

he writes in his "Memoirs" of his pleasant yet arduous task: "Line by line, word by word, I had everything to explain; and when he had laid hold of the meaning of a passage, I recited it to him, marking the accent, the prosody and the cadence of the verses. He listened eagerly, and I had the satisfaction to know that what he heard was carefully noted. His delicate ear seized so readily the accent of the language and the measure of the poetry, that in his music he never mistook them. It was an inexpressible pleasure to me to see him practice before my eyes an art of which before I had no idea. His harmony was in his mind. He wrote his airs with the utmost rapidity, and when he had traced its designs, he filled up all the parts of the score, distributing the traits of harmony and melody, just as a skilful painter would distribute on his canvas the colors, lights and shadows of his picture. When all this was done, he opened his harpsichord, which he had been using as his writing table; and then I heard an air, a duet, a chorus, complete in all its parts, with a truth of expression, an intelligence, a unity of design, a magic in the harmony, which delighted both my ear and my feelings."

Piccini's arrival in Paris had been kept a close secret while he was working on the new opera, but Abbe du Rollet ferreted it out, and acquainted Gluck, which piece of news the great German took with philosophical disdain. Indeed he attended the rehearsal of "Roland," and when his rival, in despair over his ignorance of French and the stupidity of the orchestra, threw down the baton in despair, Gluck took it up, and by his magnetic authority brought order out of chaos and restored tranquility, a help as much, probably, the fruit of condescension and contempt as of generosity.

Still Gluck was not easy in mind over this intrigue of his enemies, and wrote a bitter letter, which was made public, and aggravated the war of public feeling. Epigrams and accusations flew back and forth like hailstones.

"Do you know that the Chevalier (Gluck's title) has an Armidex and Orlando in his portfolio?" said Abbe Arnaud to a Piccinist.

"But Piccini is also at work on an Orlando," was the retort.

"So much the better," returned the Abbe, "for then we shall have an Orlando and also an Orlandino," was the keen answer.

The public attention was stimulated by the war of pamphlets, lampoons and newspaper articles. Many of the great *litterati* were Piccinists, among them Marmon-
tel, La Harpe, D'Alembert, &c. Luard du Rollet and Jean Jacques Rousseau fought in the opposite ranks. Although the nation was trembling on the verge of revolution, and the French had just lost their hold on the East Indies; though Mirabeau was thundering in the tribune, and Jacobin clubs were commencing their baleful work, soon to drench Paris in blood, all factions and discords were forgotten. The question was no longer

"Is he a Jansenist, a Molinist, an Encyclopædist, a philosopher, a freethinker?" One question only was thought of. Is he a Gluckist or Piccinist? And on the answer often depended the peace of families and the cement of long established friendships.

Piccini's opera was a brilliant success with fickle Parisians, though the Gluckists sneered at it as a pretty concert music. The retort was that Gluck had no gift of melody, though they admitted he had the advantage over his rival of making more noise. The poor Italian was so much distressed by the fierce contest that he and his family were in despair on the night of the first representation. He could only say to his weeping wife and son: "Come, my children, this is unreasonable. Remember that we are not among savages; we are living with the politest and kindest nation in Europe. If they don't like me as a musician, they will at all events respect me as a man and a stranger." To do justice to Piccini, a mild and timid man, he never took part in the controversy, and always spoke of his opponent with respect and admiration.

It has become a too frequent occurrence for managers or others interested in getting up concerts and musical entertainments in Toronto, to announce that the *best* talent in the city has been secured. Now, when as it often does occur, that the programme is carried out by amateurs of very mediocre ability, it is not only a fraud upon that portion of the public, if any, who are induced to believe it, but a piece of gratuitous impertinence to those able musicians who do not happen to be engaged. It would be more fair and honest to announce the names of the parties to take part in the concert, and let the public judge for itself as to whether they are the best or not, or at least, in the event of this being inconvenient, to avoid the use of a superlative term, which by reflection casts an imputation upon others, whose names do not appear.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY'S CONCERT.

The first concert of the above society this season took place in the pavillion of the Horticultural Gardens on the evening of the 25th of January. The floor and galleries of the spacious hall were well filled. For the accommodation of Chorus and Orchestra (which, united, numbered about two hundred and fifty persons) an addition had been made to the stage.

The chief work presented and which filled the first part of the programme was the Dramatic Cantata, composed by Henry Smart, entitled "The Bride of Dunkerron." This charming work is full of grace and power, and abounds with rhythmical melodies, bold and effective choruses and elaborate instrumentation. The argument is as follows:—

The Lord of Dunkerron, enamoured of a sea-maiden, seeks her for his bride. She has not the power to quit