

after life—but the words were blistered with the tears which fell as she wrote them, and through mine I could with difficulty decypher the characters her dying hand had traced.

"My simple history is ended, Bella: simple, yet fraught with such earnest teachings that you have my permission to repeat it to any, to whom it may be likely to prove a wise and salutary lesson."

Bella's emotion prevented her reply, and Mrs. Randolph silently kissing her cheek, rose and left the room.

## MUSICAL HINTS.

No. 1.

### ON THE VOICE.

BY MUSICUS.

No one can doubt that the advancement of music has been extremely slow in this country. Excepting the performances of simple songs, or light instrumental pieces, the art itself has received little notice. The scope taken has indeed been a limited one, for the principles of the science have wholly been forgotten. With regard to singing, how much has the word science been abused! It has been attributed to the vilest flourishes upon wrong harmonies, and to absurdities upon which the theatrical public no longer waste their applause. Even in England the education of professional singers has been extremely superficial. It is the duty of every professor to examine and explain to his pupils the theory as well as the practice of music; then, the art will indeed become among us more general and more refined. The neglect of laying a foundation of musical knowledge, and too great dependence on the feeling, or ear, hinder many from becoming fine performers; and these errors, therefore, cannot be too zealously combated.

Many a child of excellent disposition for music, has been ruined as a performer, by being left too much alone in the outset, or by being placed under the immediate charge of a governess, who, with little ear, little knowledge of time, and less experience in teaching, suffers her pupil to practice dances, jigs, and other little senseless tunes: satisfied with the progress made, if the notes be expeditiously read and played. Pupils are too anxious to see results from the attendance of an instructor, and are too eager to play tunes, by which they judge of their improvement. It is by this vile system that parents misjudge of their children's profit, and fondly anticipate all their future excellence. Alas! how

seldom are these expectations realized! To create an interest, and at the same time to repress a desire, for getting forward, is not one of the least difficulties with which a master has to contend. During the first year of his employment he should be occupied in forming the hand, training the fingers, and beguiling by a pleasant and amusing manner, the unpleasant labour which is found at the beginning of music by all young and lively children.

Perhaps the first and greatest point to achieve, is a thorough and gradual exercise of the fingers, to render them equal in power, and capable of acting independently of each other; by this means the advanced stages of execution will be distinct, neat, and equal. On the contrary, the fingers will stick together and hold down more notes than are required, the wrists will be stiff, the arms full of motion, and the body awkward. Perfect freedom from affectation is a great charm in a performer. The ordinary process by which players would indicate the great effect their author produces upon them, is nodding of the head—distorting and writhing of the body—lifting up of the hands, as though the keys were hot, with many other absurdities, which it would be well they could see in a glass.

There are many instructors, however, who desire to put their pupils in the right path; this the pupils will not permit. Young ladies, for instance, want, with a hop, skip and a jump, to conquer everything; their ambition is to sing, and to play quadrilles; they choose for themselves; and the following dialogue, not the least over-drawn, is an oft told tale.

"Ah! I am glad you've come; I've a new set of quadrilles —"

"Let me see them; by Julia? I hope you continue your 'daily studies.'"

"Studies! I cannot give my mind to studies; I'm sure they'll spoil my taste, for I never hear my friends speak of them; they are such dry stuff; no sentiment, no nothing!"

"I again repeat, that in the practice of those studies, you not only acquire a facility of fingering, but it is a channel to the knowledge of counterpoint and modulation."

"Counterpoint! what is counterpoint?—what is modulation?"

"Then you have not studied the principles of harmony."

"Oh, no! but I'm told it's a frightful heap of notes; the very thought of it makes me nervous. However, Mr. Minum, I shall devote my attention to singing; I wish to learn some of the most fashionable songs. Pray, were you at the concert last evening? The music was delightful."