thorn*, *O bring me Wine*, *The Wolf*, *The Heaving of the Lead*, *The Post Captain*, *Old Towler*, and *Down the Bourne and thro' the Mead*, the last, by an unintentional compliment, being frequently found in collections of *genuine* Scotch songs. The words for this were written by the composer's friend, Holcroft.

PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC IN ITALY.

THE following Letter, addressed to a Professor of the *Ecole Royale de Musique*, by one of his pupils, who is on his musical travels in Italy, contains some interesting details on the state of music in that country, which may not be unacceptable to our readers.

Rome, 20th Sept. 1828; Naples, 4th Oct.,
and Rome, 11th Oct.

In compliance with the wish you expressed, I send you such details respecting the actual state of music in Italy, as I have been able to collect, and I trust they may tend, in some degree, to satisfy your curiosity.

It was at Genoa that I heard Italian music for the first time. At Turin the opera season was on the point of commencing, and *Matilda di Shabran* was the piece chosen for the opening, but my stay was too short to allow of my hearing it. I speak of Genoa merely in the order of time, for nothing could be more wretched than what I met with there. At Lucca I first really heard an opera; this was *Il Trionfo della Croce*, by Pacini, which appeared to me to possess but little intrinsic merit. The orchestra was in a great measure composed of amateurs, a thing usual in Italian towns of the second order, and was tolerably good. There was no want of precision, but it was defective in vigour of execution: the wind-instruments, the flute and first horn excepted, were very indifferent. I remarked in this orchestra a vicious practice, which I have since found to be common, namely, the double bass accompanying the recitative by adding to the chords struck little extempore *fioriture*, which are not only in bad taste, but have the disadvantage of interrupting the progression intended by the composer. The choruses here were excellent, both with respect to precision and justness of intonation, but totally deficient in every thing like shading, the men and women straining their lungs to the utmost even in accompanying the airs, and in giving the passages which relieve the aria of the principal singer. This company, which is in high repute in Tuscany, is very inferior to that we generally have in Paris. The Signora Lorenzani, a contralto, possesses

talent: her voice is somewhat hard, but her intonation just, and her school good; her action too is correct, and her whole manner vigorous and energetic. The prima donna, Signora Grisi, who is the great favourite, is extolled to the skies; but she is by no means so good a singer as the former lady; she is deficient in vigour of execution, and unable to contend even against the small orchestra of this place. But the indulgence shown to singers in Italy is extreme; thus the first tenor, Reina, enjoys a reputation here, which a single representation among us would be sufficient to destroy: I can only say of him, that I know some dozens of amateurs who sing far better. The rest of the company do not merit the honour of a notice. I shall say nothing of the opera, which is servilely traced upon the pattern of Rossini. Some of the choruses are not ill-constructed, and an inter-act is well conceived; but, as is the case with all Pacini's compositions, the whole wants that development which marks the hand of a master. In one piece, a *preghiera*, the ritornello to which, for the corno di bassetto, announces something good, terminates in a soprano air, deficient of all expression, and is followed by a chorus of women, as colourless as their own white dresses.

The abuse of means employed by Rossini, and especially that of heightening the effect by *la banda sul palco* (the band on the stage), has become general; you have the noise of the great drum, of cymbals, octave flutes, and, above all, of trumpets, the performers on which appear to make a merit of drowning the whole orchestra; and all this frequently in defiance of consistency and truth of costume.

At Florence there are two theatres, *Il Teatro Nuovo* and *Il Teatro Goldoni*. The company of the first, who were performing the *Giulietta e Romeo* of Vaccaj, are below criticism; the Lucca performers, of whom I have just spoken, are impatiently expected to fill their place. At the other house they were playing *Tebaldo ed Isolina*; the part of Tebaldo by Madame Casimer Ney, of Paris, who acquitted herself very respectably; but nothing could be more wretched than the prima donna, whose name I was not tempted to inquire, and yet the good-natured Florentines overwhelmed her with bravos. Crivelli sung the tenor, if indeed singing it could be called; for he has not even the wreck of his former splendid talents. His voice, which has sunk towards the bass, is unable to support itself at its old elevation; when he passes the *e*, the efforts he is obliged to make are painful; all his ornamental passages are made in the bass octave; and yet the great singer was still visible in the duet *Ombre terribili!*—His air was altogether a failure, though he was compelled by the cruelty of his friends to repeat it. In the third act is a scene, the decorations of which are magnificent in the extreme, and which was one of the best things in the piece; it appeared to inspire Madame Casimir, for she sung her romance with more than usual spirit.

If on the stage I have found little to admire, yet in private circles I have met with some singers of talent; and among the rest, the daughter of the Contessa Testa, to whom I had the honour of being presented, and who delighted me with a voice and method of the first order. She is a pupil of Velluti, and of Ceccherini, first tenor to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose powers I heard to great advantage, in a grand mass, for he does not sing at the theatre. The Signora Carolina Testa does honour to these masters: she has a magnificent contralto voice, great power of expression, extraordinary flexibility of organ,

which she never abuses, and, what is better than all, great amiableness of character.

This morning, the 22nd, I heard at the church *di Santo Eustasio*, a grand mass, executed by the singers of the Papal chapel. The execution was very good, and yet I cannot help thinking the chapel of the King of France superior, as well in an instrumental as a vocal point of view, except in as far as the castrati are concerned. Their voices have a degree of vibration, not possessed by those of women, and a character which no other species of voice can supply: it is impossible, without hearing them, to judge of the effect produced. Two of these individuals singing the soprano, and the same number the contralto parts, equal the power of six tenors and as many basses; but it is necessary to hear such voices at a certain distance; when too near, they produce a strange, and by no means agreeable, effect upon the nerves. I afterwards heard the same singers at the ceremonial of the beatification of a saint, in St. Peter's; the general effect of the music was admirable. With respect to this singular ceremonial, I must reserve the details till another occasion.

Yesterday evening, I was at the *Teatro Valle*, to hear the *Italiana in Algeri*. Execution bad, overture heavily played. The tenor had good musical intentions, but his voice betrayed him; there were several prettinesses in his air, *Languir per una bella*, as well as in the duet. The part of Mustafa was not amiss, but deserves no honourable mention: the female singers and the choruses detestable. *Zelmira* is in preparation here; I hope to see it and David on my return. Adieu, my dear master, to-morrow morning at four, I start for Naples.

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NAPLES is the city of enchantments; in a picturesque point of view, nothing in the world can compare to it: I shall have a thousand things to say on this subject: at present, I shall confine myself to music only. At the *Teatro Fondo*, I heard Paër's *Agnese*, which was excellently cast. The principal parts were sustained by Tamburini and the Tosi. With Tamburini I was greatly pleased, as well with respect to singing, as to the power and truth of his dramatic action. His voice is a barytone, rather than a bass; he reaches with ease the *e* and *f* in alt. His ornaments are sparingly employed, and in good taste. Doubtless, the Tosi has talent, but I cannot help thinking her below the rank which public report has assigned her. She never is exactly in tune, and yet it is too much to say that she sings false. She is not deficient in warmth, and yet one rises from her performance unsatisfied: there is an absence of that nameless charm which hangs round true excellence.

At the *San Carlos*, the excellent orchestra of which merits honourable mention, I heard Bellini's opera *Le Pirate*. It is an absurd composition as a whole, but contains pieces which shew that something better may be expected from this master; particularly a duet for soprano and tenor, a chorus, some parts of the finale of the first act, and, above all, an air which terminates the piece, admirably sung by Rubini, a singer whom you knew at Paris. He fills the principal part in the opera; his wife, formerly Chaumel (*la Comelli*), the second; and the bass part is sung by a young Neapolitan, named Tatta, who has a fine voice, but wants many of the requisites of a finished singer. The choruses are good; the orchestra numerous and intelligent: it accompanies correctly, but is deficient in nerve and vigour of execution. I have since heard the *Siège de Corinth* twice performed, and have no reason to

alter my opinion. This opera is got up with care; it was produced for the first time on occasion of the king's birthday, when *San Carlos* was in all its splendour; the illumination was complete; the boxes a blaze of beauty, diamonds, &c. Tamburini sung the part of *Mahomet*, Rubini that of *Neodes*, and the Tosi was *Palmira*; the execution was good. Nothing could be finer than the manner in which Tamburini sung his air, *Maometto intorno venite, o figli miei*. Though his voice is not very striking in the chords of the bass, yet it is full and round, and never fails to please by its sweetness and flexibility. By the way, his diminutive figure is but ill calculated to convey an idea of the haughty master of the East. The Tosi sung her part very correctly, and the execution in general was very satisfactory. I take my leave of Naples with a very favourable opinion of the *Teatro San Carlos*; but with respect to this part of Italy, I cannot bring myself to consider it, as the Italians do, as the native country of music, out of which there is nothing excellent. Our opera, if not better, is at least as good; and at all events, we succeed in producing a totality of effect, which is not found here. By the side of one actor of some distinction, is found a host of something less than mediocrity; and so thoroughly are these children of poverty penetrated with a conviction of their deficiency, that they make no effort to gain attention; hence no one opera can be said to be heard entire: it is a mere series of fragments.

* * * * *

At last I have obtained my wish; for yesterday (October 11) I heard in the *Teatro Valle*, at ROME, the celebrated David in Rossini's *Zelmira*; and—must I candidly avow it—he afforded me no satisfaction. His voice is in ruins; it is with difficulty he can render his middle notes available; he is therefore obliged to have recourse to a falsetto, and transports all his ornamental passages to the higher octave, so that he seems as if imitating one of the castrati of the papal chapel; the quality of his falsetto being extremely decided. This perfect resemblance carries with it something very disagreeable; but, what is still worse, David is always out of tune, a defect particularly felt in the recitative, in which the chord struck by the bass always differs by half a tone from the musical phrase that follows. Yet, notwithstanding all this, the Romans overwhelm him with applause; and were I not writing to one of my own countrymen, I should not dare to utter what would be construed into blasphemy, and expose me to the risk of being pelted in the streets as a musical heretic.

The execution of the rest of the work was feeble and without effect, neither the singers, orchestra, nor choruses, displaying any vigour, or apparent wish to exert themselves: the latter, in particular, sang so dreadfully out of tune, that even those of no very delicate nerves sat in a state of agony. In the ritornello and accompaniment of the first air of *Zelmira*, we were regaled with a solo on the *corno Inglese*, a thing which, had I not heard it with my own ears, I should have deemed incredible; the effect was for all the world like the crackling sounds produced by the peasant boys blowing through the leaves of the *coloquintida*. Vidal, the violinist, whom I met the same evening, expressed himself scarcely less astonished than myself, though somewhat habituated since his residence here to monstrosities of this kind. I knew that this excellent artist was in Italy, and was delighted at meeting him.

My dear master, let me entreat you to excuse this rambling and unconnected letter, written at twenty diffe-

rent intervals. On my return to Paris, I hope to give you those particulars, *vivâ voce*, to which I have not the ability to do justice upon paper. I write this in fulfilment of the promise I made you, and to prove to you that, amidst all the delights of this land of music and the arts, I have not forgotten one to whose kind instructions I feel so deeply indebted.

ON THE INSTABILITY OF MUSICAL FAME.

A LOVER of music feels something painful in the reflection, that the art is so liable to change. A great poet is sure of immortality, and of the best kind—that which arises out of the unceasing admiration of his works. The poems of Homer and Virgil have survived, for ages, the languages in which they were written; languages that are dead, but embalmed and preserved for the sake of the treasures of genius which belong to them. And, among nations yet unborn, the original accents of our Shakspeare and Milton will be mingled with the sounds of languages not yet called into being. Even the painter enjoys, to a great extent, a similar immortality. Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Titian, are not mere barren names; their works live and breathe before us, inspiring a love and veneration for their authors; and so religiously are these divine productions preserved, that it is impossible to assign a limit to their duration.

