

# MEMOIR OF MAURICE GREENE.

(Chiefly collected from the Histories of Hawkins and Burney.)

MAURICE GREENE was the son of the Reverend Thomas Greene, Vicar of St. Olave Jewry, London, and nephew of John Greene, Serjeant-at-Law. He was educated in the choir of St. Paul's, and when his voice changed, was articled to Richard Brind\*, the organist of that cathedral.

He was early noticed as an elegant organ-player and composer for the church, and obtained the place of organist of St. Dunstan in the West before he had attained his twentieth year. In 1717, on the death of Daniel Purcell, he was likewise elected organist of St. Andrew's, Holborn; but the following year his master, Brind, dying, Greene was appointed his successor. The Dean of St. Paul's at that time was Dr. Godolphin, a musical man and the friend of Greene, through whose influence with the chapter an augmentation of the salary of organist was obtained, by the addition of a lay-vicar's stipend †. In 1726, on the death of Dr. Croft, he was appointed organist and composer to the Chapels Royal; and on the death of John Eccles ‡ in 1735, obtained the office of Master of his Majesty's Band. In 1730 the degree of Doctor in Music was conferred on him by the University of Cambridge, his exercise being Pope's Ode for St. Cecilia's Day, which was performed with great applause §; and as an additional testimony to his

\* Brind had also been brought up in the same choir. He composed two anthems, now forgotten.

† Thus, the scanty choir, which then consisted of only six lay-vicars, was robbed of a member, leaving but five, of whom one at least is generally inefficient, to fill the vast area of that immense cathedral:—while there are no less than four canons and twenty-six prebendaries, who are rarely seen within the walls of the church. Such is the manner in which our cathedral service is provided for, and ecclesiastical revenues are distributed!

‡ Eccles was a composer for the theatres, of act-tunes, &c., and such incidental songs as occurred in the comedies of his time. His name is very conspicuous in all the old collections published at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. The three-voiced song, "Wine does wonders every day," which retained its popularity for more than a hundred years, is by Eccles. He succeeded Dr. Staggius about the year 1698, as Master of the Band to Queen Anne.

§ At the request of Greene, Pope condescended to make considerable alterations in this poem, and inserted one entirely new stanza,—the third. And as it differs materially from the ode as published, and has never appeared in print, except in Hawkins's history, we insert it as a literary curiosity.

I.

Descend ye Nine! descend and sing;  
The breathing instruments inspire;  
Wake into voice each silent string,  
And sweep the sounding lyre!  
    In a sadly-pleasing strain  
    Let the warbling lute complain:  
In more lengthen'd notes and slow  
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow:  
    Hark! the numbers soft and clear  
    Gently steal upon the ear;  
    Now louder they sound,  
    Till the roofs all around  
    The shrill echoes rebound:  
Till, by degrees remote and small,  
    The strains decay;  
    And melt away,  
In a dying, dying fall.

II.

By music minds an equal temper know,  
Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.  
If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,  
Music her soft, assuasive voice applies;  
    Or when the soul is sunk in cares,  
    Exalts her with enlivening airs.  
Warriors she fires by sprightly sounds;  
Pours balm into the lover's wounds:  
Passions no more the soul engage,  
Ev'n factions bear away their rage.  
Amphion thus bade wild dissensions cease,  
And soften'd mortals learn'd the arts of peace.

merit, he was shortly afterwards, on the death of Dr. Tudway\*, elected Professor of Music to the University.

III.

Amphion taught contending kings  
From various discords to create  
The music of a well-tun'd state;  
Nor slack nor strain the tender strings,  
Those useful touches to impart  
That strike the subject's answer'ing heart,  
And the soft silent harmony that springs  
From sacred union and consent of things.

IV.

But when our country's cause provokes to arms,  
How martial music every bosom warms!  
When the first vessel dar'd the seas,  
The Thracian rais'd his strain,  
And Argo saw her kindred trees  
Descend from Pelion to the main.  
Transported demi-gods stood round,  
And men grew heroes at the sound.  
Inflam'd with glory's charms!  
Each chief his sev'nfold shield display'd,  
And half unsheath'd his shining blade:  
And seas, and rocks, and skies rebound,  
To arms, to arms, to arms!

V.

But when thro' all th' infernal bounds  
Which flaming Phlegethon surrounds,  
Sad Orpheus sought his consort lost,  
The adamantine gates were barr'd,  
And nought was seen, and nought was heard  
Around the dreary coast,  
But dreadful gleams,  
Dismal screams,  
Fires that glow,  
Shrieks of woe,  
Sullen groans,  
Hollow moans,  
And cries of tortur'd ghosts!  
But hark! he strikes the golden lyre,  
And see! the tortur'd ghosts respire;  
See the shady forms advance!  
And the pale spectres dance!  
The furies sink upon the iron beds,  
And snakes uncurl'd hang list'ning round their heads.

VI.

By the streams that ever flow,  
By the fragrant winds that blow,  
O'er the Elysian flow'rs;  
By those happy souls that dwell  
In yellow meads of asphodel,  
Or aramantine bow'rs;  
By the heroes' armed shades  
Glitt'ring thro' the midnight glades,  
By the youths that died for love,  
Wand'ring in the myrtle grove,  
Restore, restore Eurydice to life,  
Oh take the husband, or return the wife!

VII.

He sung, and hell consented  
To hear the poet's pray'r;  
Stern Proserpine relented,  
And gave him back the fair.  
Thus song could prevail  
O'er death, and o'er hell,  
A conquest how hard and how glorious!  
Though Fate fast had bound her,  
With Styx nine times round her,  
Yet music and love were victorious.

\* Thomas Tudway received his education in the King's Chapel, under Dr. Blow, and was a fellow-disciple of Henry Purcell. He was patronised by, and lived much in the company of, the famous Earl of Oxford, for whom he made a large collection of music, chiefly Italian; and also scored with his own hand, for the same nobleman, seven thick quarto volumes of the most valuable services and anthems by English composers, which now, as part of the Harleian MSS., are deposited in the British Museum.



On the arrival of Handel in this country, Greene courted his friendship with an assiduity that bordered on servility; insomuch that his visits to him at Burlington House, and at the Duke of Chandos's, were rather more frequent than welcome; for the former discovered that, in his disputes with Bononcini, Greene had acted so disingenuously as to render it desirable to decline much further intercourse with him: in consequence of which, the latter availed himself of every opportunity to decry the productions of Handel, and extol those of his Italian rival. He was a member of the Academy of Ancient Music, and, with a view to exalt the character of Bononcini, produced, in the year 1728, the madrigal "In una siepe ombrosa," really composed by Lotti, but claimed by Bononcini, which gave rise to that famous dispute which terminated in the disgrace of his friend. Not able to endure the taunts of those who resented his pertinacious behaviour in this business, he withdrew, and established another concert at the Devil tavern\*.

Dr. Greene, however, had many excellent connexions, which not his talents alone, but the respectability of his family, procured him. He enjoyed the friendship of Bishop Hoadley, at whose table he was always a welcome guest, and set to music many elegant pastoral poems, namely, "Florimel," "Phœbe," and others, written, as supposed, by Dr. John Hoadley, a son of that prelate. He had also interest with the Duke of Newcastle, of political memory, probably through the Duchess, who had frequent musical parties at Newcastle-House, and these Greene used to manage, but without accepting any remuneration, which, on such occasions, he invariably declined, choosing, with a very becoming spirit, to visit on the independent footing of a guest. The mother of the Duchess was Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, whose patronage of Bononcini was an additional motive with Greene for contracting a close intimacy with him; for the doctor was a man of understanding, and formed connexions of the best kind. By his personal civilities to Mrs. Anastasia Robinson†, he so recommended himself to her, that, upon becoming Countess of Peterborough, she took every opportunity of evincing her gratitude.

Dr. Greene and the Rev. George Carleton, Subdean of the Royal Chapel, married two sisters named Dillingham, whose little pittance amounted to about five hundred pounds. This was all he had to begin the world with; nevertheless, by industry and economy, he was enabled to bring up a family of children, and make considerable savings. His uncle, Serjeant Greene, a single man, left a natural son, a barrister, to whom he bequeathed an estate in Essex, called Bois-hall, worth seven hundred pounds a year. The latter dying about the year 1750, left the whole of his property to Dr. Greene.

In the state of affluence to which he was raised by this event—for such a rental at that period may fairly be estimated as equal to two thousand pounds at the present day,—Dr. Greene, reflecting on the corruptions of our church music, occasioned by the multiplication of copies, and the ignorance of transcribers, resolved to correct and also to secure it against future injuries. He accordingly collated a great number of manuscript services and anthems, and reduced them into score. By the year 1755 he had made considerable progress; but his health failing him, he transferred the further prosecution of the work to his friend and disciple, Dr. Boyce‡, who, in a manner

worthy of the projector and of himself, completed it, and gave to the world a collection that is without rival.

Dr. Greene died on the 1st of September, 1755, leaving only one child, a daughter, married to the Rev. Dr. Michael Festing, rector of Wyke-Regis, in Dorsetshire, the son of Mr. Michael Festing, an eminent performer on the violin\*.

"Dr. Greene," says Burney, who knew him, "was an intelligent man, a constant attendant at the Opera, and an acute observer of the improvements in composition and performance which Handel, and the Italian singers employed in his dramas, had introduced into this country. His melody is therefore more elegant, and harmony more pure, than those of his predecessors, though less nervous and original. He had the misfortune to live in the age and neighbourhood of a musical giant, with whom he was utterly unable to contend, but by cabal and alliance with his enemies. Handel was but too prone to treat inferior artists with contempt: what provocation he had received from Greene after their first acquaintance, when our countryman had a due sense of his great powers, I know not; but for many years of his life, he never spoke of him without some injurious epithet. Greene's figure was below the common size, and he had the misfortune to be very much deformed, yet his address and exterior manners were those of a man of the world, mild, attentive, and well-bred."

Dr. Greene composed many cantatas, songs, and other pieces of secular music, which were very popular in their day; among which "Go, Rose†,"—"Dear Chloe, while thus beyond measure,"—"Busy, curious, thirsty fly‡," and "Fair Sally§," have never ceased to be admired. The sonatas, unfairly printed by Wright, being a publication unauthorized by him, must be considered as a work intended for some particular purpose, therefore not amenable to criticism. His reputation rests on his *Forty Anthems for one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and eight voices*, in two volumes. These place him, in our opinion, at the head of the list of English ecclesiastical composers, for they combine the science and vigour of our earlier writers, with the melody of the best German and Italian masters who flourished in the first half of the eighteenth century. Dr. Burney's review of these is anything rather than impartial and just. He must have written either from a very imperfect knowledge of the contents of the volumes, or under the influence of a prejudice not quite excusable in a historian. The divisions and shakes of which he complains, were the faults of the day,—the bad taste to which a composer was obliged to yield; and where are the first of these to be met with in greater profusion than in the compositions of Handel himself? In order, however, to shew the inconsiderate haste in which Dr. Burney pronounced judgment on the works of the great musician who is the subject of this memoir, it is enough to say, that in his list of them and remarks on their merits, he never even alludes to those which confessedly rank as the finest in the whole collection; namely, "I will sing of thy power," for five voices; "Lord, let me know mine end," for four; "O clap your hands together," for five; and, *mirabile dictu*, "God is our hope and strength," the most celebrated, and the most generally admired of all Dr. Greene's numerous productions for the church.

\* Michael Christian Festing was a pupil of Geminiani. He was leader of the King's Band; and on the building of the rotunda in Ranelagh Gardens, had the sole management of the performances there. He was one of the founders of the Royal Society of Musicians, and for some years discharged gratis the duty of secretary to that institution.

† Printed in our fourth volume.

‡ Printed in the present number.

§ Ditto.

\* Upon this Handel remarked, "De toctor Creene is gone to de Tevil."

† A celebrated singer in Handel's time.

‡ See Memoir of Dr. Boyce in the second volume of the *Harmonicon*.



## ON THE INSTABILITY OF MUSICAL FAME.

[Concluded from page 58.]

THE immediate successors of Cimarosa and Mozart—Zingarelli, Mayer, Paer, Winter, &c., followed those masters in the moderation of their musical colouring. Rossini, however, has given vogue and currency to the exaggerated style of the present day. In his earlier works, though remarkable for the brilliant and florid character of his melody, he was light and simple in his harmony. In this respect, *Tancredi* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* leave little to be wished for. In his later productions, Rossini adopted a German style of harmony, which he soon carried beyond even his models. Any of his more recent operas would afford many examples of the overcharged style which he has thus introduced; and we shall take *Otello* as being one of the finest of them. Our readers will observe that we are not writing a review of this opera, and that our subject does not allow us to indulge in the pleasure of remarking

its many beauties. Our purpose is to point out in it instances of that vitiated style which belongs exclusively to the modern school, and is not to be found in the works of Mozart or Cimarosa.

One fault of Rossini's later style is, loading simple passages of melody where nothing remarkable is meant to be expressed, with heavy and chromatic accompaniments. They are often so crowded, that they lose that transparency so delightful in Cimarosa and Mozart, which, while it enables the hearer to perceive and enjoy the movement of the parts, would enable him also to detect and be offended by any impurity in the harmony. Rossini's harmony is often indistinct and turbid, of which the hearer is quite conscious, though unable at the moment to detect many impurities which the author's desire of fulness has made him admit into it. The following examples will sufficiently shew the fault now described.

The terzetto "*Ah vieni*" contains the following passage, which is twice repeated:—

Here we have a series of *five consecutive fifths*, and three sevenths resolved upwards,—progressions which would be absolutely intolerable, were they not in some degree covered by the other parts,—which is just saying, that the



harmony would be found to be execrable, if the enormous noise of the orchestra allowed the hearer to discover of what it consisted\*.—In the chorus, "Qual orror," we find the following:—

This passage is continued for some time. In the first place the voices are obliged to hold upon the note B, while the basses in the orchestra, in a *legato* passage, come upon the A# immediately below, an intolerable clashing of sounds, hardly possible indeed to be accomplished, for the voices must be pulled down by the instruments to the semitone below. And there is, further, the crude combination of the A# with the chord B, D#, F#, and Ab. We will venture to say, that nothing approaching to such passages as the above are to be found in the whole works of Mozart, though they are frequent in those of Rossini; and they could only be tolerated by a person whose delicacy of ear has been blunted by the stunning noise of a modern orchestra.

For instances of exaggerated musical language we may

take the duet, "*Vorrei che il tuo pensiero*," between Desdemona and Emilia, which occurs almost at the beginning of the opera, and is wholly unimpassioned. It consists of some quiet, moralizing reflections, which ought to have been conveyed in music as calm as the words. But the former exhibits chords and modulations so gloomy, that a person unacquainted with the language, and hearing the music for the first time, would imagine that Desdemona and her confidante had already reached the acmé of tragic distress. The duet is in G; and immediately after the smooth melody with which it commences, it breaks into the following portentous modulation, in which the transition in the voice parts is rendered still more remarkable by the repetition of the gloomy chord of the extreme sharp sixth in the accompaniments:

\* See our review of this opera, in the first volume of the *Harmonicon*, First Series, page 82; where we have inserted and reprobated the passage now quoted by our correspondent.—EDITOR.



It is no justification of this passage to say, that it contains the words "languente" and "dolor." Where the whole tone of the poetry is calm reflection, or remark, (as is the case here,) it is puerile to make the music express languor or grief, because these words happen to be introduced.

Towards the end of the same duett the music breaks out

into another most extraneous modulation, and goes on for a short time in a manner that might have suited the language of despair, but which, as the mere repetition of a reflection made in the utmost tranquillity of mind, is absolutely unmeaning. The passage is somewhat long, yet we quote it as a striking instance of the fault we are endeavouring to exemplify.

The nuptial hymn, "*Santo Imen*," is expressive throughout of happiness; yet, in one part, where the tide of joy is at the full, the music breaks into a passage which is as startling as any thing in *Don Giovanni*. It is exactly one of that kind which Mozart introduced on some sudden and appalling interruption of the business of the scene.

The consequence of employing this powerful language so often, without necessity, is, that when it is really called for, the composer must either be content with what he

had used on common occasions, or he must endeavour to heighten it still further by rugged intervals and noisy accompaniments. The opera in question contains many passages which, in themselves, are beautiful and expressive, and modulations calculated to produce grand and striking effects. But these passages want the relief which would have been afforded had not the general colouring of the piece been so high. In some of his other operas this is still more remarkably the case, as in *Semiramide*, in many respects a magnificent work, but where chromatic



chords and crowded accompaniments hardly ever leave the ear in repose.

