

(From our London Correspondent.)

Be not surprised at my not having communicated to you the sad intelligence of the death of our celebrated townswoman, Madame Catherine Hayes.

On the 11th inst., calling at her residence, I was informed that she had burst a blood-vessel, and was dangerously ill at Sydenham, to which place I immediately proceeded, and arrived at the very instant of her death. This information so shocked me, that I could not possibly write one line, though aware of the sad fact for two days before the London newspapers started the public by this sorrowful record. But what could I do?—my pen refused to barter for so great a sorrow—"my right hand forgot its cunning"—my mind, confused and harrowed as by some hideous dream, hardly to be realised, was utterly incapable of either thought or action; and even now as I write my pen trembles, and the ink is mingled with tears; and though the violence of the tempest is past over, and a mournful calm has ensued, yet the ocean of sorrow is so agitated that ordinary words would fail, and the language of passion can alone express the intensity of so great an affliction. Cold-hearted Campbell died without a regret; Sidney Herbert awaked a passing sigh, but the profound sorrow with which the death of Catherine Hayes filled the public mind was universal. Her name was long associated with those sweet songs, working the tenderest memories of youth and home and love, which none could portray with such vivid and thrilling effect as she did. Catherine Hayes dead! The sunlight itself looked sorrowful, and the earth seemed robed in mourning! I can now more calmly relate some particulars of the last hours of poor dear Catherine, as she is universally called by all who knew, that is to say, by all who loved her; to me it will be a duty "pleasing though sad to the soul," and it will satisfy a desire you must naturally feel to know something connected with the last moments of our world-worshipped and idolized countrywoman.

The last letter written by this much lamented lady, lay in her chamber unopened, addressed to your correspondent, and was handed to me at her house on the following day. It is a sorrowful and precious memorial! In it there is an expression of grateful thanks for some slight services rendered by me in a communication to your journal of the 10th of July last, which contained a notice of her first and alas! that it should be so, her last concert in London.

I give the extracts, which cannot fail to gratify you:—"Thanks much for the charming notice inserted in the LIMERICK CHRONICLE, nothing could have been better, and I am much obliged to you." For the sake of Limerick, and of Limerick people I am glad that these expressions of graceful acknowledgment should have been written by her to a townsman, and on such an occasion. They evidence a trait which pre-eminently distinguished her character viz., an extreme sensibility for the least kindness rendered to her; this was unfortunately accompanied by its companion characteristic, an exquisite sensitiveness to unkindness and calumny; like all her countrywomen she was proud of the crystalline purity of her name—of this her enemies were fully aware. They well knew where the poisoned arrow could strike her, and their calumnies against her will and better judgment forced her to an act which was deeply regretted; the arrow pierced her heart, the iron entered into her soul, her look became sorrowful, and with passionate tears she complained to a friend of the cold and heartless silence with which her name was shrouded over. "If they abused," she cried, "I would not care, but to kill me by this dumb silence." They could not abuse her, for that she was too good; they could not deny that she was wonderfully gifted by nature, accomplished by art, and illumined by the purest inspirations of genius; the verdict of the world would crush such temerity, but they could insinuate calumnies, damn with faint praise, and kill with cruel silence. They have done so; they can now rejoice that the seed she had sown she had not reaped, the fruit she had reared she had not tasted; she died in her early summer, and now they can stand above her grave in Kensal-green, and triumph in their shame. They may call it revenge; let them do so. They can bear it in their bosoms as a gospel to that judgment-seat where salvation and mercy are one; but we have no part with them, and gladly do I turn from this dark and sorrowful page to brighter and happier reflections.

