

dämmerung. A Norwich concert for the benefit of Dr. Bunnett was well attended and testified in many ways to the estimation in which the injured gentleman is held. It may be remembered that in consequence of some promise to an older friend of the Dean's, Dr. Bunnett was deprived of that promotion to the highest musical position in the city to which he was so fairly entitled. Arabella Goddard has been delighting the provinces, and was specially successful at Brighton. Mr. Best's fine organ recitals at Liverpool have been almost entirely stopped by the condition of the organ, which is almost too uncertain to be used at all. Says the *Liverpool Porcupine* :—"It is suffering from what may be termed *organic* asthma. It is subject to strange internal rumblings, its whole system in fact, is demoralized." It will be a lasting disgrace for the citizens of Liverpool, if the great organ of St. George's Hall, which has almost of itself conferred on her musical repute, is not repaired immediately.

After MacFarren's "*Lady of the Lake*," the two most interesting recent English compositions are Dr. Armes' (organist of Durham Cathedral), oratorio of "*Hezekiah*," and "*The Sorcerer*," the latter a comic opera half Sullivan, half Gilbert. The oratorio seems to be a production altogether in the spirit of the old school, the choruses being characterized by Handelian uniformity, and little or no originality. The soloists at the first representation were Miss Anna Williams, Madame Patey, Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Sims Thomas, the latter in the part of Hezekiah. But *The Sorcerer* was a real success, and a work of singular merit. We quote from the "*Examiner*" :—"The character of refined humour as opposed to low comicality is fully sustained by Mr. Sullivan's music. That Mr. Sullivan is a learned musician, an excellent writer for the orchestra, and a musical humourist of the true order, are facts beyond dispute. But never before have these qualities appeared combined on so important a scale as in the present instance. The *finale* of the first act is an elaborate piece of construction with as many as nine solo parts, independently sustained and grouped together according to their divergent emotions in the most masterly way. Here also we meet in the whispered "aside" of Alexis and Aline with as pretty a bit of true sentiment as can well be imagined. The *ensemble* in the second act, "Oh! joy, the charm works well," is equally well constructed, while the quintet of the same act—*couplets* with interesting bits of concerted music would be the technical description—the lighter vein of comic opera prevails. . . . Amongst the happiest touches of humour in the opera, is the Handelian character of the music which accompanies the old-fashioned courtship of Sir Marmaduke Point Dextre, and the Lady Sangazure. In other places the claptrap of the modern opera is parodied in the most amusing manner. The preparation of the philtre strikingly recalls numerous "incantation" scenes from popular operas, and such a stanza as—

Now for the tea of our host,
Now for the rollicking bun,
Now for the muffin and toast,
Now for the gay Sally-Lun—

is an admirable equivalent for the familiar "*andiam beviam*" of the lyric stage. . . . Here at last is a work of entirely English growth which bids fair to hold its own by the side of numberless foreign importations. Mr. Gilbert's dialogue is, as regards true humour, as superior to the ordinary run of French libretti, as Mr. Sullivan's music is to the clever commonplaces of Offenbach and Lecocq, and it is quite time that our public should realize the part. Enthusiasts, moreover, may cherish a hope that an early opportunity will be afforded to our rising composer to show his strength on that higher dramatic stage, the weakness of which he has so clearly parodied."

Continental music does not present so interesting an aspect. It is impossible to tell what half the musicians are doing, there is so little movement among performers and few works of merit being sent out by composers,