MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

IMITATION.

IMITATION (not the echo of one part by another, in counterpoint, but the copy of some effect in nature,) has, by various composers, been carried to a most extravagant and ridiculous extent. Froberger, organist to the Emperor Ferdinand III., is said to have represented the passage of Count Thurn over the Rhine; Kuhnah, a musician of celebrity, composed six sonatas, in which he attempted to give a lively picture of David combating Goliah: Buxtehude, of Lubec, composed a suite of lessons, descriptive of the motions of the planets: Vivaldi, in his concertos, strove to depict the four seasons: Geminiani translated a whole episode of Tasso's *Jerusalemma Liberata*, into musical notes: Handel, in his *Israel in Egypt*, affected to represent the sun standing still; and Haydn, in his *Creation*, has imitated light with sound, in order, it is pre-

sumed, to inform the blind what light really is. In reflecting on these absurdities, how we are compelled to pity the mistakes of genius! Even if music be an imitative art, imitation is among the humblest of its pretensions:—its true character consists in its power to charm the imagination, move the passions, and awaken sentiment.

GLUCK'S PROFOUND JUDGMENT.

Gluck being asked why, after Orestes, in *Ephigenia in Tauris*, has said "*My heart is again at rest*," the motion of the bass continues to express a degree of mental agitation, the musician replied, "Because, when Orestes says his heart is at rest, he belies his secret feelings. His heart is not at rest. The torment of his guilt forbids it: he has killed his mother."

IMPORTANCE OF THE ROMAN TIBICINES.

By the ancient Romans, the tibia, or flute, was held in much higher esteem than any other instrument. For the tibicines, or flute-players, a college was founded: they always performed with their heads covered; and were allowed other especial privileges, not enjoyed by the fidicinists, or performers on the lyre. Their office was, to attend at triumphs, sacrifices, and all public solemnities. That this order of Roman musicians were sensible of, and sometimes pre-

sumed upon, their importance, is evident, from the following fact, related both by Livy and by Valerius Maximus :—

"The censors having refused to permit the tibicines to continue to eat in the Temple of Jupiter, they withdrew to Tibur, now Tivoli, a town in the vicinity of Rome. As the sacrifices could not be performed without these musicians, the magistrates were at a loss how to proceed in their absence : the senate, therefore, dispatched ambassadors to the people of Tibur, requesting them to deliver up the tibicines, as officers of the state, who had fled from their posts. The Tiburtines, willing to oblige the Romans, tried with fair words to persuade their new guests to return to their duty; but, these means proving ineffectual, they resorted to stratagem : they appointed a public feast, invited to it the tibicines, plied them well with wine, and, when they were overtaken by intoxication and sleep, put them into carts, which conveyed them to Rome. The next day, the tibicines, having in some degree recovered their senses, were prevailed on to stay in the city, and were not only restored to their former privilege of eating in the temple, but permitted annually to celebrate the day of its restoration (the 13th of June), though attended with circumstances so disgraceful to their office,

by processions in which the most licentious excesses were allowed.

MUSIC TOO MUCH FOR SATAN.

Luther, who was scarcely less learned in music than in divinity, having, with the approbation of Melancthon, received into his church a solemn service, consisting of anthems, hymns, and certain melodious motets, he was so pleased with them, that he expressed his opinion of their excellence, by exultingly exclaiming, "*Scimus musicam dæmonibus invisam et intolerabilem esse.*" We know that to the demons music is hateful and unbearable. Dr. Wetenhall applies this passage to the music of our church; and, on its authority, pronounces it to be *such as no devil can stand against.*

SUSPECTED MURDER OF MR. BILLINGTON.

When Mrs. Billington visited Naples, in the year 1794, she was not long there before she attracted the attention of princes, dukes, barons, counts, and commoners. Her amazing vocal powers, with her great personal charms, and the facility with which those charms were yielded up, and perhaps then, for the first time, opposed by her hitherto complaisant husband, gave birth to a rumour that his sudden death was occasioned

by poison. The manner of his decease was as follows:—On the second day of his wife's engagement at San Carlo, after they had been dining with an English family, who were lodging in the same hotel, he went up stairs to fetch the cloak in which she was about to go to the theatre; when, while in the act of putting it on her shoulders, without uttering a syllable, he dropped down at her feet, and expired.

MOZART'S PREDICTION OF HIS OWN DEATH.

Mozart produced his last composition on his death-bed—it was his requiem: at the moment he began that sublime piece, the illness by which he was confined had alarmingly increased—his blood was inflamed—his ideas were gloomy—and he felt persuaded that the music he was composing for another would be completed but in time for his own funeral. His wife, distressed at not finding it possible to dissipate this dismal impression, followed the advice of the physician, and took from him the score. On his appearing to mend, the manuscript was returned to him, but soon afterwards he was seized with a violent fever. On the day on which he died, he requested to see once more, and retouch, the production on which he had been so interestedly engaged. After altering a few notes, he earnestly gazed upon the composition, heaved a sigh, and

said, "Was I not right when I declared that it was for my own obsequies I was composing this funeral anthem?" He then added, "I die at the moment in which I have completed my labours, —the moment in which I have triumphed over every difficulty, and am writing the final dictations of my heart." Tears then gushed from his eyes—his last adieu to the divine science to which his soul was devoted.

