

as an insult, and invariably rising from the instrument. Many, however, hesitate to do this, as it would lay them open to the charge of rudeness to the hostess who has asked them to play ; therefore it devolves on the latter to see that the more gifted portion of their guests are not annoyed by the rest. We know a few ladies who do insist firmly that there shall be no talking at their parties whilst a piece of music is being performed, but those who do this should be particular about two things ; first, that they have no music that is not worth listening to ; second, that the programme is not too long or too heavy. We have heard a pianist play the whole of a sonata of Bethoven at a musical party, the effect of which was to disgust and weary the unmusical, and even the musical portion could not but feel that it was out of place. Deep classical music, like deep reading, requires a suitable state of mind to receive it, and the attempt to appreciate the Sonata Passionata, for instance, in the middle of a miscellaneous concert or party programme, is as hopeless as would be the attempt to read a theological treatise whilst some one else was reading " Lady Audley's Secret " aloud.

The question of who to invite to a musical party is a great, but not an insoluble, problem. Our friends may be broadly divided into three classes : those who love and understand music, those who like it " in moderation," and those devoid of music. The latter we will eliminate from our guests altogether, and in making up a programme (which we hold should be done beforehand), let us choose music good enough to please the first class, and yet not so deep that the second shall fail to understand and be interested. Let us be careful that the programme is not too long, but whilst it does last let perfect silence be insisted on ; after it is over, the conversation will flow the more freely for its temporary check, and the time after supper can be occupied by music, not previously arranged, or a dance, as the case may be. The great desideratum is to make a musical party thoroughly musical, and yet to stop short of the point at which it becomes to many tedious and wearisome. Once let it be understood, that at a musical party you will hear good music, hear it without interruption, and that you will afterwards be able to enjoy pleasant, social intercourse, and it will then become an artistic pleasure, a means of musical improvement, and will be a powerful auxiliary to the Concert Room as a means of spreading a true love for, and more thorough knowledge of music.

---

Colonists in the days when colonists were more sentimental than they are now, would, on leaving their mother country, take with them a handful of earth from their native village. This they did for the sake only of early associations ; but the act had a meaning beyond what they supposed. They carried with them, unconsciously perhaps, a pledge that they would continue in their new country the principles of the old one. Thus it was proposed some time ago, on the Thames Embankment to carry on the history commenced a century and a-half ago at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. To be exact, it is just one hundred and sixty-six years since Handel produced *Rinaldo*, the first opera he gave in England at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket. The Royal Italian Opera has now been established nearly thirty years at Covent Garden, but though its history during that time has been creditable and even brilliant, its list of achievements is naturally not to be compared