Even the admirable Weber has, it appears to us, yielded in some degree to the taste of the modern school. This, of course, will not be admitted by those whose veneration for him is boundless. But, as he has carried his love of the chromatic and enharmonic much farther than Mozart, it must be admitted, either that he has gone too far in this respect, or that Mozart has not gone far enough. Our perusal of *Euryanthe*, we confess, was attended with more admiration than pleasure. The voice parts, without having the brilliant difficulties of the Rossinian school, have difficulties of another and much less effective description—those arising from all sorts of crabbed and *unsingable* intervals; and the harmony is so incessantly full, that a few simple progressions of common chords, in the old Italian style, would be welcome as “cold waters to the thirsty soul.” In the *Freischütz*, Weber was in his element, and certainly spoke the language of fiends, earthly and unearthly, as it was never spoken before. In *Oberon* there are marks of an imagination chastened by a more mature judgment; and this his last work is immeasurably superior to any of his former ones. The

subject of *Oberon*, besides, was congenial to Weber—affording ample room for those wild flights so peculiarly his own. But even in this splendid work some indications of a love for ultra-modulation and harmony may be found, and some passages in which a greater-attention to the purity of Italian melody would have been of advantage. As the subject admits, generally, of very high colouring, it is in the lighter parts chiefly that any instances of exaggeration in this respect are to be found; and the two following are sufficiently remarkable:—

In the duet between Fatima and Sherasmin, “On the banks of sweet Garonne,” which is wound up in a style of the utmost gaiety, with the words,

“Let’s be merry as we’re true,  
Love our song, and joy the chorus,  
Dig and delve, and bill and coo,  
As Eve and Adam did before us,”—

in the middle of a most joyous repetition of these words, there occurs the following transition, which would have been very appropriate had “a change come o’er the spirit” of the song, and had the singers been suddenly affected by some melancholy sentiment. The duet is in c major.—

Dig and delve, and bill and coo, dig and delve, and bill and coo, As

Eve and Adam did be-fore us, did be-fore us, did be-fore us.

This, in its proper place, would be very good music; but, taken in connexion with all that precedes and follows it, and with the general spirit and sentiment of the duet, it is a complete *contresens*.

A similar *contresens* occurs in one of the most enchanting things in the whole opera—the scene where the evil spirits endeavour to seduce Huon by their blandishments. The airy and graceful chorus, ever and anon broken in



upon by the indignant accents of Huon, is most admirable. But, in the middle of this chorus (which, it must be observed, preserves its gaiety of character to the very last) there is a modulation of deep gloom which is not sanctioned by any thing either in the words,

“ For thee hath beauty deck'd her bower,  
For thee the cup of joy is fill'd,”

or in the situation.



It might have been imagined, that the evil spirits, finding themselves baffled, would have continued their chorus—though with a change of tone, unveiling their design and its disappointment; producing an effect somewhat like that of the national air of *Malbrouk*, in Beethoven's "Battle of Vittoria," played first in a bold and martial style, as expressing the courage and high spirits of the French troops, and then in a minor key, and with wild harmony, as expressive of their defeat and sadness. But, had such an effect been intended, the change of character must have gone on to the end; whereas, after the passage in question, the original key is restored, and the chorus ends as gaily as it began—evincing that here the composer had no *design* beyond that of exhibiting an ingenious piece of modulation.

The consequence of the greatest composers of the day having sanctioned this style of composition is, that the inferior writers (who always find it easier to copy the faults than the beauties of their models) have *improved* upon it immensely; so that the present vocal school may be said to be made up of a combination of the faults of Rossini and Weber—of garish, florid, *instrumental* melody, full of sudden modulations and chromatic intervals, and accompanied by crowded harmony, and all the noise that the orchestra is capable of producing. Every composer who has any learning thinks it necessary to bestow it on the most trifling ballad; and those who have it not (the most common case) shew their want of it by heaping together all sorts of disallowances and blunders. The result of the whole is, that we have fed so long on *ragouts*, *curries*, and *devils*, that our palate has lost its natural sensibility, and can find no savour in the plain and wholesome food of our forefathers.

Shall we go on, requiring stronger and stronger *stimuli*, or shall we return to a taste for simplicity? The latter will probably be the case. Rossini's orchestras have carried the stimulus of loud and piercing sounds as far as it can well be carried; singers have been compelled to

strain their throats to the utmost possible extent; learned harmony and modulation have been lavished upon every sort of subject, till all gradations of musical colouring have disappeared. In this situation we cannot long remain stationary—and if we cannot go forward, we must go back. Weber's *Oberon*, as compared with some of his own earlier works, is a return to simplicity. Within this very short time, the monopoly gained by Rossini has become less exclusive, and the Italians have taken from the shelf a few of their favourites of former days. Some of Cimarosa's operas (in particular) have been revived; and the audiences of Milan and Florence, who had not heard them for many years, have hailed them with acclamations of delight. The works of Mozart are beginning to be more frequently performed in Germany. Handel, who formerly was hardly known out of England, is now becoming popular in the same country, where his oratorios are frequently produced on a magnificent scale. They are even making their way in France, where, in the course of some dozen of years, it is probable that his best compositions will be well known. All these are strong symptoms of a tendency to return to the love of chaste and simple music; and if that love is once revived, how absurd will the present taste appear! As absurd as the taste for hoops and *toupées*, since our ladies have accustomed us to the natural elegance of the Grecian costume.

Much will depend on the taste and judgment of those to whom the education of our young musicians is intrusted. And we cannot help saying, that it would give us much more pleasure to learn that the pupils of the Royal Academy of Music were deeply engaged in studying the works of the great contrapuntists—of Cimarosa, and of Mozart,—than that they were able to draw together fashionable audiences by performing the *Barbiere de Siviglia* or *L'Inganno Felice*.

G. H.

Edinburgh, January, 1829.



DEATH AND FUNERAL OBSEQUIES OF  
GOSSEC.

THE Nestor of musicians, the founder of the modern French school, the venerable Gossec, died on the 16th of February last, at the very advanced age of ninety-six. He was a remarkable example of what industry and native energy of mind are able to effect. Though the son of a humble labourer, deprived of all the advantages of fortune and the assistance of masters, he not only succeeded in educating himself, but in making that progress in pure and classical knowledge, to which everything around him seemed to present such insurmountable obstacles. Placed in the midst of a school of musicians, imbued with prejudices the most inveterate and the most destructive to the true interests of the art, he was so fortunate as to escape their contagion, and to lay the foundation of that school, which has since attained to such eminence. The study of classical models, and that kind of *presentiment* of science which genius is sometimes permitted to possess, led him to anticipate the period when that science has acquired a greater degree of organization and consistency. Afterwards, when circumstances arose to second his wishes and his efforts, he was seen struggling against the weight of years, and lavishing upon studious youth those instructions for which he was self-indebted, and which were the fruit of incessant labour.

The contemporary of Rameau and of Rossini, how many and what extraordinary revolutions had not Gossec witnessed in his art! The good man was the idol of the amateurs of the time of Madame de Pompadour, and had even then been successful in almost every kind of composition. A predecessor of Haydn, he had long heard himself distinguished by the flattering appellation of *le Roi de la Symphonie*. Three or four very successful works had placed him at the head of the composers of sacred music, and he had the honour of being crowned in the theatre. Could such a man be induced with ease to renounce his glories? He continued to enjoy them to the last, but with modesty, and without envying the fame of younger and perhaps more successful artists. He saw Grétry, Méhul, Cherubini, Nicolo, Boieldieu, Berton, Lesueur, in fine, Rossini himself, successively rise into renown without ceasing to admire them as artists and esteem them as friends. When he beheld certain composers armed in fierce rivalry against their fellow-artists, he was content calmly to look on, and exclaim, "Well, be it as it will, I have had my day."

For the last three or four years he resided in a state of comfortable independency in the village of Passy, where he breathed his last with all the tranquillity of a child who sinks to rest. All Paris remembers the venerable composer, bent beneath the weight of years, quitting his lodgings precisely at five, to repair to his favourite resort, the *Théâtre Feydeau*. He always halted half way, at the *Café des Variétés*; and after taking his favourite beverage, resumed his course, and was to be found, immediately after the opening of the doors, in his favourite corner to the left of the pit. Like a veteran, he continued faithful to the last to the post of his early glories.

Though Gossec had for some years ceased to live in the midst of his brother artists, he had left in their minds a lively recollection of his many services and useful labours, as well as a personal esteem which remained undiminished. Hence, notwithstanding the distance to the village of Passy, a great number of artists repaired thither to render him their last homage. A deputation from the

*Academie Royale des Beaux-Arts*, the professors and pupils of the *Ecole Royale de Musique*, several musicians of the King's Chapel, of the Opera, and of many of the other theatres, as well as a number of amateurs, met there, at an early hour of the day. At twelve, the procession moved towards the church, where several pieces of music of this master's composition were performed in an impressive manner by the numerous musicians present. Among other compositions, we particularly noticed a *Pie Jesu*, written by M. Panseron for this mournful occasion, and which was remarkable both for the beauty of its harmony, and the purity of its style.

After these religious ceremonies were concluded, the procession directed its course towards Paris. On reaching the cemetery of Père la Chaise, where a place is destined for a monument to the composer, M. Fétis, the celebrated composer, and editor of the excellent *Revue Musicale*, pronounced the following discourse.

"Gentlemen, Plato has said 'that a long life granted by the gods is the recompense of the honest man.' If this remark is not always found to hold good—if talents, united to virtue, frequently yield their produce in the spring-time of life; yet the observation of the sage of Athens can with justice be applied to the venerable artist whose tomb is now before our eyes. Gentlemen, are we not all prepared to render this tribute to Gossec—to declare that he is the honest man of whom Plato spoke? But if our voices speak not, there is one which will not fail to pronounce the tribute due; it is the voice of that long period of glory, which to this artist had already become a kind of posterity. He is indeed an artist entitled to our veneration. Born beneath the humble roof of poverty, he raised himself by degrees to a rank in social life, the most honourable and distinguished; and, what is more, he raised himself to that position by the single energy of unaided talent. He is surely entitled to be called an honest man, who, without ambition, without intrigue, without depressing the interests of others to build up his own, has pursued the path of honourable exertion; who has passed two generations without encountering a single enemy; and who has measured his strength with a host of competitors, without finding a single rival. And such was Gossec, such was the artist, to render the last homage to whose memory we are now assembled in this spot of melancholy yet ennobling associations.

"It is for us, above all others, to testify our gratitude to this Nestor of musicians; we, who have been educated in the school of which he laid the first foundations, and who are, more or less, indebted to him for the knowledge we possess. For it must not be forgotten, that Gossec was born in a country, and at a period, when the study of his art had taken a false direction, and that it was by mere natural strength of mind, and by soundness of judgment, that he escaped the prevailing system, and led the way to sounder doctrines, both by precept and example. He perceived what was wanting in France to place her at the head of musical civilization; and his constant efforts were directed to supply that deficiency, and obtain for her that preponderance. This became the ruling passion of his heart, which, joined to that love of exertion which had animated him from his earliest years, and that kindness of disposition which prompted him to aid the efforts of youth, made him forget the approach of age, and the inconveniences by which it is attended. Far from seeking that repose which nature seemed to demand, he was seen, to the last, dealing forth to his pupils that instruction of



which he had himself so sensibly felt the necessity, and devoting to the interest of his art the relics of his expiring energy, and the close of a long and honourable existence.

“ Yes, in raising my voice over the grave of this venerable artist, in order to proclaim his benefits and our gratitude, I obey the twofold call of duty and affection; and though the feeble tribute of my praise can add nothing to his glory, it may not be uncondusive to our own. This let posterity know, that in descending into the tomb, Gossec left not behind him ungrateful hearts in those for whom he had prepared the way to eminence and renown.”

By the death of Gossec, a place is left vacant in the Institute (the *Section des Beaux-Arts.*) Among the names of the aspirants to the honour of filling it, that of M. Auber stands first in the list: his competitors are Messrs. Hérold, Reicha, and Fétis.

N. B. For a further account of this distinguished composer, the reader is referred to the Memoir of Gossec, in the first volume of the new series of the *Harmonicon*, page 145.

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## ON THE CHARACTER OF KEYS.

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To the EDITOR of the HARMONICON.

SIR,

London, February 10th, 1829.

IN your last number [*for February*] I find some remarks by J. S. on the opinion I offered concerning the character of keys; I beg leave, therefore, to say a few more words in defence of my theory, as I still think this to be attributable only to temperament.

J. S. believes *pitch* to be one cause. In answer to which I would observe, that concert-pitch is about a semitone higher than it was fifty years ago. If then, any specific quality once naturally belonged to certain sounds, that quality must still exist; consequently, the keys which formerly had sharps for the signature, though now having flats, ought still to be brilliant; and those which had flats, though now having sharps, should be the reverse. But on the contrary, the nominal scales used to express emotions of love, sorrow, &c., by the old authors, are the same as those employed for a similar purpose now; though it is not probable that much attention was paid to temperament formerly; and even in the present day it is too much neglected.

Not only has every apartment or enclosed space its peculiar note, but each solid substance is in accordance with some particular key, or we should not hear small articles of furniture in a room rattle or vibrate, when certain sounds are produced. The same vibration takes place, but in a slighter degree, when the 3rd and 5th of that key is struck. Every note has a sympathetic connexion with its 12th and 17th, and it is not possible to produce a more beautiful combination of sounds, than that of the key-note, the 5th and 10th.

The extracts from Dr. Arnott do not shew that a sound is flattened by reflection from any particular surface. One surface may have the power of softening the harshness of sounds more than another; but the same difference in character will exist between the keys of  $\epsilon b$  and  $\epsilon \sharp$ , whether heard in a square or circular apartment, or in the open air\*.

On the horn and trumpet, the 3rd and 5th are perfect, but all the other notes of the scale are imperfect. The imperfection is remedied by the slide. Sufficient attention is seldom paid to the character of the key by performers on the horn and trumpet, by which neglect they are not always strictly in tune with the rest of the orchestra.

As to the clarinet, the scale for boring that instrument is graduated upon the same principle as for the flute, &c. The variety of clarinets is only to facilitate execution; for when a piece is composed in the key of  $\epsilon b$ , it is beyond comparison easier on a  $b b$  clarinet, the same music being written in  $F$ , than it would be to play in the original key upon a  $c$  clarinet. When a composition is in  $\epsilon$ , the playing upon an  $A$  clarinet, the music being transposed into  $G$ , is attended with equal convenience.

The Æolian harp cannot be classed among the useful instruments; and other harps are, or ought to be, tuned upon the same principle as the piano-forte.

The last observation of J. S. refers to the human voice. The wonderful flexibility of the organ giving it a power to produce the slightest variation of sound, of course enables it to render every interval perfect; but whether they are really made so, entirely depends on the ear of the singer; for an imperfection amounting to one-eighth of a note is no more felt by an uncultivated ear, than are a dozen consecutive fifths in succession. All singers receive their instruction at a keyed instrument; and though they may occasionally practise without one, yet continued reference is made to it, for the purpose of ascertaining whether voice and instrument agree. Thus, the mind becomes mechanically, though insensibly impressed with the peculiar nature of each key; for the question, why such peculiarity should exist, does not occur to one singer in a hundred; but none expects to see a flourishing bravura in four flats, though as easy for the voice to execute in that key as in any other. When the key is once seen, its character is immediately felt by the performer, almost by instinct, and the voice is at once adapted to its peculiar character.

I agree with J. S., that were a number of glees performed without accompaniment, the perfection of the intervals would be much the same in one key as another; a monotony would in time be felt, and much effect would be lost. Singing without accompaniment is rare by comparison, and scarcely any vocal composition can be properly expressed if unaccompanied.

I am, Sir, &c.

T. S. R.

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\* Bacon, in his *Sylva Sylvarum*, or *Naturall Historie*, makes some very ingenious and original remarks on musical sounds, though little was thought of temperament in his day.



## Review of Music.

### PIANO-FORTE.

1. **NOTTURNO**, with an Accompaniment for the Violoncello or French Horn, *ad libitum*, composed by F. KALKBRENNER. Op. 95. (Chappell, 135, New Bond Street.)
2. **Les Coquettes, QUADRILLES DE CONTREDANSES brillantes et variées, with a GRAND WALTZ**, composed by HENRI HERZ, *Pianiste de la Chambre du Roi*. Op. 49. (Goulding and D'Almaine, 20, Soho Square.)
3. **SWISS AIR, with brilliant Variations**, composed by J. L. VON BÖHNER. (Pettet, 154, Oxford Street.)