With the early history of Catherine Hayes we, of her native place, are well acquainted; we remember, as if 'twere yesterday, that bower, on the banks of the river, where at eve her young half-conscious soul gazed with child-like sadness or delight as the western sun burnished with golden light the wide-flowing waters of the noble Shannon; and as it shed its parting rays on the fair child of song, her heart, touched as if by the finger of sorrow, poured out its plaintive lay, mourning for departed glories; and the pale moon rose and smiled on that angel being, who seemed like the Peri pleading at the golden gates of Heaven. By that bower, as the fisherman strayed, silently he drop'd his oars, and glided calmly, fearful to disturb the gentle, timid child, whose notes, now bright, now sad, filled his thoughtful soul with unutterable thoughts and feelings, and shed a softened radiance o'er his nightly labours. The bower of the young nightingale was well known, nor shall it soon be forgotten, and she, too, in her world-wide travels in far off climes, and on moonlit seas, never ceased to remember this the home of her heart; and the rough sailor, on the ship's deck, and the rude inhabitants of the golden lands, were melted into tears, and civilized by her tender and thrilling melodies, filled with happy memories of home, and peace, and love, which shed their unfading beams o'er their chequered years of existence. In her, whose mind was pure and guileless, it evoked that pleasing memory which our poet, Moore, so beautifully describes in lines so sweetly applicable:—

There's a bower of roses by Bendemeer's stream,
And the nightingale sings round it all the day long;
In the days of my childhood 'twas like a sweet dream
To sit by the roses, and hear the birds song.

That bower and its roses I never forget,
But often at eve, at the close of the year,
I think are the nightingales singing there yet
Do the roses still bloom by the calm Bendemeer.

From this bower she sprang with the eagle flight of genius to the highest pinnacle of fame, and was crowned in Italy, the land of song, with that diadem of glory which is never placed on any but heroes inspired by the light of genius, and thus she did away with the reproach that the Emerald Isle, so essentially the land of song, where national melodies, of world-wide reputation, alternating from the tender and simple to the grandly sublime, and whose war songs wake the soul as by the blast of a trumpet, never, within memory, gave a single female vocalist who could fully interpret the highest order of dramatic music. Although in every other walk of life Ireland gave proofs of unlimited genius and talent, a vocalist who "has achieved triumphs which threw into shade many of the proudest lyric victories of the Italian and German prima donnas,—Catherine Hayes stood alone." Orators, writers, statesmen, warriors, sculptors, painters, poets, musicians, actors and actresses, we have without number, but of grand and wonderful vocalists we had but one, and she has now departed. Perhaps it is as well were we to take a cursory glance at the history of Madame Catherine Hayes since she left Limerick. You are aware that she was placed under the care of Signor Sapio in Dublin, where success as a

concert singer was immediately accorded to her. She remained with him till 1843, in which year, having heard Grisi, Mario, and Lablache in Dublin, she determined to become an operatic singer. She then placed herself under the care of E. Garcia, the brother of Malibran, and the instructor of Mario, Jenny Lind, and many other famous vocalists, for over eighteen months. Miss C. Hayes remained with Garcia, who declared "it would be impossible by mere study to add a grace to the fully developed and beautiful voice she then possessed, so extensive was it in compass and so perfect both in its upper and lower register." But possessing that timidity which always accompanies true genius, she did not feel satisfied, as she told me, without obtaining the best masters in Italy, and perfecting herself in that language. She then determined to proceed to Milan, and provided with letters of introduction to the best masters there, she decided on making it the place of her temporary abode. When there numerous offers were made to her to accept engagements immediately. Amongst others, one for the Italian Opera in the spring of 1845, at Marseilles. This her best friends advised her to accept, as being timid and gentle, inexperienced in theatrical art, they hoped that she would gain confidence to make an appearance before an Italian audience at the great theatre La Scala at Milan. She, therefore, proceeded to Marseilles, where she made her debut on the 10th of April, 1845, in the opera of I Puritani of Bellini. Her success was so great that it was said by critics that if they were not aware of her being a debutante, they would have supposed her to have been for many years an accomplished actress.