How different is the case with the musician! His art is as ancient as poetry or painting; it is as immediately founded in nature; as universally delightful, and calls as strongly into action our best affections and feelings, and our highest powers of taste and intellect. It is the sister art of poetry and painting—a relationship which has ever been acknowledged. Yet the fame of the musician is evanescent and perishable. Go back two or three centuries, and we have the names of men who were the delight and ornament of their age, whose strains were in every mouth, and whose praises were on every tongue. On them the epithets of “illustrious” and “immortal” were bestowed as liberally as on any of their successors. And yet, where are they now? Where is Monteverde, whose wonderful genius penetrated farther into the then unexplored regions of harmony than any one who has come after him? Where is Palestrina, who, to the most sublime conceptions, united powers of harmonical combination which have never been surpassed, if, indeed, they have been equalled? Where are the great old luminaries of the English school—our Tallis, Bird, and Gibbons? “All buried midst the wreck of things which were!” Their names are still mentioned by musical critics and historians, and their works remain also—on the dusty shelves of libraries, or in the undisturbed repositories of black-letter amateurs. Who, even in Italy, knows any thing now of Carissimi, on whose splendid compositions our Purcell formed his style? And Purcell himself—the divine Purcell—who was so long the idol of England, we may almost ask, where, too, is he? His name is still mentioned with the customary veneration, and his works continue to be studied by a limited portion of our musicians. But excepting, perhaps, “Britons, strike home,” which has assumed the character of a national air, what does the English public know about Purcell? Since the days when Madame Mara sang “Mad Bess,” and Bartleman “Let the dreadful engines,” his strains have hardly ever been heard in an English theatre or concert-room. The solitary instance of the recent attempt to revive “Edgar and Emmeline,” is hardly worth mentioning. Even at the

concert of Ancient Music, Purcell is nearly laid on the shelf—an indication of the oblivion into which his works have been, unhappily, falling.

The mighty Handel, who, only a century ago, bestrode the musical world like a colossus, already exhibits signs of old age. His name (like Purcell's) is still repeated with the wonted reverence—but it has been gradually becoming a name. Fifty years since his works were familiar to every one who had any pretensions to musical taste or knowledge. Now, *The Messiah*, and about a dozen detached pieces, selected from all his other works, are performed at the Music-meetings and the Ancient Concerts; and this is all. By the great body of singers and performers, both professional and private, his music is hardly ever looked at. Now and then a venerable gentleman of the old school is to be met with, who talks with fond regret of the days of Joah Bates and the Commemoration, keeps a chamber-organ, and makes his daughters sing and play the songs and choruses of the great master. But such an occurrence is as rare as it is delightful. As to his Italian dramatic music, which was once the object of as unbounded attention as that of Rossini is now—it is utterly forgotten.

In Italy, the illustrious composers of the eighteenth century—Durante, Pergolese, Jomelli, Cimarosa, Paisiello, &c. all are forgotten. Of their exquisite operas hardly a note is now to be heard, in public or in private, from the Alps to Vesuvius. The school of Naples has given way to the school of Pesaro. A similar change has taken place in Germany. How few, even there, know any thing now about the illustrious Bachs, Hasse, Graun,—or, indeed, any composer older than Haydn and Mozart! The operas of Mozart himself, even in his own country, are beginning to be rarely performed; for, in general, they are made to give way to the productions of Rossini, and some popular composers of the present day.

In consequence of the fertility of the present age in literature, the works of our older poetical classics are less read than they ought to be. But this happens, because those, whose time for reading is limited, naturally bestow it on that which has most novelty. Those great works, when they are read, inspire us with undiminished admiration. But the works of the old musicians, when performed, have no longer the same attraction for the listeners. The standard of beauty, in music, has been constantly changing; and works which rouse the enthusiasm of one generation, are listened to by the next with coldness or dislike.

Is this the consequence of some quality inherent in music, which must necessarily operate in future as it has done in time past? Is every succeeding race of musicians to push its predecessors into eternal oblivion? And are the names of Haydn, of Mozart, and of Beethoven, to perish in their turn? This is so painful a conclusion, that one feels anxious to escape from it; and there seem reasons for hoping that the future history of music may not, in this respect, be entirely similar to the past.

After the dark ages, the art of music was revived from the foundation: so was painting. But painting sprang up at once in a state of maturity; while music had a long and feeble infancy, and can only be said to have recently attained her full growth. The invention of harmony opened so vast a field to be explored and cultivated, that no single genius, nor, indeed, the united genius, of any single age, could do more than advance a very few steps: and the adventurers often missed their way, and retrograded rather than advanced:—nature and melody were lost sight of, and music became the art of constructing

harmonical enigmas. By the successive efforts of men gifted with powers, which, in happier times, would have made them Mozarts or Beethovens, the art was gradually disencumbered of its scholastic load, and its true principles were discovered. This progress occupied the period between the revival of music and the days of Handel—who, by one gigantic stride, brought it, in some of its highest branches, to all the perfection it has yet reached, or is perhaps capable of attaining. In the grandeur of his choruses he has never been equalled; and in the sublimity, tenderness, and beauty of his melody, and the purity and richness of his harmony, he has never been surpassed. Since his time, however, the developement of the powers of instruments, and the introduction of a lighter style of air, have given to his works an appearance of heaviness, which has in part contributed to the comparative neglect into which they have fallen. This is particularly the case with his Italian operas, which, admirable as they are, could now never be listened to, even by the greatest *laudator temporis acti*, after those of Cimarosa, Mozart, or Rossini; and they, therefore, have doubtless sunk into perpetual oblivion.

In so far, then, as music has been in a state of real improvement down to the present time, those productions which have been succeeded by superior works of the same class, will naturally be superseded by the more modern compositions, and forgotten. This must be the fate of all the dramatic works of the Italian school prior to the days of Cimarosa; of all the German dramatic works prior to those of Mozart; of all symphonies prior to those of Haydn; and of most of the compositions for the violin, piano-forte, &c., prior to those of the present generation.

But the changes in the state of music have not always been progressive. Music, more than any other of the fine arts, is subject to the influence of bad taste, fashion, and caprice. A single composer, of brilliant parts, but of incorrect judgment and an ill-regulated fancy, may, by producing very attractive but faulty works, and calling forth a swarm of imitators, entirely corrupt and vitiate the general taste, so as to render the public insensible to the beauties of a chaster school. In so far as the neglect of the older authors is to be traced to this source, it may be considered as merely temporary.

In the vocal, and particularly the dramatic music of the present day, there is a tone of exaggeration which is not to be found in the works of the preceding age. Look at what we shall call (from its greatest ornament) the school of Cimarosa, and observe the sparing use of modulation and chromatic harmony. If an air of Cimarosa is meant to convey one unvaried sentiment, his modulation seldom goes beyond the dominant, and yet his melody is both varied and expressive. If he has to introduce some change of feeling, or sudden emotion, he is thus enabled to do it by the simplest means. A flat seventh, or an unexpressed minor third, are sufficient with him to thrill the hearts of the listeners. In like manner his harmony, though beautiful, is generally confined to the diatonic scale of the key in which the air happens to be at the time. Its charms consist in the exquisitely skilful movement of the bass and inner parts. The harsher dissonances and chromatic intervals are introduced only when the purposes of expression require them; and their effect is consequently always striking and powerful. An orator, or writer, whose style is calm and simple on ordinary occasions, has a large stock of stronger language at his command; but if he is in the habit of garnishing his ordinary discourse with exclamations and superlatives, he will find, when he wishes to be

impassioned or impressive, that, in point of appropriate language, he has left himself nothing in reserve. A painter, whose general tone of colour is moderate, can deepen the gloom and heighten the brilliancy of his pieces, when necessary, much more effectually than an artist, who on every occasion employs bright colours, strong lights, and deep shadows. Our modern composers are so lavish of their transitions, dissonances, and chromatic intervals, that their style has acquired a general character of unmeaning emphasis. Some of the older writers have been too sparing of the resources of harmony in situations where they would have been appropriate. But this remark is certainly not applicable to the charming *Matrimonio segreto*, a work which, for beauty, spirit, grace, variety of expression, and dramatic effect, has not been surpassed even by Mozart. Mozart used the riches of modulation and harmony more freely than the more frugal school of Cimarosa allowed, and thus improved upon that school generally. In this respect he appears to have attained the point of perfection. Some of his successors have passed it, and got into a very different region.

To explain our meaning more distinctly, we shall quote or refer to a few passages from the older and more modern composers; and if we must have recourse to Rossini and Weber for examples of what we conceive to be the fault of the present school, we trust we shall not be accused of want of respect to those two great masters, in whose works may be found innumerable examples of the highest beauties of the art.

The *Matrimonio segreto* is one continued example of the quiet and unexaggerated style of the school of Cimarosa. The beautiful duet at the beginning, *Cara, cara*, which expresses so finely the tenderness of the two lovers, merely modulates slightly into the dominant, and the harmony does not contain an interval not belonging to the diatonic scale: yet it is neither languid nor monotonous. The still more tender and expressive duet which follows never deviates from the key of c. The voice part contains two or three slight chromatic appoggiaturas, but the accompaniments have not a single accidental flat or sharp. The quartetto, *Sento in petto un freddo gelo*, is animated, impassioned, and dramatic, and remarkably brilliant in its instrumentation.

The passage beginning at "Tal sarpreso," and ending at "che mi viene a lacera," is an instance of most powerful expression, effected by a modulation of the simplest kind; but too long to extract.

The famous duet between Paolino and the Count, *Signore concedete*, at the words "Pensate! riflettete!" contains another specimen of fine modulation.

The finale to the first act, which is very long, and full of bustle and incident, has only three decided modulations; from the key of d to eb; from that to c, and then, by some very simple gradations, back to the original key of d.

The modulation from d to eb is very dramatic. All the different personages, except *Carolina* and the *Count*, leave the stage, after a piece of full harmony in d, on which chord there is a pause. The orchestra then strikes the chord of eb, and a short symphony in that key introduces with great effect the *tête-à-tête* between the old lover and his mistress. There is afterwards a passage of loud altercation among all the characters, which is interrupted by *Fidalma* exclaiming "*Silenzio, silenzio! che vien mio fratello!*" The loud passage closes in eb, and *Fidalma's* call of "silence!" is thus introduced:—

This, by the way, is a fine specimen of the manner in which the older Italian composers, by means of intermediate passages, soften the transition from one key to another, and thus avoid those "*modulations étranglées*" which are too common in the modern music.

There would be no end of these examples were we alone to consult our own pleasure in searching for them. But we recommend our readers to undertake the task, which they will find equally delightful and improving. We shall only point out one more, in the Terzetto in the second act, "*Sento ahimè!*" where a most beautiful transition introduces the perplexity and distress of Caroline:—

We now turn to Mozart. As this composer added much to the strength of musical colouring, we shall take his opera where this is most apparent; namely, "Don Giovanni." But it will be found, even there, that his harmonies and modulations are much more simple than those which have become common since his time.

On a careful examination of this opera it will be seen, that though the harmony is fuller, and the orchestra more effectively employed, than in the operas of Cimarosa, yet there is a similar moderation in the use of strong musical language. Even in the wildest parts of the piece, sudden and violent modulations very seldom occur, and never without some strong and obvious dramatic reason. The long *Introduzione* commencing with Leporello's soliloquy, and ending with the death of the *Commendatore*, is written nearly throughout with all the simplicity of Cimarosa; and the stronger colouring which it assumes towards the end, is a necessary consequence of the tragic character of the incidents. Yet, even in this part, the modulation is natural and gradual, and the harmony perfectly simple. The duet that follows, "*Fuggi! crudele, fuggi!*" is of the most impassioned character; and yet while the music expresses, with unrivalled power, all the phrenzied grief of the daughter and the tenderness of her lover, it does not contain a mo-

dulation or a combination, that is not to be found in the most trifling ballads of the present school. When Mozart uses chromatic intervals, he seldom gives them to the voice. When he does, they have some peculiarity of expression—as in the quartetto "*Non ti fidar,*" where the following phrase of *Don Giovanni*



contains the very accents of coaxing persuasion. The scene beginning with the duet between *Zerlina* and *Masetto*, "*Presto, presto,*" (with the exception of greater richness in the instrumental score) does not exhibit a bar which Cimarosa might not have written; and the spirited quartetto, "*Riposate vezzose ragazze,*" is precisely in the style of that master. Not a single strong modulation occurs from the beginning of the opera to the situation in the masquerade scene, where *Zerlina* suddenly screams for help when she is about to be carried off. Here the beautiful minuet in G is just terminating by the orchestra, when it is suddenly interrupted by *Zerlina's* scream;—

How fine, and how simple, this is! And yet there are hardly half a dozen such transitions in the whole opera.