THE prevalent style of piano-forte music—we allude to the foreign chiefly—is not calculated to confer immortality on it, assuredly. In most of the compositions of this class which have appeared during the last six or eight years, there is a manifest want of that clearness of design, that sentiment and grace, which so distinctly mark the true school, and in lieu of these high and permanently-pleasing qualities, we have too often a confused subject, if any at all; a skittishness, mistaken for gaiety, and a succession of ineffective difficulties, miscalled brilliancy; plainly indicating either an inferiority of talent in the composers, or a degeneracy of taste in those whom all artists, generally speaking, must strive to conciliate, however great the sacrifice of future fame;—

“For those who please to live, must live to please.”

These remarks apply in a certain degree to the style of the first and third of the above publications. Mr. Kalkbrenner was bred in a good school, and most of his compositions shew, some more some less, his acquaintance with the best models, ancient as well as modern, but his powers of execution run away with his judgment more frequently than his warmest admirers can approve, and lead him to mix up with compositions otherwise likely to support his reputation, passages which will consign them to early oblivion. The **NOTTURNO** before us is an instance of this. The first movement, an *Andante*, equally divided between the keys of F minor and major, displays the master, and possesses great merit. The thema which follows has to boast of much originality, and in this, as well as in the three variations on it, are very effective passages, requiring rapid execution, it is true, but producing effects that offer something like an equivalent for the cost of labour. Unfortunately, however, there are extravagancies blended with these that have no relation to the general design, are immensely difficult, and yield no effect. Even in the mode of notation it seems to have been M. Kalkbrenner's study to evade the facility offered him, as the following two bars from p. 7 will evince:—



How much more easy, how much more rational, and how almost precisely the same as to effect would this passage be, if written thus,—



but then there would be no display of agility; no rivalling of the conjurer's quickness,—of his slight-of-hand. In a word, there would be no quackery, and no exclamations from the *spectators*, (we will not say *audience*) of “what a surprising player!”—“wonderful execution!” &c. No—not one of those epithets which people are so prone to use when they suppose they ought to admire, and therefore think it will prove their judgment to applaud, would be heard. The succeeding variation, however, has enough in the first half of it to redeem many of the little sinnings against reason that surround it. Something like imitation appears here, and the subjoined harmony, which shews what the author is capable of, makes us forget his vagaries.





The accompaniment to this is easy enough for the violoncello; not so for the horn. The one will not require a Lindley; but none inferior to a Puzzi or a Platt will be equal to the other.

The QUADRILLES of M. Herz, if really meant as dances, are infinitely too good for the purpose: they ought rather to be viewed as a collection of elegant, attractive rondos, the subjects original, and these diversified in not only a tasteful but a very superior manner. This work is not intended for indifferent performers, it will require a neat, expert player, with a hand of some power, to do the compositions justice. But the pieces are short, two of them being contained in two pages, and four in four, therefore not likely to put the practitioner's patience to any severe test; and being also in the most modern style, of which they are favourable specimens, they will serve to initiate those who are yet strangers to it, in an agreeable manner. We have before alluded to M. Herz's prodigal use of Italian terms. Though we should be very glad to see the musical vocabulary reformed, yet we have no desire that it should be enlarged by any unnecessary additions. But if improvements, or changes of any kind in the art, render necessary the introduction of new words, let these, at least, be correct, be grammatical.

The introduction to No. 3, an andante in *eb*, is by far the best part of the work, and we most willingly bestow that commendation on it which is the meed of true musical expression and delicacy of taste; but we cannot extend our praise to the thema, though a Swiss air we are told, and therefore very fashionable just now, for it is cold and meagre, faults which will be much aggravated if the air is played so quick as *allegretto assai* and three-eight time imply. The subject acknowledges its poverty at the very onset:—



The octaves and concealed fifths here generated by similar motion, are as offensive to the ear as hostile to rule: or—for we wish to be clearly understood on this point—they are ungrammatical because painful.

The variations are spirited, though not uncommon; but the ninth is of a higher order, and there is some cleverness in the last, or the finale.

1. CAPRICCIO, composed by J. N. HUMMEL. (Monzani and Hill, 28, Regent Street.)
2. A FOURTH GRAND FANTASIA, in which is introduced the Scotch Air, Little Fanny's love, composed by CHARLES NEATE. Op. 17. (Cramer, Addison, and Beale, 201, Regent Street.)
3. CAPRICCIO on a German Air, composed by the same. Op. 18. (Cocks and Co., Princes Street.)

THE Capriccio of M. Hummel is one of the few musical publications of the day that will survive the present age and be transmitted to posterity. It is formed of solid materials, and fashioned in such good taste,—a taste arising out of an intimate acquaintance with the best composers of all times and countries,—that, though it may not at once become *the rage*, it will soon attract the notice of all true lovers of piano-forte music, and never be *passée* in the opinion of such persons.

After four bars of *entrata*, an expressive adagio begins thus:—



This passes into an *Allegro agitato*, a very original movement, commencing in the following spirited manner:—





This subject is worked in a masterly way, and leads into an agreeable air, *allegretto scherzando*, not unlike Caraffa's "aure felici":—



After much ingenious modulation, the adagio in F recurs, and then the *allegro agitato*, now in the major key, concludes the piece, which, for sweet melody, and clever contrivance devoid of pedantry, has not often been equalled.

Mr. Neate's FANTASIA shews that it has occupied a considerable quantity of time and cost no little labour. Parts of it are ingenious, but as a whole it is rather dry, and too much in imitation of that ultra-German school which we mentioned in no very laudatory terms in our last page. As to the three black leaves of *tremando*, the swarm of semidemisemiquavers at pages 9, 10, and 11, we really cannot consider them as constituting a legitimate variation on so sprightly an air as "Little Fanny's love," they are more fit to express the hate of a Shylock. This, however, we would have endeavoured to pass over, had they been effective in themselves, but the fact is, that they make a vast bustle without any proportionate result.

Steibelt, whom Mr. N. has had in view, succeeded *à merveille* in such passages; but Steibelt was, in his way, a giant.

We very much prefer Mr. Neate's CAPRICCIO to his Fantasia; it has more design, more air, is written in better taste, and altogether smells less of the lamp; though there are many passages in it that are less the product of genius than of persevering industry. The opening movement in a minor, is good; it seems to have flowed naturally; and the German air in a major, is pleasing. The last movement too, beginning at the *vivace*, is animated, but towards the conclusion betrays more of hard work than of invention.

1. "O give me back my Arab steed," a ballad, arranged with an Introduction, by T. A. RAWLINGS. (Chappell.)
2. ANDANTE AND RONDO, from ROSSINI'S Semiramide, arranged by AUG. MEVES. (Same publisher.)
3. "Hey the bonnie breast-knots," the air composed and sung by Mr. Sinclair, arranged, with an Introduction and Variations, by P. KNAPTON. (Mori and Lavenu.)
4. WEBER'S Cradle song, arranged with an Introduction and Variations, by A. C. WHITCOMBE. (Paine and Hopkins, Cornhill.)

ALL the above are in a very familiar style, and three out of the four are more distinguished by negative than positive merits. They are studiously easy, just the sort of music that is calculated for present sale, and for circulation in boarding-schools, where novelty is in great request.

No. 1 is an air ascribed by Mr. Rawlings to the name of Hodson; but he will find it in Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, if he will turn to the finale of the second act. Mr. R. has made rather a shewy piece of it.

No. 2 is the fine chorus "Giuro ai numi," from *Semiramide*, as the andante, and an air, the title of which we do not at this moment recollect, from the same opera, as a quick movement. Of the first it is needless to speak in praise; Mr. Meves has given it in the notes of the composer, and followed it by a few appropriate additions of his own. The second movement is not so striking as the first; and both together only make five pages.

The subject of No. 3 no doubt is Mr. Sinclair's, as he claims it, but it is very like the Scotch air, "And are ye sure the news is true?" Mr. Knapton has arranged it in a very skilful, happy manner: his merit in this case is positive. The introduction to it is brilliant, without being difficult; and, as a bagatelle, the whole does him much credit.

The introduction to No. 4 is the best part of it. We presume that the two last chords in the sixth bar of this should be, not Eb, A, C, but Ab, C, F; and we recommend the omission of the G and F in the two base chords in the following bar, to prevent octaves of a faulty kind with the upper part.

1. "Cruda sorte," the trio from ROSSINI'S Ricciardo e Zoraide, arranged, with an Accompaniment for the Flute (ad libitum), by J. C. NIGHTINGALE. (Longman and Bates, Ludgate Hill.)
2. DIVERTIMENTO on airs sung by Madlle. Sontag in WEIGL'S opera, The Swiss Family, arranged by T. VALENTINE. (Chappell.)



3. "My lodging is on the cold ground," arranged with Variations, by the same. (Pettet.)
4. "La bella Brunetta," a Venetian melody, arranged with Variations, by the same. (Same publisher.)

No. 1 is little more than a transcript from the German vocal score of the opera: the share which Mr. Nightingale has had in the publication is, as was to be expected, quite unexceptionable.

No. 2 is brief and easy. We do not trace the airs arranged, but they are well adapted to the instrument, and to those who are unwilling to encounter musical difficulties of any kind.

No. 3 is the air so admirably arranged as a rondo by Dussek, who felt the beauty of the melody, and had too much taste to pervert it. We have now a variation *marziale*, and another *allegretto e leggiro*, with Alberti bases in demisemiquavers, runs of semitones, and other flights of fancy. It is transposed also from F, the original key, to A.

In No. 4 we likewise find a *marziale*, and more of the Alberti base. One variation, however, the fourth, has something like novelty in it, and the whole is short, and perfectly free from difficulty of any kind.

1. "One hour with thee," an Air sung by Mr. H. Phillips, composed and arranged, with an Introduction and March, by WILLIAM CARNABY, Mus. Doc. (Willis and Co., Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly.)
2. AN INTRODUCTION and RONDO, composed by SUSANNAH COLLIER, late student at the Royal Academy of Music. (Welsh, 246, Regent Street.)
3. "Adeste fideles," with Variations, composed by JOSEPH F. REDDIE. (Longman and Bates.)
4. A second set of three WALTZES, in imitation of a musical snuff-box, composed by A. T. MACDONALD. (Goulding and D'Almaine.)

No. 1 is an admired song, but this is no reason why it must necessarily make a favourite divertimento. In fact it is not at all calculated for adaptation, which the puerile, obsolete base,



and the namby-pamby triplets prove beyond contradiction; for would Dr. C. have had recourse to these if anything better had been left open to him? The march, too, how out of character! unless the "One hour with thee" is addressed to a drill-serjeant.

There is a certain degree of prettiness in the light subject of No. 2, but the composer has not been so successful in this as in her vocal work noticed in our last.

That the Portuguese hymn is a beautiful melody and incapable of amendment, will be allowed by most people, yet Mr. Reddie has undertaken the task of altering it. How well qualified he is for so bold an undertaking, the taste of his additions to the following few bars of the air will shew. Our extract is made note for note, turn for turn, shake for shake. If it does not make our readers turn up their eyes and shake their sides, we shall be surprised.



All this, too, the double turn included, is to be played with one hand. The first variation is also in two-four time, is marked *allegretto*, therefore tolerably quick, and yet is full of *semidemisemiquavers*. Good Heavens!—a racing hymn! But perhaps the author meant the whole as a joke, and may plead in excuse, that the Portuguese composition itself was intended for Adam's race.

No. 4 has pleased us no less than the former set by the same. Played very softly, with the open pedal, it will be difficult to distinguish these, when heard on the piano-forte, from the best musical boxes.

### DUETS, PIANO-FORTE.

1. GRAND RONDO, à la Polonaise, composed, arranged, and dedicated to HIS MAJESTY THE KING of PRUSSIA, by I. MOSCHELES. (Chappell.)
2. DIVERTIMENTO, La Rencontre de la Sontag' et de Velluti, on the duet "Il tenèro affetto," by PIO CIANCHETTINI. Op. 18. (Mori and Lavenu.)
3. RONDO on "Più lieta, più bella" in ROSSINI's Elizabetha, composed by F. HUNTEN. (Cocks and Co.)
4. TYROLIAN AIR, with Variations, composed and published by the same.
5. The Plough-boy, DUSSEK's RONDO, arranged by GEORGE PERRY. (Pettet.)

THE GRAND RONDO by M. Moscheles is, we may venture to assert, the result of much study, and will exact infinitely more from those who may have the courage to undertake the upper part of it. This is an exceedingly clever composition; there is an abundance of air in it,—but of the frolicsome, polacca kind,—and of very masterly modulation. Many of the effects are quite original, and it is impossible either to play or listen to it without feeling highly exhilarated by the gaiety of the style, which never abates for a single moment, though the duet extends to twenty-nine close pages. In the midst of our admiration of a work in which so much skill is exhibited, we could not help regretting the introduction of a hideous descending passage of semitones, for which not the slightest apology is to be made, for M. Moscheles ought to set a good example, not follow a bad one. He may regulate the public taste, therefore should not suffer his own to be influenced by the unaccountable freaks of a few of his wild countrymen, which are often imitated here by both players and singers, but particularly the latter, and these chiefly, if not entirely, of the Italian party.

No. 2 is Meyerbeer's beautiful duet in *Il Crociato in Egitto*, including, "Da questo istante," making a slow and a quick movement. The original is in E, and Mr. Cianchettini has transposed it into F, by which he has certainly rendered it more easy, thereby attaining a great object for players in general, and securing a wider circulation of his duet: but the effect suffers from the change. This it is our duty to state, though in such a case we should have deemed it prudent to adopt exactly the same measure. We wish that he had also changed the time from three-eight to three-four, and converted the notes into others of twice their *apparent* length. This would still further have diminished the difficulty to the performer, without altering in the least the effect; for the words *Larghetto non troppo lento* would



have brought it to exactly what it is in its original form. Mr. C. has of course introduced all the ornaments of the Signor and the *Fraulein*, he has also augmented the whole by his own additions, which do not depart from the character of the vocal composition.

No. 3 is a good arrangement of an air that has, on the continent, been much overrated. M. Hünten has extended it by some florid passages, which make the part of the first performer not very easy to execute.

The Tyrolian air, No. 4, is not that which is so well known in this country, but a very inferior one, and possessing none of the characteristics, except the measure, of the melodies of the Tyrol. The seven variations on it are arranged in a brilliant, but not remarkably taking, manner; there is too much of the modern tinsel in them to please the admirers of sterling music; but they will not appear wholly destitute of merit in the eyes of those whose taste varies with the fashion of their dress.

The popular air of Shield, *The Ploughboy*, was converted into an excellent rondo by Dussek, and formed part of one of his early and most admired concertos. At the public concerts and oratorios he performed it incessantly, and those who could master it—for it was then considered fit only for first-rate players—were expected to produce it in all private parties. Thus it was heard *usque ad nauseam*; consequently soon became vulgar, and then was laid on the shelf. Mr. Perry has taken it down, but in arranging it as a duet has not brought much more effect out of it than it yielded in its native state. It is not, in fact, the kind of composition that requires four hands; there is very little full harmony in it, the air is everything, and the accompaniments are thin. Nevertheless, we are always glad to see a good thing rescued from obscurity, and this is certainly not less agreeable in the shape of a duet than in its original form.