At Milan, in the same year her success was so absolutely triumphant, that at the conclusion of the *Linda di Chamounix* she was called before the curtain no less than twelve times! and was retained as the *Prima Donna assoluta* for the whole of the great carnival. At Vienna her success was so flattering that she wrote to a friend to state that she feared she should be "spoiled" at Venice in the *Lucia de Lammermoor*. The excitement she caused was unparalleled, even in this city of musicians; two operas were written for this accomplished artist and charming woman. In the course of this season, her return to Vienna, and subsequent visits to Rome, Florence, Verona, Genoa, &c., was attended by unqualified triumphs. In London in the spring of 1849, her success was most unequivocal in her celebrated character of *Linda de Chamounix*, and when called before the curtain at the close of the opera the applause of the audience was so energetic and decided that it was evident she attained the highest point of her ambition on a stage which witnessed the almost nightly performances of Grisi and Mario. Next season she was selected by Mr. Lumley to replace *Jenny Lind*, and reaped a greater triumph at her Majesty's Theatre than any she had previously attained! She was honoured by a command to sing at Buckingham Palace, and was praised by the Queen for her well deserved success, and highly complimented by Prince Albert, who is a thorough judge of music. Her success during the same season in Handel's *Messiah* and the *St. Paul* of Mendelssohn was so decided that it established her at once as one of the greatest interpreters of sacred music. I shall not speak of her enthusiastic reception in her native land, of that you are aware, nor of her after world-wide travels for they are not to my present purpose which is to vindicate the just fame of our fair countrywoman from the vile and disparaging notice of the *truthful Times*, by the unanimous verdict of Europe, excluding her country, America, Australia, Asia, &c., &c., where the *Times* insinuates that she traded on a reputation gained in England! It indeed admits that in her own country she was adored, that her pathway there was literally paved with gold and strewn with flowers," which very admission contains a gross slur. It seems to forget that while an English lady, Miss Helen Faucet, was presented in Dublin with a valuable bracelet as a tribute of admiration, Catherine Hayes received but a shamrock crown in 1849, meet emblem of national affection and the national poverty which then desolated her native land, and in calumniating her it goes out of its way to stigmatize the whole Irish nation as devoid of musical taste; considering its general truthfulness this is not to be wondered at, though, if it were possible, one would be surprised at such an unparalleled falsehood in the face of all history, both before and since the days of Cambrensis, who was forced to write in language of enthusiastic praise of the wonderful musical genius of our people; but we need not fear to compare Ireland, not with England, but with any country in this respect. To what country does Balf, Wallace, Dugan, Osbourne, and M'Farren belong! We may compare Dublin, Cork, Limerick, and Galway, with London, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Southampton. Does the *Times* remember how a great English tenor was taught time and tune by the gallery boys in Cork, but perhaps I should have been silent and never have recorded these thoughts, but for the paltry notices which appeared in most of the London newspapers, particularly that vile and derogatory one to which I have alluded, in that arch-enemy of truth and justice—the *London Times*, a paper whose unfairness renders England hated all over the world, and has caused and is causing the greatest ill feeling between these countries, and the direct injury to our national union, but with purblind malevolence and fiendish craft it continues a course of abuse and vindictiveness which was first begun by Geraldus Cambrensis (under Henry II.) and adopted by this his hopeful successor. A paper of which (one of the most eloquent members of the English bar) said that, "When moved by interest or malevolence it spared no enemy, but with unprincipled and merciless vindictiveness it crushed the young man just struggling into life, and with remorseless and cowardly malignity it smote the old man as he tottered on the verge of the grave," which sentiment was cheered to the very echo over and over again in a crowded court, while the judges remained silent until the excitement would subside. The learned gentleman might, as I told him, well have added that neither genius nor virtue could shield the tomb of the dead from its unhallowed desecration, and particularly if they were Irish. It cast ruthless slanders into the yet open grave of O'Connell, while conservative opponents spoke both generously and kindly, remembering as men and gentlemen the holy maxim

Nil nisi boni mortuorum.

And even the fair form of the gentle, loving and gifted Catherine, as she lay in her pale shroud, awfully beautiful like the image of some sweet saint, carved in pure and Spolletto marble, was not free from the vile and lying detraction, of the heartless scribe who damns with faint praise, Catherine Hayes traduced forsooth, while Batte is exalted to heaven! Catherine Hayes passed over for Patti! I regret much to speak about any lady in terms that could in any way be deemed derogatory, but when comparisons are forced on one I cannot help saying that this young lady has a weak physique and a worn voice that she is comparatively ungifted by nature and untaught by art. But as 'tis always safe to degrade and insult Ireland, so it is politic to praise America, or again it may suit the management of Covent Garden to try and palm on the public a new singer since Grisi has long since ceased to be attractive, or, perhaps, it may be from a motive, even, more vile, viz., personal vindictiveness or probably all these in a combination. All that can truly be said of Patti is on going to hear her, expect-