The trio, "*Ah taci, ingiusto core,*" has some sudden modulations; but these are employed to give effect to a succession of abrupt and passionate exclamations from *Elvira*, which, indeed, are of the nature of accompanied

recitative—a species of composition wherein an unlimited range of modulation is absolutely necessary, and has been taken by all composers, ancient as well as modern. It contains, besides, one enchanting transition (from E to C) to introduce the "honeyed words" of *Don Giovanni*;—

The famous scene where *Don Giovanni* compels his servant to ask the Statue to supper, affords Mozart, of course, full scope for wild musical effects. The grotesque

horrors of the situation, accordingly, are inimitably expressed; yet there is not a change or chromatic interval introduced, that is not obviously indispensable to the nature

of the dialogue. And even in the last tremendous scene of the supper, it is quite surprising to observe by what simple means the most appalling effects are produced. Observe the instrumental passage, which, on Elvira's quitting the room, introduces her scream at sight of the statue, and the wild effect of that scream itself, though it is merely the flat seventh:—and then Leporello's going out, and cry of terror on seeing the portentous visitor,—the effect of which, though quite different from the former, is produced by only an *inversion* of the very same harmony. In the awful dialogue between Don Giovanni and the Statue, the utmost powers of musical language were called for, and have been employed. This scene, therefore, is much wilder in its harmony and modulation than any thing else in the whole of Mozart's vocal works; although his successors have been often equally wild, without the same reason, and, consequently, without the same effect.

[This subject will be resumed in our next.]

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW TUNING-SPRINGS.



THE instruments in general use as standards for determining the pitch of the voice, and variable musical instruments, have many disadvantages. The pitch-pipe is cumbrous in size, and is not easily adjusted with accuracy to the sounds required. The tuning-fork, preferable to the pitch-pipe in many respects, is inconvenient from the force required to put it into vibration, from its engaging the hand of the tuner, and from its tones not being sufficiently continuous. The extreme portability of the sound-producing principle employed in the construction of the *Æolina*, (which instrument was fully described in our last number,) added to the facility with which steady and continuous tones are obtained from it, suggested to Mr. C. Wheatstone its applicability to the purposes for which the preceding instruments are employed. The wood-cut prefixed to this notice is an accurate representation in shape and size of one of these *tuning-springs*, which in fact is only a single note of the *Æolina* placed in a frame, convenient for handling, or for holding in the mouth. The most usual key or pitch-notes are *c* for the piano-forte, *A* for the violin, the Spanish guitar, and the flute, and *eb* and *cb* for the single and double action harps. Sets of springs for tuning a complete octave of the harp or the piano-forte with the proper temperament, are also manufactured; a set for the harp, consisting of a diatonic scale in the keys of *eb* or *cb*, and for the piano-forte of a chromatic scale from *c* to *c*.

POWER OF MUSIC.

[From Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia*, Vol. II. p. 443, 2nd Edition.]

THE chief delight of the wandering tribes of Persia is to sit together, smoking their pipes, and listening to songs and tales, or looking at the tricks and grimaces, and enjoying the witticisms of buffoons*, (who are to be found in every quarter of Persia,) and some of whom are perfectly skilled in their art. A Persian chief of a Kurdish tribe, who remained several days with the British missions near Kermanshah, in 1801, had in his train a jester, who possessed very versatile and extraordinary talents. One day upon the march, the fellow, addressing the English envoy, said, "You are, no doubt, very proud of the discipline you have established amongst your Persian servants, who march in your front in as regular a style as your own soldiers. How long, sir, has it taken you to introduce this order among my countrymen?"—"About six months," was the reply. "Now," said he, "if you will permit me, you shall see that I will, in less than six minutes, destroy all that you have done in six months." Leave being granted, he rode near the Persian horsemen, who were leading the state-horses, and who had strict orders not to leave their ranks. He had noticed that they were almost all of the Lac and Fylee tribes, whose chief residence is among the mountains of Louristan; and he began to sing, as if to himself, but in a clear and loud voice, a song, which commenced, "Attend to me, ye sons of Louristan; I sing of the glorious deeds of your forefathers." Before he had finished his song, to which all were listening with attention, the whole cavalcade was thrown into confusion by the kicking of horses, the Persians having broken the line of march, and crowded round to hear him more distinctly. The jester laughed heartily at the success of his joke, and said to the envoy, "Do not be distressed at the fate of your fine discipline: I have heard of a man who, with nothing but the song I have just sung, collected an army, and was called a king for several weeks."

This, I am assured, was the fact. A chief of no pretensions had, during the confusion that followed the death of Nadir Shah, gone about Louristan with some musicians and singers, who continually played and sung this favourite air; and he by this means collected about five thousand followers, and proclaimed himself king.

On the subject of Persian music in general, Sir John Malcolm has the following remarks.

"The Persians deem music a science; but they do not appear to have made much progress in it. They have a gamut and notes, and different kinds of melody, adapted to various strains, such as the pathetic, voluptuous, joyous, and warlike: the voice is accompanied by instruments, of which they have a number; but they cannot be said to be farther advanced in this science than the Indians, from whom they are supposed to have borrowed it. Their strains are often pleasing, but always monotonous, and they want that variety of expression which is among the charms of this art."

* The Persian definition of a good *Laottee*, or buffoon, is, that he ought to be able to laugh, cry, weep, sit still, and dance at the same moment. Some of these jesters approach very near to this idea of perfection.

Review of Music.

SACRED MUSIC.

1. *A New MORNING and EVENING SERVICE, in Score, consisting of TE DEUM, JUBILATE, MAGNIFICAT, NUNC DIMITTIS, KYRIE ELEISON, and a CHANT, as sung at the Foundling Chapel, composed by J. C. NIGHTINGALE, Organist of the Foundling Hospital. (George, Fleet Street.)*
2. *ANTHEM, "Though I speak," as performed at the Philanthropic Society's Chapel, May 29th, 1828, composed for the occasion, by SUSANNAH COLLIER. (Harmonic Institution, 246, Regent Street.)*
3. *The Lord's Prayer, arranged for the Voice and Piano Forte, or Organ, by T. S. RAY. (Chappell, 135, New Bond Street.)*
4. *"Fair are the Flowers," from the Oratorio of The Fall of Jerusalem, as sung by Miss Paton at the Bury Musical Festival, composed by GEORGE PERRY. (Pettet, 154, Oxford Street.)*

THOUGH fully persuaded that much of the effect of cathedral music is attributable to its age and to early associations, yet we are always glad to see the stock increased by new contributions, inasmuch as it shows that the taste for a species of composition, to which we owe nearly all that is valuable in the art, is not extinct; and, likewise, because the new, if good, will, in time, be endowed with the qualities of that which has so long held possession of the church, and by thus constantly adding to the quantity to be selected from, afford that variety for which there is so universal an appetite.

Mr. Nightingale's Service is quite orthodox in point of arrangement and style. It is very much in the manner of King, whose compositions are in almost daily use in every English cathedral. It is short, but he very wisely has not repeated the words, or interrupted its progress, by a single pause or change of time in the *Te Deum*, and but one in the *Jubilate* and *Nunc Dimittis*. The whole proceeds in an easy, agreeable, unassuming manner, the design being rather to please by natural melody and simple combinations, than to strike by sudden transitions and abstruse harmony. We meet with none of those points, those *fug-hettline* (if the double diminutive may be allowed) that are so remarkable in Orlando Gibbons and Child—none of the hard discords of Blow, or the quaintnesses of Tallis, Byrde, and Bevin, but smooth air, simple modulation and plain accompaniments.

The title of this publication should have been, a Morning Service in c, and an Evening Service in g; an entire service should be in one key. In the whole range of our cathedral music, he will find no precedent for the plan he has adopted. And his chant with a *da capo* is equally at variance with a practice, from which we never before met with any deviation.

The second of the above is, when considered as a composition generally, deserving of very great praise. The air is good, the accompaniments excellent, and the chorus shews much thought, with no inconsiderable share of invention. But it is more in the style of a *scena* than an anthem; not that it wants the gravity which is so becom-

ing in sacred music, but that there is an entire absence of the *manner* which long-established habit—a habit that we should be sorry to see broken through—leads us not only to expect, but to require. Perhaps, however, this is the kind of composition approved by the congregation for whom it is written; in which case our objection, in this particular instance, fails to the ground, and we have only to congratulate them on so valuable an addition to their collection. We may also add, that this is exactly calculated for those domestic parties in which music set to sacred words is in use: it is not difficult, not long, and can hardly fail to please.

No. 3 is a very clever production, but we regret to see such a prayer set to music; it is not in any way suited to the purpose, and following the practice of the Christian Church universally, should only be delivered in the manner in which it was originally uttered. Let us hope, nevertheless, that a composition of so much merit will appear in a shape to which the above objections will not apply; for though the music in its present state of combination is quite out of character, yet it is far too good to be lost, and may easily be joined to words better adapted to it.

In the duet, No. 4, are commendable parts, but as a whole it is a common-place sort of production. Long divisions are, it is true, found in classic composers, in Handel for instance, but they are among his defects, and tolerated for the sake of his innumerable beauties. They here have little to assist in redeeming them, and appear in all their native deformity. A semitonic passage, too, in the introductory symphony, shews that the composer is conscious of his weakness, and feels obliged to enlist on his side those who, having no taste at all, admire, from pure ignorance, what they suppose to be difficult of execution, and, therefore, by an inference natural to such persons, praiseworthy.

1. *A SELECTION OF SACRED MELODIES, from the works of the most celebrated composers, viz. BEETHOVEN, CRAMER, HAYDN, MOZART, ROSSINI, SPOHR, &c., adapted to appropriate words by BISHOP HEBER, CAMPBELL, COWPER, &c., also CHANTS and RESPONSES, composed and arranged by JOHN BLOCKLEY, organist of Hendon. (Cramer, Addison, and Beale, 201, Regent Street.)*
2. *A Selection of PSALM and HYMN TUNES, adapted to the Mannal of Parochial Psalmody, by the Rev. T. M. HORNE, M.A., the whole arranged by THOMAS HENSHAW, organist of St. Pancras. (Balls, 408, Oxford Street; Cadell, Strand; Blackwood, Edinburgh.)*
3. *CHURCH PSALMODY, a Collection of Tunes harmonized for Four Voices, with an Organ accompt. expressly adapted for a Selection of Psalms and Hymns, by a Layman. (Cocks and Co., Princes Street, Hanover Square.)*

MR. BLOCKLEY'S is a large collection, comprising nearly sixty melodies, besides chants and responses. The airs are selected from the favourite compositions of many

authors, the number of which is augmented by several of his own. We must here repeat what we said in a recent number, namely, that in transferring theatrical music to the church, only that should be chosen which is beginning to be forgotten—or, at least, the original words of which are not quite fresh in every memory; otherwise, associations not particularly religious are unavoidably formed. In the present volume, we have “Prenderò quel brinetto,” from *Così fan tutte*; “Deh! perdona,” from *Tito*; “Voi, che sapete che cosa è Amor,” from *Figaro*, and other amorous ditties, all in the recollection of every one, set to the most solemn words. And who, except the Messrs. Clodpole and Hobnail of the village, will, for the next twenty years to come, ever hear the latter air, without having the image of Madame Vestris as *Cherubino* immediately presented to his mind?—Though we cannot conceive a much more agreeable earthly image, yet it would not be in keeping with any thing connected with Christian worship.

