

nervousness or some other cause, he failed to improve, playing the prelude and obligato correctly but somewhat weakly. Since there is an organ part written, and an organ present, why was the accompaniment omitted? Gounod knew very well that toward the close of the song where violin and voice are in unison that something more than the running notes of the prelude, which from the piano accompaniment, was required to balance the melody.

No. 4. Recit and Aria—"Now Heaven in Fullest Glory Shone," from the Oratorio of the Creation, (*Haydn*) was sung by Mr. Schuch in his usual correct and happy style. Of this gentleman's singing little remains to be said; being a bass he is not troubled with registers to any great extent, the rock upon which so many uncultured singers are wrecked. Beyond this his phrasing is intelligent, and his conception of the music generally, artistic.

No. 5. "Longing" (*Rubinstein*) was sung by Miss Lay, whom (in a notice of the previous concert) we found occasion to criticise rather severely. Whether from more confidence or careful study since, we know not, but a marked improvement is manifest both in method and style, and the number, which, by the bye, is a very lovely one, was pleasingly and agreeably rendered. No. 6, and close of part I of the programme, comprised two part songs, respectively "Cradle Song" and "The Fairies," both by Macfarren. These were exceedingly well rendered by choir, unaccompanied. In reference to these part songs and quite apart from the question mooted at the preamble to this criticism, we desire to correct an impression which we have reason to believe to some extent is in existence with reference to this class of music. The first verse of *The Fairies* is as follows:

"Up the airy mountain, down the rocky glen,
We daren't go a hunting for fear of little men,
We folk, good folk, trooping all together,
Green jacket, red cap, and grey cock's feather."

Now the impression which such lines would (naturally, we admit) create upon the minds of those who are apt to judge the music by the words, would be that the music was simple and frivolous, we wish to say that the words are not necessarily a standard of measurement for the music, and that the highest specimens of musical composition may be wedded to the simplest, and most absurd words. Rameau said he could set the sheets of a newspaper to music, although such a union, to those who understood the language in which the words were sung, would appear ridiculous, one has only to bethink oneself that it would be all right in "Dutch," or some other language which one did not understand, in which case the words are but the means of utterance to musical sounds. Nay, more may be said in favor of fanciful conceits, such as the lines we have quoted; they frequently give rise in the mind of the composer to correspondingly fantastical musical forms which may be as elaborately and artistically worked out as subjects of a more solid character.

No. 7, and first of Part II on the programme, comprised Sir Michael Costa's Secular Cantata for solos, chorus and orchestra. In the ode to the moon, Mrs. Cooper's voice appeared to better advantage, but the defects of her method made themselves even here painfully apparent,—one example will suffice; "So gentle moon, good night," in the word gentle the *ge* were given as close sound of e with strong *flatus* (escape of breath) thus *ge—entle*. Mrs. Maddison sang the part of Mab with her usual care; her voice appeared a little husky which may have been the result of fatigue or a cold.

Her method is very good, and her singing though somewhat lacking in animation never offends. Mr. Schuch sustained the part of Oberon satisfactorily. Mr. Dennison (Tenor) that of the Lover, of whom the same might be said in every respect except that his voice broke badly upon some of the upper notes in the first verse from the effects of which he did not recover during the remainder of the song. Mr. Dennison's voice is fresh and of a pleasing quality of tone, his pronunciation and enunciation very good, and but for the break referred to, his solo would have been an acceptable addition to the programme. The chorusses in this Cantata were especially deserving of commendation, and the orchestral accompaniment was more in repose, being played much more smoothly and effectively than in the former Cantata. No. 8. "Dearest Companions," from *La Sonnambula* Bellini, was sung by Mrs. Morris. This lady's voice is a true soprano of good compass, equal scale and very flexible. As far as the execution of that florid song is concerned, no fault can be found, yet with all it failed to impress as anything beyond a purely mechanical performance. Mrs. Morris exhibited an occasional tendency to sing sharp. No. 9. A part song, unaccompanied, by *Lemmens*, entitled "Drops of Rain," was effectively rendered by the chorus, and was well received by the audience. No. 10. "Lascio Ch'io Pianga," (*Handel*) Recit and Aria, was carefully sung by Miss Maddison. We should have liked a little more declamation in the recitative. As it was, the contrast between the recit and aria was completely lost; in all other respects the number was well rendered. No. 11. "I. Naviganti." (*Randegger*) a trio for soprano, tenor and bass, was rendered by Miss Lay, Mr. Dennison and Mr. Schuch. Mr. Dennison redeemed, in a measure, his damaged reputation, while Miss Lay and Mr. Schuch ably sustained their parts, rendering this well known number one of the most acceptable of the evening. The concert proper concluded with chorus and orchestral accompaniment from Rossini's opera "Cinderella," entitled "Hark! Again the Thrilling Horn," which was vigorously and effectively rendered. The National Anthem, by chorus and orchestra, upon which Mr. Fisher bestows particular care, brought the concert to a close. Miss Boyd, pianist of the Society, rendered efficient service at the piano. The concert, taken as a whole, if not a brilliant success, was yet a creditable and enjoyable affair, and we have faith in the future of this young Society.

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