

PROVINCIAL.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean are on a visit to Scarborough.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Paul are on a tour of the Welsh watering places.

Mr. David Miranda is engaged for the Saturday Popular Concerts at Edinburgh.

"The Golden Dustman" has been playing with success in Edinburgh, Mr. H. Webb in the part of Wegg. It is to be produced in Liverpool on Monday.

The Mdles. Georgi have made a most successful appearance in Dublin, being encored in all the pieces allotted to them in the programme. They are engaged for twelve concerts.

A classical evening was given on Thursday last week at the Hall-by-the-Sea, Margate. Mendelssohn's overture "Ruy Blas," the Pastoral Symphony, and Mozart's "Jupiter Symphony" were ably rendered. El Nino Eddie also appeared on the tight-rope "to correct the classicality," as Mrs. Brown takes a little something in her ginger-beer to correct the ginger.

"The Two Lives of Mury Leigh," the new drama by Boucicault, produced some three weeks ago at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, by Miss Kate Terry and her talented company, will be withdrawn on Thursday, the 16th. The piece possesses considerable interest, and has proved attractive, but it certainly owes a great deal to the clever and complete way in which it is played. Tom Taylor's drama "Plot and Passion," will occupy Friday and Saturday evenings. Next week "Hamlet" will be performed, Ophelia by Miss Kate Terry, in which part, as it is said, she is without a rival. Also "Much ado about nothing," in which the fair manageress will personate Beatrice.

The Theatre Royal, Manchester was re-opened for the season on Saturday, August 11th. A more brilliant first night could scarcely have been. During the recess the theatre has been completely renovated, and now presents a light and elegant appearance. Mr. Buckstone, with his celebrated Haymarket Company, commenced a limited engagement in "The School for Scandal" and "Box and Cox," to a house crowded in every part. Often as the great comedy has been played here, and with one exception, by the same actors, it is not too much to say that the vigour and spirit infused into it on Saturday last has never before been attained. As the several members of the company made their entrances they were greeted with hearty applause, and all and singular appeared to do their utmost to deserve the cheering welcome accorded to them. Mrs. Herman Vezin replaces Miss Angel, and made a most effective *Lady Teazle*. On Monday the comedy of "Money" was given with a completeness of cast which made it most interesting. Miss Nelly Moore, as *Clara Douglas*, Mr. Chippendale as *Sir John Vesey*, Mr. Howe as *Evelyn*, and Mr. Compton as *Graves*, supported their several characters with great skill and truth. On Tuesday "The Rivals" was performed, on Wednesday "She Stoops to Conquer," on Thursday "The Poor Gentleman," on Friday "The Rivals," and on Saturday, the 18th, "Money" will be repeated. Some excellent farces have followed the comedies. "The Overland Route" will be shortly brought out.

A PRECEDENT.

"I don't see why the public press should me quell,"
Quoth CHELTNAM, bard of the Olympic Sequel;
"E'en TUPPER, everybody knows full well,
Continued Coleridge's weird *Christabel*.
"Quite so," say Circle, Stalls, and Boxes upper:
"And you of course are the dramatic TUPPER."

THE OPERA OF 1866.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

Her Majesty's Theatre relies for success on the affection of Her Majesty's subjects. Without seeking the peculiar and distinctive patronage surrounding the musical temple in the Virginal grounds of the Garden—without attempting to rival in numbers the living mass that covers the acreage behind the proscenium of a larger stage than even the ambition of a Kemble insisted on—Mr. Mapleson and his co-adjutors have relied upon the patronage of the general operatic loving community by reason of a continual stream of the finest musical dramas the world has ever seen, performed by a chosen body of artists—first and foremost in renown—and supported by an orchestra and chorus equal in their way to all the demands of their leaders and the requirements and necessities attending the proper presentation of the greatest works of the greatest of all opera composers.

