

SINGERS AND SINGING.—The Italians are the only people who have cultivated vocal science with pre-eminent success. From them are deduced the ev principles that are established in other countries. Perhaps we may trace certain national variations of tone in singing to the predominance of peculiar actions of the organs of speech in pronouncing the several languages. The French are nasal, the Germans are guttural, and the English sibilant. These are the characteristics of their several languages. Their own singers differ too in their manner of voicing, while the Italians, whose smooth and gliding syllables are lubricated by the constant succession of vowels, evince in the uniformity of their conduct of the voice, their *portamento*, as it is termed, that they have a regular and certain method of producing tone; and it must be conceded to them that it produces the purest and the best that art has hitherto attained. They appear, as far as such an act will admit of being described, to form the tone more at the back of the mouth, keeping the throat moderately open, than either in the chest, the head, or the throat itself. We should say that there is a place near the back of the mouth, where the voice, whether from the head or the chest, must pass, and it seems as if the method brings the tone to this spot previous to production, and sends it forth in its finished state, from that precise point, untainted either by the nose or the throat, the mouth or the lips. The mouth, which the English singer causes to take a very principal direction, has little, if any, immediate influence in the formation of the Italian tone. The mouth and lips are much more visibly at rest; they assume a gentle smiling character; the aperture is lengthened rather than rounded as in English singing. Upon such a matter, words convey very inadequate ideas; but if the reader will closely observe and endeavour to imitate the tone of a fine Italian singer, a sort of sympathy will direct him to that immediate action of the organs employed in the production and emission of sound which we have attempted to describe, and he will clearly understand these differences.

Besides these grand essentials of purity, richness, sweetness, and brilliancy, I have said it is important that the voice in all its compass and variety should carry with it a distinguishing and predominant characteristic, by which it may always be recognised. This property is perfectly compatible with the most sublime, the most lively, or the most pathetic expression of tone. The auditor, even with his eyes shut, should never be at a loss to determine whether the notes proceed from the same person; the conduct of the voice should be equable, and the tones in pronouncing the different vowels, as nearly alike as is consistent with pure and unaffected pronunciation, which ought upon no account to be sacrificed to erroneous notions of tone. The license which the Italian language grants in this point, in permitting something like the insertion of vowels between words beginning and ending with consonants, is not to be endured in an English singer. *Moy for my, doy for die*, must always be disgusting to a classical ear in any tone. The transitions, though well-marked and well defined, should never be too violent or sudden, but should seem to melt into each other by proper gradations, unless in compositions where a change of the sentiment demands an entire and rapid alteration. The notes should never be quitted abruptly, but should sink as it were into silence. These appear to be the only general rules.

SOME PARTICULARITIES OF GOETHE.—A distinguished painter, M. de Keilhoeltzer, who was on habits of intimacy with Goethe during the last twelve years of his life, has given us an account of some of the great man's peculiarities, of which the public was previously ignorant.

Light and warmth Goethe loved above all things; and consequently, the higher the temperature, the gayer and the more conversible was he. He used to say jestingly, that if a man could form beforehand a true idea of the horrors of winter, he would hang himself in the autumn, sooner than endure them. He would never allow the windows of his study or of his sleeping-room to be opened; even if the air was fairly noxious, he found it comfortable. It was only in his absence, and at the risk of being severely censured, that those around him would sometimes, acting from a well grounded anxiety for his health, throw open those two apartments to change the air in them.

Goethe was insensible to unpleasant odours, with the single exception of that of rotten apples—an odour which, by a singular contrast, Schiller was peculiarly fond of. Goethe walked one day into Schiller's study, and not finding him at home, determined to await his return, and sat down not far from the poet's desk, but soon experienced a stupor which gained gradually upon him, and did not disappear until he was fairly in the street. Schiller's servant set to work to find, if possible, what could have produced such an effect on Goethe's nerves; and found on a shelf above the desk a score or so of apples, all more or less rotten, with which the author of *Joan of Arc* had provided himself, in order to perfume to his taste what he called his "workshop."