ing a great treat from the extraordinary laudations of that lady, tickets were to be procured for half the usual price in the night of the season! a matter difficult to reconcile, with the notices in the *Times*, but this was soon accounted for by the disappointment universally manifested on hearing this much over-praised singer, who, to the surprise of all, was "staring" it at Covent Garden, while Albani, Catherine and other great artists were "shelved." So much for the lies, critiques, and a very discerning public, and, doubtless, after this your readers will rather adopt the opinion, expressed of Catherine Hayes's great natural gifts and artistic acquirements, by accomplished continental judges, who declared her eminent success as a vocal artist was only to be equalled by the blameless purity of her life, and her winsome and ladylike manners.

In your paper (10 July last) I quoted from "the musical world" similar praises, and also in your notice last July of Madame C. Hayes concert in Limerick appeared an opinion which a most eminent cantatrice herself expressed in a conversation with me on singers and singers generally, viz., that "Madame Hayes sings divinely." The lady who expressed this opinion is of the highest intelligence and greatest ability in her profession, and one totally incapable of unjust praise or disparage, which may be well inferred from this generous and lady tribute of admiration to a rival artist in a conversation which was both private and disinterested. This reminds me of a conversation ten years since with the then Miss C. Hayes in which I expressed the pleasure I experienced on the previous night at the personation of *Lucretia Borgia* by Madam Barlieni Nini reference was made to a notice in the leading journal of that day which was not only unjust to that lady as an artist, but also needlessly and personally offensive. Madame B. Nini was a wonderful singer, though her voice was rather worn, but with great artistic skill she managed to cover every defect, and the fiery, intense and startling energy of her singing and acting made you forget all the personal and physical defects against which her genius had to contend. Grisi was incapable of such a style of singing and vastly more passionate and impulsive without any of that broad violence which in some of her personations so greatly detracts from Madam Grisi, even in *Norma* her denunciation of Pallio sufficiently evinces this, as she advances towards Nini, with a roar, and lifting up her arm, like a sledge hammer she seems about to dash Nini into a thousand pieces. In this scene her violence seems boundless, expressing a malevolent hatred, which necessarily springs from a love so selfish and impure that all interest in the woman is lost from disgust at the magnificence of the virago, however powerful the declamation the effect produced was powerless. How very different was the realization of this character by the most delicate, refined, yet unpassioned personation of Catherine Hayes the moral, mental, and physical attributes of those artists differed not more widely than the variance of their delineations of *Norma*. In Catherine Hayes' your interest was continuously increased, and intensified by the feeling that before you was the gentle, injured yet fondly loving woman, who in the very rage and tempest of the passion moving her soul to its lowest depths, yet nursed an undying love, which sprung from the fountain source of a pure and devoted affection where very anger was, but the language of its tenderness, a veil scarcely concealing its infinite forgiveness, until every eye was dimmed with tears, and every heart throbbing with a tender and affectionate sympathy for the trusting, outraged, yet fondly loving *Norma*.

I did not intend to enter so largely into this subject, but was necessarily compelled by these unjust and unkind remarks in the great mis-leading journal, to place before your readers some facts in opposition to the assertions in that paper—so poor an advocate—and on the grounds of good intention, may be forgiven for weakly essaying to defend the memory of an Irish lady, of surpassing beauty and genius, gifted with songs divinely inspirations—a lady of whom, in your pages (February 20, 1881), you justly stated:—"Of the singing by Madame Hayes—of her melodies it would be useless to speak; suffice it to say, that as her countryman, Moore, was truly called 'the poet of exquisite feeling,' so, justly does 'the Irish Nightingale' deserve the appellation of the vocalist of exquisite feeling,"—for, if it is not possible to distinguish her wonderful singing by any peculiar characteristic, it is feeling—tender, refined, yet impassioned—this particularly entitles her to the name of the 'Irish Nightingale'; and, we must here remark that, though this title was applied to Jenny Lind, at a time when an absurd and extraordinary musical nomenclature was invented to land that gifted lady, yet, we must confess that, though the 'Swedish Nightingale' is remarkable for the greatest facility, and simplicity of style, yet, her calm mastery of vocalization is entirely exempt from those glorious impassioned bursts of feeling, by which Catherine Hayes so thrills and electrifies her audience. Madame Lind's singing is neither sensuously nor morally lovable—her voice seems disembodied, and you never realise the woman. This, notwithstanding her marvelous vocalization, we have always considered a great and irreparable defect, which nothing could supply; but Madame Hayes, though she may not surprise at first, and dazzle, grows on you more and more fascinating, and subduing with the sweet and exquisite tenderness of the 'bird of song.'

