

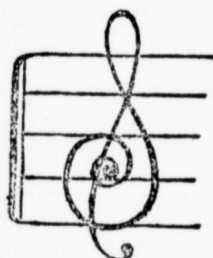
CHANGE.

When we are gone,
The generation that comes after us
Will have far other thoughts than ours. Our
ruins
Will serve to build their palaces or tombs.
They will possess the world that we think ours,
And fashion it far otherwise. —Longfellow.

QUEENS OF SONG.

STORIES ABOUT WARBLERS SUG-
GESTED BY JENNY LIND'S DEATH.

None Ever Took the Country So by
Storm as the Swedish Nightingale, but
Nilsson, Patti, Grisi, Alboni, Malibran
and Others Have Sung Very Well.



SINCE the death of Jenny Lind all the old opera patrons have been relating their reminiscences, and we have a thousand interesting stories about the various queens of song. Many have charmed the American people, but none ever took the country by storm as did the "Swedish Nightingale." Her fair countrywoman, Christine Nilsson, was loved for her womanly sweetness and admired as much for her grace and beauty as for the range and purity of her voice, while Patti, Grisi, Alboni and Malibran had praise enough; but none excited such furore as did Jenny Lind. Her previous career in Europe had been a great success, it is true; but there the people had traditions of other great singers. In America Jenny Lind had all the advantages of novelty and the perfection of advertising as practiced by a master of the art. Her success, therefore, stands unrivaled in the world. Even when we scan the histories of the greatest singers of former times, we find no success so brilliant. It is a curious fact that, as we trace it back, the line of noted singers seems to end abruptly not quite 200 years ago. For 1,000 years before that time we hear of great actresses occasionally; but either great songstresses were rare or the public taste had not developed to the proper appreciation, or, as is most likely, the social and religious prejudices of the people set so strongly against woman in public that their genius was never developed. Indeed, we know that for many centuries it was rare that women sang in

religious service, and in the principal churches of Rome her singing was positively forbidden.

Nell Gwynn, the actress, is a prominent historic figure of the time of Charles II, and immediately after her Anna Bracegirdle was queen of the stage; but they had no contemporaries in song. Soon after, however, came one of those strange changes in public taste or opinion, and then noted songstresses appear in the history of many places in Europe. First of these on the British stage was Faustini Bordoni, an Italian, born in 1700. She had queened it in France and Italy for ten years before making her first appearance in London, in 1726, as Statira in Handel's "Alessandro." She sung from the age of 16 to that of 52, and retained her vocal sweetness till after retiring.



Catarina Gabrielli succeeded her in popular favor. She was the daughter of a cook in Rome, and her voice was noted for its sweetness as soon as she could speak. She was as beautiful and witty as she was musical, and more than one duel was fought on her account. The French ambassador to Vienna was so infatuated with jealousy on her account that he tried to kill her, but the point of his sword broke on her whalebone bodice. She was ordered out of Russia because a prince fell in love with her, but not till she had given Catherine II a taste of her wit. When told by the singer that her price for an evening would be 5,000 ducats the empress cried in amazement:

"Five thousand ducats! Why, that is more than I pay a field marshal!"

"Ah," said the unabashed cantatrice, "then get one of your field marshals to sing for you." She died in 1796, aged 66.

Sophie Arnould was another beautiful and witty singer—so witty that a book of her sayings has been compiled. But wit in woman is rarely genial, and many of Sophie's repartees are strongly spiced with sarcasm. She was born in Paris in 1744, sung in all the European capitals, and died in 1803. Elizabeth Weichsel was born in London in 1770, married her music master, Thomas Billington, and for ten years was queen of British song as "Bettie Billington." Giuseppa Grassini, who reigned a little later, was long known as the favorite of Napoleon Bonaparte. She left her native Italy with him soon after the

M

Am

Sui

S

Work f