

No. 2, in *b*, is a masterly composition, and has everything in its favour, except the accentuation of the words. What could tempt the composer to give a whole long bar to such words as 'when,' 'in,' and 'the'? Let us counsel him to sacrifice his present plates, and to re-engrave what is worthy of being admired and preserved, bating these blemishes, which will certainly, if suffered to remain, prove a great impediment to the success of the song.

No. 3 is the work of a good musician; but here again we find that sort of imitation—exhibited in rolling octaves of semiquavers—which we cannot admire, and very little, indeed, of novelty, without some of which quality any composition professing to be new must fail to excite interest.

No. 4 is an expressive song, well set to some excellent lines.

No. 5 is an animated, free air, and the words are appropriately set; but how often have we met with the same passages in different guises!

The plaintiveness of No. 6, and the correct manner in which the words are set, may perhaps recommend it to notice.

The words of No. 7 are accented in so cruel a manner, and there is so little otherwise to praise in the song, that we must mention it as a great failure.

We like Mr. Haite's verses and his melody, but the latter is somewhat light in its style, the mournful nature of the words being considered.

No. 9 has (thank heaven for such a blessing!) something like originality in its manner, and is altogether a very pleasing ballad. This is likely to become popular.

No. 10 has a great deal of pathos and beauty, but Sig. Costa's knowledge of our language is very slight, if indeed he knows a word of it, which we much doubt, he therefore has been misled in setting the words, the false accentuation of which is quite remarkable. We give him the advice that we offered the composer of No. 2—namely, to engrave the plate afresh, with the necessary corrections.

HARP AND PIANO-FORTE.

The favourite Airs, Choruses, &c. from HAYDN's Creation, with Accompaniments for the Flute, and Violoncello (ad libitum), by N. C. BOCHSA. Book I. (Chappell.)

THIS book comprises 'Now vanish before the holy beams,' 'The marvellous work,' 'Rolling in foaming billows,' and 'With verdure clad,' extremely well arranged for effect, but the ease of the pianist has not been much consulted. These four pieces make excellent drawing-room social music.

HARP.

INTRODUCTION and VARIATIONS in a French Waltz, composed by MISS M. A. DIBDIN. (Willis and Co.)
An airy, gay, short bagatelle.

VOCAL, WITH GUITAR.

SONGS from AUBER's Fra Diavolo, arranged by VERINI:—

1. 'The Gondolier.'
2. 'Fair Agnes.'
3. 'Vainly, alas! thoud'st soothe.'
4. 'I'm thine.'
5. 'On yonder rock.' (Chappell.)

THE English words to these might have been better adapted, certainly, but the errors are not either numerous or conspicuous. The guitar accompaniments are well arranged, and by no means difficult. No. 2 is the favourite barcarole, and No. 5 the Air—the most popular thing in the opera—printed in our Number for last April.

1. *AMPHION, or the Flowers of Melody, No. 10, containing the Melodies of the Singers of the Alps, by CARL FISCHER.*
2. Ditto, No. 11, by FERDINAND SOR. (Johanning and Whatmore.)

THOSE who relished the airs sung by the Alpine vocalists, may now have them in a cheap form.

No. 2 has the recommendation of Sor's name, but this is not one of his most successful efforts.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A DILETTANTE.

[Resumed from page 47.]

February 2nd. AN event new in theatrical history has occurred at Milan; the audience have been expelled from the grand opera house, LA SCALA, by a couple of regiments of Austrian soldiers, who, when the curtain rose, appeared on the stage with muskets pointed at the company in the pit. This curious politico-theatrical event is described and accounted for in the following manner, by the correspondent of a French journal. Of course the picture is rather highly coloured, but the main features are, I have good reason to believe, accurately portrayed. How wonderful that such an affair should have made so little noise beyond the Alps!—Will the Italians continue to bear this?—Cicero was of opinion that the moral state of a people might be learnt

from the character of their music. Judge the Italians by this test;—judge them by their hatred of Mozart; their utter ignorance of Handel and Beethoven, and very slight knowledge of Haydn; also by their admiration of Mercadante, Pacini, &c., and it will follow that a spirit to resist tyranny is either dormant or extinct in their breasts.

About two o'clock, on the *Corso*, crowds of pedestrians gravely said to each other: 'We shall meet again to-night at *La Scala*.' An Austrian officer reflected thereupon as much as an Austrian can reflect; he drew forth his pencil, for the danger appeared serious, and made memoranda.