I regret much that I am compelled, against my will, to be so prolix, but it must be excused, for, on an occasion like this, we cannot allow ourselves to be confused by jargon, or bullied by shameless impudence.—I am not indifferent to the merits of other singers; but cannot forget the glories of Catherine Hayes, which are those of Ireland and Irishmen, who, as the *Times* admitted, was our Jenny Lind. Stephens, in one.

I well remember the delightful voice of the beautiful Sontas, which fell upon the ear softly, as dews from the clouds of heaven; the golden glories of Albani can never be forgotten; the bird-like vocalization of the over-praised Jenny Lind, "who is great in small parts and little in great"; the startling energy of Nini; the dramatic grandeur of *Barlieni*; the refined *Bosio*; the almost miraculous art of *Viardot*; the intellectual and gifted *Rudersdorff*; the splendid voice of *Fiorentini*; and *Sophie Cruvelli*, that bright young star who unbosomed the promise of her spring; and the many delightful attributes of the other charming singers, far too numerous to mention, now crowd upon my memory.

But, take her for all in all, though perhaps greater singers than Catherine Hayes may exist, I must confess that I never felt so deeply moved, and so unutterably entranced, as by her whose wondrous voice seemed to thrill the soul with undefinable rapture, 'till it became, as it were, disembodied, and borne higher and higher on the wings of impassioned and rapturous song to heaven's very gates, while every sense, but hearing, sank absorbed in an overwhelming ecstasy of delight! I remember some years since when stating to the then Miss C. Hayes, this wonderful effect of her singing, which I and others experienced, tremulous with emotion, her eyes cast on the ground, yet filled with the delight which true genius ever feels in the triumph of its power, she mildly said while the words trembled on her lips, "that was a great triumph for an artist." I shall ever remember the contrast between the timid gently-bushing woman I then addressed, and the glorious priestess of a divine inspiration as she stood transfigured by the light of genius, and held her audience enthralled by some entrancing spell, enshrined in her very spirit and plunged by her into an abyss of sorrow the *de profundis* of the soul, one instant more and life's cords seemed rent asunder, but then as by an inspiration, holding their very souls within her own;

she bore them on high, *ad miss in excelsis*, from the lowest depths of sorrow, on the wings of impassioned song, by a wonderful *crescendo*, 'till with one glorious burst of thrilling joy the soul entranced in strange ecstasy, seemed to pass through the very gates of light amidst the glories of the angels. Those who have not felt can never conceive the rapture of this feeling; it is like a spirit etherealized, wafted higher and higher, in dread but sweet delights, half affrighted amidst the beams of a dazzling heaven!

'Twas a delicate modesty which said "that was a great triumph for an artist." No, no, fair Catherine, art is but the chisel in the hand of the sculptor, but the form of beauty is the creation of genius, and your's was genius transfigured by light inspired, for your soul absorbed in song's divinest passion—

"As when the sun suffused clouds,
Resolving glories fast succeeding,
And burning midst its dazzling shroud,
It seems alone its light unshedding:
So song consumes its changeful soul,
We drink life from the raptured singer,
As willows 'neath the wind's control,
We're swayed by song, of bliss the bringer.
Oh song! oh song! weak words of ours
Would vainly tell thy wondrous powers."

[Lines inspired by and presented to Miss C. Hayes, Dublin, 1849.]