While on the subject of “Voi, che sapete,” we must not silently pass by a misrepresentation of the author. In the original at those words, the base falls from the key-note to the note below; therefore, takes the chord of the sixth and fifth. Mr. B. gives us the flat fifth without its accompaniment. In the next bar he boldly changes a G and E, into a B and G. We will place the composer's passage and the arranger's version of it before our readers: thus the possessors of the work will be enabled to restore the real notes.

MOZART.



NEW VERSION.



We find a few other proofs of incorrect judgment in the course of the work, but they are not many; and take it altogether, the harmony is pure. One glaring exception, however, we must notice in the York chant, p. 62, where two most outrageous fifths astonish us by their unpardonable effrontery. The fault may be the composer's, in which case it either ought to have been corrected, or the chant at once rejected. It is a more agreeable task to praise two or three of Mr. Blockley's own melodies, particularly the first, which has gratified us much. The work is extremely well brought out, and shows a very respectable list of subscribers.

No. 2, being a selection made to suit Mr. Horne's new and excellent “Manual,” has not had novelty so much in view, as a good arrangement of the standard tunes, properly adapted to the new versions. Nevertheless, while Mr. Henshaw has retained many of our fine church me-

lodies, which have so long been familiar to the ear, he has added to them several modern and deservedly popular tunes, together with some compositions of distinguished foreign masters, the whole of which are so arranged, as to unite simplicity of style with facility of execution. The new tunes are Peterborough, St. Philips, Rouen, Paris, and Redemption. Three of them are of French origin. Mr. Henshaw was brought up in the King's chapel, of which he was afterwards for many years sub-organist; his qualification, therefore, for the task, was presumed by us before we opened the work. An examination of it thoroughly confirmed our belief.

No. 3 is engraved without words, being intended for the use of such as possess the volume mentioned in the title-page; consequently we can say nothing of the merits of their adaptation. The selection is good, and the harmonizing of such tunes as we have examined, faultless.

PURCELL'S SACRED MUSIC, selected by VINCENT NOVELLO. Numbers 3, 4, and 5. (*The Editor; all the principal Music-sellers in Town; and Robertson, York.*)

OUR readers will perceive that this work goes on quickly; extensive therefore as it will be, we are likely to witness its completion in a reasonable time, and soon to be enabled to possess a perfect collection of the church compositions of the great Purcell. No. 2 contains “Thy word is a lantern,” in C, for contra-tenor, tenor, and base. No. 3, “O praise God in his holiness,” in Bb, for contra-tenor, tenor, and two bases, with symphonies, and accompaniments for two violins, viola, and violoncello, and a chorus for a double choir. No. 4, “They that go down to the sea in ships,” in D, for contra-tenor and base. A curious history of this last is given by Sir John Hawkins, of which the following is the substance. Charles II. having built himself a yacht, made a party to sail down the river and round the Kentish coast, and to add to the good humour of the company, Mr. Gostling of the Royal chapel, a remarkably fine base voice, was requested to be of the number. When off the North Foreland, a violent storm arose, and to preserve the vessel, the King and the Duke of York were obliged to assist in hauling the sails, and work with the common seamen. The danger and distress he had witnessed made such an impression on the mind of Mr. Gostling, that, on his return to London, he selected from the Psalms those passages which declare the wonders and terrors of the deep, and giving them to Purcell to set for him to sing, this anthem was produced. That it was composed for a voice of no ordinary compass, such as Mr. G. possessed, may be seen in the very commencement of it*.



They that go down - - - to - the sea in ships

* In a note to this anthem, Mr. Novello tells us, on the authority of Mr. Richard Clark, that the words of Webbe's fine glee, “When winds breathe soft,” were a versification by Mr. Gostling of the above anthem. After Mr. Clark's intrepid assertion, that Dr. Bull composed “God save the King,” the absolute fallacy of which was so completely shewn by Dr. Kitchener, we are more disposed to rely on what he shall prove, than what he may advance. That Mr. Gostling was the author of the verses is more than improbable; but since publicity is given to the assertion, it becomes Mr. Clark, either to support it by facts, or to state the grounds of his belief.—(*Ed. of Harmonicon.*)

PIANO-FORTE.

1. AIR SUISSE, with an Introduction and Variations, composed by HENRI HERZ. Op. 46. (Goulding and D'Almaine, Soho Square.)
2. RONDEAU TURC, composé par F. HEROLD. (Cramer and Co.)
3. BRILLIANT FANTASIA, on airs in Rossini's new Opera, Le Comte Ory, by F. HEROLD. (Latour, 50, New Bond Street.)

THE first of these is *The Swiss Boy* (ecce iterum!) with an *Introduzione*, in which are a few charming bars of *pastorale*, six variations, and a finale. Half of the variations are very good, and even new; the rest flighty and full of no-meaning. A singular passage in the second deserves notice, and is worth practice:—



The whole of this is difficult; parts of it exceedingly so; but there is quite enough in it to reward courage and industry.

No. 2 is very light, pretty, and shewy. How the $D\sharp$ and $B\sharp$, the last notes of the Introduction, can have entered the head of M. Herold as leaders to the subject in c , is beyond our power to explain. We advise the performer to make the following notes gentlemen-ushers to the Rondo:—



No. 3 proves, by the manner in which the various airs, &c. from the opera are blended into one piece, the judgment of M. Herold, and his knowledge of the instrument. His introduction is not much to our taste, and admits of very considerable curtailment.

1. Intanto Erminia, a DIVERTISSEMENT, on airs from ROSSINI's Matilda di Shabran, arranged by AUGUSTUS MEVES. (Cramer and Co.)
2. La Petite Capricieuse, Air Varié, par G. F. Kiallmark. (Clementi, Collard and Collard, Cheapside.)

3. Recollections of Switzerland, a DIVERTIMENTO, by T. VALENTINE. (Willis and Co., Egyptian Hall.)
4. "Auld lang syne," with an Introduction and Variations composed by E. PERRY. (Mori and Lavenue, 28, New Bond Street.)

No. 1 is rather a pleasing air, well arranged in an easy manner, and very short.

No. 2 exhibits no attempt to depart from the usual course of such things. The variations are such as we have daily met with during the last five-and-twenty years; but the air is agreeable, and as no part of it presents the slightest difficulty to the performer, it will do for a large class of players.

No. 3 is *The Swiss Boy* again!—eked out with a *Ranz des Vaches*.

No. 4 may be described in the same terms as we have adopted in giving our opinion of No. 2.

1. Les Charmes d'Edinbourg, INTRODUCTION and RONDO, composed by CHARLES HARGITT, JUN. Op. 8. (Goulding and D'Almaine.)
2. DIVERTIMENTO, Le Caprice, by the same. (Cramer and Co.)
3. DIVERTIMENTO, "The Sylphe Aërien," by the same. (Purdie, Edinburgh.)

WE are glad to meet with this gentleman again, for his publications evince not only a constant effort to break loose from the trammels of indolent custom, but a great deal of vigour and invention. He is a good harmonist; some of his modulations would do credit to great and experienced composers. The Introduction to No. 1 is a superior production; and No. 2 possesses much of that which is now so rare—originality. No. 3 is graceful, without being so new in its general character as the others. All are pleasing, and within the compass of every tolerably good performer. Those who are more willing to make an agreeable impression on their auditors than to astonish such as have no feeling whatever for music, will find these compositions, the two first particularly, better adapted to their purpose than many things that appear under the sanction of great names.

THE SCRAP BOOK, for PIANO-FORTE and FLUTE, containing select movements from various authors and original compositions. Nos. 3 and 4. (Chappell.)

THESE are a continuation of a very useful work noticed before. Amongst other things the present numbers contain "Il tenero affetto," adapted by Dressler; part of Mozart's air in A , but transposed,—and not very happily,—into G ; a slow movement from Haydn's seventh grand symphony; a rondino by Moscheles; the Russian air, "Shöne Minka," &c.; all of which are arranged in a very familiar manner, and the work is published with uncommon neatness and care.

A Series of PREPARATORY Exercises, by J. C. CLIFTON. No. 3. (Clementi and Co.)

THIS is likewise a continuation of a work that we thought promised to be very useful. The number now before us supports the character of the first, giving the learner some insight into the deeper recesses of music, and preparing him for the enjoyment of compositions that do not depend on fashion for support, but improve by time, and are better liked the oftener they are heard. This is an object which every good musician should keep constantly in view, and

to which his publications ought more or less to tend. He will in the long run be recompensed by the adoption of such a system.

HARP.

Etrennes aux Dames, SIX select AIRS and WALTZES, arranged by GUSTAVUS HOLST. Nos. 1 to 6. (Wessel and Stodart, Frith Street.)

THESE are a collection of short easy airs, of four pages each on an average, calculated for young players, and very well arranged as to effect, the limited means being taken into the account; for it is obvious that when every difficulty is to be avoided, the same results cannot be produced as when the composer, or arranger, is under no such restraint. This is a useful work.

VOCAL.

1. DUET, Herrick and Amarillis, *the poetry by ROBERT HERRICK, the music by S. J. OXLEY. (Brown, Holywell Street.)*
 2. SONG, "My heart's true pulse," *the words by Mrs. Cornwell Baron Wilson; the music by WILLIAM CARNABY, Mus. Doc. (Willis and Co.)*
 3. SONG, The Crusader, *composed by AUGUSTUS MEVES. (Chappell.)*
 4. CANZONETTA, "Grazie agli inganni tuoi," *the poetry by Metastasio; composed by PIO CIANCHETTINI. (Chappell.)*
 5. ARIETTA, "By those eyes," *the poetry by L. E. L., composed by T. F. WALMISLEY. (Chappell.)*
 6. BALLAD, "You softly spoke," *the music by FRANCIS ROBINSON. (Clementi and Co.)*
 7. SONG, The smile and sigh, *sung by Miss Paton; adapted to ROSSINI'S Cavatina in La Donna del Lago, by C. E. HORN. The words written by L. Turner, Esq. (Horn, 28, Aldermanbury.)*
 8. SONG, Orock's Daughter, *composed by J. REEKES. (Faulkner, 3, Old Bond Street.)*
 9. SONG, The Alpine Bride, *sung by Mr. H. Phillips; the poetry by Miss Landon; the music by CHARLES T. MARTYN. (Callcott.)*
 10. BALLAD, "Donald is gone to the wars," *written by Harry Stoe Van Dyk; composed by LEWIS LEO. (Mayhew and Co., 17, Old Bond Street.)*
 11. SCOTCH BALLAD, "Hurrah! for the bonnet and plaid," *sung by Miss Love in Guy Mannering; composed by L. ZERBINI. (Wybrow, Rathbone Place.)*
 12. BALLAD, The Sylphs of the Flowers, *written, composed for, and dedicated to, H. R. H. THE DUCHESS OF KENT, by F. E. LACY. (Luff, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury.)*
 13. The Lady-Bird,
 14. The Recruiting Serjeant,
 15. The little Frog's Song,
- } composed by J. GREEN.
(Green, 33, Soho Square.)

WHENEVER No. 1 is performed, we suspect that the singers will have the duet all to themselves, unless they take the precaution to enlist a third, as an accompanist; in which case there will be present, Herrick, Amarillis, and, perhaps, Sir G. Smart.

There is a want of distinct rhythm in No. 2, and too much monotony. It is not a happy effort.

Part of No. 3 is pleasing, but the long symphonies *alla marcia* are disadvantageous to it as a song, and the author's general design has been anticipated in many instances: still there is a something in the style of this which will give it a chance of becoming rather popular.