From eight o'clock the promenaders of the *Corso*, punctual to their *rendezvous*, resorted to the vestibule of the

Theatre. All the doors of the immense playhouse were thrown open: they enter! The lustre sparkles; the boxes exude perfumes; the pit exhibits a thousand heads; the orchestra preludes; the spectators clap with impatience: they pause.

Already the iced sherbet circulates in the boxes; the tale of love is suspended; admirers yield their seats to husbands; the ladies eat; the pit yawns; but the curtain trembles.—‘Ah, mamma,’ exclaimed a young Milanese, with black eyes, and fine hair, ‘what am I going to see—an opera or a ballet?’—‘Both, my dear.’—‘I should like a serious one best.’—‘Silence in the boxes!’

The orchestra plays the overture to *La Gazza Ladra*.—‘Bravo! bravo!’—The pit applaud with the feet,—the ladies with their voices and fans. It resembles a concert. Happy Milanese! At length the curtain rises. Where are the decorations? Wait!—behold the performers!—Two Regiments of Hungarian Grenadiers! they take aim at the immense crowd. The soldiers’ eyes and fusils are turned towards the bosoms of men, and women, and children! Pit, boxes, orchestra, all fly—they scream, they shout, they are breathless—they knock down each other to escape being felled by the soldiers! ‘Is any one killed?’—‘God be thanked!’ But in the passages, at all the outlets, the Germans have mounted guard, threatening every one. The pit rise; swords are immediately at their breasts: the ladies faint—they are overwhelmed. All the assembly are made prisoners in a body. ‘To the Spitzberg prison with them!—To the fortress of Muncaez with all this canaille!’

4th. A Concert has been performed in Edinburgh without a single vocal piece! To Mr. Yaniewicz this novelty owes its birth, who played ‘Lord, remember David,’ on the violin, and it is very possible that the words were as distinctly articulated by him as they are by many singers; that is to say, not at all. The *Scotsman*, a paper to be relied on, whence I gain my information, thus describes and remarks on this concert:—

‘The music was entirely instrumental; and by intermingling the violin, harp, guitar, and pianoforte, an agreeable variety was produced. The first and second movements of Haydn’s quartett, op. 80., were exquisitely played by Yaniewicz, supported by Murray, Stewart, and Hancox. This quartett was composed by Haydn when far advanced in years, and yet how replete it is with fire, elegance, and originality! The andante of Mozart’s op. 10. contains many passages of the most delicate expression, which Yaniewicz did all justice to. The minuet, which is a pure emanation of genius, was executed with great spirit.

‘Occasionally, we remark in Yaniewicz’s playing, a few liberties taken with the original; such as varying the accent, retarding and accelerating the time, as the fancy and feeling of the moment dictate. This would be reprimandable in an ordinary player, but the genius of Yaniewicz adds even additional graces to the beauties of Mozart! Like an original actor, he gives us a new reading of the passage, which is as pleasing as it is unexpected. Nothing can be more beautiful than his playing of “Lord, remember David.” The whole soul of the performer seems poured forth in his expression of this divine air. He may well be said to make the strings speak. The pianoforte pieces by Miss Yaniewicz, and her sister, were very accurately and ably executed. One cannot fail to remark the decided clearness of Miss Yaniewicz’s playing;—every note tells, and every effect is brought out. Miss P. Yaniewicz plays the harp very judiciously. She never

‘overstrains the powers of the instrument, which we consider anything but pleasing when tortured with violent exercises and wrought up difficulties.’

There is no danger, however, of vocal music being banished the orchestra; unless, indeed, singers—foreign ones, I mean—should persist in forcing out of their own throats, and down ours, such trash as they have within the last few years introduced into our concerts. I hope that harp players will attend to the hint given in the above extract, which only speaks the opinion of all such sensible people as can discriminate between good and bad in music.

6th. While Handel was directing the rehearsal of one of his oratorios, the *Révue Musicale* tells us, he heard a gruff and unknown instrument among the basses. ‘What are those abominable sounds,’ he roared out, ‘which split my ears?’—‘A serpent,’ some one replied. ‘A serpent!’ growled the composer; ‘it does not seem to be that by which Eve was seduced.’ The story is as good as most things of the kind, but M. Fétis should have made a later composer the peg to hang it on. It is a pure anachronism; there were about as many serpents in England during Handel’s time, as *jupons* in paradise on the day of Eve’s nuptials.