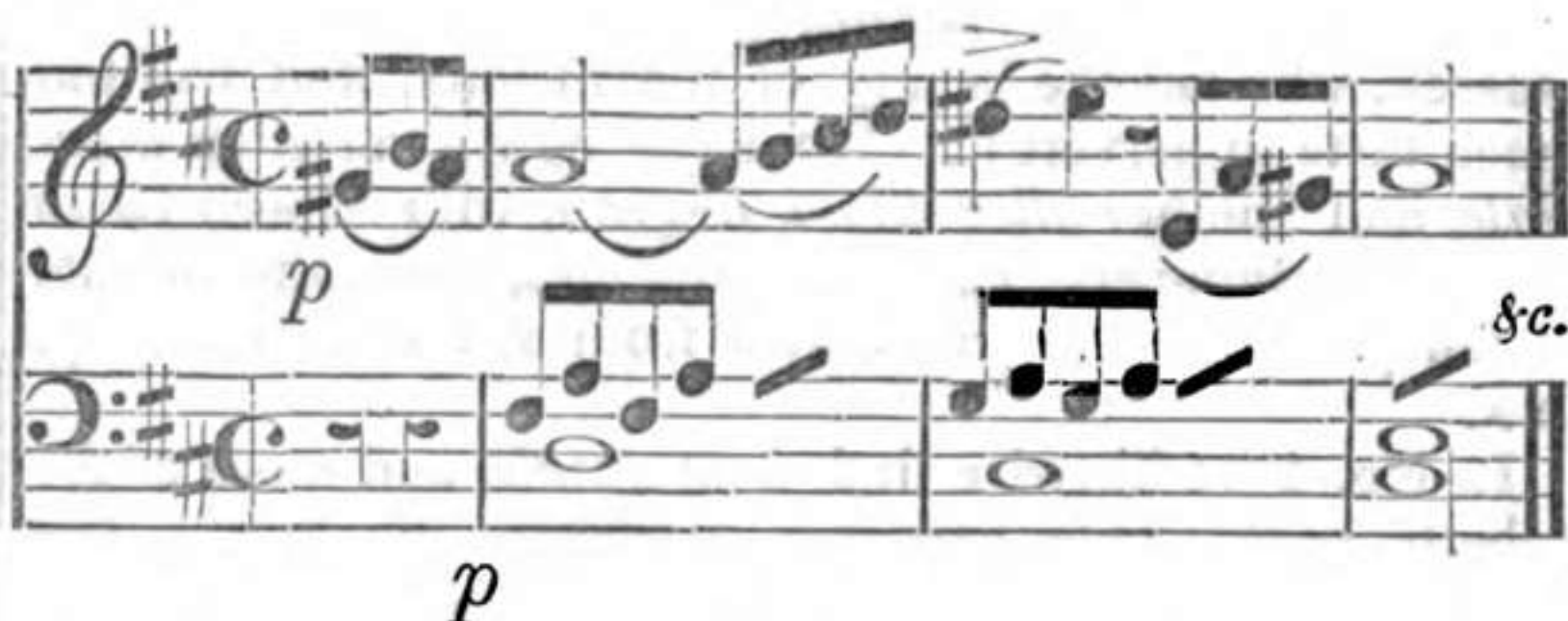
A. ROMBERG'S GRAND SYMPHONIES arranged, with accompaniments for FLUTE, VIOLIN, and VIOLONCELLO, by J. N. HUMMEL, &c. &c. &c. No. 1. (For the Proprietor, by Chappell.)

To the same gentleman who has for some time past been engaged in printing at his individual risk the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven, and has just commenced a series of the best overtures by the celebrated masters, all arranged for him by Hummel, the public are indebted for the present publication, which will, it is to be presumed, be followed by one or two more by the same, and assist in forming a complete collection of the symphonies esteemed as musical classics. It is executed on the same plan as those of the former that have already been noticed by us, and in point of adaptation is in no way inferior to them; though we do not pretend to place its author on a level with either of those great men: as a symphonist he stands in the next degree, and may be ranked with Clementi, Spöhr, and Ries.

This work is in D, the opening adagio commencing thus,



and the quick movement opens in the following manner:—



The minuet and trio, also in D, are very spirited, and quite à la Haydn, for neither of the Rombergs can be said to have a style of their own, though there is an abundance of original ideas to be found scattered among their works. The andante, in G, is an elegant movement, and may be taken as a favourable specimen of the author. The finale is bold and energetic, and is kept up with increasing spirit to the conclusion.

1. THE FAVOURITE AIRS in PACINI'S Opera, *L'Ultimo giorno di Pompei*, arranged by A. DIABELLI. Book I. (Boosey and Co.)
2. THE OVERTURE to *La Cenerentola*, with an accompaniment for the FLUTE (*ad lib.*) by GIOACCHINO ROSSINI.

PACINI'S opera, *The last day of Pompeii*, succeeded at Naples and at Vienna; but we by no means offer this as any proof of its intrinsic merit, for the taste in both those capitals is at a low ebb, the present composer, together with Mercadante, Pavesi, and such diluters of Rossini, being there in high esteem, and listened to while Mozart cannot obtain a hearing. In a despotic government, with an effeminate nobility, it will generally be found, that weak and slender music is most patronised and approved; for that which is the result of deep thought, and which to be understood requires some mental effort, suits not a spirit-depressing government and a drowsy aristocracy. Cicero, nearly two thousand years ago, was aware of this fact, and connects the decay of a state with the decline in its music.

It is not fair, perhaps, to judge of a work from a small part of it, and that part only a piano-forte adaptation, without words and without anything like an accompaniment. Our impression from what we here see of the opera is not a favourable one; but we must not be understood as giving any opinion on the subject at present.

The overture to *La Cenerentola* is well arranged, by a Mr. Bark we understand, though he has either thought it *infra dignitatem* to put his name to a mere adaptation, or is too modest to appear to claim any share in a work of which he is not the author.



**LADIES' THOROUGH BASS**, containing explanations of the INTERVALS, the KEYS, and their MODES, the RULE OF THE OCTAVE, with remarks on cadences, modulations, &c. &c.; also in the ACCOMPANIMENT of VOCAL MUSIC, and FIGURED BASSES, &c., with numerous EXAMPLES, by T. LATOUR. (Latour, 50, New Bond Street.)

THOROUGH-BASS, as it is called, is seldom really learnt, because, among other reasons, many of those who undertake to teach it, either are themselves in want of instruction on the subject; or, understanding it, have not the power to communicate their knowledge in an intelligible manner; or else are so pedantic and tedious, that the pupil abandons the pursuit in disgust and despair. The author of the present work seems to be well aware of the importance of this branch, or rather root, of the art, and very correctly says, that a knowledge of harmony facilitates the reading of music, particularly where many chords are written in succession, for these frequently embarrass even such as are naturally quick and have acquired the art of reading with ease notes in every other form.

By the very title given to his book, Mr. Latour announces that it is popularly written—meant for amateurs, or non-professors, and not for those who wish to become profound in harmony. Hence it is not the result of learned research and deep meditation, but of a practical knowledge of the less abstruse parts of what is commonly termed the science of music, set down in so familiar a manner that "ladies" may understand it, without any great exertion of intellect or expenditure of time. The reader will therefore infer, and correctly, that general utility has been the author's object; and we will add that his work is likely to prove useful, for, taken altogether, it is correct in principle and accurate in definition; though a few verbal amendments and more careful punctuation would render it still clearer to the youthful student.

But we beg leave to call Mr. Latour's attention to certain parts of his book to which he should give his attention in the next impression. At page 2 he calls the interval  $c\ b$  a fundamental seventh. He ought to have said,  $c\ b\flat$ . Page 5, the terms *cadence* and *coda* are considered as identical: but cadences occur continually in every portion of a composition; the coda never but at the end. We find the words tonic, dominant, &c., often used, but without perceiving that they are anywhere explained. Page 21, it is stated, that "the chord of the diminished seventh produces the real enharmonic change, but always in minor keys;" and this proposition is thus demonstrated:—



why should this not also modulate into  $B$  major? Add a sharp to all the  $D$ 's, and the error immediately becomes apparent. The author devotes page 17 to prove that the minor key has two relatives: a relative major in the 3rd above, which everybody admits, and another in the 3rd below, which nobody, we should think, will grant. Take  $A$  minor as an example. Its relative major is  $C$ , because neither key having any sharps or flats at the signature,

there is a strict relationship between them. But  $F$ , the 3rd below  $A$ , and according to our author another relative, has a  $B\flat$  in its signature, which creates an essential difference between those two keys. There is, we admit, only a change of one note in the chords of the two keys, as Mr. L. states;—



but such is the case in all keys so situated; for instance,  $c$  minor and  $A\flat$  major;  $F\sharp$  minor and  $D$  major; yet who would venture to call these relative keys? The question however is not of chords, but of scales: it is the scale, not the chord, that determines the key. The latter arises out of the former. It is from the kindred nature of the scales that the term relative originates.

Mr. L. tells us of several great masters who have used what he now for the first time calls the *second relative*. He might most truly have stated the same of every composer, great and small, from Palestrina to Pacini, but would thereby only have proved that they frequently followed the minor perfect chord by a major one a third below. He gains nothing therefore by this argument, unless he also shews that they considered such chords as belonging to relative keys, of which he can produce no evidence whatever. And even if he could, he would only have the sanction of their names in support of a demonstrable error.

We have entered at some length into this subject, from a wish to assist in simplifying music; and as one important step towards this, to reduce rather than increase the number of its terms. But though we differ from the author on some points, we find much to approve in his work, and again state, that it may be rendered highly serviceable to those for whom it is designed.

### VOCAL.

1. CANONE, "Me beato il ciel," for four voices, by Miss BELLCHAMBERS, pupil of the Royal Academy of Music. The words by PISTRUCCI. (Chappell.)
2. BALLAD, The Soldier's return, composed by MRS. PHILIP MILLARD. (Pettet.)
3. SERENADE, "Love, art thou waking or sleeping?" composed by JOHN THOMPSON, Esq. (Edinburgh, Paterson, Roy, &c.)
4. SONG, The Arab to his steed, written by W. KENNEDY, Esq., composed by JOHN THOMPSON, Esq. (Same publishers.)
5. BALLAD, Love and young Romance, composed in the Scottish style, by J. BLEWITT. (Chappell.)
6. SONG, "Vain are music's soothing sounds," composed and published by the same.
7. SONG, "Know ye the land," the words by LORD BYRON, composed by ALFRED BENNET, Mus. Bac. (Same publisher.)
8. SONG, A heart for sale, composed by S. HENSHALL of Liverpool. (Boosey and Co.)
9. SONG, "Why does my mother say, Beware," composed and published by the same.



10. BALLAD, "I saw thee weep," written by LORD BYRON, composed by G. A. HODSON. (Same publisher.)
11. BALLAD, "O lady, weep not o'er my bier!" composed by J. BLOCKLEY. (Cramer and Co.)
12. SONG, The little baby's dance, composed by J. GREEN. (Green, Soho Square.)

A CANON from a female pen is so great a novelty, that on receiving the first of these vocal pieces, our curiosity was not a little excited. We need not say that this is in the unison, for a lady would hardly meddle with so ungraceful a thing as a canon in the 4th and 8th below. The subject is elegant, though not exceedingly new, and there are some pleasing bars in the composition; but there are also a few dissonances to which the ear will not easily be reconciled. Such an attempt, however, from so young an *artiste*, and a female one too, is very laudable, and ought to be encouraged.

No. 2 is another lovely production of a lady, who, as a melodist, not only rivals, but bids fair to surpass our professional composers. We do not find an exceptionable note, or the most trifling error of any kind, in this charming ballad, which, being moderate in compass, easy to execute, and sure to please, we recommend to the notice of our readers.

Nos. 3 and 4, both likewise by an amateur, are distinguished by an originality that is anything but usual now-a-days. The first, extremely simple and in the bolero style, will be very generally admired, both for its melody and distinctness of rhythm. The second, which is almost eccentric, begins in F# minor, passes into the relative major, and concludes in F# major. The effect of the whole is very remarkable, and while it certainly must prove agreeable to many, will, from its singularity, have some hands raised against it. The long note given to the word "wind," at page 2, bar 8, by detaching it from what follows, quite obscures the sense, and should forthwith be amended, which will be no difficult task.

No. 5 is a very pretty melody. The second part in the minor key, and the air recurring afterwards, has a good effect. But this should have been named a rondo; it certainly is not a ballad. No. 6 is at least equal in merit to the poetry, which is exceedingly below par.

No. 7 is clever and effective, equally displaying the composer's knowledge of music and his superior taste. That he has studied Weber and imbibed some of his notions of harmony is apparent in the very commencement of this song, though he has made a perfectly fair use of his acquaintance with that great composer's works.

We can say nothing in praise of Nos. 8 and 9, "whose lovely form," instead of "whose lovely form," is bad, as to accent; and the resolving the chord  $\frac{4}{2}$  by that of the 7th, (see last bar of first page) is quite as objectionable in regard to harmony. We regret to say that we do not find any counterbalance to these defects.

No. 10 is full of the most faulty accents: "I saw thee smile;"—"and then methought," &c. Afterwards, from an error in setting, the nymph is made to "smile the sapphire's blaze;" for such is the sense given to the words by the misplacing of a quaver rest. The punctuation of the second verse alone shews how the poetry has been read.

We are not much refreshed by No. 11, after the wearying task of examining the three preceding songs. It is certainly free from the positive errors of those, but not less devoid of any agreeable feature.

No. 12 is the tenth of the collection in octavo of "Little Songs for Little Singers," mentioned by us before. This is pretty, but the air is "Galloping dreary dun," or much like it.

#### HARP.

1. THEME and VARIATIONS, composed by THEODORE LABARRE. Op. 31. (Mori and Lavenue.)
2. FANTASIE IRLANDOISE, in which are introduced two Irish Airs, composed and published by the same. Op. 32.

No. 1 is more valuable for its Theme than for either the Variations on it or the movement by which it is introduced. In the whole there is a want of variety, arising from frugality in modulation. Great diversity may be obtained without having recourse to the *alla marcia*, *alla polacca*, &c., which, four times in five, are inappropriate and absurd; but then, to produce such diversity, a rich fancy is required, regulated by an extensive knowledge of the best schools, and an acquaintance with the great masters of each.

No. 2 consists chiefly of variations on "My lodging is on the cold ground," some few of which are good, but, generally speaking, M. LABARRE does not seem to have understood the true character of the air. These publications are suited only to performers of a superior order: they have more of the brilliant than the expressive in them, and are cast in the fashionable mould, therefore calculated for the present, with little chance of longevity.

#### FLUTE.

FANTASIE, Recollections of Ireland, for THREE FLUTES, in which are introduced "Garry Owen," and "The last Rose of Summer," by TULOU. (Mori and Lavenue.)

NEVER having had an opportunity of hearing this performed,—for it is not an easy thing to get together three flutists—we scored a few passages out of it, and from these venture to form an opinion favourable to the whole. M. Tulou has evinced his judgment in writing variations on the beautiful air, "Tis the last Rose," suitable to it, and then introducing the lively tune as a finale, instead of turning the former into a jig, according to the very reprehensible practice of the day.

#### EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A DILETTANTE.

(Resumed from page 66.)

Feb. 24th. I have heard a good account of a performance, on the 3d instant, at Leicester, by the Choral Society of that town. They mustered upwards of a hundred performers. The people of this great metropolis are little aware of the degree of perfection to which these societies,—which are to be found in nearly all the great towns in the north,—have arrived. Many years ago, while on a visit to Lord Derby, in Lancashire, Mr. Greator had an opportunity of hearing a society of weavers perform the choruses of Handel, and acknowledged that he had never known them executed with more, if so much exactness, even in London.

Feb. 27th. It was intended to erect a tablet in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, to the memory of the late



excellent and truly English composer, William Shield, and to defray the expense by subscription; but the generosity of a public-spirited individual has rendered such a measure unnecessary. John Fuller, Esq., formerly M.P. for the county of Sussex, has taken entirely on himself the charge of shewing this well-deserved mark of respect to the virtues and talents of his deceased friend. The present is only one instance out of many that might be enumerated, of this gentleman's liberality and good feeling.

*March 3rd.* The seceding members of the opera band—that is to say, the whole of the effective part, two only excepted—have published in the *Times*, the following letter to the editor, as a reply to the remarks of M. Laporte on their pamphlet\*. He has not rejoined, for the best of all possible reasons; he cannot furnish anything like a satisfactory answer to a single assertion in this very temperate and complete refutation:—

“ Sir,—Our long silence on the subject of M. Laporte's letter of the 31st ult. must, we are sensible, have naturally excited a strong prepossession in favour of that extraordinary effusion. However, strange as it may appear, we can conscientiously aver, that our seeming acquiescence has arisen from no irresolution of purpose, but solely from the unforeseen mischances incidental to a party destitute of organization. These have hitherto opposed insuperable obstructions to our wishes, and the manager has been enabled to ‘ walk the course alone.’

“ But as truth cannot lose all its value merely because accident has rendered tardy its disclosure, and as no man who has the means of self-justification can be fairly expected to remain unmoved while assailed by gross misrepresentation, we cannot deny ourselves the gratification of thinking that our evidence may still have its effect in removing injurious impressions. Few words will suffice for the utterance of a false charge, while the task of refutation may require many. For this reason we can at present select only three instances from thirteen kindred ones, of M. Laporte's unscrupulous mode of assertion. These, we are of opinion, will form a striking exemplification of his own coarse expression, and prove, almost to demonstration, what peculiar propensity gives the strongest claim to gaining an end by ‘ disgraceful means.’

“ M. Laporte says that ‘ he has offered us a return to former salaries.’ We solemnly declare, that a more untrue assertion has never, to our knowledge, been practised upon public credulity.

“ He says also, that ‘ our malice has so far exceeded all bounds of decency, as to apply to the Lord Chamberlain to oblige him (M. Laporte) to agree to our arrogant terms.’

“ The letter respectfully addressed to the Lord Chamberlain contained no expression warranting the charge, and was positively founded upon a totally distinct motive. In proof of this, the copy of that innocent document is at the service of any editor who will favour us by giving it publicity.