No. 4 is set with much feeling, and the composition as a whole is elegant in its style, though the passages are not very original. Indeed one or two of the cadences are so common as to induce us to advise the singer to take the same liberty with them that Signor Velluti has with other parts of this canzonetta, and alter freely. Not, let it be understood, that we approve all the substitutions of the latter, many of which, like half of his embellishments, are exceedingly puerile and whining.

No. 5 is very expressive, and the accompaniment excellent.

No. 6 brings again before us a composer who has recently been noticed with approbation in our review. His present Ballad exhibits the same good taste and feeling as his former productions. An enharmonic modulation in this (a bold thing in a ballad!) produces an effect which justifies the introduction of so formidable a key in a species of composition that is usually characterised by simplicity.

No. 7 is "Aurora, ah sorgerai!" with English words.

No. 8 has not a single distinctive feature, as regards melody; and as to the accompaniment, the author will do well to call all his harmonic knowledge of harmony into action, and then proceed to the task of revising his publication.

No. 9 is a charming song in the Scottish manner; moderate in compass, and easy to sing.

No. 10 is in the same style as the former; but that is light and airy,—this inclining to the pathetic. It is an excellent imitation of Scottish melody.

No. 11 is also indebted to Caledonia for its style. The success of "Blue Bonnets" has engendered this, and others of the same degree of merit.

No. 12 exhibits symptoms of inexperience, particularly in the opening symphony.

Numbers 13, 14, and 15 are the *Little Songs for Little Singers* continued. These are hardly fair subjects for criticism. The intent of the publication is laudable, and the execution blameless. The best part of No. 14 is an air by Weber, published in a former volume of the *Harmonicon*, and not merely a "suggestion of Weber," as Mr. Green tells us.

FLUTE AND PIANO-FORTE.

1. ITALIAN FANTASIAS CONCERTANTE, *composed by RAPHAEL DRESSLER. Nos. 1, 2, and 3. (Cocks and Co.)*
2. CIMAROSA'S AIR, "Udite, tutti udite," *from Il Matrimonio Segreto, arranged by W. BARK. (Payne and Hopkins, 69, Cornhill.)*
3. KUFFNER'S SERENADE, *arranged and published by the same.*

MR. DRESSLER tells us, in his title-page, that he has "introduced" certain subjects into his fantasias. He ought rather to have stated, that they are altogether made up of such airs, and that his share in the work has been nothing more than adapting these, and connecting them by a few analogous bars scattered here and there. The first number contains "Assisa a pie d'un salice," from *Otello*, and "Cara, deh attendimi," from *Zelmira*. The second, Meyerbeer's chorus, "Nel silenzio," from *Il Crociato*, and "Non piu mesta," from *La Cenerentola*. The third, Rossini's "Buona notte," and "La mia Dorabella," from *Così fan tutte*. These are arranged so as to suit two pretty good players on the respective instruments. The flute part is unobjectionable, but that for the piano-forte has many passages which lie very awkwardly for the

hand, and for which there is no reasonable excuse, as they might, without any detriment to the effect—indeed with an improved effect—have taken a much more natural and easy form. The selection, however, is good. But have not these airs been thus arranged often and often before?—If so, why not have searched for others less known, and less threadbare?

No. 2 is a striking contrast to the foregoing. The one filled with semi-demisemiquavers; the other with plain crotchets and quavers. But the moment for the return of simplicity in music is not yet arrived, and, excellent as is this air of Cimarosa, and well as it is adapted, we doubt whether there will be half the number of applications for it as for the very worst composition of Rossini.

No. 3 consists chiefly of an extremely pretty polonaise, with the easiest piano-forte accompaniment possible.

VIOLIN.

SIX PROGRESSIVE DUETS for two violins, by CAMPAGNOLI, Member of the Royal Academy of Sweden. (Vernon, Cornhill.)

IN these we discern the composer who knows the value of melody, and who possesses taste and judgment, though from the peculiar nature of the work the author has been kept within very narrow bounds, and, if possessed of genius, allowed very little opportunity of displaying it. The six duets are all easy; the first four may be undertaken by a learner of a fortnight's standing, and the other two are not much more difficult.

FLUTE.

MOZART'S *Così fan tutte*, arranged with embellishments by CHARLES SAUST. (Cocks and Co.)

THE present is the second number of a work noticed in our last, and contains a good selection from the opera, arranged in the same rather easy manner as the former.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A DILETTANTE.

(Resumed from page 40.)

Jan. 25th. Poor Shield! one of the most distinguished of English musical geniuses, died this morning. A more worthy or more amiable man never lived! A writer who evidently was well acquainted with his dramatic productions, very aptly compares him to Grétry. "There is no composer," says he, "who seems to resemble the portrait drawn of this great musician by his contemporaries, so much as our countryman Shield. Their hearts are alike; their heads are alike; and their melodies possess the same character of pathos and simplicity." So long as beautiful melody has power to charm, *Rosina* will be admired. So long as *Rosina* is admired, Shield will be held in remembrance.

26th. No time has been lost in filling the office of Master of the Royal Band of Musicians, vacant by the decease of Mr. Shield. Mr. Christopher Kramer, master of the king's private band, is his successor; and though, for the sake of encouraging English art, such an appointment ought to have been bestowed on an English musician, yet it must be confessed, that, so far as having created the finest wind-instrument band in Europe en-

titled him to preferment, Mr. Kramer had a strong claim to reward. But who succeeds him as composer of the minuets, a sinecure of 150*l.* per annum?—some celebrated English composer, doubtless?—No!—Some person much distinguished in the profession by his great merits?—No!—the appointment is given to a bookseller!—Well—should his Majesty collect another library in lieu of that most magnificent, most royal one, made by the late king, and recently presented to, or rather thrown away on, the British Museum, perhaps some ingenious musician will be employed to search for rare books, to select the choicest editions, to hunt out the best copies, and to class and arrange the whole, and then be named librarian, as an acknowledgment of his professional abilities. Dr. Petty, afterwards Sir William, the ancestor of the Marquess of Lansdown, applied for the professorship of physic at Gresham College. He was told that it was already given away, but that the professorship of music would soon be vacant, which should be at his service. Accordingly, he was shortly afterwards made Lecturer on Music. The application of this is easy enough. *Sicut erat in principio*, &c.

— A Trial night, or evening for the trial of new compositions, of the Philharmonic Society. The pieces performed were, an overture by Mr. H. Griesbach, in *E♭*; Onslow's overture to *Le Colporteur*, in *C*; a symphony by Mr. Cipriani Potter, in *E♭*; Spohr's overture to *Pietro von Albano*, in *A♭*; an overture by Mr. Hill, junior, in *F* minor, the same as tried last year, but much altered and improved; and an overture by M. Perez. The overture by Spohr, a most elaborate, difficult composition, put the ability of this band to a most severe test. They played it at sight; but the best judges might have concluded that they had rehearsed it half a dozen times before. I doubt whether so marvellous a performance as this can be matched by any orchestra in Europe. Where, indeed, is there a band that unites such talents as this?—All of these were approved, some more, some less, except the last, which had not many suffrages in its favour. A Mr. Dannelley sent in a composition, which was politely rejected. Query,—is this the gentleman whose Dictionary of Music was so completely *shewn up* in the fourth volume of the Harmonicon? If so, he would "lie still were he wise."

— Mr. Moscheles has written a new symphony. Whether it will be performed at the Philharmonic, or any other public concert in London, this season, is not known. Those who have heard it in private, speak of it as a production of extraordinary merit, exhibiting high talent for this most difficult species of composition.

28th. A French journal of this date hints at the system carried on by some of the singers in Paris, in order to attract the notice of this country. They get puffs of the most extravagant kind inserted in two or three of the minor papers in their pay, and as these articles generally find their way, in some shape or other, into the English journals, a reputation is thus gained which often enables performers to obtain engagements here on terms of the most preposterous kind. A game of this kind is now playing by a lady who wishes to share in the spoils of the British nation. Praises are heaped on her in the same prodigal manner that they were bestowed on Mlle. Sontag, but with even less justice, for the best and impartial critics consider the new candidate for public

favour as but an imitator, or caricaturist, of Madame Pasta.

31st. The King's Theatre opened this evening, for the season, without a *prima donna*, without a *primo basso*, and without nearly all the best and experienced orchestral performers!

Feb. 2d. Another youthful prodigy in music has been started at Hamburgh; his name Theodore Klein, and his age nine years. A dealer in music in that city has already published a collection of the compositions of this child, who is about to set out on his travels. I trust he will not find his way here. But if he must come in quest of our gold, I hope he will leave his paper behind him. All juvenile wonders are nuisances, but a composing one is, or ought to be, indictable at Quarter Sessions.

4th. The dispute between the present manager of the King's Theatre, M. Laporte, and the principals of the band, has afforded an opportunity to a few of the writers in newspapers, to show their liberality and good manners. The *Morning Journal*—which lately distinguished itself by something very like high treason—has been talking of a quarrel “between a manager and his fiddlers;” and the *Athenæum*, in the same spirit of good feeling, echoes the gentlemanlike language of the scribe in the *ex-New Times*. “The *ex-fiddlers*,” says he, “Lindley and Co., being much prized on the score of their concerto-playing, imagined that they were equally valuable in the orchestra.” Now, though one may venture to assert, that it matters very little to such “fiddlers,” as Lindley, Crouch, Anfossi, Nicholson, Willman, Mackintosh, &c. &c., how they are spoken of in such journals, yet let it be recorded, that, in the nineteenth century, persons were to be hired at about three-halfpence a line, to write in so very decent a style. But in addition to this pay, I admit there is the hope, nay the certainty, of being further rewarded by orders, by means of which these three-halfpenny gentry, and their respectable friends, are enabled to mix with the company in the pit at the Opera; nay, often to obtain boxes for themselves and their — *companions*. Such persons, as well as their abettors, should take care how they throw stones, considering what houses of glass they inhabit. How is the manager himself, being a player, designated in our strictly legal language?—a vagabond. But did he ever meet with a being in the form of civilized man, who could so grossly violate decency, as to apply such a term to a respectable actor? Certainly not. Then when these ruffians of the press apply for their expected reward, let M. Laporte show a generous spirit, and drive them from the door of his office, with that disdain which in such a case it becomes every man possessed of proper feeling to exhibit.

5th. I find the following character—for it is no caricature, though so called—in the new novel of *Rank and Talent*. “There was scarcely a piece of music which Miss Henderson could not play at sight; but her style of playing was such as to weary rather than fascinate, and to listen to the young lady's dexterity on the piano-forte, was called ‘undergoing one of Miss Henderson's sonatas.’” Do we not meet with these Miss Hendersons every day?—and is not the practice of nine masters out of ten, to endeavour to qualify his pupils rather to astonish than to please? The fact is, that the one is comparatively an easy task; the other requires taste, good sense, and a

much more extensive knowledge of the art, its real object and capabilities, than the majority of masters possess. Part of the blame, however, must be placed to the account of parents, who too often are satisfied if their daughters can make a little present display, without asking whether their acquirements are of a permanent kind, and likely to contribute to the happiness of that state in which they hope to pass the greater portion of their lives.

7th. On this day, according to the newspapers, died “at his house in Southampton Place, John George Graeff, Esq., in his 68th year.” Mr. Graeff was born at Mentz, where his father held an office of some importance under the government. Though intended for the church, his strong predilection for music led to his being placed under the tuition of Abel, and subsequently of Haydn. He arrived in London in 1784, where, assisted by Mr. Clementi, he became a piano-forte master, and rose to eminence, though, in point of fact, the flute was his instrument, in which he excelled. He amassed a considerable fortune by his teaching, and having formed a highly respectable matrimonial connection, retired some years ago from a profession, the credit of which he had assisted to uphold, by his gentlemanlike conduct and excellent character. He was the composer of some pretty, easy piano-forte music, and of a set of canzonets, that possess merit, though, appearing at the time when Haydn's were in everybody's hands, they attracted but little notice.