And yet this miserable so called critic, this wretched word-painter, nature's journeyman musician, whose highest knowledge is the rule of thumb, would detract from the priestess of so grand an inspiration, and call it criticism, forsooth; why he knows as much of the seraphic spirit of song that dwelt in the heart of Catherine Hayes, as vicious intelligence knows of the inspirations of grace. Poor Catherine, I oft recall this scene as illustrating the purest genius and the gentlest modesty.

(To be concluded in our next.)

LONDON, AUGUST 30.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

PLYMOUTH, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28.—The Athens arrived this morning with the above mails. She left the Cape on the 22nd July, St Helena on the 31st, and Ascension on the 4th of August. Anxiety was felt for the immediate appointment of a successor to Sir George Grey. After a long and warm debate in the House of Assembly the separation question was rejected by 22 against 15. The separation league will continue the agitation, and had threatened to carry the case before the Queen. It was expected that a federation scheme would be proposed next session as a compromise.

The estimates had been passed without material reduction, and the loan of £200,000 had been agreed to. The island of Tschaboe had been formally annexed to Cape of Colony.

A cry for reform had arisen in the Dutch reformed church, the members of which demanded the popular

alluded to the retreat at Bull's Run, as evidence of the powerlessness of men individually brave, but impudently drilled, and organised against an enemy. The town is illuminated, and the streets thronged with people.—By *Magnetic Telegraph*.

DUBLIN, AUGUST 31.

FATAL CATASTROPHE AT HOWTH.

Wednesday, between six and seven o'clock a.m. melancholy occurrence took place seven miles from Howth, by which six men in the prime of life and health met a watery grave. Within the last few days the shoals of herrings off the Eastern coast had been greater than was ever known for many years; and every exertion has been made by the owners and crews of the large fleet of fishing craft on the station to take advantage of the fine weather to take as much fish as possible. A fine lugger (the *Gold Seeker*), the property of Mr. Kelly, of Kingstown, while making for Howth, thus full freighted with herrings, and having a crew of eight men on board, was caught in squall from the S.W., and in consequence of being so heavily laden, she was not able to luff off the wind, she broached into the sea way, and we down immediately in seven fathoms. Owing to the delay attendant on getting rid of fishing gear, none of the other trawlers could give timely assistance to the eight men who were struggling in the water and before succour could arrive six of the poor fellows were drowned, four of whom named Byrne, were members of one family. One of the men that was saved, he up the other for over an hour, and when both were taken on board a lugger they were expiring from exhaustion. They were taken to Howth, where Dr. Costello, of the St. Lawrence Hotel, had them supplied with everything necessary. None of the details of the sad disaster could be obtained from either of the two men who were rescued, as they were scarcely able to speak from absolute weakness.

THE ROYAL CARRIAGE.

The following is a description of the Royal carriage built by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company for the use of Her Majesty and the Royal family upon the occasion of their visit to Ireland this year:—

On several occasions, when speaking of the preparations which were being made for her Majesty's visit to Ireland, we referred to the decorations of this beautiful structure. When speaking of the herald panel on the panels, we observed that it was a credit to an artist by whom it was executed. On the medium panels are emblazoned the royal arms, exquisitely finished and wrought out. In their appropriate places represented the armorial bearings of Ireland, Dublin, Cork, and Limerick; also the insignia of the Order of the Garter, St. Patrick, Thistle, and Bath. A general colour of the carriage is crimson lake, suitably relieved and picked out. Perhaps in the three kingdoms could not be found a finer specimen of herald than is to be seen on the panels, quarter panels and lateral sections of the state conveyances under the name of the *decoration*, furniture, upholstery, &c. was entrusted to Messrs. Fry and Co., Westmoreland street. The dimensions of the carriage measure twenty-eight feet by nine, and is divided into three compartments, all furnished *en suite*. These miniature apartments consist of ante-room, *salon*, and boudoir. The furniture comprises two sofas, four cabriolet legs, and two easy chairs all upholstered in the blue Irish-manufactured tawny, relieved with green. The sides, ceiling and panelings are done in azure, relieved by gilt mouldings. The ormolu is in rosewood, flower vases, velvet footstools, &c. are the very highest class of art manufacture. The Brussels carpet which bears the royal motto is a blue ground and of the finest texture. The mantle