“ We deny, fearlessly, the charge of ‘ keeping the public waiting while some of us were quietly returning from Cambridge.’ If M. Laporte will take the trouble of consulting dates, he will discover the fact, that there was no public performance at the Opera-house on the evening of our return.

“ The only instance we can remember of the ‘ public having been kept waiting,’ happened on the occasion of two concerts given in Bath and Bristol. In these, M. Laporte felt so lively a personal interest, that he attended both himself, and returned to London with the performers on Saturday evening, March 22, an opera night.

“ M. Laporte describes Anfossi as ‘ deploring the introduction of foreigners.’ The thought never existed, saving in the inventive fancy of the accuser.

“ We have now, Sir, performed our promise, and we believe that his literary advocates can find no creditable pretext for attacking us until they can re-establish the fame of the manager.

“ We have the honour to subscribe ourselves, Sir, your very obedient and humble servants,

(Signed) R. LINDLEY, C. NICHOLSON,  
T. J. WILLMAN, JOHN MACKINTOSH,  
T. HARPER, H. PLATT, & C. & C.”

*6th.* I have just seen an account, in a Berlin Journal, of the manner in which the anniversary of Beethoven's birth-day has lately been noticed at Dresden. I wish that

our musicians could be inspired with a little of that feeling which animates foreign professors, they would not only become better friends but better artists. This celebration was in the form of a concert, given at the house of music-director Moeser. The saloon was decorated with green boughs and with the bust of Beethoven. Many of his compositions were executed, among which were the *Sinfonia Eroica*, the fine air “ Adalaida,” and the overture to *Egmont*. The evening terminated by a supper, during which the memory of this great genius was drunk in a most solemn and reverential manner.

— The Oratorios commenced this evening at Covent Garden Theatre. The beginning was inauspicious, so far as relates to the number of auditors.

*7th.* A provincial paper, which takes in paragraphs from the Opera-house, says, “ Mad. Monticelli has had a tempting offer for a continental engagement, which it is not improbable she will be induced to accept.” This is artfully enough meant to imply that she was worth engaging here, and, by a *ruse* which betrays its author, to relieve the management from the blame of having brought over a performer so perfectly inadequate to the situation of *prima donna*.

*9th.* The newspapers, with scarcely an exception, are unusually severe in their strictures on the performances at the King's Theatre, and on *Il Conte Ori*. So much for the talent of *Monsieur le Directeur!*

*11th.* *The Post* of to-day tells us, that “ Handel founded his ‘ Happy We’ [in *Acis and Galatea*] on the fine old Welsh air, *The Rising Sun*; and Mr. Parry,” the paragraph continues, “ has done the same with the *Bardic Ode*, in *Caswallon*.” This article contains internal evidence of its source. When I read it, I thought that I should split my sides with laughing,—Handel and Parry in the same sentence! This is “ how we apples swim,” in the highest state of perfection.

— The accounts of the Philharmonic Concerts in the same journal are far too good to come from the pen of the sage musical critic who twaddles in that paper. But why allude to the recent black-balling in the society? and by name too. The mentioning such a fact could not be pleasing to the individual, and certainly does no honour to the body. I hope, however, that the eight *noes* will take the earliest opportunity of redeeming their own characters, and of doing justice to a gentleman of the highest professional talent and most unblemished private character.

— Mr. Hawes, who has undertaken the management of the oratorios this season, is determined that the character of Handel's greatest work shall not be unknown to the world;—he advertises it as *the celebrated*,—*The celebrated MESSIAH!* This is quite the counterpart to “ Hamlet, a Tragedy, by the celebrated William Shakespeare, Esq., formerly of Stratford-on-Avon, in Warwickshire.” But everything musical is celebrated now-a-days: Mr. Lee's songs are celebrated; Messrs. Welch and Bochsa's cigar-makers are celebrated; Mr. Rowland Stephenson, a very musical man, is celebrated; nay, even M. Bochsa's character is celebrated;—why, then, is not the MESSIAH to be celebrated also? I see no good reason for withholding the honour.

\* See *Harmonicon* for Februar last



14th. The *Spectator* of this day has some remarks on the union of Italian music and English words, in which a little error is blended with a great deal of lively criticism.

“The junction of Italian music and English words,” says the writer, “forms generally a most unhappy *mésalliance*. The intractable hardness of the sounds and the baldness of the ideas are rendered unpleasantly conspicuous by the very beauties of the melody with which they are in forced association. Our language is not euphonous, but its expression in connexion with simple native airs is not displeasing. The songs of the *Beggar's Opera* are full of the grace of appropriateness and simplicity; the music is level to the sentiment. In *Comus*, the style of which is ambitious, we have something of the halt of the language to the lyre. But to take the examples of our own day: listen to any bravura, the words of which are English, and say whether an effect is not constantly produced on the sense like the setting of a saw, or the grating of a slate pencil to the ear. There is a mechanical offence, besides that to the understanding. Our words are especially indocile and unaccommodating. The consonants are too strong in the verbal constitution, and refuse to submit themselves to the convenience of the composer who requires their adjustment to divisions, turns, or flourishes.”

The wit of the songs in *The Beggar's Opera* reconciles us to the sound of the words. Take the very first, for instance, and where will *cacophony* be found in greater perfection? But this, it may be said, is little more than recitative, or at best a comic tune. Let us then turn to the lovely melody from Purcell's *Dioclesian*, adapted to “Virgins are like the fair flower.” This is by all admitted to be one of the most beautiful and effective airs in the opera; but is it possible to find words more unmusical, more studded with obdurate consonants, and better calculated to thwart every attempt at graceful singing? They however have meaning; we relish them, therefore do not discover their hardness. Such is not the case with the nonsense-verses to which Mozart's and Rossini's operas are set; our ears are immediately assailed by the harsh sounds whereof they are composed, because they have neither wit nor elegance to divert our attention from the ruggedness of their component syllables.

That English words may be associated with exquisite music, without either bringing their companion into disgrace or exposing their own infirmity, is shewn in the union formed between the two in Handel's oratorios. The fact is still more striking in the adaptation of that great master's Italian songs to English words, in the pasticcio called *The Redemption*, in the execution of which a sensible man, Dr. Arnold, proved that opera airs might be joined to English words without losing a single particle of their own beauty, and without exciting the slightest suspicion in the auditors of any *mésalliance*. As to what is said of the bravura, I answer it by producing “The soldier tired,” an imitation, an exact and excellent one, of the Italian *aria d'agilita*, or bravura, of that day. In hearing this very fine song—for such it is in spite of prejudice—who ever finds out that “an effect is produced on the sense like the setting of a saw”? None, I believe; except perhaps a few of those ladies who, when they give a *soirée musicale*, would as willingly admit the cry of an oyster-wench into their programme as allow the introduction of an English air. But lest Arne's popular composition should not be sufficiently convincing, I will add “From mighty kings,” and “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion,” the two best known and most admired of Handel's bravuras; is there any “grating of a slate

pencil” in either of these?—I am not one of those who contend that the English language is as euphonous as the Italian, the Spanish, or even the French, but that it is at least as much so as the German, all will admit: yet who that has had a fair opportunity of judging, will deny, that good music properly set and well sung to German words, is very little deteriorated, even by sounds which, it was said by Charles V., should only be uttered when speaking to one's horse?

15th. The following appears in the *Examiner* of this day. “A letter addressed ‘à Monsieur, Monsieur l'Examiner,’ has been received by us, the contents of which are a few bars of music, with French words attached to them. Supposing that they may be the production of M. Bochsa's prolific brain, we hasten to give them insertion, which we suspect is more than the highly-gifted author and composer anticipated from us.

“*Fragment, formant partie d'un Vaudeville qui va paraître très incessamment.*

“Quand l'Examiner va dire quelque chose,  
Chacun s'attend à une absurdité;  
Chacun s'y prépare, et n'est jamais trompé.”

“We will conclude with a parody of our own:—

“Quand Monsieur le Forçat va faire quelque chose,  
Chacun s'attend à une grande lacheté;  
Chacun s'y prépare, et n'est jamais trompé.”

M. L'Examiner did right to reject the notes of M. Le Galérien, but he should have adapted the parody to *L'Hymne des Marseillais*.

20th. Paganini is to be here by the beginning of May. This is quite certain, so far as any engagement made with so uncertain a being can be relied on. He not long since gave a concert at Prague, which he announced in the following manner. “The Chevalier Paganini, artist of the chamber of His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, will have the honour to give on Saturday, 20th December, in compliance with the general wish, another concert, which must be the last, and in which he will perform, among other pieces, *The Storm*, a dramatic sonata, with grand orchestral accompaniments, and with appropriate decorations [scenic], together with solos and variations on the fourth string of the violin by Paganini. 1st part, the approach of the storm; 2nd., commencement of the tempest; 3rd., the prayer; 4th., raging of the sea; 5th., hurricane; 6th., confusion at its height; 7th., the return of calm; 8th., a burst of the most lively joy.”

In spite of the success of this performer at Vienna, he has found many Germans who do not join in the crowd of his admirers. The *Musical Gazette* of Berlin contains a letter in which great surprise is expressed at his success in the capital of Austria, once the seat of good music. The author adds, that it is impossible for anybody possessing taste and reason to be pleased with his harlequinades, after having heard the real violinists of the present day. We shall hear and judge for ourselves.

28th. The wit, truth, and spirit of the annexed observations, which appear in the *Spectator* of this date, introducing a critique on *I Messicani*, entitle them to a place in my diary. They ought, and probably will, find a corner in every scrap-book in the dominions of our Sovereign Lord the King.

“The French Stage has its little *pièces de circonstance*, which are full of spirit and gaiety: our Italian Opera has also its pieces of circumstances, but they are pieces of unfortunate circumstances, and the effect



savours sadly of the dolorous origin. *I Messicani* is of this latter family; it is, we are frankly told, the offspring of necessity. Necessity is proverbially the mother of invention; in this instance, however, she is the parent of patchwork, and the production of need is appropriately a beggar's raiment of divers stuffs and hues. M. BOCHSA has cobbled up the opera out of odds and ends, and remnants of ROSSINI, SPOHR, and BEETHOVEN; and when the *cento* of ill-assorted materials is brought out, with some touch of natural shame, distress is pleaded in apology. Now we are as compassionate critics as any under the chandelier,—we yield to none in gentleness of disposition,—but we protest that it greatly exasperates us to hear the difficulties of a huge bouncing theatre, with its pit of half-guineas and its boxes of three hundred a year, urged in excuse of faults,—not chance medley faults, but committed prepense and of malice aforethought. A darn, said BRUMELL, is more vicious than a hole, inasmuch as it shows premeditated poverty. Such is our quarrel with *I Messicani*. It is a wicked example of the premeditated poverty. The house was even shut up while M. BOCHSA was stitching away at this mendicant garment. Poverty, like murder, which it resembles in atrocity, can only be palliated by the absence of design; and a plot of six weeks' announcement for the pic-nic of a beggar's wallet is not to be pardoned by gods or men. Whatsoever you do, says HORACE, let there be a unity, a singleness, and integrity in it: and more especially is this observance becoming and useful—*dulce et decorum*—in the business of unlicensed appropriation, called in the vernacular tongue theft. The two broom-venders illustrate this point of moral prudence. The one finding that the other constantly undersold him, at last did homage to his rival's superior success; at the same time frankly expressing his surprise at it,—for, said he, 'My regard to my family is such, that I make an invariable rule of stealing the materials for my brooms.' 'Ah! but,' replied the other, 'I understand trade better than that, for I steal my brooms ready-made.' This is exactly the system we would recommend to opera managers—let them steal the brooms ready made: let them not give us a handle of ROSSINI's rosewood, a twig of SPOHR's laurel, a branch of BEETHOVEN's cypress; for brooms so ill assorted will prove besoms of destruction, and sweep the public from the house. Rather than this, we recommend them to take down a good old opera or two from the dustiest shelf, and produce it as the work of any Signor Crotchetiani in the orchestra. To robbery we are not so prudish as to object; but robbery and murder, as heard in *I Messicani*, exceed our liberal toleration. Above all, let no more be said of *necessity*—which, if it has no law, has also no quarter. The plea of *necessity* for an *I Messicani* is to be answered by the *circumspice* of the spectator. Look around that house, the finest in Europe, the richest in its receipts, and say what grounds should exist for the pretext of difficulties. The fact is, that there is not half a company of singers. In the periods of the greatest embarrassment of the theatre, we had comic as well as serious operas. Now we have the serious alone, and a serious bore of sameness it is becoming. We do not allow the exception of *L'Italiana*, because as performed it proved an eminently grave entertainment. We are not so unreasonable as to call upon the proprietor to engage stars; good vocalists, not of the first name and class, may make up a very pleasing comic opera."

### THE YORK ORGAN.

It has been publicly stated that the fine organ lately destroyed with other parts of the choir of York Cathedral, was erected by Green. This is one of those errors which, for want of better information and neglect of inquiry, get into circulation, and after a time are difficult to remove. The splendid instrument, now lost, was built in 1803, by Messrs. Blyth and Sons, of Isleworth, in Middlesex, seven years after the decease of Mr. Green, whom they succeeded; no part of the old organ being retained, except the case, which was far too valuable, on account of its antiquity, to be lost.

This organ contained the following stops:—

*Great Organ*,—stopt diapason, first open diapason, second open diapason, third open diapason, principal, great twelfth, nason, fifteenth, sesquialtra three ranks, furniture three ranks, cornet five ranks, trumpet, treble trumpet, and bass-clarion. *Choir Organ*,—stopt diapason, dulciana, principal, flute, fifteenth, and bassoon. *Swell*,—stopt diapason, open diapason, principal, dulciana, cornet four ranks, trumpet, and hautboy; with seventeen pedal keys.

### EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM EDINBURGH.

To the EDITOR of the HARMONICON.

SIR,

Edinburgh, Feb. 8, 1829.

YOUR last Number, which is an excellent one, contains a very beautiful song by Mr. Geary. I heard it sung the other evening, and it gave great pleasure; but we agreed that the passage allotted to the voice, in the third bar from the end, at the word "die," is awkward, and that the effect is immensely improved by throwing those notes into the accompaniment, thus—

die, Love - must die. &c.

If you agree in this opinion, the song is so very good, that it might be worth your while to suggest to your readers to perform it in this way.

I was in hopes that your dilettante, who, in his clever diary, shews up the absurdities of the London newspapers in musical matters, would have noticed, in the terms it merited, an article in the *Morning Journal*, two or three weeks ago, on the subject of the pamphlet published by the seceding members of the opera band, so full of vulgar insolence and scurrility, as to be a disgrace to the paper in which it appeared. It occupied a conspicuous place in the "leading article," usually destined to discussions on weightier matters, and therefore I have no doubt obtained this situation "for a consideration."

We are very dull here this winter in respect to public amusements. The theatre is deserted, though the company is excellent, and the manager unwearied in his exertions. Our professional society have been obliged to discontinue their subscription concerts for want of encouragement, a great misfortune to the lovers of music, as they were got up in such a manner as to afford much pleasure even to those who are accustomed to the music of London. Catalani gave three concerts last month, which, however, were well attended—one of them an overflow. This great singer (who has not, I think, appeared lately in London) is no longer what she once was. Her voice has lost both compass and flexibility, and her intonation has become very uncertain: still, however, she is a magnificent singer. Madame Stockhausen, who was of the party, was very popular; and our young ladies are all *working away* at her Swiss airs.

A few evenings ago, a concert took place for the benefit of the family of the late R. A. Smith, a man who was very generally known and liked here, and whose untimely death is much regretted. The concert was given in St. George's Church, of which Mr. Smith was *precentor*; it was planned and managed by the clergyman of the parish (the Reverend D. A. Thomson), and, through his active and benevolent exertions, proved so successful as to clear between 200*l.* and 300*l.* for the musician's family. As a



Presbyterian church must not be profaned by the admission of instruments, the music was entirely vocal; yet it was wonderful with what accuracy and effect the performers (about 40) sung a number of difficult and complex pieces of sacred music, both of the English and German schools. Some of the best of Mr. Smith's compositions were sung; but the most effective performance of the evening was a Funeral Anthem composed for the occasion by Mr. John Thomson, (the son of Dr. Thomson) a young amateur, of whose genius you have spoken more than once.

The only other intelligence I can send you is, that an organ has lately been erected in one of the dissenting Presbyterian chapels in this city, and is used every Sunday in accompanying the psalmody. Much clamour has arisen, of course, among the "unco guid," and all sorts of direful calamities are predicted from such an unhallowed act. The congregation, however, which is a large one, are, I understand, delighted with the organ, and, I trust, will not be molested in the enjoyment of it: in which case, I hope soon to see many more, even in our established churches.