— A morning paper of this day talks of the “melody” of Mad. Pisaroni's voice, and the “tact” of her style!

— The *Spectator*—a weekly journal, conducted with great ability and propriety—has a remark to-day, which, without seeming to be so intended, applies to the coarse language mentioned above. “Among our barbarous ancestors,” says the writer, “surgeons and lawyers were in small repute; musicians and architects were denominated ‘fiddlers and masons;’ ‘poor scholars’ were presented with a license to beg; and players were ordered to the buttery. In process of time, however, these professors attained their due distinction.”

8th. The following account of Mr. Shield's funeral appears in the *Examiner*.

“The remains of this eminent musician and most amiable man, were removed from his residence in Berner's-street on Wednesday morning last, (the 4th ult.) and deposited in the south cloister of Westminster Abbey, amongst other men of genius who have done honour to their country. The procession was of the most simple and unostentatious kind, like the estimable composer himself, and consisted merely of a plain hearse and two mourning coaches, containing a few of Mr. Shield's most intimate friends, followed by the private carriages of some of his other acquaintances. The mourners were Mr. Thomas Broadwood (the executor,) Col. Crodill, Mr. J. B. Cramer, Mr. V. Novello, Mr. Blake, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Parkinson, and Mr. Cahusac.

“The body was received at the door of the Abbey (where it arrived about twelve o'clock) by the gentlemen of the choirs, of which there was a most numerous attendance, and the musical part of the service began. It consisted of the admirable service in G minor, by Dr. Croft. On the entrance of the coffin into the choir, and after the mourners had taken their places in the stalls, the fine

funeral chant by Thomas Purcell was performed. This was followed by Dr. Greene's masterly anthem in a minor, 'Lord, let me know mine end,' in which the fine *processional* base, stalking throughout the movement, had a most charming effect. The coffin was now removed towards the cloisters, during the progress to which was performed the inimitably fine verse composed by Purcell, to the words, 'Lord, thou knowest the secrets of our hearts;' which Croft, who composed all the rest of the service, would not even attempt to reset, as he despaired of producing anything at all to compare with this exquisite specimen of Purcell's deep feeling and pathetic expression. On the body's being lowered into the grave, (which is quite close to that of his old friend, Mr. Salomon, and not very far from his still more intimate friend, Mr. Bartleman—who lies in the west cloister, by his master Dr. Cooke), the remainder of the service was concluded in the most solemn and affecting manner, by the voices *alone*, which contrasted most powerfully with the preceding movements that were accompanied by the organ, and produced an indescribably striking and impressive effect.

"Nearly the whole of the most eminent members of the musical profession surrounded the grave. Seldom have we seen more genuine sorrow and regret than were depicted on the countenances of all present at this sad ceremony; and never had we to record the committal to his 'parent dust' of any one more universally or more deservedly respected and beloved, than was the late WILLIAM SHIELD."

9th. The Oratorios this season are to be under the direction of Mr. Hawes, who has resolved to resist the demands of the lady-singers, and we hope he will be able to persevere in his determination. It is high time to oppose such pretensions. He offered, I am told, Madame Caradori and Miss Paton, fifteen guineas per night, and they demanded twenty. Mr. Lindley, I believe, is content with five, and the other principals in proportion!—and there is only one Lindley; but many Patons and Caradoris.

The *Sunday Times* of to-day, in alluding to this, tells us, that Mr. Hawes "has the entire management of the vocal musical department at St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Chapel Royal." What nonsense these reporters send forth to the world!—Mr. Hawes belongs to those two choirs, certainly, but has no more to do in managing the cathedral service than the verger or the door-keeper: such duty is allotted to the respective sub-deans, who consult with the organists, and with them only; except upon very extraordinary occasions, when the whole choir may be convened for a special purpose.

The same paper says, that Curioni has only (and enough too) 800*l.* this season at the Opera, though he had 1600*l.* last year; and that Madame Caradori demanded 16 or 1800*l.*, therefore was not engaged.

10th. We are continually told of the losses sustained by the managers of theatres, yet we never hear of a want of competition whenever those establishments are offered to bidders. There is a mystery in this that ought to be explained. By a speech in Chancery, a statement which remains uncontradicted, it appears, for instance, that the average receipts and disbursements at Covent Garden Theatre leave a large balance in favour of the concern. For in a suit now pending, counsel estimated "the scale of annual expenses at from 47,000 to 59,000*l.*, which, by

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the number of performances, amounts to between 300*l.* and 400*l.* per night. The items of this expenditure are—Performers, 26,000*l.*, Tradespeople 9,000*l.*; annuitants 4,500*l.*: ground-rent and taxes, 3,500*l.* The receipts varied from 50,000 to 80,000*l.*, yielding an average profit of 12,000*l.* a year."

14th. The opera of *La Donna del Lago* was performed this evening with just half the characters omitted. This is rather too bad, in a theatre which demands a subscription of three hundred guineas for fifty nights, and fourteen and sixpence for good places in the pit, and therefore ought to be provided with *doubles* in case of need. Even Donzelli was ill, though he did perform. A morning paper, which will insist upon appearing learned in musical matters, says that his hoarseness did not betray itself "in the *portaments di voce*."—What next?

—In the same journal is a most barefaced puff of the *Bohemian Brothers*, as the cigar-making Jews are called. Every piece they sang, we are told, was encored. No doubt;—for Messrs. Welsh and Bochsa take good care that this shall happen. *Claqueurs* now form part of the establishment at all these exhibitions, and are as necessary as paragraphs and free tickets. But the article I allude to further states, that "the vibration of the singer's chest was heard as distinctly as the vibration of a string." Good heavens!—the vibration of muscle, fat, and skin! It is impossible to say whether profound acoustical knowledge, or strict veracity, predominates most in so very learned a remark. What geese these advertisers must take the public for!

16th. But the *ne plus ultra* of puffing is, if I mistake not, to be found in the following paragraph, which I extract literally from the *Post*:—"The celebrated Mr. J. White, the conductor of the music at the Royal West London Theatre, has been appointed Master of the Private Band of Captain Whitehead, of the Honourable Company's Ship the *Duke of Sussex*." If so "celebrated" a person is preferred to the office of master of the *private* band of so important a personage as Captain Whitehead, who will the latter find of sufficient rank to become the master of his *public* band, should the East India Company furnish him with one?—Who?—Why Mr. J. Brown, director of the orchestra to the Royal Ambulatory Punch-and-Judy Theatre—to be sure.

—The credulity of the public is great, but if they took the trouble to reflect for one minute on an assertion which has just run through all the papers,—namely, that Madame Pasta made 17,000*l.* in this country last season, they must have discovered its absurdity. She received about 6000*l.* from the Opera,—a most preposterous sum—and about 1,000*l.* elsewhere. Thus 7,000*l.* is in an instant swelled into 17,000*l.* She had not one country engagement, let it be recollected; she attended very few public concerts, and not many private ones, for Madlle. Sontag was the *pet* of the season. The above therefore is the outside of her receipts in 1828. They were more by three or four thousands the former season, I believe; a fact which tells very little in favour of the common sense of my countrymen, I must acknowledge. And Madame Pasta's mother thought so too; for, on arriving at Calais with her daughter on their way from England, and being charged immoderately at the *Lion d'Argent*, she exclaimed to the landlord, "What! do you take us for *English asses*?"

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We shall, however, grow wiser by experience. The story related in *Galvani's Messenger* of an entertainment given by Madame Malibran Garcia*, in which a *proverbe dramatique* was introduced for the purpose of ridiculing the English, will certainly assist in curing an infatuation which makes us laughed at in all societies abroad.

18th. Those who wish to see a specimen of musico-dramatic criticism should read the *Herald* of this date, where will be found an account of last night's performance at the King's Theatre, that for downright imbecility may vie with anything on record.

22nd. The following caution in *The Times* is very well worth the notice of the frequenters of the Opera, in whatever character they may go. It is impossible to mistake the person to whom it applies; there is but one such. "The amateurs of ballets should never be hasty in giving credit for all the good music occurring in them, to individuals who make the appropriation appear as the production of their own genius. There are persons as ready to set down as their own that which they have conveniently copied from other composers, as they have shewn themselves apt to take liberties with other people's signatures."

The Philharmonic Concerts.

FIRST CONCERT, Monday, Feb. 23, 1829.

ACT I.

Sinfonia in C Minor	BEETHOVEN.
Aria, Signor Donzelli, "Ah! si per voi." (<i>Otello</i>)	ROSSINI.
Double Quartetto, four Violins, two Violas, and two Violoncellos, Messrs. Weichsel, Watts, Moralt, and Lindley, Oury, A. Griesbach, Lyon, and W. Lindley (never performed at these Concerts)	SPOHR.
Duetto, Madame Stockhausen and Signor Donzelli, "Fuggi! crudele" (<i>Il Don Giovanni</i>)	MOZART.
Overture, (<i>Le Colporteur</i>)	ONSLow.

ACT II.

Sinfonia in E flat, (Letter T.)	HAYDN.
Cantata, Madame Stockhausen, "Non temer" (Piano Forte obbligato, Mr. Cramer)	MOZART.
Concerto, Violin, Mr. Tolbecq	KREUTZER & TOLBECQ.
Terzetto, "Tremate! empj, Tremate;" Madame Stockhausen, Signor Donzelli, and Mr. Phillips	BEETHOVEN.
Overture, <i>Calypso</i>	WINTER.
Leader, Mr. F. CRAMER.—Conductor, Mr. CRAMER.	

SINCE good modern music has been nearly banished the Opera, and most private concerts, the Philharmonic performances have increased in interest and attention. There may be heard the best works of the great composers of the present, and latter part of the former, century. Where else can they be listened to with satisfaction? Now and then at a benefit concert, when the major part of this band is engaged, which can happen very rarely. Sometimes a symphony or overture is well got up at a country festival; and occasionally at an oratorio; but this is quite a matter of uncertainty, and while the attempt completely succeeds once, it fails nineteen times at least.

This first concert of the present season was an admirable selection; we had almost said a perfect one. The merits of the symphonies we need not descant on, having repeatedly dwelt on them in this work. The overture to *Calypso*, also, has often been noticed by us.

But Onslow's is quite new here, having only recently been produced at the French Opera. There is more air in this, a greater quantity and a better distribution of light and shade, and less of the abstruse, than in any instrumental composition we ever heard of the author. The principal subject is exceedingly melodious, and accompanied by a rich but not overwhelming harmony, the power of the instruments being very much kept down, so as to produce a larger continuation of gentle sounds, than is common in this class of composition; by which means the effect of the fortissimos is far greater than when they are prolonged, and when the ear is allowed no repose till fairly tired out by uninterrupted bursts on the tympanum. As to the originality of this overture, in a rigorous sense of the word, we cannot say much: its author manifestly is well read in the orchestral works of Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber, and deeply impressed by their beauties. So richly is his mind stored by these, that, unintentionally and unavoidably, they often become so mingled with the product of his own imagination, that what would otherwise be his alone, takes spontaneously a colouring from that with which it is so constantly associated, and gives an appearance of premeditated imitation, to what is in reality only an accidental resemblance. We hope that this will be repeated during the season: it will make a much stronger impression on a second hearing.

The double quartett of Spohr was another novelty. It is in four movements. The first an allegro, and the second a scherzo, each in the minor, though written, that is to say put together, in a very masterly manner, smell too much of the lamp, and are heavy from excess of learning. The latter movements, an adagio and a finale, both in the major mode, atone for the "palpable obscure" of the two first. A lovely air meanders through the adagio, assisted by a full but not confounding accompaniment; and the last movement is on a light, playful subject, admirably worked, but the labour concealed, so as to bear every appearance of having flowed naturally from the mind of the composer, ready fashioned, and complete in all its parts. We must allow, however, that we discovered no effect from this double quartett that might not have been produced in a single one. We expected a conversation-piece,—subjects given out by one side, replied to by the other; augmentations and diminutions. But nothing of all this; it might as well have been called a concertante at once. The performance of it cannot be too highly praised; but the names of those to whom it was entrusted speak for themselves. Weichsel was, of course, the most conspicuous. He gives confidence to all who are united with him, and his superb tone diffuses itself in every part of the room, without exercising any undue superiority over that of his coadjutors.