Goethe, whether at home or in society, always endeavoured to snuff with his own hands all the candles near him, because, as he used to say, it was an operation that no one could perform to his satisfaction. He has even been known to leave more than one party abruptly, because the servants had not snuffed the candles

that stood before him in a way that pleased him, and because there were no snuffers on the table, wherewith to correct their blunders. He did not like to be asked how he did, and if such a question was put to him when he happened to be in the least indisposed, he was vexed, and without making any answer, would change the conversation to some other subject. He loved life, but loved good health more and did not fear death. "The only things I now fear," he would say, in the last year of his life, "are diseases, and a painful end. If God will grant me an easy death, and that soon, it is all I ask."

VERIFICATION OF A DREAM.—A letter from Hamburg contains the following curious story relative to the verification of a dream. It appears that a locksmith's apprentice one morning lately informed his master, (Claude Soller,) that on the previous night he dreamt that he had been assassinated on the road to Bergedorff, a little town at about two hours' distance from Hamburg. The master laughed at the young man's credulity, and to prove that he himself had little faith in dreams, insisted upon sending him immediately to Bergedorff, with one hundred and forty six dollars, which he owed to his brother-in-law, who resided in the town. The apprentice, after in vain imploring his master to change his attention, was compelled to set out about eleven o'clock. On arriving at the village of Billwaerder, about half way between Hamburg and Bergedorff, he recollected his dream with terror; but, perceiving the baillie of the village at a little distance, talking to some of his workmen, he accosted him, and acquainted him with his singular dream; at the same time requesting, that as he had money about his person, one of his workmen might be allowed to accompany him for protection, across a small wood which lay in his way. The baillie smiled, and, in obedience to his orders, one of his men set out with the young apprentice. The next day the corpse of the latter was conveyed by some peasants to the baillie, along with the reaping-hook, which had been found by his side, and with which the throat of the murdered youth had been cut. The baillie immediately recognized the instrument as one which he had on the previous day given to the workman who had served as the apprentice's guide, for the purpose of pruning some willows. The workman was apprehended, and, on being confronted with the body of his victim, made a full confession of his crime, adding, that the recital of the dream had alone prompted him to commit the horrible act. The assassin, who is thirty-five years of age, is a native of Billwaerder, and previously to the perpetration of the murder had always borne an irreproachable character.

PERSONAL ADORNMENT OF LADIES.—Art is an extremely beautiful thing, but nature is a much more beautiful and a wiser one. Jewelry of all sorts is a beautiful thing; satin, velvet, the costly oriental draperies, etc., are also abstractedly grateful to the eye, and are chief ingredients in the entire composition of the gorgeousness of the picture; but despite of our admiration of these, the general ornaments of ladies, we still cannot help remarking the very few natural flowers and wreaths by which a woman can alone increase (if it be possible to increase) her own beauty. Pure as the diamond is, clear as the brilliant is, warm as the ruby is, sunshiny as the topaz is—a beautiful woman is purer, clearer, warmer, and casts forth a more celestial sunshine than any one of them; and they are, therefore, not so fitted to accompany and share the admiration compelled by a woman's beauty as flowers, the only things of the lovely which art cannot increase in beauty, except women. We remember a short time back being inexpressively delighted with the taste a young lady, who sat near us, displayed in the style of her head-dress, which consisted merely of a wreath of white roses. Her eyes and hair were as black as sloes; upon her cheeks was the delicate blushing of the rose; and these with the sweet modesty of her face's expression, united to the simplicity of the head-dress, composed an aspect the beauty of which could not possibly have been attained by the costliest tiara of diamonds, or the united brilliancies of all the precious stones wealth could procure. How the beauties of Titian and the old masters would suffer if jewelry were substituted for the profusion of flowers by which they are adorned. We really find it difficult to see the propriety of putting a heavy head-gear about the delicate brow of a fairy, but could well fancy her supporting a delicate rose wreath, or even the more ample luxuriance of a crown of ivy or vine. Do our readers think with us?

