

OPENING OF THE MUSIC HALL, SETTLE.

In the early part of last week this interesting building, which promises to contribute so much to the instruction and entertainment of the inhabitants of Settle and its neighbourhood, was formally opened and dedicated to public use. The occasion was marked by the performance, on Monday evening, of the sacred oratorio of the Creation, by the members of the Settle Choral Society, assisted by the principal members of the Leeds Choral Society; and by several distinguished vocalists whose services had been specially engaged for the occasion: and, on Tuesday evening, by a Concert of miscellaneous music. Before however we speak of the performances, it may be as well to say a word in regard to the building which has been thus auspiciously inaugurated. A want has long been felt of some appropriate building, in which the various requirements of a locality possessing a population such as that of Settle and its neighbourhood, for all purposes of public assemblage, such as lectures, concerts, public meetings, &c., could be conveniently provided for; and, the successful establishment of a Choral Society in the town, within the last few years, has tended to cause this want to be still more seriously felt. In the absence of any public attempt to supply this deficiency, necessarily involving a considerable expenditure, with no prospect of adequate return, the Music Hall has been erected at the sole cost of the Rev. J. Robinson, who has, in a spirit of praiseworthy liberality, provided, not only that the building should be such as to answer all the purposes of public instruction and entertainment, but also be a handsome architectural ornament to his native town.

The structure is designed in the Italian style, and contains a handsome music room, 50 feet long, by 30 feet wide, and 26 feet high, fitted up with a spacious orchestra, rising floor with very comfortable fixed seats, capable of affording accommodation to an audience of 400 persons, and convenient waiting and refreshment rooms. The architectural ornaments are simple and appropriate, and the hall possesses that degree of resonance, the precise amount of which in our public buildings it appears to be so difficult to obtain. The work appears to be well executed in a solid and substantial manner, and the arrangement of the attendant apartments seems to be very convenient. The building was designed and completed under the superintendence of Mr. E. G. Paley.

The same spirit which dictated its construction presided over its inauguration, and no expense seems to have been spared to render its opening worthy of the occasion. The following professionals were engaged to assist the members of the Settle Choral Society, viz., Mr. and Madam Weiss, of the London concerts, Mr. Perring, of Manchester, Miss Senior, (pupil of Mrs. Wood,) and Mr. Hinchcliffe, vocalists; Messrs. Haddock and Rayner, 1st and 2nd violins; Mr. Rayner, violo; Wilson, violoncello; Crowther, double bass; Saynor, flute; Womack, oboe; Fotheringham, clarionet; Hicks, bassoon; Oddy, French horn; Piel, trumpet; Martin, trombone; and Crabtree, drums.

The performance of the "Creation" was opened as usual with the representation of chaos, which was played by the band with great care and precision.—Mr. Hinchcliffe sang the recitative "In the beginning," and we were then introduced to Mr. Perring, a tenor of considerable celebrity, who it will be remembered made a very favourable impression upon a Lancaster audience in the performance of the Sacred Oratorio of "Elijah," a few months ago. He sang the pieces allotted to him with good taste and feeling;—his voice is soft and of considerable compass, and he sings with that care and strict attention to the music which is sure to gain the approbation of a critical audience. His rendering of the favourite air "In native worth," towards the end of the second part was exceedingly good, and called forth rounds of applause.—Mrs. Sanderson, the principal soprano of the Settle Choral Society, undertook the solo parts of "The Marvellous Works," and "The Heavens are telling," and sang the terzetto "Most beautiful appear," with Messrs. Perring and Hinchcliffe. Almost immediately recovering from a little nervousness natural to non-professional singers, which was observable at the commencement of her first song, Mrs. Sanderson sang her pieces well, and to the evident satisfaction and delight of her many friends present. She sang that thrilling solo, "The glorious Hierarchy of Heaven," as brilliantly as could be desired, and sustained the high notes in excellent time. Her part of "The Heavens are telling," was equally well sung. The terzetto was, however, rather beyond her powers, and she did not sing it with her usual confidence. She sang the principal soprano parts in the whole of the choruses, the success of which was owing in a great measure to her exertions. Mr. Hinchcliffe, an old friend from Leeds, was on this occasion superseded, to a great extent, in his usual parts by Mr. Weiss, one of the best basses of the present day; Mr. Hinchcliffe, however, sang two recitatives with great care, and in his usually good-natured manner gave most effective assistance to the bass parts of the choruses. To hear Mr. Weiss' fine voice and perfect intonation was indeed such a treat as can only be heard now and then; the whole of the heavy parts of "Adam" were undertaken by Mr. Weiss, and

sung by him to perfection. We consider him, as a bass, second only to Herr Formes, and think Mr. Robinson could not have made a more excellent engagement than of Mr. and Madame Weiss. Madame Weiss sang the soprano songs, with the whole of which she appears to be very familiar. Mr. and Madame Weiss sang that charming duett, "Graceful Consort," at the end of the oratorio, with such good taste and feeling, that the audience were in raptures, and nothing but consideration for the lungs of the pair prevented an encore; the applause was however, loud and long continued.

