

A Society for the Trial of New Works

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preparation at the Trinitade Theatre of Lisbon, has just succumbed to an attack of illness, without seeing his new work performed.

Spanish operatic composers have been displaying an unwonted activity of late. At the Royal Theatre, Madrid, a new opera, entitled "Trafalgar," the libretto by Xavier de Burgos, and the music by Jeronimo Jimenez, was brought out last month and very well received. A similar success was scored at the Liceo, of Barcelona, by a new opera "Zabra," a Spanish subject of the ninth century, the composer being Señor Felipe Espino. Again, at Valencia, an opera in three acts, entitled "Sagunto," by Señor Salvador Giner, has just met with a highly favourable reception, the music being described as highly characteristic and effective.

Mdlle. Sigrid Arnoldson, the young *prima donna*, made her *début* on New Year's Day at the spacious Liceo Theatre, of Barcelona, and was most enthusiastically received.

The first performance of M. Tchaikowsky's new opera, "La Dame de Pique," at the Imperial Maria Theatre, St. Petersburg, was a veritable triumph for the gifted composer. The work is described as being replete with dramatic life, and containing many elements of true popularity; qualities which ensure its retention in the *répertoire* of this and other leading Russian lyric stages for some time to come.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—As an admirer of the paper from its commencement, I am sorry to notice a slip in the "Facts, Rumours, and Remarks" on page 723 of the December number. The writer of the article on the "Cambridge Musical Critics" is very severe on the musical shortcomings of his contemporaries; but his withering sarcasm would have been more effective if it had been written in English. As it is, the Cambridge editors may well retort with the old caution about the beam and the mote. "Clothed upon with" is certainly nonsense. "Invested with" might pass muster, but is not elegant, and while laudably preferring words of English to those of Latin origin, your satirist should be sure of his ground. When a man has a coat upon his back he is "clothed," but he is not "clothed upon." This bit of slipshod drowns all the thunder.—Yours truly,

W. T. WATTS.

107, Bristol Road, Birmingham, January 12, 1891.

[We are very much obliged to our correspondent for kindly watching over the purity of our English and taking the trouble to set us right, when, in his opinion, we are wrong. The consciousness that his eagle eye is upon us will, no doubt, result in more careful and accurate utterance. There is only one drawback: We doubt whether philological criticism is Mr. Watts's strong point. He declares the expression "clothed upon with" to be "certainly nonsense" and not English. Yet it is found in a book with which our correspondent should be familiar—a book generally accepted as a model of English in its strength and purity. If Mr. Watts will turn to Saint Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, c. 5, v. 3 (authorised translation) he will read: "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be *clothed upon* with our house which is from heaven." Should Mr. Watts object that the Jacobean translators were antiquated old fellows, speaking an archaic tongue, then we refer him to a contemporary writer. In Tennyson's "Godiva" our correspondent may discover this line:

"Then she rode forth, *clothed on with* chastity."

So that the expression which our correspondent declares to be nonsense, is not only English, but classic English. When next Mr. Watts is moved to act as a censor on behalf of our mother tongue, he will do well to be "sure of his ground," and, by-the-way, not talk about thunder being drowned by a bit of slipshod—certainly a very curious and remarkable operation.—Ed. M. T.]

## A SOCIETY FOR THE TRIAL OF NEW WORKS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—In answer to Mr. Crump's letter—that is to say, the latter portion of it—I beg to call his attention and that of others to the Musical Artists' Society, which has for its object the performance of new works by known and *unknown* composers who are members of the Society. If Mr. Crump can produce competent musicians who would like to become members, I am sure that Mr. Alfred Gilbert, of The Woodlands, Maida Vale, will have no objection, provided, of course, that they are proposed and seconded in the usual way. I think I may here remark that the more new members can be added to the Society, the more it will be possible to provide the highest skill available for the performance of the music, and the higher the class of those members as composers, the higher will be the selection of music to choose from for performance.—Yours truly,

W. H. SPEER.

Rothsay, St. Albans, January 6.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

\* \* \* Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.

Our correspondents will oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

Correspondents are informed that their names and addresses must accompany all communications.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Notice is sent to all subscribers whose payment (in advance) is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed. We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers that, although the music is always kept in stock, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

A. G. E.—You forgot to enclose your name and address.

## BRIEF SUMMARY OF COUNTRY NEWS.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this summary, as all the notices are either collated from the local papers or supplied to us by correspondents.

BARNSTAPLE.—Dr. Edwards's new Cantata *Epiphany* was produced on the 13th ult. with great success, under the conductorship of Dr. J. T. Gardner, of Ilfracombe. Dr. Edwards was at the organ, and played with taste and skill. The whole of the soprano solos were taken by Miss Willis. The Magi were represented by Mr. Sydney Harper, Mr. George Harper, and Mr. Norton Deane; while in the other parts the vocalists were Mr. S. Harper, Mr. George Garland, Mr. C. J. Bath, and Mr. B. T. James, and the choral recitatives, in which the narrative work is for the most part done, were sung with much success; while with regard to the general chorus work too great praise cannot be given. The tuneful Angels' hymn, which concludes a choral recitative in Part II., was sweetly sung by the boys included in the choir. The congregation joined in the opening hymn, the last verse of the stately chorale, the carol, and the Nunc dimittis. A second performance was given in the church on the following evening, again conducted by Dr. Gardner, the singing, both of solos and choruses, deserving the highest praise.

BASINGSTOKE.—On the 8th ult. the Harmonic Society gave a Concert in the Town Hall. The programme consisted of Bennett's *May Queen* and a miscellaneous selection. The soloists were Mrs. Clare Wright, Miss Poulter, Mr. Staples, and Mr. D. Price. Mr. J. S. Liddle led the orchestra and played a solo, *Aria* and *Gavotte* (Ries). Mr. W. H. Liddle conducted and played the *Adagio* and *Presto* from Mendelssohn's D minor Pianoforte Concerto, accompanied by the orchestra. Miss Arkwright and Mr. M. Clapshaw accompanied on the pianoforte.

DURBAN (NATAL).—The Choral Union, which has not been in existence many months gave, on December 19, a performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in the Town Hall. The Conductor was Mr. Crane, who has worked with commendable zeal in the training of his forces. Mr. Hallé undertook the part of the Prophet, and showed a thorough appreciation of the music. Mr. Macfarlane was the tenor. Miss McNeil and Miss Sayle were the soprano soloists, the latter making her public *début*. Miss Robinson, Miss Stuart, and Miss Sanders divided the contralto music between them. The chorus was fairly good, the orchestra worked well, and the several trios and quartets were carefully given. Mr. Crane fulfilled his position as Conductor with care and skill. The Concert was repeated on the following Monday.

GNATON.—The first Concert of the Gnaton and District Choral Society, a very promising Association, was given on December 26, at Yealton, a village about seven miles from Plymouth. The formation of such a Society, having for its object the "study of superior music," was suggested by Mrs. Williams, of Gnaton Hall, and Mr. Williams assumed the offices of Hon. Sec. and Treasurer. The great majority of the voices, however, came from Yealton, where the weekly rehearsals are held. The first part of the programme was