M. Tolbecq, who is newly arrived from Paris, is a very good performer. The opening of his concerto promised more than the subsequent part fulfilled,—we speak of the music—and one slow variation in the last movement was very effective; but the whole was tediously long, and wanted variety.

The vocal pieces were selected with great judgment. Donzelli sang the aria from *Otello* in a manner far superior to anything we have been accustomed to from Opera singers, since the elder Crivelli was here. But we shall say more of him elsewhere. His duet with Madame Stockhausen shewed how much he might excel in such music, were he but encouraged to give his thought to it, though neither of the two were quite at home in this masterpiece of dramatic composition. Madame Stockhausen, in the fine but excessively difficult cantata, was

* See our Foreign Report in the present number.—(Editor.)

highly respectable. She was much indebted to Mr. Cramer for his accompaniment, which excited many gentle murmurs of approbation during its progress. The Terzetto, quite à la Mozart, was, we feel morally certain, an early production of Beethoven, though marked as his opera one hundred, or more. It is a charming composition, but seems to want stage action, with a view to which it appears to us to have been written. The voices of Donzelli and Phillips blended most charmingly in this piece.

The concert was led with vast animation by the indefatigable F. Cramer, and the whole went off with a spirit which shewed that the zeal of the performers is quite unabated. Very few subscribers appeared to be absent on this occasion, and consequently the room was remarkably full. We should be glad could we say that it is in such a condition as the public have a right to expect. And as to the ante-rooms, the one looks like a barn metamorphosed into a theatre; and the other resembles those parlours in the Greenwich taverns, where the removal of a sliding partition throws two into one. The darkness, however, of the great saloon is in favour of its present condition, for the dirt is not so visible as if the lights were more powerful. But the cold which attacks the feet is a more serious evil. We counsel the ladies to bring foot-muffs with them, and the gentlemen to come in French clogs, while the wintry winds continue, or they may be drawn into a more frequent intercourse with their physicians than is either desirable or profitable.

Foreign Musical Report.

VIENNA.

Theater an der Wien.—A new romantic opera, in four acts, was produced here, entitled *Meister Pilgram, Erbauer des Stephanthurmes in Wien*, the poetry by Ed. Duller, the music by Kapellmeister Gläser. The subject which is calculated to awaken local interest, and abounds in patriotic feeling, is happily chosen, and several of the musical pieces are pleasing and characteristic; but as a whole it is not of a kind to attract any permanent attention.

Josephstüdt Theater.—A new romantic drama, in four acts, has appeared here, entitled *Der Stock im Eisen*, the music by Kapellmeister Kessler. Several of the choruses and other pieces in this composition, prove the author to possess more than common merit.

Leopoldstüdt Theater.—In the course of the last month was produced here, for the benefit of Music-director Raimund, *Der Alpenkönig und der Menschenfeind*, a grand romantic opera in two acts, the music by Kapellmeister Wenzel Müller. The piece possesses considerable merit, both in a literary and musical point of view. The overture contains several characteristic and original passages, many of the airs and concerted pieces are excellent, and the accompaniment contains several pieces of musical painting, which bespeak talents, on which the public are justified in forming no mean expectations.

The Count von Gallenberg, the new manager of the *Kärnthnerthor Theater*, has just issued a prospectus, with which the public in general seem highly satisfied. The subscription is to be moderate, and a pledge is given that all novelties of merit, but in particular those of the German school, shall be promptly brought before the public.

The house is to open with C. M. von Weber's *Oberon*. It is to be followed by Mehul's *Valentine de Milan*, Marschner's *Vampyre*, Onslow's *Colporteur*, Maurer's *Aloyse*, Rossini's *Seige de Corinth*, and *Le Comte Ory*, Auber's *Muette de Portici*, &c. Some of the original compositions of Conrad Kreutzer, Gyrowetz, and Lachner, are to be revived; the works of Spohr, Fesca, Lindpaintner, &c., are to be put into requisition; not, of course, forgetting the classical masters of the old school.

The success which has attended the publication of Hummel's "Piano-forte School," may be estimated from the fact, that, on the day of publication, more than eighteen hundred copies were disposed of.

BERLIN.

Königliche Theater.—The only novelty here has been Isouard's sprightly opera, *Le Déjeuné*, which was excellently cast; Madlle. v. Schätzel, as the young widow, and M. Bader, as the bon vivant, were admirable. The music of this piece is of that light and pleasing kind, which is always sure to give satisfaction, and there is much comic humour in some of the scenes: that, for instance, of the double chamber.

Madlle. v. Schätzel continues to rise in public favour, in proportion as her diversified talents become more known. She has appeared in the following characters, and done justice to each: as Henriette, in Auber's *Maçon*, in which the negligent grace and naïveté of her performance were warmly applauded; as Amazily, in Spohr's *Jessonda*; and, lastly, as the Genius, in Spontini's *Nurmahal*, all of which operas have been performed to crowded houses.

Königstüdt Theater.—A new and very spirited operetta, has been produced here, entitled *Neues Mittel Weiber zu curiren* (a New Way to cure Wives), the music by Mr. Böhmer, member of the Royal Chapel. Several of the airs and concerted pieces have merit, and were much applauded. It is to be hoped that the success of his first attempt will encourage this artist to continue to cultivate his talents for dramatic music, as they appear to be of a very promising kind.

After this was performed the *Elisa und Claudio* of Mercadante, in which Madlle. Siebert particularly distinguished herself. The opera, which was in the German language, appeared to afford general satisfaction.

Spontini has at length completed his grand opera of *Agnes von Hohenstaufen*, of which it will be recollected that one act only was produced some time since, on occasion of a particular court festivity.

The expected romantic drama of *Quentin Durward*, to which Kapellmeister Schneider is composing the music, is said to be in a state of great forwardness, and from the specimens that have been heard of the music, the liveliest expectations are formed. The cognoscenti are curious to know how a master who, as yet, is known only by church music, and works of the severe kind, will succeed in dramatic composition.

MUNICH:

Mr. Lindpaintner, Kapellmeister of Stutgard, has just obtained fresh laurels here in his new opera *Der Vampyr*, which was performed to one of the fullest houses of the season, and obtained decided success. Several of the airs and concerted pieces were encored, and at the fall of the curtain the composer was loudly called for. Madlle. Schechner did not a little contribute to the success of the piece, by the truly dramatic manner in which she performed the principal character.

HALLE.

Music, and particularly that of the religious kind, has recently experienced a serious loss here, in the person of the Chancellor, Aug. Hermann Niemeyer. He was the munificent patron of every musical undertaking, and particularly of the Singing Academy, which, under his auspices, had attained to a degree of repute before unknown. In honour, therefore, of his memory, the *Requiem* of Mozart was performed.

NUREMBERG.

At a meeting of the magistrates and principal citizens of this town, a gold medal was voted to Kapellmeister Frederic Schneider, of Dessau, as a testimony of respect to his talents, and for the zeal with which he exerted himself on occasion of the meeting to commemorate the anniversary of their celebrated townsman, Albert Durer; for which this composer produced his new oratorio, *Christus, der Meister*. A letter of thanks was sent him, enclosing also a numerous list of subscribers to his forthcoming oratorio.

MILAN.

Madame Pasta has undertaken the management of the *Carcano* Theatre. She is also engaged to perform at Vienna, where the public have long been expecting her, and by the means of her talents look forward to the restoration of the Italian Theatre.

LISBON.

Opera concerns go on here but very badly; at no time has this city been the favourite resort of the Muses, and at present they have nearly deserted it altogether. There has been a revival of Coccia's pleasing opera, *La Festa della Rosa*, which was well performed.

A *Jeu d'esprit* has been handed about, of which I send you the following fragment; the spirit in which it is written may easily be seen, as well as to whom addressed.

To meet you there upon the shore shall stand,
With fiddle and with fiddlestick in hand,
That crown'd Rossini of melodious skill,
For whom ye ran so well, and fought so ill,
Your liege, the tuneful David of Brazil.*
He who would reign by revolutions,
Who from a throne hymns constitutions;
Whom Mars and Phœbus both call son;
Who plays a twofold part;
In music, quite a Wellington,
In battle, a Mozart.

PETERSBURG.

After a considerable interval, a new Italian company has been organized, and the season opened with two novelties—novelties under this degree of the meridian—*Zelmira* and the *Cenerentola*. The company, however, is but indifferent; the Signora Melas, the prima donna, has a tolerable soprano voice, but inclined to be shrill; she obtained but little success in the first opera, but succeeded in redeeming her credit in the latter, and particularly in the finale of the second act. Nicolini, whose voice is a high bariton, sang the tenor parts, during the absence of a singer of this kind. Though he has rather a pleasing voice, he succeeded but little, his style being crude, and his action bad. The favourite of the public is Tosi, the *primo buffo*, who in effect is the best singer of the company. Zamboni, another *primo buffo* and director of the

theatre, is extolled by the journalist of St. Petersburg, as the very first of all *Baroni*; in what part the good director will take the compliment, it is not for us to determine. As to Zambelli, and the Signora Monari, they appear to be singers of so very mediocre a class, as to be undeserving of notice.

PARIS.

THE following curious paragraph appears in Galignani's *Messenger*. We are sorry to find a young lady of talent so deficient in the good sense which would have prevented so ridiculous a display, and so wanting in that grateful feeling for former support in this country, which, just at this moment, it would be to her interest at least to appear to possess:—

"A fund of remark and ridicule has been supplied to the fashionable circles these last few days, by the eccentric vagaries of a celebrated young Opera singer of the *Théâtre Italien*, who, it appears, during the last week, gave an evening party, to which, it was ostentatiously announced, that none were invited who had not been previously presented at court! Passing the pitiable silliness of this piece of pretension, in such a quarter, the young Signora is also accused of a more grave offence against good taste. It is said, that with other entertainments selected for the amusement of her distinguished guests, among whom were many English, was a dramatic proverb, in which the English nation was ludicrously caricatured and held up to derision, in a character supported with infinite piquancy and spirit by the amiable hostess herself. If this be true (and our authority is too good, we fear, to admit of a doubt,) we must, in plain language, characterize it as an act of vulgar, low-bred impertinence, especially unbecoming in one who, if we recollect rightly, has herself been indebted to the hospitality of the nation which is now the object of her ridicule, and which, notwithstanding its alleged deficiency in musical taste, which was particularly the subject of satire with the Signora, is the best friend and most munificent patron of musical talent in the world. It is right, perhaps, to add, that Mdlle. Sontag is not here alluded to, that lady having been engaged on the evening in question at the palace of his Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans."

Théâtre Italien.—Signor Gennero, a young tenor lately arrived from Italy, made his débüt in the *Donna del Lago*, but without success. It appears, that some short time since, he attempted the part of *Don Ottavio* at Florence, and by no means shone in the character. An Italian Journal excused him by saying, that the part was ill-adapted to the singer; had the phrase been reversed, it would have been far nearer to the truth. His voice is pleasing, but he is completely devoid of style, method, and other necessary requisites for a singer of any pretension.