THEORY AND PRACTICE.

The branch of musical science which has for its object the investigation of the philosophy of appreciable sounds, is not necessarily connected with that which teaches their arrangement in composition. Hence, there have been but few musicians who have been eminently distinguished for skill, both in the theory of the production of sounds, and the knowledge of their application in practice. The principal of these were Zarlino, Tartini, Rameau, and Dr. Pepusch. The truth is, as observed by Thomas Salmon, in his "*Proposal to perform Music in perfect and mathematical proportions*," that musical sounds enter and gratify the ear, without informing the understanding respecting the proportions from which they arise. Reason and enquiry instruct the philosopher on this point; but neither the composer nor the practitioner is compelled to make

the same investigation. The first looks into the causes of sounds and their natural laws; the latter two take sounds as they find them, and use them as they are wanted.

VARIOUS APPLICABILITY OF THE SAME MUSIC.

When Dr. Brown wrote his ode entitled *The Cure of Saul*, in order to set it to music, he made a selection from the works of various celebrated composers. For a solo air, he took the saraband in the eighth sonata of Corelli's second set; and for a chorus, a movement in Purcell's "*O, give thanks.*" The melody of "*Return, O God of Hosts,*" in "*Samson,*" Handel took from one of his own Italian cantatas. The chorus in *Alexander's Feast*, "*Let old Timotheus yield the prize,*" was originally an Italian trio; as was also that in *Il Penseroso*, "*These pleasures, melancholy give,*" and a great portion of the music to Dryden's lesser ode for St. Cecilia's Day, had been composed for an opera written by Dr. Smollet, and set by Handel, but which was never performed.

PIERRE WINTER,

Chapel-master to the King of Bavaria, at Munich, was born in 1758, and made so rapid a progress in his musical studies, that, at twelve years of age, he conducted the royal band. The German operas of this great master are twelve in number,

and their picturesque beauties, mythologic, heroic, and comic, are universally acknowledged. To the treasures of Italy,—Italy, already enriched with the elegant productions of Sarti and Jomelli, Cimarosa and Guglielmi, Paer and Paesiello,—he added the wealth of his compositions; and Naples, Rome, and Venice, have resounded his praise. Winter first became known to the musical public of Paris, by his noble opera of *Tamerlane;* where it was said, that the music accompanying the entry of Tamerlane into Adrianople is so expressive of the incident, that it is impossible to listen to it, and not fancy that we are spectators of the triumph of the Tartar. In consequence of the great success of this piece in France, he was solicited to set to music *Castor and Pollux*. Winter, sensible of the caprice of the Parisian amateurs, was unwilling to trust in their hands the reputation he had acquired. Besides that that opera had already been set by Trajetta, Candrille, Bianchi, Sarti, Vogler, Frederici, and others, he knew how sanctimoniously partial the French still were to the music of their *divine* Rameau, some of whose airs Candrille had introduced in his Castor and Pollux; and it may be said, for him, that he feared to have the French theorist's quaintness and crudities pitted against his ease and elegance. His predictive apprehensions were too correct. He yielded to

the persuasion of the manager, and became the victim of his own complaisance. He composed the opera; it was heard; and the music that has since been admired in every other metropolis in Europe, was condemned at Paris, as unworthy of being heard after that of Rameau.

Not only at Venice, Naples, and Vienna, have Winter's operatic compositions been heard and applauded; at London also have they been listened to with admiration. His *Calypso*, *Castor*, *Zaira*, and *Proserpine*, have had here brilliant receptions, and the warmest eulogium has been awarded to several of his grand ballets. But the most highly successful of all his lyrical productions represented in London, was his *Orpheus*, a ballet, novel in its kind, inasmuch as it unites with the grand pantomime the attractions of vocal melody,—to the illustrative lyre of the ancient Greeks, adds the beauties of modern song, and seems to fill the whole circle of musical enchantment.

THE MASTER OF VIOTTI.

A higher praise can scarcely be given to any violinist than is comprehended in this title, founded on fact, and emphatically applied to Pugnani by a respectable musical writer, M. Cartier. But while, in one sense of the expression, he was the master of Viotti, in another,

he was the master of all who performed with him, or under his direction. Few musicians have at once, like Pugnani, commanded equal respect for their talents and their persons; no leader ever more fully possessed the means of extorting esteem and attention. In private, his manners were peculiarly conciliating; and, whenever he appeared in public, he was sumptuously apparelled, and conducted himself with great propriety and dignity. In his performance there was a grandeur of style, so perfectly correspondent with his exterior, as to strike every one. Of whatever band he led he had the perfect command; and the performers, in compliment both to the tutor and his pupil, instead of speaking of him by his name, called him, in imitation of M. Cartier, *The Master of Viotti.*

DR. WORGAN,

A native of London, and born about the year 1730, received his first musical instructions from his brother, a practical musician; then became a pupil of the scientific Roseingrave, and finished his professional education under the elegant Geminiani. By these advantages, and an industrious investigation of the works of Palestrina and Handel, he became a distinguished theorist, and one of the first extempore fuguists of his time, on the organ. At an early age, he