

## REMARKS ON THE THEATRICAL ORCHESTRA—CONCLUDED.

Having in the former part of this article reviewed orchestral classifications, and arrangements somewhat minutely, it necessarily prevented me from concluding my remarks on the performances of the band, and other matters connected with them.

If I did not feel convinced that music in general, in this City and Territory, required a representative, I should not take upon myself the responsible and unpleasant task of criticism; but as I do feel the work to be in a measure my mission, I am quite willing to bear any spiteful remarks that might be made on my opinion.

I am requested by the band to state that they were somewhat unprepared at their benefit with a startling choice of compositions; but for my own part, I think the apology unnecessary, as under present circumstances the selections could not have been improved.

The third piece in the programme for the evening was Donizetti's grand scena "Fra poco." This composition is considered to be about one of the best emanations from that most popular author. It is also one of Mr. Sims Reeve's "crack" scenes; and although it cannot be compared with Bellini's "All is lost now," still it is a fine composition. In "Fra poco" as in "All is lost now," Mr. Mark Croxall interpreted the voice part with the Cornet a piston. He was however on this occasion located in the orchestra, and Mark was "himself again;" and his rendering of this beautiful solo was in excellent style.

As I am endeavoring to "kill two birds with one stone" by imparting knowledge to the musical student in the art of composition in conjunction with criticism on the performances of the Orchestra, I will make a few remarks on the beauties and defects contained in Donizetti's grand scena.

In the first part of the introductory symphony, the author fully demonstrates his knowledge of harmony. He also proves himself in many passages a skilful diplomatist by producing startling effects with his harmonic progressions. There are many theorists who can be pedantic and erudite enough; but it requires genius and mental experience to classify a variety of mixtures in such a manner that will produce and bring out a euphonical and an astounding manœuvre. The treatment of this short introduction is worthy of minute remark, as it is a lesson of importance to many composers. The first chord is—as in general—the harmonic triad on the tonic. The second is, the first inversion of the imperfect harmonic combination on the subtonic. The subtonic combination is followed by the diminished seventh on the leading note, and resolves itself into the relative minor triad of the subdominant. The effect is grand. This mode of mixture and resolution belongs to the second and sixth minor forms of the ancients. At the third and fourth bar the double basses are on the *pedale*—the double basses are fine on the *pedale*—and the violins, *violas*, *claironet*, *trombone* and horns are rolling about and crossing each other in a beautiful progression, picking up on their way a variety of harmonies. In the fifth bar a dominant seventh is added to the combination, and a splendid termination is made on the tonic harmonic triad. The Orchestra rendered this beautiful introduction in a very creditable manner. At the opening of the scena by the Cornet a piston, the wind band produced some fine effects with their sustained notes;—especially the horns—and the violins also told well with their combined sounds; in fact all the instruments were adding strength, and beauty to the harmony, and also rendering great assistance to the solo player. As the scena proceeds, the accompaniment takes a lighter form;—somewhat too light—the horns abandon the fine *crescendo*, and adopt the "puff puff" peculiar accompaniment of the *pianoforte*, and although the harmonies are in a great measure effective, the frivolity of the arrangement destroys much of the grandeur which should predominate in the first movement of a scena. There are some beautiful *fioriture* passages for the cornet a piston, which were well executed by Mr. Mark Croxall. The subject of the second movement is introduced by the violins, *claironet* and flute, doubling each other in the octave and unison. A very pretty accompaniment—excepting the horns who are puffing in the *pianoforte* form—is added to the subject which was well brought out by the Orchestra. The last movement, like all Italian terminations, is full of energy and spirit. Some very fine syncopated passages in the *Allegro*, as also in the *Modrato*, were effectively rendered by the band; but one particular harmony I must not fail to notice because it is startling. The composer in producing this effect, claps on the break as tho' ten thousand thunderbolts were in his way, and drives up on the imperfect triad and percusses on the *supertonique*. The distance from the original harmony is so great that theoretical writers would term it abrupt transition; but I am sure its abruptness is its greatest glory. This progression is taken from the *phrygian* mode of the ancients, and the preparation, percussion, and resolution, exhibits harmonic skill.

