

Singing in State Schools

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the March from 'Le Prophète.' The same night (8th ult.), the season commenced with 'Les Huguenots,' which, however, was somewhat coldly received by a very thin house, a circumstance with which, says the *Epoca*, the religion of the hero may have had something to do."

At Lyons the phenomenal tenor voice of a journeyman blacksmith, named Desflages, has attracted so much attention that the municipality of the town have granted him the necessary means for the training of his rare gift.

A new operetta entitled "Los Hijos de Madrid," composed by Senor Cereceda, was recently produced at Saragossa with much success.

At the Euterpe Society of Barcelona a symphonic poem in five movements, entitled "La Primavera," by the Maestro Rodoreda, was performed for the first time, and met with an enthusiastic reception.

The Florentine orchestra, consisting of seventy members, amongst them twelve solo instrumentalists, is just now engaged upon an extensive concert-tour in Austro-Hungary and Germany, under the direction of the Maestro Enea Brizzi.

The ceremony of unveiling a monument erected to Bellini at his native town of Catania has been postponed for a year in order, it is said, to combine with it the inauguration of a theatre, now in course of construction, which is to bear the name of the composer of "Norma."

The unveiling of a statue of Spohr, which was to have taken place at Cassel last month, has likewise been postponed until April next.

In Marianne Schönberger-Marconi, whose death is announced, on the 9th ult., at Darmstadt, at the extreme age of nearly ninety-eight years, one of the most remarkable contralto singers of her day, the acknowledged rival of a Catalani and a Pasta, has passed away. Marianne was born at Mannheim during the classical period of the Mannheim stage, where, as a child of nine years, she commenced her artistic career, her father being an Italian by birth, engaged as a contrabassist in the orchestra, and her mother a German. The fame of her splendid voice having reached the ears of Cherubini, then the director of the Vienna Opera, he succeeded in engaging the young artist for that institution where she achieved a series of triumphs. As Madame Schönberger she subsequently extended her fame over all the principal countries of Europe, where her assumption of tenor parts in the leading operas of the period created an almost unexampled sensation. For many years past Madame Schönberger has lived in simple retirement at Darmstadt, where she was universally respected.

At Turin died, at the age of twenty-eight, the composer Alessandro Riberi.

The death is also announced at Bologna, at the age of fifty-four, of the Maestro Ulisse Parisini, a composer of Church music of some merit.

We subjoin, as usual, the programmes of concerts* recently given at some of the leading institutions abroad:—

Paris.—Concert Populaire (October 15): Symphony, C major (Beethoven); Chant du Soir (Schumann); Suite Algérienne (Saint-Saëns); Prelude, "Lohengrin" (Wagner); Overture, "Oberon" (Weber). Châtelet-Concert (October 22): Symphony, C minor (Beethoven); Violin Concerto (Mendelssohn); Prelude, "Parsifal" (Wagner); Nocturne, transposed for violin (Chopin); Spanish Dance (Sarasate); Fragments from "Roméo et Juliette" (Berlioz). Lamoureux Concert (October 22): Symphony, F major (Beethoven); Overture, "Carnaval Romain" (Berlioz); Concerto, D minor (Rubinstein); Minuet for strings (Handel); Prelude, "Parsifal" (Wagner); Finale of Divertissement "Les Erinnyes" (Massenet). Concert Populaire (October 22): Symphony, D major (Beethoven); Concerto Symphonique for pianoforte (Littoff); Airs de Danse, "Les Fêtes d'Hébé" (Rameau); Prelude, "Parsifal" (Wagner); Overture, "Patrie" (Bizet).

Leipzig.—First Gewandhaus Concert (October 5): Symphony, E flat major (Haydn); Toccata, F major (Bach); "Gesangscene" for violin (Spohr); Adagio and rondo from first Violin Concerto (Vieuxtemps); Symphony, No. 8 (Beethoven); Violinist, Madame Norman-Néruda. Concert of the Pianist Camillo S. Engel (October 11): Sonata, E flat major, Op. 7 (Beethoven); Lied ohne Worte, No. 1 (Mendelssohn); Gavotte (Reinecke); Scherzo (Schubert); Impromptu (Chopin); Tarantella (Liszt); Vocal soli. Second Gewandhaus Concert (October 12): Overture, "Water Carrier" (Cherubini); Lieder (Schubert and Brahms); Violoncello Concerto (Molique); Pieces for Violoncello (Schumann, Reinecke, Klengel); Symphony, "In the Forest" (Raff). Gewandhaus Concert (October 19): "Fest-Ouverture" (A. Dietrich); Airs from "La Sonnambula" (Bellini); and "Le Démon" (Rubinstein); "Carnival of Venice" (Benedict); Concerto, E flat major (Beethoven); Rhapsody (Liszt); Symphony, B flat major (Schumann).