I am always,  
Sir, yours faithfully,

## The Ancient Concerts.

### FIRST CONCERT,

Under the Direction of His Grace the Archbishop of York, for His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, Thursday, March 5th, 1829.

#### ACT I.

Coronation Anthem. The king shall rejoice.	HANDEL.
Duetto. Te ergo. (Te Deum)	GRAUN.
Motet. Ne pulvis et cinis.	MOZART.
Song. What though I trace. (Solomon.)	HANDEL.
Trio and Chorus. Sound the loud timbrel.	AVISON.
Concerto 4th. (From his Solos)	GEMINIANI.
Song. Let the bright.	HANDEL.
Chorus. Let their celestial. (Samson.)	
Monody. Forgive, blest shade.	DR. CALLCOTT.
Recit. Eccomi sola.—Ah padre!	GUGLIELMI.
Air. Gran Dio! che del mio cor.	
Chorus. Cum sancto. (From a Service)	MOZART.

#### ACT II.

Sinfonia. (Jupiter)	MOZART.
Recit. Rejoice, my countrymen. } (Belshazzar.)	HANDEL.
Chorus. Sing, O ye heavens. }	
Solo and Quartet. In my distress.	MARCELLO.
Movement from the Lessons.	HANDEL.
Sestet and Chorus. This is the day. (Anthem)	DR. CROFT.
Song. Holy, holy. (Redemption.)	HANDEL.
Chorus. Hallelujah. (Messiah)	HANDEL.

WE very deeply regret that the noble directors of these concerts appear determined to persist in the old system, and thereby depriving us of what we should feel a very delightful employment, viz., the critical illustration of many exquisite compositions, which are still suffered to moulder on their library shelves amid dust and cobwebs. We are fully aware that a small portion of the subscribers (and it is but a small one) prefer the perpetual repetition of the same songs and choruses every season, and, unfortunately for the subscribers generally, this small portion consists of those highly titled individuals to whom the directors, highly titled themselves, feel it decorous to pay deference at the expense of the majority, and totally indifferent to their disappointment, whether perceived or not. So long as the subscribers choose to submit to this treatment, and will continue their subscriptions notwithstanding, there will not be the slightest effort made to render less irksome the insipid sameness which has characterized the Ancient Con-

certs for the last twenty years. Let them, on the contrary, shew some little spirit, and express their disgust and ennui by withdrawing their support for a time, and it is not the highly distinguished patronage of a chosen few, that could prevent the total reform of the whole concern: a change must be for the better.

At the first concert of the present season there was but a thin attendance; it was remarked that the call of the House of Commons was the reason. Whimsical enough, this. The subscribers not come to town yet—another somewhat better cause. But we think there has been a falling off of subscriptions, and not a slight one. Paradoxical as it may appear, we affirm that, for the good of the concerts, we hope it may prove so.

The first duetto was not well chosen: heavy and uninteresting in itself, it did not receive much relief from the performance of Miss Stephens and Miss Johnson. Miss Johnson, indeed, professes to give all due effect to the low treble notes, but why Miss Stephens is to descend we can really see no just cause. Mozart's motet we thank his Grace of York for: the chorus was exceedingly well sustained, and a very admirable specimen of the great master in his more serious vein it is. Mr. Phillips will do, probably, his part more justice the second time. This evening we hardly ever heard him less energetic. "What though I trace," was never more chastely or more feelingly sung than by Mrs. W. Knyvett: such airs are peculiarly adapted to her voice and style. We heard Miss Stephens's voice in "Let the bright seraphim," but, *vox et preterea*, &c. We did not much fancy Guglielmi's song, but Madame Caradori Allan did it justice.

Of Mozart's fine chorus it is unnecessary to speak. The violin rattle at the close is the only objection. Phillips opened the second act with great effect; the Jupiter symphony which preceded seemed to have inspired him.

Of all that followed we have only generally to remark, that the performers did the pieces ample justice. As to a musical critique of the several compositions, our readers have only to take up any volume of the *Harmonicon* since we began our Ancient Concert notices, and they will be sure to find one; whether the first or last, will be very immaterial.

Where is Mr. Braham this season?

### SECOND CONCERT.

Under the Direction of the Earl of Darnley, for His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, Wednesday, March 11th.

#### ACT I.

Overture.	}	(Saul)	HANDEL.
Chorus. How excellent.			
Song. O Lord, have mercy.	}	(Alcina.)	PERGOLESI.
Trio. Non è amor.			
Concerto 11th.			
Selection from Israel in Egypt.	}	(Grand)	HANDEL.
Chorus. He gave them hailstones.			
Chorus. He sent a thick darkness.	}		
Chorus. He smote all the first born.			
Chorus. But as for his people.	}		
Chorus. He rebuked.			
Chorus. He led them through.	}		
Chorus. But the waters.			
Duet. The Lord is a man of war.	}		
Chorus. Thy right hand.			
Chorus. The Lord shall reign.			

#### ACT II.

Sinfonia in D.	MOZART.		
Duet. Deh! prendi.	MOZART.		
Chorus. Ah! grazie.	}	(La Clemenza di Tito.)	MOZART.
Trio. Quello è di Tito.			
Recit. Ma, che giorno			
Chorus. Tu è ver.			



Song. Honour and arms. (Samson)  
 Chorus. Exaltabo te, Domine.  
 Concerto 4th.  
 Glee. When winds breathe soft.  
 Song. Pious orgies.  
 Chorus. Gloria Patri.

HANDEL.  
 PALESTRINA.  
 CORELLI.  
 WEBBE.  
 HANDEL.  
 LEO.

COULD we have anticipated the mental treat of this evening, we should not, probably, have felt so disposed to censure, as was the case last Wednesday; not that the noble director has introduced any novelty—but then, if there were no novelty, there was no frippery, and it will indeed be a very great point gained if we should find that the directors generally have, at length, opened their eyes to the inconsistency of intermingling with compositions of the first order, sleepy songs turned into sleepier glees, and three-part glees, into grand choruses!

Lord Darnley has, for several seasons, diversified his selections most satisfactorily, and on the present occasion has fully succeeded. The magnificent opening of Handel's Saul, followed up by the sublime chain of choruses from Israel in Egypt, produced a very powerful effect. These wonderful specimens of the great master's genius and judgment, are, generally speaking, performed separately, and at different periods of time; but how much more sublime the effect when the connexion is preserved, and the various tremendous bursts, each astonishingly descriptive of the awful visitation represented, follow, without interruption, till the glorious shout of the prophetic proclaims that the terrible judgment is o'er!

We wish not to make Miss Wilkinson suffer for the bad taste and total want of judgment in those who will persist in letting her sing what only ought to be a bass song; but we advise her, for her reputation's sake, to resist a repetition. For our part, we do not like, at best, to hear the silvery warble of the female voice turned into that non-descript croaking they call a fine contr' alto. No disparagement to Madame Vestris, or Miss Love, or even to Madame Pisaroni.

We did not recollect the terzetto from Alcina; and, to say the truth, Handel's though it be, we have no very violent desire to have it further stamped upon our memory.

Cramer, we delight to say, gets steadier and steadier every year. His performance to-night was perfection in all its bearings, and the band most bravely supported him.

Proceed we now to the rich opening of the second act; Mozart's exquisitely spirited symphony in D, followed by the no less delightful scena, from his Clemenza di Tito. But the duettino in this, "Deh! prendi," as sung by Madame Caradori and Miss Wilkinson, was downright comic. They added to it something so like variations, and vastly ridiculous ones, that we were divided between laughter and resentment. Query,—have not the directors the power to interdict broad farce? Vaughan was in his usual pure style and sweet voice, and the return to that heavenly strain "Ah! grazie si rendano," after his elegant solo, might "almost persuade Justice to break her sword"—or, in other words, not quite so poetical as Shakspeare's, tempt *Clio* to scold no longer.

"Honour and Arms" was admirably sung by Mr. Phillips; we never heard him more energetic, or his lower tones more full and rich. He made full atonement for a little tameness and apparent negligence at the first concert.

The "Exaltabo te, Domine" of Palestrina, is a fine specimen of the ancient Italian church music. We thought we traced the germ of the Amen Chorus of the *Messiah*, towards the close of it. Though nobody can manage these

matters better, if so well, as Mr. Groatovex, we confess we should be always better pleased were these very ancient religious pieces performed with simply the organ and voices. The solemnity is sadly disturbed by the introduction of drums and trumpets, and a redundancy of orchestral accompaniment, however ingeniously managed.

Miss Stephens's "Pious orgies," it would, we fear, be almost high treason to attack: but Miss Stephens, Miss Stephens, though we make great allowance for that harassing satiety that must be the consequence of endless repetition, you should not quite fancy yourself on "downy couch reclining."

THIRD CONCERT.

Under the Direction of the Earl of Darnley, Wednesday, March 18th, 1829.

ACT I.

Overture.			
Recit. This day a solemn.	}	(Samson.)	HANDEL.
Chorus. Awake the trumpet's.			
Duet. There is a river.			MARCELLO.
Madrigal. O'er desert plains.			H. WAELRENT, 1590.
Recit. Folle è colui.	}	(Ætius.)	HANDEL.
Aria. Nasce al bosco.			
Chorus. O Father.		(Judas Macc.)	HANDEL.
Overture and Requiem.			JOMELLI.
Song. Lord! to thee.		(Theodora.)	HANDEL.
Chorus. When his loud voice.		(Jephthah.)	HANDEL.

ACT II.

Overture.	(Zauberflöte.)	MOZART.	
Duet. Ah! perdona.	(La Clemenza di Tito.)	MOZART.	
Frost Scene.	(King Arthur.)	PURCELL.	
Glee. Swiftly from the mountain's brow.		WEBBE.	
Song. Parto ma tu.	(La Clemenza di Tito.)	MOZART.	
Concerto 4th.	(Oboc.)	HANDEL.	
Anthem. Hear my prayer.		KENT.	
Recit. Behold! a virgin shall.	}	(Messiah.)	HANDEL.
Song and Chorus. O thou.			
Recit. acc. For Behold.			
Song. The people that walked.			
Chorus. For unto us.			

THAT such leaden things as "There is a river" and "O'er desert plains," should ever have found admittance at all to the Ancients is not a little surprising; but that we should be loaded with them from year to year, sans intermission, is almost as great an infliction as "Hear my prayer." In regard to the venerable production of 1590, if it is produced as a specimen of the old madrigal of that day, we can only say that the selection is tame and insipid in comparison with many we could mention of the same date; and if we descend a little later, we come to such Madrigalians as Wylbye, Weelks, Ford, &c., from whose works are to be culled the richest specimens of fancy, under the correction of the purest and soundest counterpoint.

We would advise Mr. Phillips not to throw so much force into the upper tones of his voice; it is a very difficult matter to sing loud without bordering on coarseness, and strength sufficient may be given to "Nasce al Bosco," without any strain whatever to the voice; for if the words are attentively considered, it will be perceived that vivacity, not energy, is required in singing it. We remember Bartleman's animated expression in this fine song, and yet in singing it his tones never "came o'er our ear" more mellow and subdued. On the whole, however, Mr. P. performed it with great judgment and feeling.

For the rest of the act, vide any Harmonicon—iterum iterumque!

The magnificent Overture to the *Zauberflöte*, followed



by "Ah! perdona," was a high and complete gratification to us.

The Frost Scene as usual, and Mr. Phillips sang with his usual ability. The *shivering*, however, which he throws into his voice is a little too like a regular succession of *shakes*; and, by the way, though Purcell meant, as may be seen by looking at the score of the song, that the "cold genius" *should* thus express his sensation, yet it is no easy task to accomplish. Bartleman came the nearest to the natural tremble; and if Phillips will be a little more subdued and *irregular* another time, he will greatly increase the effect of this admirably characteristic song.

The "Parto" from "La Clemenza di Tito," sang as it was by Madame Caradori Allan, proved a high treat. Nor must we pass over Willman's delightful clarionet accompaniment: we know not which most to admire, the brilliancy of his execution, or the exquisite richness of his tones. In the oboe concerto which followed, it would be injustice in us to neglect mentioning too the performance of Mr. Ling on another wind instrument, and one so difficult as rarely to be completely mastered. Mr. Ling, in point of sweetness and delicate precision, has, however, beyond all question, obtained this mastery; nor, since the loss of poor Griesbach, has he met with any competitor. There is, we believe, a Mr. Vogt, or some such name; but "Ods' ducks and ducklings," as Acres would say, defend us from him!

The selection from the *Messiah*, which closed the concert, was, as it *should* be, since it *was to be*: but the Lords Directors do not, we believe, attend the *whole performance* of the Oratorio at the end of the season.

## The Philharmonic Concerts.

SECOND CONCERT, Monday, March 9, 1829.

### ACT I.

Sinfonia Eroica	BEETHOVEN.
Duetto, Madame Caradori Allan and Signor Begrez, "A che quei tronchi accenti?" ( <i>Zelmira</i> )	ROSSINI.
Sextuor, Piano Forte, Flute, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, and Double Bass, Mrs. Anderson, Messrs. Nicholson, Willman, Platt, Mackintosh, and Dragonetti	ONSLow.
Scena, Madame Caradori Allan, "Tu m' abbandoni, ingrato"	SPOHR.
Overture, <i>The Ruler of the Spirits</i>	C. M. VON WEBER

### ACT II.

Sinfonia in D	MOZART.
Duetto, Signor Begrez and Signor Pellegrini, "Son io desto"	PAISIELLO.
Quartetto, two Violins, Viola, and Violoncello, Messrs. Mori, Watts, Moralt, and Lindley	HAYDN.
Terzetto, "Cosa sento" Madame Caradori Allan, Signor Begrez, and Signor Pellegrini ( <i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i> )	MOZART.
Overture, <i>Des Abencerages</i>	CHERUBINI.
Leader, Mr. SPAGNOLETTI.—Conductor, Mr. BISHOP.	

THE first act of this concert seemed rather heavy, owing to so many of the pieces being in one key, *eb*. The Heroic Symphony contains much to admire, past all doubt, but it is difficult to keep up admiration of this kind during three long quarters of an hour. It is infinitely too lengthy. The *marcia funebre* in *c* minor is exceedingly beautiful, but the whole of what may be termed the *coda*, which constitutes three-fourths of it, should be omitted. Sacrificing a part to save the whole is prudent in all cases, and if this symphony is not by some means abridged, it will soon fall i to disuse. Nothing but the unique manner of its per-

formance at these concerts keeps up the attention even of this audience. Mozart's in *d* produced an unabated effect\*: the middle movement was encored. Weber's overture, full of imagination, gains upon frequent hearing. Such music does not suddenly unfold all its beauties, but requires some acquaintance with it. Cherubini's *Abencerages* makes a good finale.

The Sextuor of Onslow was in all its parts admirably executed. Mrs. Anderson did it the fullest justice, and the names of her coadjutors will be sufficient to shew how she was supported. The first movement is uninteresting, but the *andante* and *finale* are as charming to the ear, as they are masterly in their construction. Perhaps we ought rather at once to have stated, that they are masterly because charming. The greatest treat of the evening, after Mozart's symphony, was the quartet by Haydn, his 82nd in *bb*, one of the most beautiful things that ever came from the pen of this author, who has no equal in this class of composition. It is impossible to praise too warmly Mori's performance of it, or to value too highly the merit of those with whom he was joined.

The vocal part of the concert was not quite equal to the instrumental. The scena from *Faust*, "tu m' abbandoni," is an elaborate work, and Madame Caradori sang it remarkably well, but it is not one of those things that captivate an audience. The duet from *Nina* produced little effect. The *terzetto* always pleases, and did not fail on the present occasion. The duet from *Zelmira* might have been omitted; it is ill calculated for Pellegrini, a *buffo*, and not either accustomed or equal to serious music; and it was accompanied in a most imperfect manner; the time ill kept, and the instruments infinitely too noisy.

THIRD CONCERT, Monday, March 23, 1829.

### ACT I.

Sinfonia Pastorale	BEETHOVEN.
Scena, Mr. Sapio, "Through the Forests," ( <i>Der Freischütz</i> )	C. M. VON WEBER.
Introduction and Theme Varié, Clarinet obligato, Mr. Willman	KUFFNER.
Scena, Miss Paton, "Si, lo sento," ( <i>Faust</i> )	SPOHR.
Overture, MS. "Der Vampyr"	MARSCHNER.