CALLING OF THE QUEEN BEES.—"I have never been able to see what was going on at the time this calling took place but once. As our bees are not very near the house, it is my practice, in swarming time (when I have any reason to expect a swarm), to walk to the aviary about 10 o'clock, to ascertain if any hives are getting very busy, in which case I place some one to work near the spot. Going one morning to a hive I expected to send forth a swarm, I was amused at the sound of "peep, peep." Feeling interested in what might be the result, I continued my observations till the swarm came out, but I think it is probable it had been going on for a considerable time before. This sound of "peep, peep," came from an old queen, whom I could plainly

see going from one part of the hive to the other; running in a hurried manner, as though anxious to escape, and uttering the call in a hoarse kind of way every time she stopped. During the time this was going on, there was another sound of "peep, peep," of a shriller kind, from a fixed point; but it was in the interior of the hive, and consequently, out of the reach of my observation. This continued about an hour, when the swarm issued forth; but whether the queen who ought to have accompanied it was destroyed in the hive, or lost after she came out, I cannot say; but, almost as soon as the bees were out they returned to the parent stock, and never after made an attempt to swarm, neither was there any more confusion in the hive, nor sound of "peep" from either old or young queens, but all went on as peaceably as though nothing had happened.—*Gardener's Magazine*.

BEAUTY OF THE JEWESS.—Fontaine asked me one day, why the women of the Jewish race were so much handsomer than the men. I gave him a reason at once poetical and Christian. The Jewesses, I replied, have escaped the curse which has alighted upon their fathers, husbands and sons. Not a Jewess was to be seen among the crowd of priests and the rabble who insulted the Son of man, scourged him, crowned him with thorns, subjected him to ignomy and the cross. The women of Judea believed in the Saviour—they loved, they followed him, they soothed him under afflictions. A woman of Bethany poured on his head the precious ointment which she kept in a vase of alabaster; the sinner anointed his feet with a perfumed oil, and wiped them with her hair. Christ, on his part, extended his grace and mercy to the Jewesses; he raised from the dead the son of the widow of Nain, and Martha's brother, Lazarus; he cured Simon's mother-in-law, and the woman who touched the hem of his garment. To the Samaritan woman he was a spring of living water, and a compassionate Judge to the woman in crime. The daughters of Jerusalem wept over him; the holy women accompanied him to Calvary; balm, and spices, and weeping, sought him at the sepulchre: "woman, why weepest thou?" His first appearance was to Magdalen; he said to her, "Mary!" At the sound of that voice Magdalen's eyes were opened, and she answered, "Master!" The reflection of some very beautiful ray must have rested on the brow of the Jewesses.—*Chateaubriand*.

FRESH AIR.—The celebrated Dr. Darwin was so impressed with a conviction of the necessity of good air, that, being very popular in the town of Derby, once on a market-day he mounted a tub, and then addressed the listening crowd. "Ye men of Derby, fellow-citizens, attend to me! I know you to be ingenious and industrious mechanics. By your exertions you procure for yourselves and families the necessaries of life; but if you lose your health, that power of being of use to them must cease. This truth all of you know; but I fear some of you do not understand how health is to be maintained in vigour—this then depends upon your breathing an uncontaminated air; for the purity of the air becomes destroyed where many are collected together; the effluvia from the body corrupts it. Keep open, then, the windows of your workshops, and as soon as you rise, open all the windows of your bed-rooms. Inattention to this advice, be assured, will bring disease on yourselves, and engender among you typhus fever, which is only another name for putrid fever, which will carry off your wives and children. Let me again repeat my serious advice—open your windows to let in the fresh air; at least once in the day. Remember what I say; I speak now without a fee, and can have no other interest but your good in this my advice."—*Maidstone Journal*.

POWER OF PREJUDICE.—"People are apt to see the force of evidence or of argument only as it makes for their own prejudices—the wish is father to the thought." The wolf when he was learning to read, could make nothing out of the letters, whatever they might be, that were set before him, but 'lamb.' Cudworth suggests that even geometrical theorems, (that the three angles of a triangle for instance, are equal to two right angles,) if connected with offensive moral truths, might possibly become the subject of doubt and controversy. And Mr. Lo Bas, who adopts this sentiment in his valuable essay on Miracles, adds in a note, somewhat after the manner of Warburton's Illustrations, "If the Pythagorean proposition (Euc. 1. 47,) were to impose on mathematicians the Pythagorean maxim of a strict vegetable diet, what carnivorous student of geometry would ever get to the end of the first book in Euclid? Or if we could conceive the doctrine of Fluxions had, somehow or other, been combined with an obligation to abstain from the use of wine; does any one believe that it would have gained its present undisputed establishment throughout the scientific world? Should we not at this very day have many a thirsty analyst protesting that he was under an absolute inability to comprehend or to credit the systems?"—*Quar. Review*.

There are readers who get no further than the title page of books, like the Indian fox, who devours only the heads of insects.