10th. Hamburg had the honour of seeing Mdle. Sontag close her musical and dramatic career: the concerts she gave in that city proved as brilliant as productive; and an enthusiasm difficult to describe was manifested by the public every time she performed. She quitted Hamburg for the Hague, where her husband, the Count de Rossi, envoy from the court of Turin to the King of Holland, was waiting to receive her.

13th. Remarkable instances of accurate ears and penetrating eyes are given in the *Examiner* of this date. ‘On the night of the opening of the Opera,’ says the writer, ‘the *Times* discovered, through Madame Vespermann’s cold, that the exact compass of her voice was from *e* below the lines (by which the third space in the base must be meant!) to *F* in the upper key. The *Chronicle* saw that there was no change in the orchestra, excepting the absence of Mori, who was all the while as conspicuous as ever. The *Globe* saw, that the lovely Brocard was no less fascinating than heretofore, in her favourite character of *La Somnambule*,—which was performed by Madame Montessu!’

14th. THE LEADER LED. Madame Vestris, an evening paper (the *Globe*) states, was obliged very lately to take Signor Zerbini, her leader, out of the orchestra of her theatre, [the Olympic, by a police-officer! This leader, it seems, refused to be led by the *Directrice*, and actually flourished his baton of office, his fiddle-stick, in defiance; but stick *versus* truncheon had no chance; so yielded to the officer’s staff; and the *Primo Violino* condescended to play second fiddle to one of Peel’s *blue-bottles*, as the ‘rank and fashion’ of St. Giles’s have named our new police.

— The following piece of irony surprised me very much in the *Post* of this day: ‘. . . . The representative of *Zoraide* must have been extremely ill used by the orchestra: she scarcely sang a piece in which the instruments were not unfrequently half a note above her.’ This reminds me of a reply made by a friend of mine, some years ago, to one who remarked that Madame Ferlendis sang dreadfully out of tune. ‘Out of tune!’ exclaimed he. ‘She only sings in one key while the orchestra plays in another.’

17th. The Paris newspaper, *Le Temps*, of the 14th of February, thus speaks of the French company now acting in the Haymarket: 'The representations at the French theatre just opened in London, have, more than ever, occasion for the indulgence of the English. With very few exceptions, this company would hardly be tolerated in a French provincial theatre of the third class. But when one considers that the price of boxes for forty nights is from a hundred and forty to a hundred and sixty guineas, that a stall is half-a-guinea, and a seat in the pit three shillings and sixpence, it will not be denied that the public, from whom such extraordinary contributions are demanded, have a right to expect that rather more pains should have been taken to provide for their amusement.'

24th. A journal remarkable for its approval of everything that goes on at the Opera House, thus spoke, at the commencement of the year, of Madame Vespermann's talents. The event has borne the eulogist out in his praise with a vengeance!—If Sontag's mantle has fallen on Madame Vespermann, it has fallen indeed! Thus writes the paragraphist: 'M. Laporte has succeeded, after much negotiation, and with some difficulty, in engaging the celebrated *cantatrice* (Madame Vespermann), of Munich, who will make her first appearance in this country early in the season. She is considered on the continent to possess such vocal abilities as to entitle her to be named Sontag's rival.'

28th. The Directors of the Ancient Concerts have engaged Braham for the latter eight of their twelve performances this season. They wished to retain him for the whole series, but on applying to the manager of the Oratorios, who had previously secured his services, to permit him to attend at Hanover Square during one hour only on the first two Wednesdays, the request was refused. The policy of this denial is not very apparent, for the audiences at the Concert and the theatre differ as much as their *locales*, and the matter could have been so arranged—as has often happened before—that both parties might have been served, with only some additional fatigue to the performer.

—Very considerable reductions have been made in the salaries of many of the performers at the Ancient Concerts this year, in consequence of the losses sustained last. Some of the principal vocalists are engaged for only half a season; others have been induced to lower their terms, and economy is the order of the day. I am glad to learn, however, that the small pittance, comparatively speaking, bestowed on the orchestral performers, is not lessened. This does credit to the feeling and judgment of the noble directors.

March 4th. At the *Concentores* this evening, the Chevalier Neukomm, a visiter, produced a German *Chorale*, or psalm-tune, in many parts, which was performed by the members present, aided by their friends; and all agreed in bestowing the warmest praises on a composition which alone would suffice to rank the author, a dilettante, among the greatest musicians of the age.