### ACT II.

Sinfonia, No. 7	HAYDN.
Aria, Mr. Phillips, "Qui sdegno non s'accende" ( <i>Il Flauto Magico</i> )	MOZART.
Concerto Violin, M. Artôt, jun. (his first performance in this country)	KREUTZER.
Duetto, "Ella, oh ciel," Miss Paton and Mr. Phillips, ( <i>Torvaldo e Dorliska</i> )	ROSSINI.
Overture, <i>Don Mendoza</i>	A. ROMBERG.
Leader, Mr. MORI.—Conductor, Sir G. SMART.	

THE Pastoral Symphony was never better executed than on the present occasion. This, and Haydn's in *d*, one of the grand set, or those written for Salomon, have been repeatedly noticed by us. The overture to *The Vampire* is a very palpable imitation of Weber's *Freischütz* and *Oberon*. Well put together it certainly is, and proves the composer—or plagiarist—to be a good mechanical musician; but so far as he is to be judged by the present sample, possesses very little indeed of the inventive faculty. Andreas Romberg's overture is light and airy; its merit consists in the melody that flows through it uninterrupted by any of those instrumental bursts which, when without a distinct object, as is too often the case, only conceal the want of design and feebleness of the composer.

Mr. Willman's beautiful tone and perfect execution af-

\* The minuet and trio of this are printed in our present Number.



forded much delight, as was manifested in the applause he received. The piece he played, a waltz with variations, has little claim to notice as a composition, but is rather pleasing; though we regretted that he had not found something more worthy of such a place. The young Artôt, a French boy, about fourteen years of age, and an élève of Kreutzer, reminded many who recollected Pinto of that extraordinary genius. His playing is principally distinguished by an enthusiasm which is seldom felt, or if felt rarely exhibited, by so youthful a performer, and by a strength of hand and firmness of bow not less remarkable. He has too much of that sliding of the finger up the string which was so conspicuous a defect in Kiesewetter, and like him he is too fond of those squeaking notes which may shew a degree of mechanical skill, a sort of practical wit, but also betray the weak part of the instrument, which becomes, to our ears at least, distressing the moment the second shift is exceeded. He is certainly a very talented boy, but has yet much to learn, and something to unlearn.

Mr. Sapio sang the eternal "Through the forests," with much animation. Miss Paton's scena,—the same which she has before performed here,—was admirable; she has quite recovered her strength, though the strain on her voice produced by this long and fatiguing composition, evidently rendered the latter part of the air a great labour to her. The accompaniments too were here again quite overwhelming in the forte parts, for which some blame attaches to both leader and conductor. They ought to impress on the orchestra that the *fortissimo* and the *forzato* of a vocal piece is not the same as an instrumental one, but that the prevalent degree in the former being *piano*, the other terms should only be considered as indicating a slight increase of strength, and not be construed in a literal sense. Mr. Phillips obtained an unanimous encore in "Qui sdegno." It was a beautiful specimen of vocal elegance. The duet of Rossini is only fit for the stage, and even there cannot rank as one of his best. But this is a composition that should never be put in any other hands than those of Italians. Such was decidedly the impression of every one present on this occasion.

M. MOSCHELES has recently composed a symphony, his first, which will be produced at his concert in May. The most lively curiosity is excited in the musical world, to hear a work of such magnitude, by a writer who has so much distinguished himself by his piano-forte compositions, but to which he has hitherto almost entirely limited his efforts.

## Foreign Musical Report.

### VIENNA.

*Theater an der Wien.*—A new romantic opera, in three acts, has been produced at this theatre, entitled *Seraphine, oder, Der Kriegsgefangene* (Seraphina, or the Captive of War,) taken from Kotzebue's tale of "Benjowsky." The music is by that industrious composer, Adolph Müller, and contains several pieces creditable to his talents.

*Josephstätt Theater.*—Two new pieces have appeared here, *Herma, oder, Die Söhne der Rache* (Herma, or, the Expiation of Vengeance) a romantic drama in five acts, the

words by Madame Birch-Pfeiffer, the music by Kapellmeister Gläser; and *Die Biene* (the Bee,) an occasional operetta, consisting of a selection of popular airs, comic scenes, dances, and *tableaux*, so arranged as to form a kind of connected piece. The first is a drama of considerable interest, founded on one of Vandervelde's well-known novels, entitled "Der Böhmisches Mägde-Krieg\*." The music is some of the best and most spirited we have had for a long time from the good Kapellmeister, who, if not one of the most classical, is certainly among the most prolific, composers of the day. The curious in these matters have cast up their account, and found that his name is to no less than a hundred and twenty different works; and so far from his powers appearing exhausted, he seems likely, at the rate he continues to produce, to see his name to as many more.

The *Kürnthnerthor* Theatre still continues closed, except to occasional concerts. Among them was one lately given, in which appeared one of those *wunder-kinder* (wonder-children,) whom it has been the fashion of late years to push into notice, in order to stifle at once that precocious talent, which, if properly cultivated and prudently kept back from flowering too early, might have "yielded fruit in due season." The talent of the little prodigy in question was that of imitating, or rather mimicking, Paganini so exactly, as to produce a complete illusion.

We hope shortly to be able to give you some satisfactory information as to this theatre, and the plans in progress for its effective management.

M. Christian Heinrich, the well-known musical-instrument maker of this place, in conjunction with his nephew, Johann Bauer, has constructed a new instrument, to which they have given the name of *Orchestrion*. It is said that in this instrument a problem has been resolved which before appeared insoluble. Instead of being furnished with a single cylinder, it has three, which are connected with several registers of a different nature, and set in motion by a single weight, ingeniously adapted to the purpose by means of a chain. The greatest difficulties have been surmounted, and nothing can be more admirable than the manner in which the inventors have succeeded in rendering the most delicate shades, as well as the most massive effects, of orchestral music. Overtures of the most complicated kind are given with an exactitude and a unity of effect, that is entitled to every praise. The metal instruments, which have hitherto been defective in machines of this kind, are remarkable for their excellence. The particular character of all these, which are faithfully employed according to their distinct natures, is strikingly preserved; and all their harsh and defective sounds have been regulated or avoided. These artists intend proceeding to the capital of Russia with their invention, where they are led to hope for the most liberal encouragement.

A new musical instrument is also announced in the Nuremberg Journals; but from the general description given, we should consider it to be nothing more than a variety of the *Physharmonica*. It is said to combine great power with much sweetness of effect.

### BERLIN.

*Königstätt Theater.*—Auber's opera, *La Muette de Portici*, has been produced here under the title *Die Stumme von*

\* I may take this opportunity of expressing my surprise that the name of this talented and popular writer should be unknown to your literature. In power of description and high-wrought dramatic interest, several of his romances will bear a comparison with those of the great Necromancer of the North himself.



*Portici*, and was received with great applause. It was brought out with great splendour of decoration, and very effectively cast.

A misunderstanding has unfortunately arisen among the renters of this theatre. It appears that this undertaking, by far the most enterprising of this capital, both for the variety and interest of the works performed, and the great number of distinguished artists employed by it, does not pay its expenses. The receipts of the last year amounted, however, to 110,000 dollars (nearly 21,000*l.*) a considerable sum for Berlin, where the disbursements are so moderate, compared, for instance, with Paris or of our own capital. A law-suit is mentioned; but several of the renters limit their demands to an investigation of the entire affairs of the theatre, and an abolition of the abuses that have crept into the administration.

#### DRESDEN.

THE first representation of a German opera, in three acts, entitled *Libella*, took place here at the close of last month. The music is by a young composer of the name of Reisinger\*, who has lately been chosen to fill the place of concert-master and director of the opera here; a position which has assumed a double importance and responsibility since it was held by C. M. v. Weber. The success of the piece was decided, though that success is difficult of attainment here. The fact is, that it is the fashion here to cry up the Italian to the prejudice of the native German opera; and in consequence of this feeling, the fashionables were content to remain neuter during the first act; but during the second this reserve began gradually to wear off, and at the close the applause was warm and unanimous, and the composer was called upon the stage to receive the congratulations of the public. We shall shortly be enabled to give further particulars of the nature and character of the music.

#### PRAGUE.

WEBER'S *Oberon* was represented for the first time on the theatre of this place, on occasion of the birth-day of the Empress of Austria. It was received with all the enthusiasm that might naturally have been expected to be excited by the last accents of a musician who does so much honour to Germany. The execution was worthy of the work. Madame Ernst, as *Reiza*, distinguished herself both as an excellent actress and a sound musician; and Madame Podorski, as *Oberon*, and Binder, as *Huon*, shewed themselves worthy of the favour of the public. The third evening's performance was devoted to the benefit of Weber's family; the house was an overflow, and the object in view adequately answered. The interest, after a number of successive representations, remained undiminished.

#### COLOGNE.

A NEW theatre has been built here, which was completed in the short term of nine months. It is said to be a very handsome and commodious structure, capable of containing nearly two thousand spectators. The stage is remarkably broad and spacious. The opera chosen for the opening was the *Jessonda* of Spohr, which was performed by a highly respectable company. We trust that this undertaking will meet with all the encouragement it deserves.

\* A work by this clever young composer was lately published in the *Harmonicon*, and another will appear in our next Number.

#### MILAN.

DURING a temporary close of the theatre, a concert was given by the musical society of this city, *Del Giardino*, which excited universal interest, as it afforded the Milanese an opportunity of hearing Madame Pasta, after a long period of absence. She charmed one of the most numerous audiences witnessed here for a long time, by the admirable manner in which she sung the cavatina from the *Crociato*, the air of *Tancredi*, the romance of *Tebaldo ed Isolina*, and in the celebrated quartett in *Nina*. "So great," says one of the journals, "was the emotion of the orchestra at the rehearsal, that they were scarcely able to accompany the singer!" On the same occasion, the Signora Tenelli, and the tenor, Berardo Winter, distinguished themselves by the goodness of their school, and afford hopes of two singers of excellence.

The *Società del Giardino* in order to render durable the recollection of the pleasure which Madame Pasta had afforded them, gave orders to the sculptor Marchesi to execute the bust of this celebrated singer in Carrara marble. It is to be placed among those of the great artists that adorn the saloon in which she sung.

The enthusiasm excited by the talents of Madame Pasta among the amateurs of her native city, led to a wish to witness their display on the boards of the *Scala*. After considerable solicitation, the lady was at length prevailed upon to comply with the general wish, and application was made to Signor Barbaja for the use of his theatre. But it seems that the manager had had some altercation with the singer, and in consequence thought proper to refuse. The dilettanti in question, and particularly the members of the *Società del Giardino*, resolving not to brook the caprice of the *impresario*, immediately entered into terms with the proprietor of the *Teatro Carcano*, and intend giving a series of representations of classical works, in which Madame Pasta is to perform. Signor Barbaja will find himself awkwardly circumstanced in consequence of this competition, and may, perhaps, have reason to repent his ill-humour.

#### BOLOGNA.

THE winter concerts have commenced at the *Casino*, and the first of them presented a display of artists and amateurs both Italians and foreigners, but rarely witnessed here. Madame la Comtesse Merlin, of Paris, the Signora Cecconi, the Signora Julia Grisi, and the tenors Marchionni and Pedrazzi for the vocal part; the celebrated clarinet, Ivan Müller, and the Marchese di Villa Campo, the well-known amateur on the piano-forte, for the instrumental part, gave this meeting an extraordinary éclat. Both the selection of pieces, and the manner in which they were executed, left nothing to be desired. The Signora Grisi, a contralto of extraordinary power, who recently made her first appearance in public in the *Zelmira*, is niece to Madame Grassini, and promises to tread in the footsteps of this great singer.

#### FLORENCE.

ON occasion of the fête celebrated in honour of the emperor his master, the Count de Bombelles, the Austrian minister, had the *Italiana in Algeri* represented upon his private theatre. The work was executed by amateurs, among whom was the Lady Ambassador, who is distinguished no less for her beauty and the extent of her voice, than for her profound knowledge of music and of the art of song. The opera went off admirably well, both as regarded the singing, and the orchestral performance.



Lord Burghersh's opera, *Il Torneo*, was afterwards represented upon the same stage. According to the Italian journals, the music of the noble diplomatist does no less honour to his talent than to the musical art in general. Besides two of the airs, the introductory choruses are mentioned with particular eulogium. The whole was executed with a degree of precision hardly to be expected from an amateur party. The principal characters were supported by the Ladies Williams, Festa and Orbicchi, and by MM. Franceschini.

Persiani's *Gastone di Foix* was attempted at the *Teatro Pergola*, but fell flat at the first representation.

#### TURIN.

*Teatro Reale.*—The *Didone abbandonata* of Mercadante was the only piece produced, and it proved true to its title. The deserted Dido had to pour forth her sorrows to empty benches.

#### FERRARA.

THE theatre of this place opened, by way of novelty, with the *Elisa e Claudio*, and the ballet of *Fedra*, neither of which pleased; but the *Inganno felice*, which was well cast, put the public in good humour again—a trifle can often do so.

#### BERGAMO.

THE *Barbiere*, even if performed by the best company, cannot be expected to please for ever: and such was the case here. It is a wonder that managers do not learn the art of catering better for the public taste; *toujours perdrix* will no more answer on the stage, than in the dining-room. The *Clotilda* of Coccia followed, and helped to set things right for a time; it is a composition which contains much that is excellent, and the subject is of a pleasing kind. It is surprising that the piece is not in more general requisition.

#### PARMA.

*Zelmira* was the piece chosen for the opening of the season; but in spite of the efforts of Madame Bonini and Cosselli, it did not succeed. And what was there to replace it?—the *Semiramide*!

#### BOLOGNA.

*Teatro Communale.*—There is a satiety in music as in every thing else, though managers seem to find a difficulty in bringing themselves to believe it; and it was owing to this cause that the *Barbiere di Siviglia* produced no effect in this theatre, though supported by the superior talents of an accomplished young singer, Signora Giulietta Grisi, the tenor Regoli, the *basso cantante* Moncada, and the *buffo comico* Spada.

#### ROVEREDO.

Signor Giuseppe Antonio Bridi, a wealthy proprietor, and learned amateur of this place, lately gave a selection of music, attended by circumstances of too interesting a nature to be passed over unnoticed. He has a delightful garden, laid out in the English taste, in which he has lately constructed an elegant temple to the Genius of Music. It is a rotunda in the ancient style, supported by a range of columns in the Doric order. The interior is painted in fresco by Signor Craffonara, and is considered as a masterpiece of this artist's talents. In the centre is represented, resting upon a group of clouds, the Genius of Music; in one hand he holds a lyre, and with the other

points to the Temple of Immortality, faintly portrayed in the distance. Ranged below him are the figures of the following great artists: Palestrina, Gluck, Jomelli, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, and Sacchini, surrounded with appropriate emblems of their characteristic talents. The choice of these *seven* heroes of their art may have been made either with reference to the number of the Muses, or of the musical tones. Upon the lower part of the rotunda, and immediately below these figures, are inscriptions to the memory of the several composers.

In another part of the garden is a solitary grotto, overhung with weeping willows, in which is a tablet of marble with the inscription

*Manibus. Mozart. Sacrum*

Below this are the following words in German:

HERRSCHER DER SEELE  
DURCH MELODISCHE DENNKRAFT

With the following translation in Italian:

SIGNORE DELL' ANIMA  
PER LA FORZA DELLA MELODIA  
E DEL PENSIERO

Upon occasion of opening this garden to his friends, a temporary orchestra was formed, in which various pieces, both vocal and instrumental, from the masterpieces of the immortal men to whose honour the temple is raised, were admirably performed.

#### MANTUA.

THE *Semiramide* was given here, and, though not very effectively cast, was received with satisfaction.

#### TRIESTE.

THE *Schiava di Bagdad* of Pacini has been produced, but met with a very cold reception. After this, the greater part of the singers fell indisposed—and most opportunely, for there was no other opera ready to replace the unsuccessful piece.

#### VENICE.

THE accounts received from this place, respecting the effect produced by Rossini's new opera, *L'Assedio di Corinto*, at the *Fenice*, are of a contradictory kind. According to one statement it was attended with success; while the other represents it as a decided *fiasco*. At all events, it is universally allowed that the Signora Grisi, and the tenor Verger, distinguished themselves by their excellent acting, as well as singing.

#### ROME.

AT the time of the decease of the late Pontiff, three theatres were open here, a thing by no means usual, and the following pieces had been represented:—

*Teatro Valle.*—*La Contessa di Fersen*, a comic opera by Fioravanti; but in consequence of the indisposition of the *prima donna* Manzocchi, it was performed but twice. It is a composition of merit, but not a new piece; it was written some years since for Marcolini and Zamboni, who gave it an eclat, which it is not likely it will again enjoy. The subject is taken from a well known French piece, *La Femme à deux Maris*. The principal parts were given by Manzocchi, Cavalli, and the tenor Ravaglia. It was succeeded by Donizetti's opera, *L'Aio nell'imbarazzo*, a piece that pleases by its buffoonery.

