



# THE SCOTSMAN

No. 10,161.

EDINBURGH, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1876.

PRICE 1d.

# THE REID FESTIVAL.

THE third and last of our festival concerts took place last night, with the same general arrangements as its predecessors. The following was the programme, which, it will be seen, contained a quite unprecedented concert of interesting novelty:—

## PART FIRST.

Overture—"Egmont".....Beethoven.  
 Aria—"Quid vago impallidus".....Hauptmann  
 (Petrarch's Sonnets, No. 91.)  
 Madame Antoinette Sterling.  
 Pianoforte Concerto in A Minor—Op. M.....R. Grieg.  
 Allegro Molto. Moderato.  
 Mr Charles Halle.  
 Part I. "His Madonna love provokes my rage".....Handel.  
 Air—"Love sounds the alarm" (Acis and Galatea) }  
 Mr Edward Lloyd.  
 "Lenora," Grand Symphony in E, No. 1, Op. 177.....Raff.  
 Part I. "Love and happiness."  
 Allegro. "Separation."  
 Andante, quasi Larghetto. Tempo di Marcia.

## PART SECOND.

Overture—{ An Adventure of Handel's; or }.....Reinecke.  
 "The Power of Song" }  
 Lieder—(a) Wenn ich früh.....Schumann.  
 (b) "Selbst".....Raff.  
 (c) "Der Wachtelschlag".....Schubert.  
 Madame Antoinette Sterling.  
 Pianoforte Solo—{ Prelude and Fugue in A minor }.....Bach.  
 (Alla Tarantella)  
 Mr Charles Halle.

Wallenstein's Camp.....J. Rheinberger.  
 Scherzo (Introducing a soldier's song of the time.)  
 Trio—Mung Mung (The Friar's Sermon.)  
 Serenade—(From "The Night Dancers").....Edward Loder.  
 Mr Edward Lloyd.

Overture—"Ferdinand Cortez".....Spontini.

The orchestra did its duty nobly in the most dramatic of Beethoven's overtures—playing with great power throughout, and most impressively in the grand triumphant outburst at the close. The effect was, however, somewhat interfered with by the unpunctual arrival of a large number of the audience, caused perhaps, in part, by the difficulty of driving in the slippery streets. Raff's symphony, descriptive of Bürger's poem "Lenora," was the great feature of the evening, and the most important new work which has for long been produced in Edinburgh. We should probably not be wrong in calling it the most remarkable work in programme music that has ever been written. It made no small sensation on its first production at Leipzig less than two years ago, and was as much talked of when brought to a hearing soon afterwards at a Crystal Palace concert. Raff is one of the greatest of the living composers of Germany, and it is considered in his own country that no symphonies equal to his have been written since those of Schumann. The subject of "Lenora" is treated throughout with great fervour and marvellous effect. "Liebesglück" has two movements—a joyous allegro and an impassioned andante with a lovely theme, developed with marvellous musical skill, at the close of which came a burst of pent-up applause. In "Trennung" the interest was redoubled. The theme is one of the most spirited military marches ever written, and exquisitely scored (piccolo and triangle being introduced with great effect), interrupted by an intermezzo of agitato character portraying the agony of separation. In this movement, whose charm was enhanced by the lovely playing of M. Lavigne's oboe, and the dying away of the instruments at the close, the enthusiasm reached a climax, and the audience would fain have had it repeated. In the third division it is doubtless more the general horror of the story than each individual incident that is meant to be depicted, yet passages occur that are unmistakably descriptive of the separate scenes. At the opening we have tones of anguish and distress; the return of the army without Wilhelm is hinted at by a phrase from the March in the minor key, and the pious remonstrances of the mother by a chorale assigned to trombones and strings. We have phrases distinctly descriptive of the tramp of the horse, the tinkling of the bell, the midnight gallop, and the neighing and snorting; and the symphony closes with a hymn of the spirits, taken up by the strings and repeated by the orchestra, suggestive of Lenora's union with her lover in death. At the close we had an outburst of applause such as we never before saw accorded to any symphonic work in Edinburgh. The Adventure of Handel, on which Reinecke's operetta turns, is the fabulous legend that a certain well-known air, with variations, was originally inspired by the stroke of a hammer on an anvil in a blacksmith's workshop. The air, in point of fact, is a very old French melody, and the variations only are Handel's. A musical blacksmith of Bath published an edition of the air and variations, which bore conspicuously on the title-page the words, "As played by the Harmonious Blacksmith," the name by which he was generally known. That appellation became eventually transferred to the air, and to account for it the story was invented or imagined. The overture, a bright and very musicianly work, took greatly. The leading subject is somewhat idyllic; there is a second still more rustic theme introduced by the winds. Phrases from the "Harmonious Blacksmith" come in again and again, and with particularly good effect at the brilliant close. The movement given of Rheinberger's symphony illustrative of Schiller's drama, made us long to hear the entire work. This scherzo, which had nearly as hearty a reception as the orchestral numbers already mentioned, brings before us the merry and riotous goings on in the camp of Wallenstein, interrupted by the entry of a Capuchin friar, who boldly denounces the soldiers and their ways, and likens their commander to every possible hero of evil repute in the Old and New Testaments. The scene of confusion, in which may be recognised the song of the recruit, "Trommeln und pfeifen," with piccolo and triangle, is most graphic. In admirable contrast to it comes the trio, in which the character of the sermon is unmistakable, and we have a vivid portrait of the interruption and jeering of the troops.

The little-known overture to "Fernando Cortez," a work whose subject was suggested to Spontini by Napoleon, formed an excellent closing piece. It opens with a few bars of drums, leading to a pleasing if not very original motive; a crescendo à la Rossini follows, and the whole finishes in the vigorous and spirited style characteristic of its composer.

The pianoforte concerto in A minor by the young Norwegian composer, Grieg, first played in Britain by Herr Dannreuther at a Crystal Palace concert a little more than a year ago, is a most original and effective work. While the programme affirmed correctly that it had never yet been played (in the sense of being played as written) in Scotland, we have been informed that it was played last March, in as far as it could be played without orchestra, at a concert of Mr Adlington's pupils in the Society of Arts Hall. It was matter of regret to us that on this occasion only one movement of it could be heard, but that movement took immensely. Fresh, vigorous, quaint, and full of Scandinavian nationality, it is brilliantly and effectively arranged for piano and orchestra, and was deliciously played by both soloist and band. Mr Halle's finished execution of the beautiful cadenza deserving particular mention. The most effective and difficult Prelude and Fugue, "A la Tarantella," were played with a clearness and equality of hands which few pianists could approach. An encore elicited the "Moto perpetuo."

Madame Sterling, though not altogether recovered from her cold, had in a considerable measure regained her voice. The graceful setting of Petrarch's sonnet, by Hauptmann, fell rather flat, and was perhaps a little overweighted by the orchestral accompaniment—scored for her by Silas. But to hear Madame Sterling sing the three German "Lieder" in the second part of the concert was a genuine treat. She completely identified herself with the character of each—the quiet contemplativeness of the "Wachtelschlag," the more melancholy pensiveness of Raff's very lovely song, and the delightful rustic naïveté of the little Volklied by Schumann, all coming alike naturally to her. The last-named song elicited a persistent encore, responded to by "O hush thee, my baby." Mr Lloyd sang as deliciously as we ever heard him do, both in Acis' defiant strain, and in the not very original barcarole-like air by Loder.