

Zoology. His work on Mineralogy is the earliest production on that subject extant, and in it he divides minerals into stones and earths, and classifies them according to their density and power of resisting heat; but his treatise on the precious stones is the most interesting. Theophrastus was not a stranger to technology; he manufactured glass, paints from metallic oxides, and mouldings in plaster. He was for thirty-five years President of the Lyceum, where 2000 youths were being educated. He died at an advanced age, regretting the shortness of life, feeling that just as he was beginning to learn, death must needs intrude. Aristotle and Theophrastus are ever to be considered the greatest Grecian scientists.

The troubles into which Greece was thrown after the death of Alexander, led finally to the banishment of the *Savants*, who were attracted to Alexandria by the largess of Ptolemy Lagus the founder of the celebrated library which contained 400,000 volumes. Here the spirit of original research gave place to theories, and we find that only medicine, medical botany, and astronomy were cultivated. When the *Savants* were driven out of Greece, *Anatomy* was severely proscribed, the Greeks in strong contrast to the Chinese and Egyptians, had a strong dislike to science.

(To be continued.)

THE WORTHLESSNESS OF GENERAL MUSICAL CRITICISM.

Music holds a very singular position among those arts which are commonly designated, the Fine Arts. Except poetry, music is capable of giving simultaneous enjoyment to a far greater number of people, than any other art. The same composition may be performed at the same time in fifty places, and may delight hundreds at each place; whereas a fine picture or statue can be enjoyed by only a very few at a time. In this then music has decidedly the advantage, over its sister arts. But again music labours under the disadvantage that in order to give pleasure to any number of people it must be well interpreted to them. Be the composition ever so noble in itself, unless the interpreters are capable of understanding and enjoying it

themselves, and also of overcoming the difficulties of execution which it presents, the audience can experience little or no pleasure from the hearing of it. They are in the position of one who is looking through a window at a beautiful landscape. If the glass be free from blisters and blemishes, the observer sees the beauty of the scene, just as it is. But if there be any imperfections or any peculiar tint in the glass, the whole scene becomes distorted and discoloured, and the sight of it affords little gratification to the beholder. This then is the disadvantage under which music labours, that the media (the performers) through which it is perceived, are very likely to give it some peculiar shade, or distortion of their own, and thus proportionately to destroy the effect intended by the composer.

In this respect, a painter, or sculptor has a great advantage over a musician. For both of the former are independent of all interpreters. There is nothing between their work and those who perceive it. They are their own expositors, and accordingly if any of their works are found wanting the blame rests wholly with themselves.

Not so the musician. In all probability his works are never heard exactly as they would sound if he could himself direct each performance of them. We might proceed to much greater length in this line of argument, but enough has been said to show that music is a very complicated phenomenon, and that accordingly only a person who has thought on the subject, and given it study and time, should criticise a musical composition and performance.

As we have seen that music is, in some respects at least, more complicated than any other of the fine arts we should suppose that a musical critic would of all others require great familiarity with his subject.

Do we find then that this is the case? On the contrary, we are persuaded that no class of critics are so thoroughly incompetent as those whose duty it is to aid the public in forming a just judgment of musical compositions.

Far from being acquainted with his subject, the musical critic may be ignorant of the