Mr. Haddock led the band most efficiently, and the several parts were very carefully played—the usual fault of too much noise, was not observable. The Choruses were sung in good time and tune, and were certainly not the least attractive part of the evening's performances.

Mr. Barnett, the energetic leader of the Settle Choral Society, held the baton on this occasion, and conducted the oratorio with great care and ability. At the previous concerts given by the Choral Society at Settle, the want of a conductor has been often manifest, but the absolute necessity of the case was on this occasion put beyond a doubt, for whilst every part went well together on Monday evening, the performances of Tuesday (of which a few remarks hereafter) were considerably marred, by the circumstance of Mr. Barnett attempting to combine the two offices of leader and conductor in his own person.

On Monday evening the music room was well filled, but not crowded—the audience was composed of the *elite* of the town and district, and several families from Skipton, Gargrave, Lancaster, and the neighbourhood, who had been invited to partake of the hospitalities of their Craven friends, were also amongst the company—everybody appeared highly delighted, and at the close of the performance nothing was to be heard but congratulatory remarks upon the auspicious opening, and expressions of bright expectations as to the future advantages to be derived from the provision of a Music Hall, at Settle.

The bill of fare for Tuesday evening was doubtless better calculated to please a general audience, and consequently the hall was crowded to overflowing, additional seats having to be provided on the landing and in the entrance. The performance was opened with one of Rossini's overtures, after which we had the glee and chorus, "It is our opening day;" the solos by Miss Senior, Mrs. Sanderson, and Mr. Hinchcliffe—the whole piece was given with great spirit and precision. Mr. Perring sang "In this old chair" with his usual taste and ability, and we were then introduced to Miss Senior, a young lady possessing considerable talent as a vocalist. She has a remarkably sweet voice, and her upper notes are especially good and distinct in their intonation. Her song, a young lady's "No," is well adapted to her youthful and somewhat bashful appearance, and it met with a hearty reception. Mr. and Madam Weiss sang a somewhat solemn duett, "The Exile's Return," which we did not consider a well chosen piece. In Mr. Hinchcliffe's song from *Somnambula*, "As I view these scenes so charming," the band accompaniments were so much out of time and there was such an evident want of understanding between the singer and the players, that the whole piece was most unsatisfactory;—the same thing occurred in the former duett: so entirely were the instruments out of time that Madam Weiss stopped the piece, and a new commencement was made, with not much better results. We are decidedly of opinion that had Mr. Barnett undertaken the baton, and left the first violin part to Mr. Haddock, the whole would have gone together as well as could be desired. A Quartette of four of the stringed instruments followed; it was much in the character of a violin solo by Mr. Haddock, with accompaniments by the other three. Mr. H. is a finished performer on the violin, and about one fourth of the piece he selected would have satisfied the audience, and left a very favourable impression, but the unusual length to which it was drawn out, was somewhat tedious, and violin solos, at the best, are not appreciated by more than one half of an audience. Madam Weiss sang Moore's exquisite melody "The Meeting of the waters" with charming effect; this style of ballad is exactly Madam Weiss' forte, but, whether she felt that the instrumental quartett had taken up above its share of the evening, or what other cause prompted her, we know not, but she caused great disappointment by omitting one of the four verses of her song, which otherwise gave perfect satisfaction. The favourite trio "The Magic Wove Scarf" came next, and met with a hearty encore.

Mr. Weiss sang Mendelssohn's fine song "I'm a Roamer," every verse of which was loudly applauded, and afterwards encored. The first part was wound up with a piece composed for the occasion by Mr. Barnett, entitled "The Forester's Chorus," with orchestral accompaniments, and it was given with great energy and precision; both the composition, and the manner in which the chorus was performed, reflect great credit upon its author.

In the second part Mr. Weiss and Mr. Hinchcliffe sang Handel's magnificent duett, "The Lord is a Man of War," with band accompaniments. Mr. Perring sang "All is lost," from *Somnambula*, but after hearing Mario and Reeves in the same song, Mr. Perring's efforts did not come up to our ideas of perfection. Mr. Saynor, of Leeds, played a solo on the flute, which was loudly encored, and was perhaps the most attractive feature in the evening's entertainment. Miss Senior sang a song of Bishop's, which was encored, and Mr. Hinchcliffe's "Philip the Fair" came next, and met with a hearty encore. The "National Anthem" closed the performance.