* Contributions intended for this column should indicate clearly the place and date of performance, as otherwise they cannot be inserted.

Berlin.—Concert of the Singakademie (October 28): Oratorio, "The Fall of Jerusalem" (Blumer).

Sondershausen.—Last Lohconcert (September 24): "Fest-Ouverture" (Lassen); Concerto for bassoon (Weber); Symphony, F major (Beethoven); Overture, "Don Carlos" (Deppé); Hungarian Dances (Brahms); Tarantella, "Die Fischerinnen von Procida" (Raff).

Cologne.—First Subscription Concert of the Concert-Gesellschaft, under direction of Dr. Ferdinand Hiller (October 24): Symphony, C minor (Haydn) first time; Air from "Joseph" (Méhul); Seventh Violin Concerto (Spohr), executed by Dr. Joachim; Ballad for chorus, tenor solo, and orchestra (F. Hiller, first time); Idyl for orchestra (F. Hiller); Variations for violin (Joachim); Overture, "Ruy Blas" (Mendelssohn).

Frankfurt-am-Main.—Concert of Herren Max Friedländer and Max Schwarz (October 9): Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue (Bach); Air from "Alexander's Feast" (Handel); Sonata, Op. 101 (Beethoven); Lieder from "Die Winterreise" (Schubert); Pianoforte pieces (Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Bendel, Liszt); Songs, "Schwager Kronos," "Das Rosenband," "Gruppe aus dem Tartarus" (Schubert); "Frühlingsfahrt" (Schumann); "Jouis," from "La Lyre et la Harpe" (Saint-Saëns); Unüberwindlich (Brahms).

Boston, Mass.—First Concert of the Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Herr Henschel (October 7): Overture, "Zur Weihe des Hauses" (Beethoven); Pianoforte Concerto, Op. 54 (Schumann); "Russian" Symphony, G. minor (Rubinstein); Bagatelles for pianoforte (Beethoven); Rhapsody, No. 8 (Liszt); Hungarian Dances (Brahms). Second Concert of the Symphony Orchestra (October 14): Overture and Prayer from "Rienzi" (Wagner); Symphony, No. 1 (Beethoven); Chaconne et Rigodon from "Aline, Reine de Golconde" (Monsigny); Overture and Air from "Masaniello" (Auber).

CORRESPONDENCE.

SINGING IN STATE SCHOOLS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

SIR,—The valuable letters which appear from time to time in your widely circulated journal respecting the merits of the different methods for teaching singing are read with interest in this part of the world; and thinking your readers might be glad to know how this colony (Victoria) has so far established singing in the State schools, I send you the following particulars.

Singing is systematically taught to Classes vi., v., iv., iii., either by the "Numeral" or the Tonic Sol-fa methods, and these classes are inspected and examined in accordance with the Programme of Instruction issued by the Department of Education. The examination consists of "Elementary Knowledge," "Sight-singing," and "Song-singing"—the staff notation being that by which the "tests" are given. Some of our teachers employ the "Numeral" and some the Tonic Sol-fa methods, and the Department is satisfied to give the grant for results judging by the staff notation. Our classes number from 50 to 180, and are "failed" unless 50 per cent. succeed in passing the standard of Programme.

There are about 36,000 children receiving Programme instruction subject to examination and inspection, and these are taught by 33 professional singing masters, and about 80 staff teachers. As a rule the staff teachers instruct the junior classes iii. and iv., and receive a grant of £10 per annum. The singing masters receive salaries of £425 to £200 per annum. The colony is divided into districts, and each singing master has charge of a district. Each master is expected to give six lessons of forty-five minutes' duration per diem. Teachers' classes are held in the principal towns and districts, and examinations take place half-yearly for candidates desirous of obtaining the "Licence to Teach," or the "Certificate of Competency."

The following particulars may serve to illustrate what can be accomplished by our children. The poet laureate's new national song "Hands all round" was placed in the hands of our eight metropolitan singing masters on May 9, with a request that a muster of 5,000 children should sing it on May 24, her Majesty's birthday, together with a suitable programme of national songs of all nations. These children were brought together, and sang the song in admirable style without any previous full rehearsal, and elicited the warm applause of an immense audience.

Singing is regarded in our State schools as the most popular subject of instruction, and as long as we obtain good singing we waive the choice of method of teaching.

I am, sir, yours faithfully,

J. SUMMERS,

Government Inspector of Music.

Melbourne, September 9, 1882.