7th. The second performance of the Philharmonic Society this evening showed how much the effect of a concert depends on variety in key and style, and on the relative situation of each piece. The selection was of the best music, but the monotony arising from an immediate succession of several things in a similar, or nearly similar,

key, and of the same school, threw a damp over compositions in themselves excellent, and rendered dull what, when properly placed, always pleases. The change now introduced from a card to a sheet of post paper, for the program and words of the vocal pieces, affording great abundance of room, I recommend the directors no longer to balk the company by printing only half the words, as was most unnecessarily the case in the duet from *Semiramide*. Perhaps, however, this was done to conceal the absurdity of an *Arsace* in petticoats. While on this subject, I will, by way of jog to the Italian Poet to whom the supervision of the press is delegated, invite him to discharge his duty with a little more care. The errors in the bill, &c., of the present concert, might lead one to imagine that this department is in the hands of a Dutchman, or some other Bæotian. I entreat him moreover to insert the dramatic names at full length, *once*, and abridge afterwards. Who is to guess what is meant by *Arsa*, by *Oros*, or by *Nor*?

12th. Heard some of Handel's music very rudely treated at the Academy of Music this morning. Such *perruquerie*, as I suppose the juveniles of this institution term it, is certainly not so easy as the compositions of Pacini, but it is an unerring test, the true touchstone, of vocal ability and musical feeling. I would fain ask the pupils, how they are hereafter to obtain those desirable engagements which the various festivals and meetings offer, if they are not well grounded in the oratorios and other works of Handel? For, they should be informed, the superior taste of the people of York, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Norwich, &c., leads them to select from these *antiquities* more copiously than from any other source. I wonder, by-the-by, if the singing-masters of this academy ever practise their pupils in the fine music of the Catholic church—in the masses, both ancient and modern, for which a taste is so evidently reviving? I suspect that this question, if formally put, would prove a searching one.

13th. A writer in the *Examiner* of this day tells us that Paganini 'has for the first time passed the Rhine on his way to Paris and London, and will arrive at the latter capital in April next. There cannot,' it is added, 'be a more inoffensive creature. His sole propensity is to gain money by his art, and his passion to lose it at the gaming table.'—(This is rather a loose mode of expression; but I will proceed with my extract.)—'Though there is no foundation for his having been imprisoned for killing a wife or a mistress, yet there is the impress of some blighting sorrow on him. As to his performance, the highest praise of a descriptive kind would be calculated to prejudice the reality. To be conceived it must be heard; and there is demonstration of two seemingly arrogant *dicta* of his to the writer of this notice: "Other musicians close their gamut at G, mine reaches T."—(No doubt this has some meaning, though it is so deep, or so subtle, that it defies all my efforts to make it out.)—"A violinist," Paganini continues, "who cannot on occasion produce, and clearly too, a hundred notes in a second, should renounce all hope of music—he will never benefit by the revolution my legacy will cause in the world of harmony." A hundred notes in a second! What a flash-o'-lightning sort of man this must be! If the thing were not absolutely impossible, I should wish, with Dr. Johnson, that it were so. Probably, however, I may be like him who, after reading Gulliver's Travels, exclaimed, that he had never before met with such a heap of improbable lies.

The renowned catgutarch never meant to be taken *au pied de la lettre*; it was only a flourish of his long bow. Nevertheless, this continual boasting of his arrow-like velocity bodes no good; he is, I fear, a six-hook-note man, and values himself on that in which very common machinery can beat him hollow. In a race of sounds, a musical snuff-box would leave him far behind—be his speed what it may; so that if quickness of finger is his *forte*, a Swiss toy is his superior. But, after all, the whole story is very possibly a joke, for which we may be indebted to the momentary dissipation of poor Paganini's gloom, or the sprightly imagination of the narrator. The following, however, which is part of the same article, is certainly intended to be literally understood—the illustration is happy:—‘Paganini's bow (*Scottice*, boo) is almost as wonderful as his bow (*Anglice*, fiddle-stick)—the crawfish would attempt ‘something like it were he on the stage, but not so well.’