*Teatro Tordinone.*—*Teobaldo ed Isolina* was the piece given here, and it met with tolerable success, though the



theatre can boast but of one singer above mediocrity, the Signora Petralia, who is engaged to make her débüt in London, in the month of December, 1829 (?).

*Teatro Argentina.*—Pacini's opera, *Gli Arabi nelle Galie*, was given, but without much success. Recourse was then had to *I Pirate*, the work of a young composer, but it did not succeed. It is but justice, however, to state, that its failure was more owing to the wretched performers than to the defects of the work itself; though by no means trifling, they are yet redeemed, in some degree, by a few pieces of merit. But as to the execution, nothing could be more lamentable. We have seen a letter from Rome from a young artist of promise, who thus expresses himself upon this subject:—"What a theatre! what an orchestra, and what a singer, too, this so much vaunted David! It would be impossible for one who had not witnessed it himself, to form any idea of such a spectacle of utter wretchedness. But it is a fact, that Rome, once so favoured in all that relates to the art, is now regarded by the Italians, and with justice, as the tomb of music."

#### NAPLES.

*San Carlos.*—Donizetti's *Esule di Roma* has been produced, but obtained only a moderate degree of success. It gave place to the *Ultimo giorno di Pompei*, of Pacini, which pleased. Lablache, who had for some time been indisposed, produced in it his usual effect; and Rubini and the Tosi were also deservedly applauded. The operas now successively performed are *L'Esule di Roma*, *L'Ultimo giorno di Pompei*, and *Le Priate*; not a single classical work has been attempted.

#### PARIS.

*Académie Royale de Musique.*—Madame Maraffa-Fischer, who made her first appearance here in the *Siège de Corinthe*, and who was so much affected by what Figaro terms *le mal de la peur*, has produced but little impression; so little indeed, that the administration are in the same embarrassment as before her arrival, relative to the production of Rossini's long-expected opera of *Guillaume Tell*. There are two versions of the story: some say it is to be deferred till the return of Madame Damoreau-Cinti, which will not be yet for some time; according to others, Rossini objects to his work being produced in the summer months, so that its appearance will, in all probability, be deferred till the composer's return from Italy, where he is shortly going to spend some months. In the latter case, a new opera of MM. Scribe and Auber, which is in preparation, will be produced in its stead.

There was lately given here *Un Concert consacré à la Mémoire de Haydn*, which, with the exception of the opening piece, Cherubini's *Elegy to his Memory*, consisted entirely of the compositions of this great master. "It was apprehended," says a musical journal of celebrity, "that the selection might be found monotonous, and produce upon a numerous audience an effect the very reverse of what was intended; that they might appear weak and colourless to persons accustomed to the strong emotions of Beethoven. Such, however, was not the case; and the genius of Haydn, triumphant over every obstacle, still shewed itself fresh in youth, in grace, and in power."

*Théâtre Italien.*—Madame Malibran and Mlle. Sontag have appeared together in *Tancredi*. Has the attempt completely succeeded? asks one of the journals. The answer is in the negative, but the following explanation is given. "We are not surprised at this; indeed we were

prepared for it. It is now known that Mad. Malibran is never at the height of her talent, the first time she performs a character. Time must be allowed her to dwell upon it, to weigh effects, and to perfect her outline. Between her first and second representation, very perceptible changes of manner will be observed. We therefore consider it our duty to pause before we pass a definitive opinion upon her *Tancredi*. Mlle. Sontag was in better voice than on her first appearance. She was not so often guilty of the fault of pitching it below the note, in order to replace it afterwards, a vicious habit which has been visible since her return from London, and which appears to have been the consequence of some momentary alteration in her organ. It is to be presumed that an entire establishment of her health will restore that purity of intonation which she possessed on her first arrival in Paris. The throat of this artist is a real *componium* of vocal *fioriture*. [A very equivocal compliment, by the way.] The facility of her execution is really prodigious; one would say, that it costs her less effort to execute difficulties, than to sing with simplicity." Surely all this has very much the appearance of satire in disguise. We remember it is upon record, that when Handel was praised by his pupils for his brilliant execution of a rapid and flowery passage, he exclaimed: "Ha! my friends, it is much more difficult to play two notes well, than two hundred!" and Handel is some authority in these matters.

Signora Dotti, a pupil of M. Choron, made her débüt in the part of Malcolm, in the *Donna del Lago*. The choice was injudicious, after the effect produced in that character by Madame Pisaroni, and the young singer felt its effects.

*Opéra-Comique.*—The novelty here has been *Pierre, et Catherine*, a comic opera in one act, by M. Adam. It is the maiden production of this young artist, and augurs well for his future fame. The overture contains some original effects, and was warmly applauded, as well as two of the airs, a duet and a trio. Several other pieces excited considerable sensation, particularly a march with chorus, to the words, *Avançons en silence*: it is full of dramatic effect, and terminates *piano*; it was loudly encored. A French journal thus speaks of the author. "M. Adam was already known to the public by some pieces which bespoke talent. In the present composition we see that that talent has acquired consistency, and we are pleased at finding in the greater part of the pieces an acquaintance with effects, and a knowledge of arrangement, which are expected only in a practised musician. To these advantages is joined another, which is the gift of nature alone, we mean a feeling for dramatic effect, a quality which practice may render perfect, but which cannot be acquired. M. Adam not only possesses this quality, but he belongs to a school which will enable him to turn it to good account; he is the pupil of Boieldieu, who of all the modern French musicians is the best acquainted with the art of rendering a phrase with truth and energy of expression."

A concert lately given by M. de Beriot, in the saloon of the rue de Cléry, drew a large audience. Madlle. Woke, a young pianist of the highest talent, the pupil and almost rival of M. Kalkbrenner, was heard with great applause. The young Vieuxtemps, an infant of eight years, who plays on the violin like an able and experienced artist, also drew forth lively proofs of admiration. But the highest honours of the evening were destined for M. de Beriot. We can only give an adequate idea of his extraordinary powers, by saying that he united all the talents



which are found in the most celebrated violinists. He played four pieces, two of them his own composition, full of grace, and written in the finest taste. The *Sonate du diable*\*, by which he terminated the concert, produced a surprising effect: it is impossible to perform with more ease difficulties which may truly be called infernal.

The sister of Madlle. Sontag was heard for the first time in public on the 9th of last month, at a concert given by M. Pape. Her voice is flexible, and of a good quality, but study and experience are wanting to give that firmness to the young singer which is so indispensable.

A young person who has been educated in the *Ecole de Chant* of M. Choron, a Madlle. Dotti, has attempted the part of *Malcom*, in *La Donna del Lago*, at the Théâtre Italien, and failed so completely, that she never will appear again, in all probability. The hisses were most formidable.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

A MUSICAL subscription library has been established by the house of Schlesinger of Paris, upon the following singular plan. For the consideration of fifty francs a subscriber is entitled, for the term of one year, to two pieces of instrumental music at a time, which he is at liberty to change every other day; and if any of these pieces are found particularly to his taste, he is entitled to select from among them, to the value of seventy-five francs. The subscriber, therefore, has not only access for a whole year to a large collection of music *gratis*, but also receives to the value of twenty-five francs, over and above his subscription.

An amusing volume has appeared at Paris, entitled *Mémoires d'un Claqueur*, par M. Robert. All the theatres have furnished the author with anecdotes, and had he extended his researches beyond the limits of his own country, and crossed the Channel, he might have found something worth collecting in this way.

## The Drama.

### KING'S THEATRE.

NEVER since this house was built has it ever been, for so many weeks together, in such a deplorable state. A company without either a prima donna or primo basso; half of the scanty number of the performers ill; no provision made for supplying their places; and a broken-up orchestra. All this at a time, too, when M. Laporte boasts of having the finest company in the world, and actually is supported by the largest subscription ever known before Easter! Nearly one-third of the abridged season is elapsed, and not a single performance has yet been given that would not produce an outcry in a barn!—Yet the subscribers are paying a guinea per night for each seat, a price unheard of before, and fourteen shillings for the best places in the pit, a thing equally unprecedented. If this is tamely submitted to, we shall no longer blame the lessee, but the public; for it will then be clear to demonstration that they either have more money than wit,

\* For an account of this Sonata, vide Life of Tartini, in the first series of the *Harmonicon*.

or not spirit enough to shew their displeasure at a system of exaction and mismanagement never hitherto suffered here, or equalled in any theatre in Europe.

The first attempt made to give anything in the shape of novelty was after the theatre had been opened a month, when, on Saturday, the 28th of February, *Il Conte Ori* came out, thus cast:—

<i>Il Conte Ori</i>	.	.	.	SIG. CURIONI.
<i>Il Tutore</i>	.	.	.	SIG. GALLI.
<i>Isoliero</i> , (il paggio)	.	.	.	SIGNORA SPECCHI.
<i>Raimbault</i>	.	.	.	SIG. DE ANGELI.
<i>Ferrante</i>	.	.	.	SIG. DEVILE.
<i>La Contessa di Formontiers</i>	.	.	.	SIG. MONTICELLI.
<i>Radagonda</i>	.	.	.	SIG. CASTELLI.
<i>Alice</i>	.	.	.	SIG. NEVILLE.

The story is from an ancient French ballad, dramatised years ago by M. Scribe, and lately revived in Paris, in order that Rossini might adapt to it the music of his *Viaggio à Reims*, an opera produced on the coronation of Charles X., a *pièce de circonstance*, as the French call it, to which he added a few new things, and lo! the *Conte Ory* appeared, a work that has had no success in Paris, though got up there in a splendid manner, and which it was clear to all who understood any thing of the matter, would never do for London. Nevertheless it was forced on us, and a more complete failure in every possible way was never witnessed. It is beyond comparison the worst work of Rossini; but had it been far otherwise, it was brought out in so incomplete, so wretched a manner, that its condemnation would have been equally certain and decided.

Many persons have suspected that all this was the result of design, and for the purpose of producing with more éclat *I Messicani* (*The Mexicans*), a *Pasticcio* kneaded by M. Bochsa, made up of certain heterogeneous materials of Pacini and Spohr, Mercadante and Beethoven, together with some few others supplied by the honest and talented director himself: the three principal characters in which are—

<i>Alonzo</i> , a Spaniard	.	.	.	Signora PISARONI.
<i>Zaura</i> , a Mexican	.	.	.	Madlle. BLASIS.
And <i>Orozimbo</i> , her father	.	.	.	Sig. DONZELLI.

In advertising this, M. Bochsa, aware that his name would not be a tower of strength to it, withheld any announcement of his being a contributor, thinking that, peradventure the enterprise proved successful, he should come in for some share of the applause; and in the event of failure, hoping that he might remain concealed. After several weeks had been employed in the concoction of this pasticcio, it was at length drawn forth on Tuesday, the 17th ult.; when it experienced the same fate as its predecessor, the *Count Ory*, and was as completely condemned as the practice of this theatre will allow. We did not hear one voice raised in its defence, but many hands made an effort to support it, for the pit and gallery were densely peopled with *claqueurs*. All attempts, however, proved fruitless; and after a second trial, in a much reduced state, and with another overture, it was finally sentenced, and now will settle itself on the same shelf that hides from shame Monsieur Bochsa's *Deluge*, an unfortunate oratorio hissed out of Drury-Lane Theatre some years ago, and other dramatic miscarriages of the same invariably unsuccessful wight.

Nothing could have been worse than the general getting up of these two pieces; no attention paid to costume, to scenery, to processions, or to any of the properties. In *I Messicani* were employed scenes belonging to Greek



and Roman dramas, exhibiting the architecture belonging to both!

Poor Signor Donzelli,—what a waste of such talents!—was made to roar out so loud and so often in the last of these operas, that those who had not before heard him were unwilling to believe him to be the singer who had been described in such glowing terms. We will only add, that this was advertised as *an opera in one act, divided into two parts*, another artifice resorted to, with a view to its being judged with that lenity which is usually shewn to a mere operetta. It would be a waste of the reader's time to go further into the demerits of either of these very contemptible productions, of which we hope to hear no more. But we must mention a debutante in *Il Conte Ori*, a Signora Specchi, whose real name is SPECH, one of M. Laporte's *strongest company that ever was collected*, no doubt, but who, if engaged at more than eighty, or at the outside a hundred pounds, will prove a very bad *spec*, indeed, to the concern.

Madlle. Blasis, a French lady, with a soprano voice, who has sung with applause in Paris, made a successful debut here in *La Donna del Lago* last month. She came hither without any engagement, and very opportunely for the manager, for had not this lucky accident happened the house must have closed its doors. Before next month we shall have had a more favourable opportunity of hearing Madlle. Blasis, of whom we shall then speak more at large.

#### DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

ON the 10th of March a comic opera in three acts, under the title of *The Casket*, which owes its origin to a French piece, *Les Premières Amours*, was brought out at this theatre; the music selected from Mozart, and the whole adapted to our stage by Mr. R. Lacy. That it has not met with much success is attributable, in some measure, to its length, for, except the last scene, which is new in conception and extremely interesting, it drags exceedingly, and stands greatly in need of more sprightly dialogue. It would be better were it compressed; and some of the music may be well spared. This is selected from Mozart's works generally. Two or three pieces are from his *Idomeneo*: one, at least, of which is neither suited to our stage nor to the prevailing taste. Two short airs, published with English words in an early volume of the *Harmonicon*, are introduced, but are sung rather too slow to produce the true effect. The whole weight of the vocal part of the opera falls on Mr. Braham; and the want of a female singer of his own rank is much felt. Miss Betts is an able musician and a good performer upon the whole, but has not yet acquired the art of winning an audience, though she never fails to command their respect.

#### COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

ON the 23d of February Miss Paton re-appeared on this stage, after an absence of two years, and was received in a manner worthy of her talents, and honourable to the feelings of a public who are so much indebted to her for the high gratification they have for so many years derived from her exertions to please. The character chosen by her for this occasion was *Reiza*, in *Oberon*, which owed much of its first success to her admirable performance, and in her hands loses none of its attractions by repetition. Her voice is as strong as ever, and she seems to have

recovered entirely from the effects of her long and trying indisposition.

On the 7th of March was produced an opera from the pen of Mr. Lacy, named *The Maid of Judah*, the plot of which is taken from Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, the music selected from Rossini's *Semiramide*. This has succeeded in a very marked manner, but we heard it under circumstances so unfavourable,—jammed in with three others at the back of a box, two of them (with long mustachios) being half tipsy and exceedingly noisy—that we must defer entering into its merits till our next, by which time we hope to have been able to hear it unmolested.

#### THE ORATORIOS.

ON Friday the 6th of March, these Lent performances began at Covent-Garden Theatre, and will be continued to the end of the season at the two houses alternately.

Mehul's Oratorio, *Joseph*, with English words, has been performed with great and merited applause. The choruses in this possess a grandeur, arising from extreme simplicity, to which the fugue can never arrive: that at the commencement of the second act, "Dieu d'Israël," in plain counterpoint, is an undeniable proof of this fact. How sublime the effect of two or three perfect chords with their inversions, and a few notes sung in unison! We once heard this performed in Paris by one hundred and eighty voices, and the deep impression it made still lasts in our memory. The two romances\* are delicious airs; and other parts of this excellent work are equally entitled to admiration.

The MESSIAH was given at Drury Lane on the 11th, and so far as Braham alone could contribute to its support, was a perfect performance: to which let us add, that the choruses went exceedingly well, being executed with great precision and spirit. But to produce this Oratorio now, without the additional accompaniments of Mozart, is either a proof of the most unaccountable neglect in the manager, or of an obtuseness in his perception, that cannot be too strongly censured. Mozart, as we have said a hundred times before, only had recourse to means which there is every reason to believe Handel would gladly have employed, had they been within his reach. Mozart has not altered a single note; he has only supposed himself in the great composer's place, and done exactly what he was justly entitled to conclude Handel himself would have done, had he written his MESSIAH, at the close, instead of the early part of the eighteenth century. The charming serenata, *Acis and Galatea*, has also been performed, and portions of *Samson* and of *Israel in Egypt*. The choral and orchestral parts of these went extremely well, for Weichsel led, and the seceding instrumentalists of the opera band assisted. But there is a great want of principal singers. Braham and Phillips—the latter only on Fridays—can only take what is written for the tenor and base: it is too much to expect that Mad. Stockhausen should shine in English sacred music: Who then is there to sing the soprano songs?—Alas! there is no satisfactory answer to be given; and the public stay away, though the journals strive to draw them to the theatre, and endeavour to persuade us that their efforts are successful.

\* Both published in the *Harmonicon*; see Vol. II., page 31, and Vol. V., page 44.