For a long time past the opera stage has proved the highest exhibition of great art in music, and at this time—in this country—it is the only place where the mind and imagination of the composer find a field for exercise, where the vocalist and the actor are rewarded for their long hours of hard work and unflinching perseverance, and where the public mark and feel the prodigious strides made in the alliance of language to sounds, and the power of melody and harmony in inciting and realizing the various passions of humanity. Composition for the church has stopped; there is no advance in art in our cathedrals, still less in our parish churches: pianists have ceased to write anything new: of concertante music there has been no sign: and even of glees, songs, and ballads, no more to attract attention than the singular efforts of Mesdames Claribel, Dolores, and Gabriel. But for the opera we must imagine Music has worn itself out, and that all could be done with what is known of it, has been done. Mr. Mapleson's efforts have been every way catholic—music of all countries—singers of all tribes. Of the German opera he has produced the laboured "*Iphigenia*" (in *Tauris*) of the painstaking Gluck; the "*Medea*" of the reflective and logical Cherubini; the "*Fidelio*" of the pure hearted and deep thinking Beethoven; the "*Zauberflöte*," the "*Seraglio*," "*Le Nozze*," and "*Don Juan*" of that instantaneous calculator of what to do, Mozart; and the "*Freischütz*," and "*Oberon*" of that spiritual yet thoroughly practical genius, Carl Maria Weber. In a staff of principals comprising Titiens, Murska, Sinico, Harriers-Wippem, Lavini, Trebelli, Bettelheim, and De Meric Lablache, comprising Mongini, Gardoni, Tasca, Stagno, Gunz, and Hohler, Santley, Gassier, Scalse, Rokitansky, Foli, and Bossi—the power to realize German opera could not be wanting, and all the works mentioned have been given with more or less *acbit* depending upon their real merit as musical dramas, and in some instances of course upon the knowledge of the performers, and the charm arising from the habit of working together. That some of these operas were as new to the singers as to the amateurs there can be no disguise; that some were rendered absolutely perfect, and all in a way most commendable it is our bounden duty to record. Had Mr. Mapleson relied only upon the aristocratic frequenters of the grand circle, it may be questioned whether this daring inroad of so much German handling would have met with approval. But he no doubt calculated upon the marvellous advance in musical feeling on the part of the great public, nor has he been disappointed. The people are more in earnest as to musical drama, and those that wrote in earnest gain their sympathy. The people are interested in those that were interested in their work, and worked conscientiously. They have begun to look coldly upon such composers who have measured their work by the imagined comprehension of the public. Of individual

essays in the performance of the operas we have enumerated it is too late to animadvert. Where great effort was shown the audience at once approved, and issued its certain and unchanging edict.

The Italian element has been represented by Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi: Rossini in his "*Barber*," and the "*Semiramide*;" Bellini in the "*Norma*," "*Sonnambula*," and "*Puritani*;" Donizetti in the "*Lucia*;" Verdi in the "*Trovatore*" and "*Il Ballo*." The cosmopolitan Meyerbeer came forth in the "*Hugonots*" and the "*Dinorah*," Gounod, representing the French school, stood forth in his "*Faust*," and Flotow, the Russe, in his mild echoes of the Italian, as heard in the "*Martha*."

The old favourites were still favourites; all are classical, because they are liked and loved by all. Where now are the operas of the time of Rossini's "*Barber*?" This work had no rival in its real life, sparkle, elegance, and fun; it has none now; it was alone in its genius and beauty when it first came out, and so it stands now. There is no necessity to "write up" the "*Barber*" of Rossini, and it is useless to write up the "*Iphigenia*" of Gluck. The one is alive and breathing; the other a curious, but rather interesting, mummy—the still, motionless effigies of a past existence. The fine operas of Mozart were interesting beyond measure. "*Le Nozze*" was splendidly cast—Titiens as *Countess*, Sinico as *Susanna*, Trebelli as *Cherubino*, Santley as *Count*, and Gassier as *Figaro*. So also the *Don Juan*, not forgetting Harriers-Wippem as *Zerlina*, nor the irreproachable Trebelli. That curious farrago of the incomprehensible and the ridiculous—the *Zauberflöte*—with its grand side of Mozart—and its puerile side of Mozart—received every justice, Murska as *Queen*, Harriers-Wippem as *Pamina*, and Sinico as *Papageno*. The *Seraglio* took up its place: but it will be better done, and more liked. It is a beauty, and a peculiarity, for it stands alone among the operas of its composer.

In the run of this admirable and remarkable season, all worked heartily and well, and Arditi the head not the least so. Of the omnipresent and almost omnipotent Titiens we need say nothing; Murska and Trebelli live in grateful memories, and the Sinico has come out well, and done bravely. And of good words for the good deeds of Harriers-Wippem, and Lavini, and Bettelheim there is and can be no lack.

Gardoni has increased, if possible, his reputation, and Tasca has moved towards that position to which talents and abilities like his must eventually attain. Stagno gains in sympathy and increases in interest. Dr. Gunz remains where he was, and Mr. Hohler, like Archimedes, is seeking for a place to stand upon. Mongini for his lion-like rush, his hearty mouthful of tone, his overflow of resource, his irrepressible exuberance amused the experienced, awoke the curious, and astonished the natives. There is much coming out of him, but there is much in him, and much more may be made out of him. He has our blessing.

Of those chieftains in the first phalanx of upper basses—Santley and Gassier—what need we say? It is too late to tell our readers to hear the one in the "*Trovatore*," the other in the "*Juan*," and those who have not heard them must do so next season. And we with pleasure record the efforts of Bossi, Foli, Scalse, and Rokitansky, whom we hope to meet again in future seasons.

The doings of the Gluck and Cherubini we do not altogether approve; the "*Freischütz*" was good, the "*Oberon*" might have been better. The Bellini operas were all done, and well done; and Rossini cannot complain, for he was ably treated and thoroughly enjoyed. The "*Trovatore*" would have rejoiced its composer; and the fastidious Meyerbeer would have danced with his Ballet in the "*Robert*," and opened his eyes—wide—at the beautiful performance and exquisite mounting of his "*Dinorah*."

We believe the season has been a remunerative