The works of Palestrina—the most ancient and celebrated ecclesiastical music composer—abounds with this form. Giacomo Perti, another ancient, and the renowned master and greatest fugue writer J. S. Bach used it often, and in fact it is a favorite form with all great composers. You can scarcely peruse the works of giant authors without finding more or less mixtures of the seven principal forms

of the ancients; it is the cream of composition, and without it our effusions would be ephemeral, short of life and soon forgotten. Verdi is a votary to the eighth form, a modern and good one, but weak compared with the seven ancients. Although there are many beauties in Donizetti's "Fra poco" and I have referred to some of them, there are also many defects. First, it lacks system in its instrumentation. Second, the construction is not perfect. Great authors construct their scenes in the *duplex* form. Donizetti, contrary to their method, has constructed the "Fra Poco" in the *triplex*, and notwithstanding the non-breaking of any scientific rules, the composition is much weakened by the process. The last movement of a scena is generally devoted to one of the finest ornaments in musical composition, viz. development, in fact development is the consummation of all grand pieces, and without it ideas would be heaped on ideas until they become mere idle gossip, and from the lack of this masterly working, the piece in question assumes much of this gossiping character. I should not have criticised this author so minutely but for his immense popularity, and for the benefit of students—as I have before stated—in the art of composition; but the fact is that Donizetti and Verdi—notwithstanding their celebrity—are mere pigmies in the art of operatic composition compared with Mozart, Weber, Auber and Bellini.

The "Immortalen waltzes," by Joseph Gungl, composed to the memory of Johann Strauss, and arranged for the Orchestra by Professor Thomas, is a dancing gem of the "first water," and I should have been pleased could I have pointed out the beauties of this composition in detail; but I have exhausted so much space with Donizetti, I can only make one or two remarks on this admirable piece. The introduction opens in C Minor, and a portion of the two masses are doubling each other in the counter melody in majestic grandeur, while others are working a double counterpoint in the octave; and the accompaniment—delicious morsels furnished and garnished to sharpen the appetites of the true votaries of genuine harmony.

At the ninth measure the cornet a piston follows on with the melody and sends forth its trumpet like sounds in striking sublimity; the horns also are pouring out a thrilling *crescendo*, and throughout the whole of the introduction, the instruments are discoursing in harmonies of a startling character; but the pause on the last chord! with the dominant seventh, in the second form of the minor mode of the ancients was like an electric shock. What I have feebly explained was produced by the sudden change from the minor to the major by the introduction of the real subject. It reminds one of the rumbling of the tempest succeeded by the brilliant sun, when all is bright again. The whole of the melodies in this set of waltzes are beautiful, and beautifully were they interpreted by the band. The double basses told well; in fact every instrument told well; and that is all my space will allow me to remark.

The "Albion galloppe" was the finale, and is a composition from the pen of Professor Thomas. This is a piece of considerable merit; its melody is both lively and beautiful; the *crescendos* are effective; the band accompaniment *per arco* is good, and the cornet a piston has some pretty passages which were well brought out by Mr. Mark Croxall; but the crowning gem of the piece is a duetto for the horns. The execution of the performers on those instruments was brilliant and smooth, and their tone was sweet, but I should like to have greater volume, which could be produced by practice. The winding up is full of energy and spirit, and the arrangement of this pretty composition is excellent. It was well performed by the whole of the band.

I have noticed on several occasions the fine effect produced by the band with the Professor's arrangements, and I must tell him candidly that it is necessary, notwithstanding the labor, that he should arrange more pieces for his Orchestra if he has any respect for himself.

The secret of effective arrangements is not generally known, but as I am alive to improvement I will explain.

During my study of harmony, contrapuntic composition and full orchestral arrangements under the superintendence of the late Mr. Hamilton, the celebrated author of a host of standard works on musical science; I was taught by him to arrange for a large professional orchestra, and I felt quite at home when I had professional musicians to deal with; but the moment I began to arrange for amateurs I found something terribly out of order with my arrangements, my pupils could not play them without an immense loss of time. I "turned about" and changed my plan to simplicity; this wouldn't do; some of them hadn't work enough, so I was compelled to return to my old way and drill along. Some few years subsequent I was offered a situation as conductor of the Catholic Cathedral choir at Newport, South Wales. At that place I was introduced to Signor Cavallini, band master of the 75th Infantry. I knew but little about arranging for the reed and brass bands and I placed myself under Cavallini's tuition. I had discovered that most of his players were young hands of a few months standing, but they played in excellent style, and I said to him, "Cavallini, tell me the secret of your arranging, for I'll be hanged if I know how you manage." "Well," he said, "now that you are under my tuition, and have studied the different forms of harmonic arrangements, you have a right to know my method. When I have all good players,

I adopt the most classical form. When I have a few experienced musicians and the rest 'lame ducks'—as I now have—I adopt the first and last forms of arrangement. As my 'lame ducks' proceed—and you know that some capacities will go faster than others—I take them a step higher up the ladder; this is a great stimulant to them, and on they go from step to step until they arrive at the top. This is my secret, and it is nothing else but the mixture of forms that have brought out the effect you have noticed." It appears that Professor Thomas has adopted a similar method.

