

friend, Stegmayer ; a nature truly Mozartesque ! Pity only he is not really enthusiastic in his art—but, on the contrary, too much devoted to gay living !”

“ Truly, a pity ! he is the only one I can think on with satisfaction, for his really noble talents ! all the rest, I repeat it, disgust me with their laboured ingeniousness—their extraordinary self-complacency—their current coin of praise—paid from hand to hand. May the sin be pardoned me ! but these people, when I consider them, come before me like those three nurses in Dresden, who for three months used to parade every morning the garden of the house where I lodged, each with a squalling brat on her arm, mingling with the screaming of the children their frightful tune, with a refrain that was applicable enough—“ Oh, can you pardon me this song !”

“ Ha, ha, ha !”

“ Do not laugh ! that unhappy trio nearly drove me crazy ; and even now, as often as I think on them, I have a queer feeling about my head !”

“ You should not take it so tragically ! It is too much the case now, from the highest to the lowest, that art is shockingly abused.”

“ My friend, it would be melancholy, indeed, if better spirits could look on *calmly* ; it is my firm conviction, that indifference towards the good and the beautiful, is more worthy of condemnation than open hostility. I should be ashamed to be ignorant of bad authors, and bad works ; because I hold it my duty to battle for the good, against the common and the mean, with all the weapons at my command. Chide me for a Don Quixotte—I care not ! I fight, like him, not alone, against windmills ! and spite of his craziness, I esteem the Knight of the Rueful Countenance, an honest, worthy—yea, an admirable character.”

Alexander laughed at his friend's singular notion ; but said, good-humoredly—“ Heaven forbid, my dear fellow, that I should compare you to the Knight of the Rueful Countenance ; though sooth, as I observed a while ago, you show little, to day, of your wonted cheerfulness. For the rest, I entirely agree with you as to the arrogance of our composers. At present, for the most part, that they compose but for one instrument, the piano, is beyond belief. I read, for example, some time ago, in the *Mitternachtsblatt*, an essay of a Mr. T., in Berlin. Mr. T., himself, a composer, liberally plasters his friend, C. B., and forgets not himself at the end. This might pass, and his praise—for somewhat is allowed to friendship—and as a composer of songs, C. B., has real merit, even though he cannot equal, much less rival a Schubert, a B. Klein, a Spohr, or a

Löwe ! But Mr. T. repeats some very silly remarks of B's upon Peter von Winter, and particularly his “ *Opferfest*,” and calls it a just, solid-spirited judgment ! Now neither T. nor B. have ever written any thing which could come nigh that cavatina of Myrrha, “ *Ich war, wenn ich erwachte*,” or the duet, “ *Wenn mir dein Auge strahlet*.” To a quartette like the droll, pathetic one, “ *Kind, willst du ruhig schlafen*,” neither of the two gentlemen can aspire. But they believe they can do better. I would give them simply, this advice, to write off the dramatic text of the opera, and then compose it. All Germany will thank them if they make it better than good old departed Winter.

“ Of such monstrous *genialitat*, my old master knows nothing,” observed Johann, as he showed his friend the title-page of the music lying before him ; “ the good *Giovanni Pierluigi* was as simple, and excellent a man as a great and admirable artist. He confirmed the old truth, that to be a worthy artist, one must first be a worthy man. This saying has been oft repeated ; but to my mind can never be repeated often enough ! If it cannot help the ordinary and the mean to self-knowledge and improvement, it will sustain the good, when outward circumstances threaten to overpower them ; for he who means most honestly with art, has ever the most opposition from without to struggle against.”

“ It was not easy for Giovanni Pierluigi to come forth as the creator of a new style in church music. Born in Palestrina, 1524, he found no contemporary exemplar in his art, who could have guided him in the right way. Music—I mean church music—was near utter extinction ! Soft tinklings—not unfrequently, pieces from operas, and amorous canzonets joined together, were heard in the sanctuaries. Consequently, it was music the most remote from sacred, which, from his childhood, Palestrina not only heard, but helped to produce, for he had been sent to Rome as chorister, to study music.”

“ But in his youthful breast glowed a spark of the god-like, which soon rose to a flame that illumined the night around him ! Palestrina discovered what, in a time of universal degeneration, may not be taught ; he discovered what was wanting—what must be done ; and yet more—the means to remove the evil ! In himself, he bore from the beginning, the good and the beautiful, which he was to set up in place of the corrupt and the repulsive. Thus equipped, courageous, but without presumption, conscious, but void of self-complacent vanity—he entered the arena of contest ; thus he ventured to gainsay