Rossini has completed his *Guillaume Tell*, but an obstacle has arisen to prevent its appearance. Madame Damoreau-Cinti, in ceasing to be a virgin-votary of the Muses, necessarily exposed herself to inconveniences, which, as might naturally have been expected, have come to embarrass not only the singer, but the manager also. What was to be done? The three great French singers, Fodor, Lalande, and Fauvel (*Favelli*) are under engagements, and no choice was left but a German. Terms have accordingly been entered into with Mad. Maraffa-Fischer, daughter of the composer of the well-known minuet, which bears the name of Fischer. This singer, after gaining great applause in her native country, made her débüt in Italy, in 1826, since which time she has sung in the theatres of most of its principal cities. The only question

* The illustrious individual here alluded to is said to be the composer of the Portuguese Constitutional Hymn, though we have reason to believe that it is from the pen of Signor Coccia.

that agitates the cognoscenti here, is how the lady is to manage in a *French* opera, for it is whispered that she is no great proficient in the language. The general impression, however, appears to be, that an infliction of Teutonic accent is preferable to a longer deprivation of an opera, which is pronounced by all those who have heard it at the piano, to be the masterpiece of Rossini's genius. This, time alone will shew. In the meanwhile much is said, among other wonders, of the *Oath of the Three Swiss*, the subject of which is from a well-known picture by M. Steub, and which terminates by a triple chorus of the three cantons, a piece calculated, it is said, to turn the heads of all our amateurs.

Institution Royale de Musique Religieuse. This institution proceeds with spirit, and from the freedom and judgment shewn in the selection of the best pieces of every school, promises to be highly conducive to a diffusion of a just and enlightened taste in the French capital. The following are some among the many novelties promised to the subscribers:—Handel's *Judas Maccabæus*; Graun's *Tod Jesu*; Schiller's celebrated cantata, *Die Glocke**, set by Romberg; three pieces from Palestrina, *Chori Sanctarum virginum*, *Misericordia Domini*, a lamentation for four voices, and *Eram quasi Agnus*, a responsorio; Allegri's celebrated *Miserere*; Josquin Deprez's *Lament on the death of his master, Ockenheim* (1500); Carissimi's classical production *Il Sacrificio de Jephtha*, and the three following singular madrigals of this extraordinary master, *Testamentum asini*, *Melos de barbâ Capucinatorum*, and the declension of the pronoun *Hic, hæc, hoc*; and a selection of madrigals from Palestrina, Marenzio, Monteverde, Venosa, the Scarlatti, Durante, Staffani, and Clari.

Théâtre Italien.—Mdlle. Sontag made her re-appearance at this theatre in *Il Barbiere*.—Such was the curiosity of the public to witness her return, that every box was engaged weeks beforehand. They were anxious, says one of the journals, to ascertain whether their favourite still preserved that freshness and flexibility of organ which she possessed before her journey *beyond sea*; in a word, whether the cloud by which this theatrical star had for some time been eclipsed, had entirely disappeared, and left it in its former unsullied lustre. She acquitted herself to the general satisfaction in her air, duet, and in Rode's variations, alla Catalani, and appears to have suffered no diminution of her powers.

The veteran Lesueur has just published his oratorio of *Debora*, which has been performed before the Royal Family, in the Chapel Royal, and excited the deepest interest. The piece is said to be marked by great variety of effect, from the simple air to the impassioned scena; from descriptions of placid emotion, to those of the anguish and despair of the vanquished, and the triumph and exultation of the victors. The introduction, which is descriptive of a storm upon the banks of the torrent Kison, is highly imposing in its effect, and contains passages of musical painting of a high order. The pieces which appeared to produce the most striking impression, were, the air, *Dux descendit de monte Thabor*, a composition full of energy and melody of the inspiring kind; the chorus, *Sic pereant inimici tui, Domine*; and the air, *Surge, Debora*, which is marked by so touching an expression as to come home to every heart. The work is dedicated to his Majesty the King of Prussia.

In the last list of music published at Paris, we observe the following:—"Première composition de Rossini: *Se il vuol la Malinara*, canzonetta."

The Drama.

KING'S THEATRE.

THIS house opened on Saturday the 31st of January, with Rossini's *Donna del Lago*. The parts were cast thus:—

Giacomo V. (James V. of Scotland)	SIG. CURIONI.
Douglas	SIG. DE ANGELI.
Rodrigo (Roderic Dhu)	SIG. DONZELLI.
Elena (Ellen)	MAD. MONTICELLI.
Malcolm (Malcolm Græme)	MAD. PISARONI.
Albina	MAD. CASTELLI.

We have entered at large into the merits of this opera in the first volume of our former series, and need only say *here*, that it is not one of those which will transmit the name of Rossini to posterity, though there are some few good things in it.

Our attention now will be directed to the three performers who, on this occasion, appeared for the first time in England; and we begin with MADAME MONTICELLI, whose personal attractions and merits as an actress far exceed her vocal talents. Her style is not bad, but her voice wants both quality and strength; and her appearance—which, however, ought not to have been compared to that of Madame Ronzi, which is vastly superior—is the greatest recommendation she possesses. As *Seconda Donna*, Madame M. may be very useful: she cannot with prudence again appear as a *prima*.

MADAME PISARONI possesses a mezzo-soprano voice of very unusual compass. It is still powerful, but has been more so; and its quality, though retaining much of its fulness, was infinitely richer and sweeter a few years ago. She now is obliged to force it in certain passages, lest it should not obey her will with the promptitude and correctness that it was wont to do; the consequence is, that many of her notes have a hardness in them quite unfeminine, and far from agreeable. She is decidedly a good musician, according to the general acceptance of the term, for she is invariably steady in time; and in all her embellishments, as they are called, and wanderings from the notes set down for her, is never unfaithful to the composer's harmony. In the concerted pieces, too, her exactness in her own part, and the care with which she adapts that to the others, are additional and very strong proofs of her skill and experience. Besides which, her intonation is perfect. These are high qualifications, certainly; but if pure taste is to be included as an essential part of musical knowledge, then we shall not so readily admit Madame Pisaroni's claim. She overlays every thing with ornaments, and appears to have a mortal aversion to a held, or sustained, sound. Nearly as much dislike does she seem to have for those smooth diatonic successions which are so delightful, and therefore takes every opportunity of either breaking them into zigzags, or of splitting them into minute parts by means of the chromatic scale, which, as now used, can only be compared to the love-song of a domestic animal notorious for its hostility to mice and to music.

Nevertheless Mad. Pisaroni is—perhaps we ought to

* "The Bell." A very spirited translation of this masterly production has appeared from the pen of Lord Francis Leveson Gower.

say has been—what is commonly called a great singer. We candidly admit that excellent judges have so considered her, and that some of these still hold the same opinion. Perhaps her style may not be her own choice, but a surrender of her judgment to the perverted taste, or rather the fashion, of the age. This is a point we cannot pretend to decide; but we will throw off unnecessary disguise, and declare, that all the circumstances of the case taken into consideration, if the opera were the sole object of our visits to the King's Theatre, we should not be again anxious to enter its doors when the lady was expected to perform.

Signor DONZELLI possesses a tenor voice of extraordinary beauty, compass, and power. It is so sonorous and pure, and he sings with such undeviating accuracy as to tune, that we could be almost content to sit and hear him were he to do nothing more than to practise the scale up and down. Its quality is much the same as that of the elder Crivelli, but exceeds his in strength; and also resembles what Garcia's was many years ago, though infinitely more musical. He has a falsetto, or *voce di testa*, which reminds us of Incledon, and he is equally prodigal in the use of it. This is his defect: not satisfied with what nature has so bountifully bestowed on him, he has recourse to that which is artificial, useless, and displeasing to the real connoisseur. We have not yet heard enough of him to judge conclusively of his style. His power of sustaining, and also his taste, seem to incline him in favour of that which, for nearly four hundred years—from the time of Castiglione down to the present moment—has been considered by true judges as the most perfect, indeed the only, standard. That he is calculated to excel in this, he gave many convincing proofs on the present occasion, though the part by no means suited him. He has flexibility sufficient for the most florid style, and displays quite enough of it, but whether as a propitiatory offering at the altar of fashion, or to shew his power of execution, or to indulge a natural propensity, we are not prepared to decide.

This opera was performed six nights successively, no other having been in a state of preparation, and heartily tired the public were of it, for it was, as a whole, very badly got up. For instance, Signor De Angeli was the base,—the *Douglas*! We need say no more.

On Tuesday the 17th ult. *L'Italiana in Algeri*, almost the worst opera its composer ever produced, was revived, and, if Mad. Pisaroni and Sig. Donzelli be excepted, a performance more discreditable has seldom been exhibited on these boards. A Signor V. Galli,—very incorrectly said to be a brother of the famous singer,—made his debut in the character of *Mustafa*, and a most wretched part he made of it. His voice appears to have scarcely any means of issuing; he sings as if his mouth were half filled with macaroni, and his attempts to execute passages of the least motion—we will not say agility—proved absolutely abortive. If this is to be the base, the foundation and support of all the concerted pieces till after Easter, we pity those who, night after night, are obliged to hear out an entire opera: that is to say, we pity the band, the prompter, and the scene-shifters.

Of Madame Pisaroni as *Isabella* we can only say, that the part is exactly suited to her voice*, and as exactly

unfit for her person. She ought to appear as seldom as possible out of male attire. Donzelli's singing in the character of *Lindor* was admirable; but his powers are wasted on such music. The rest was really execrable.

The loss sustained this season by the retirement of all the best performers from the orchestra, (Dragonetti excepted, who is engaged, though he refused to sign the terms,) is sensibly felt. Poor Spagnoletti is to be commiserated; his force of violins is reduced to sixteen, out of which not more than half a dozen are really efficient. But M. Laporte has shewn great judgment in engaging the two Gambati as trumpeters: they completely drown the band, and screen all its weaknesses and failures from detection. M. Bochsa's staff of office—a certain mopstick, by which we are told he contrives to *break* time—is the only noise that does not merge in their blasts; and this is precisely the sound which ought first to be overwhelmed. Who now fills Lindley's post as first violoncello?—Let him, whoever he may be, learn to accompany the recitatives better. Who is seated at the piano-forte? Alas! not Scappa, that excellent pianist;—not Coccia, the able, the watchful *maestro*: but some one who undertakes—we do not assert that he fulfils—this important duty at twenty shillings a night!

The entrances to the pit are improved, and the rise in the back seats is an advantage gained. The complaints about the condition of the house are not quite reasonable; it looks clean, the gilding is refreshed, and the general appearance of the house is respectable. As to the stalls,—one of the most imprudent innovations ever attempted, and which, if permitted, will ruin the pit, by dividing its company into two classes—of these stalls, we shall quote what has been well said in a Sunday paper, and with which we close this article.

"We cannot conclude without saying a few words to M. Laporte, who has completely broken his pledge to the public, that the stalls, or what might more properly be called his cribs, should be open to the public, excepting only such as are engaged nightly. This promise was made when he was under fear of a disturbance, and now that he can rely upon the public apathy, he has condescended to deceive them. The fact is, that on Tuesday night not one half of the seats were let, and yet they were locked up and kept so all the evening; nor were half the persons who occupied them, persons who paid at the doors; numbers of them being actors, musicians, painters, &c., who were admitted free; though, be it remembered, that M. Laporte distinctly stated that it was to keep the classes distinct that he adopted this new regulation. The fact is, he has attempted an impossibility, and flounders about on the borders of truth, to conceal a paltry attempt to extort more money from the frequenters of the opera, worthy only of his friend and privy counsellor, M. Bochsa. What does he mean by selecting company, and imputations thrown on those who sit on the outskirts of the unhallowed ground? Are there any persons who cannot occupy the sacred precincts by paying four shillings extra to have their stalls well littered? and who are more likely to pay than those [people seldom of the best character] who trouble themselves least of all with measures of economy? The whole thing is as absurd as it is contemptible; and though he may find asses and calves enough who will be content to turn into his stalls, he will probably find the larger family of the bulls not so easily gulled. At present he but acts the dog in the manger, and denies others the provender not wanted by himself."

* The *Times* rather authoritatively calls Pisaroni's voice a soprano, and in the same style adds, that the part was originally written for a soprano. We are sorry to find that paper imitating the blunders of the *Herald*, *Post*, and such prints.