The Professor's teaching and conducting requires no eulogy from me, for what he has accomplished is too well known for me to depreciate his talents in that line; but I may add that I believe the management has chosen the "right man for the right place."

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[Southern correspondence of the London Times.]

## THE SOUTHERN CORRESPONDENT OF THE TIMES VISITS THE NORTH.

"New York, January 27.—So far as my experience goes, it would appear that there is no more difficulty in passing from Washington to Richmond and Richmond to Washington than there is in proceeding from the latter place to Baltimore or from Augusta to Charleston. Of course I would not have your readers imagine that it is desirable for a stranger to follow the example of the able author of 'Guy Livingstone,' and to talk secession publicly for many weeks in Baltimore before he hazards the experiment of passing through the lines to Richmond. With such antecedents he will probably insure failure when he makes his effort to cross the border; but, assuming that he possesses ordinary discretion and confidence, there is nothing to prevent a man crossing backward and forward when he pleases, except considerable exposure on the Potomac river and possibly a long walk upon either bank. There is, in fact, abundant reason to think that the seats of the two rival governments of this continent habitually swarm with emissaries from the enemy. Such will probably always be the case when the belligerents speak the same language, and more so where their lines stretch over such an immensity of area. But it is felt in Richmond, and probably also in Washington, that the presence of spies is of very little importance. There is nothing that could injure the confederate cause to be scented out in the streets of Richmond, for upon the whole, considering the irksomeness, the pressure, and the weariness engendered by the war, I do not believe that history can exhibit so harmonious and homogenous a nation as the southerners. Similarly, from various reasons, and chiefly, as I believe, from their ignorance about the South, the war fever in the North has swept all opposition before it since General Lee's retreat from Pennsylvania and the fall of Vicksburg. It will take at least twelve months more of hope deferred before the North consents to drain the bitter cup so long and so resolutely held away from its lips by the staunch old George III. That this cup will have to be drained, if not within the next twelve months, at least within the next twelve years, is, in my judgment, as inexorable a fact as mathematical demonstration, as much beyond federal prevention as the revolution of the planets. There is a strange shadowy sense of unreality attached to passing sixteen months in and about Richmond, and then waking up to find oneself in Washington. To describe such a transition would demand not only unrivalled descriptive and antithetical excellence, but also some such quaintness of conceit as has exhibited Rip Van Winkle starting from his long slumber in Sleepy Hollow. In Richmond, the spectator has for months and months been familiar with war about his path and about his bed, and at all his meals and under every roof. War is breathed in at every breath, wafted upon every breeze, heard in every sound, visible at every step. For grace and elegance and lettered ease there is neither time nor superfluity of resource; nor, it must be added, are they compatible with the sublime earnestness of temper exhibited by man and woman. Sentries at the head of every street substantiate the passer's identity and investigate his right to be absent from the army. As earliest dawn breaks, you are awakened by long monotonous chorus of thousands of negroes, engaged in completing the defensive works around Richmond, and going forth cheerfully to their labor, which has long assumed such proportions as to defy the assault of 200,000 men. This is no idle statement of my own, but taken from the lips of the oldest, ablest, and least boastful of confederate officers, whose name will suggest itself to every reader. Cannon are constantly seen in the streets—either new 12-pounder Napoleons going up to the army from the Tredegar works, or guns which have undergone repair, or field-pieces which are going north or south: the well-known, lean, lank, ragged 'gray-back' troops, with the same lordly defiant air of individuality and self-assertion as ever, constantly troop through the city, with their old wild, discordant yells, making day or night hideous. The familiar southern tunes of 'Dixie' or 'The mocking bird,' execrably interpreted by a few fifes, a cornet and a drum, contrast marvelously with the rich swell of the German bands in Washington, which render to perfection the 'Last Rose of Summer,' or one of Mendelssohn's superb marches, crashing among the distant echoes of Pennsylvania avenue. And yet there is a heart, a nerve, and a sauciness about the southern 'Dixie'

and the mien of interpreters, which are looked for in vain among the stolid German musicians of Washington and the gaudy troops, bedizened with gold lace, who follow them. But other symptoms of war, with the exception of the uniform in the streets, Washington has none to show. The redundancy of 'green-backs'—those evidences according to Mr. Seward of a mighty nation's exuberant prosperity—is very perceptible in the increased crowd of the streets and the hungry look of greed which every face wears. But perhaps there is no sadder sign of the times, which have brought sudden wealth to all and moral thoughtfulness to none, than the ubiquity and boldness of the frail sisterhood who throng every avenue and public resort, seeking the smiles of the contractors, speculators, and *nouveaux riches*, and blending in a scene which could alone be photographed in language by the pen of a Juvenal.

