



JULIEN'S CONCERTS.

Wonderful as is Julien's band for the vastness of its organization and the perfection of its detail, for its almost stunning power and yet marvellous delicacy, in no respect is it more extraordinary than in the number and excellence of its solo players. Of these we now purpose to speak.

Koenig on the cornet, Bottesini on the double bass, Wuille on the clarinet, Lavigne on the oboe, and Reichart on the flute, constitute the first class of soloists; and the Brothers Mollenhaur on the violin, Schreus on the viola d'amore, Hughes on the ophicleide, Collinet on the flageolet, and Hardy on the bassoon, the second class.

First in importance, as in popularity, we mention Herr Koenig, whose performance on the *cornet à piston* has given him the highest position in the estimation of the public. Of him, as indeed of all the first class soloists, it may be said that he stands confessedly at the head of his profession. He has no peer, he is *par excellence* the player of the world. His tone is distinguished for its purity, fullness, clearness, and correctness. Considered as a mechanical player he surpasses all others in the rapidity and distinctness of his execution and the perfection of his *trille*. His phrasing and expression are the most correct and artistic; but his crowning influence consists in the beautiful delicacy of his intonations and his fine sympathetic powers. Every note is replete with sentiment and pathos; a poetic feeling pervades all; whilst the intensity of his expression is so great as to produce a tremulousness of tone as rare as it is delightful upon this instrument. One of his greatest effects is the wonderful echo which he produces in such a telling manner in

the "Echos du Mont Blanc." The peculiar strength of lip required to produce this effect may be best appreciated by those conversant with the mechanical difficulties of the instrument. As a mere mechanician, Herr Koenig has no equal; and when we add that unimpeachable good taste characterizes every phrase and note, we need not wonder at the hold he has taken of popular feeling.

Bottesini is at least an equal prodigy on the ponderous instrument, from which he extracts such wonderful tones. In his hands the *contrabasso* becomes entirely metamorphosed. Divested of its usual orchestral character, it rises to the dignity of a singing Concert instrument. No longer confined to the dull ordinary routine of orchestral substratum, it soars into the regions of the violincello and violin, and vies with these instruments in the delicacy and subtlety of its tones. And yet it loses none of its elementary characteristics, but retains all the fullness, depth, and firmness of tone, which gives it its fundamental importance in the orchestra. It is incomprehensible to us, how Signor Bottesini with his fragile physique, manages to wield this gigantic instrument, requiring as it does the utmost rapidity and dexterity, with the greatest strength of hand and fingers for the production of the lower notes. His harmonics, and that too, in running passages, are equal to those of Ole Bull or Paul Julien. In the "Carnival of Venice" he gives the most remarkable example of his wonderful facility in passages of execution, and in the solos from "Sonnambula" the artistic feeling in singing *sostenuto* passages are not surpassed by any artist of the Italian Opera. He is unapproached and unapproachable in the world.