19th. Heard Mrs. Wood in her second character, *Ottavia*, in Pacini's *Ultimo Giorno di Pompei*. I am at ease for her; she is quite up to anything Rossini, Pacini, or Mercadante can demand of her. Mozart is another question; whether she could embody his *pensieri grandi* is still to be proved. But again, I say, if she be ignorant, as she is said to be, of the language, her performance is almost a phenomenon. She mistook no feeling—spoiled no situation. And for her pronunciation—with ears sharpened by the diurnal critics, I watched it attentively, and can honestly say, that I have heard more offensive Italian issue from lips born to the southward of the Alps.

21st. A critic in a morning paper of this date, whose unjust severity, in speaking of Mrs. Wood's performance in *L'Ultimo Giorno di Pompei*, so much overshoots the mark as to be rather serviceable to her than otherwise, shows distinctly what are his qualifications for the duties

he undertakes. Among other *niaiserie*s he censures that lady's manner of singing ‘*Voi che sapete*,’ which air she left out!—and tells us that David reached G in *altissimo*! a note which Mrs. Billington actually could sing, but we believe no one after her, except, perhaps, Mdle. Sontag. What must be thought of the critic, who considers such a singer as Mrs. Wood unworthy of a place near—(near Pasta, or Sontag, or Malibran, the reader expects us to say; but no!—near)—Signor David!—*Eheu*!

23rd. The Countess de Rossi and her husband have expressed their intention of visiting England during the summer. The late prima donna has, since her marriage, been received into the first society, and possesses so valuable a collection of presents, that at a late party which she gave at the Hague, she wore jewels to the value of 200,000 francs, or 8400*l*. The Countess's voice is in full splendour, but she would seem to be indisposed in her feet from being always slipshod, and from being not unfrequently carried to and from her carriage. She would, I am sure, be cordially received in London.

24th. At a grand party given by the Duke of Devonshire yesterday, Miss Masson, an English lady possessing very superior vocal qualifications, and who, as an intimate friend of Madame Pasta, has been passing many months with her in Italy, benefiting by her example and instructions, sang two airs in a manner that showed her own great talent, the result of long study, and the advantages she has reaped by her visit to the reigning queen of Italian song. Miss Masson is evidently an excellent musician, and mistress not only of the modern Italian style, but no less at home in oratorio and other sacred music. She sings Handel, Mozart, or Rossini, with equal and discriminating taste, and is decidedly an acquisition of great importance to the musical world at the present moment.

THE ANCIENT CONCERTS.

So generally prevalent, during the early part of the last season, were the reports that these Concerts were *in articulo mortis*; and could not possibly prolong their existence to another year, that the Directors thought it expedient to put forth a declaration in the public journals, stating such reports to be ‘groundless and injurious,’ and announcing ‘that they will be resumed next year, and continued as usual.’ Nothing short of this open and direct avowal, proceeding from the highest authority, could, we apprehend, have been effectual in silencing reports, which, in their very nature, were calculated to produce the event anticipated. The nearly expiring lease of the Hanover Rooms, and the gradual decline of subscriptions, were probably the chief causes which gave rise to so general a belief. Still an important question remains to be asked—*Why* have the subscriptions so fallen off? Music was never more fashionable, nor more universally cultivated, than in the present day. No rival Concert exists, which can in any degree interfere with this; nor can the terms of subscription materially affect it, looking, as it does, for support amongst those classes of society to whom the amount cannot be an object of consideration. Much more might be said upon this point—but we proceed to notice the first Concert for the season, earnestly, yet respectfully, endeavoring to impress upon the minds of the Directors the

absolute necessity, on their part, of providing fresh ‘*Ways and Means*’ to satisfy the increasing demand required and expected from them. Instead of wearying the subscribers with worn-out music, fatiguing and tiresome from endless repetition, let them draw from their valuable stores, *guided by judicious and competent knowledge*, such treasures of ancient and meritorious composers, as may excite the performers to fresh exertions, and stimulate to greater excellence. Instead of having the same parties, year after year, until an engagement at the ancient music comes to be considered as an annuity for life, let superior talent, both vocal and instrumental, be sought after and brought forward. Unless these, and other points, which we shall occasionally advert to, should be thought worthy the attention of ‘the high contracting powers,’ sure we are, that, however these Concerts may drag on for a time a listless and inglorious existence, yet their end cannot be distant. They may be said to be living now, and for years past, upon their former reputation and credit; and, like the human constitution, where the stamina remains sound, but, from the prevalence of bad habits, evil symptoms infallibly appear, which, unless counteracted by science and skill, must tend to fatal results: so, in the case before us,



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