On every side money flows as though the Potomac were the Padolus. The dome of the Capitol, which once promised to share the fate without rivaling the beauty of Cologne Cathedral, is finished, and surmounted by a Goddess of such Liberty as even Madam Roland never conceived. The hotels are thronged to bursting. Willard's in particular, is occupied by an excited, pink-eyed, seething crowd such as vibrates in the *coulisses* of the Parisian Bourse. At night, theatres, gambling houses, "Varieties," and worse dens of infamy, veiled under no pretense at disguise, vie with the attractions of the "inspired maid of Philadelphia," Miss Anna Dickinson. Mr. Seward's optimism is accepted without thought or comment; no sound of war, save the occasional boom of cannon being tried at the navy-yard (a sound soothing to Yankee vanity,) ever flutters the senses; Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Chase openly, and Mr. Seward secretly, are speculating much more as to their chances for the next Presidency than as to the strength of General Lee or the designs of President Davis. Proceed next to New York, and the recollections of Richmond, blurred by intercourse with Washington, fade into the hazy distance, and can be recalled only by a vigorous effort of the understanding. But as he journeys northward from Washington the passenger cannot but dreamily contrast the memory of his recent sufferings upon the overtasked railroads of "Dixie" with the speed, the comfort, and the roominess of the northern car. I shall not attempt to carry your readers into Broadway—a thousand times described, but as indescribable as Niagara—nor to enter upon any attempt at detail. There is such matter for all feeling in this street that the mind sinks crushed. Luxury, ostentation, heedlessness, heartlessness—the richest furs, the gaudiest silks, the brightest bonnets, the most glittering diamonds, operas, theatres, concerts, *cafes chantants*, rare shows of every hue—why should I seek to prolong the list? At Delmonico's famous restaurant, or at the *Maison Doree*, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, Englishmen discuss wines and viands to which nothing superior can be exhibited at Philippe's or at Vefour's. As for a thought of the war, of the five hundred thousand souls which it has hurled into eternity from the North, or the two hundred thousand confederates who have died grimly *pro aris et focis*—why speak or think of such a ghastly theme? Good taste forbids its mention; nevertheless, if ever among the upper ten thousand its name is breathed, it struck me that four times out of five the speaker's sympathy was with South and Jeff. Davis. Stately policemen, in blue or gray uniforms, patronize the ladies if hustled in crowded Broadway, or take sly drinks with admiring friends. Why is it that democracy converts the hotel clerk, the steamboat or railway conductor, the policeman and such like into a kind of demi god—a man not only as good as his neighbor, but vastly greater and loftier? Occasionally, with the usual *fanfares* of magnificent bands, regiments "fresh from our country's glorious battlefield" parade along Broadway, with battle-flags tattered and torn, and (as is insinuated) riddled into shreds by the tornado of shot through which they have passed. I have, as it happens, seen too many confederate battle-flags which have been through every encounter of the war, and which (as the northern bullets are far more numerous than the southern) have been exposed to a fiercer fire, to believe in this demonstration of northern blood-thirstiness. But the sight never fails "to bring the house down," and elicit the rapturous cheers of Broadway, which believes in the truthfulness of the exhibition, and makes many a secret resolve to keep far away from the spot where such scenes are enacted. But of all things the most astonishing and bewildering to the stranger fresh from Richmond is the incredible ignorance and credulity of these careless sons and daughters. I have hardly patience to dwell upon the evidences of my meaning. A slave who has run away from Richmond, and gives out that he has escaped from President Davis, is elevated into an authority, and mounts the rostrum through the columns of the public journals. "The southern armies are melting away by desertion, and Lee and Longstreet can hardly keep the field." It will be as well to state at once for all that in the spring and summer, and autumn months the balance of deserters is always in favor of the confederates, but that in the depth of winter, while inaction and stagnation prevail, the Federals are, as it were, tethered by their teeth to their own standards. "North Carolina is on the eve of yielding to the blandishments of General Butler, and, headed by Governor Vance, will be back in the Union by the 4th of next July." Am I dreaming or