

THE APPEARANCE of the melody of "Home Sweet Home" during the final scene of Anna in Donizetti's ANNA BOLENA has brought brought much comment over the years, and rude remarks have been made about it by the pedants from the monolithic Brahms downwards; but no one seems to have given any consideration to the problem of how Donizetti, who never visited England, became acquainted with the melody which he found so appropriate to the situation.

After a deal of research I think the missing link in the problem is Giuditta PASTA, for whom the opera was written, and in whose villa the composer is reputed to have worked on the score.

PASTA, as a vocal debutante, visited England in 1816/7 to sing at the King's Theatre, the Musical Director of which at that time was Henry (later Sir Henry) Bishop. She came again to London in 1824, singing in Tancredi, Otello, Romeo* and Semiramide, and though Bishop was no longer in charge of affairs it is reasonable to suppose that they met again.

In the meantime Bishop proceeded with great energy to opera after opera, culminating in "Clari, The Maid of Milan" which opened at Covent Garden on May 8, 1823. The libretto for this was written by Howard Payne, an American then living in Paris. The words of "Home Sweet Home" are therefore his: though it is said that he paraphrased others written by one T.H. Bayly for a 'previous work' by Bishop.

The melody has an interesting history, for as Bishop recounted, he had many years earlier been commissioned to compile an album of Folk Songs from various countries, and being unable to find one to represent Sicily, composed this one, and entitled it "Sicilian Air". It may have been in this form that Bayly wrote words for it.

At any rate Payne's version of the words, and Bishop's music made "Clari" an enormous success. Pasta, in 1824, could hardly fail to have been aware of this; there was, in any case, another occasion when she undoubtedly met up with Bishop in performances in Dublin in 1827. So it is a reasonable assumption that she knew the by now famous melody.

DONIZETTI working in her Villa in November 1830 on the score of "ANNA BOLENA" and seeking an appropriate piece of "English music" to include in the scena, might well have referred to her as knowledgeable about the country, and she would have suggested "Home Sweet Home" as the ideal choice. A reasonable conjecture I would think, and very pleasant for us to contemplate, as Donizetti wrote so many operas on English (and Scott-

-ish) subjects of the lands he had never seen.

It is always a delight to hear the melody as Donizetti transcribed it for the scene, and a pity that we no longer hear it on the concert platform in this version with the Patti cadenza at the end.

(C) R. Keys.

Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden.

This present FRIDAY, Dec. 9, 1825,

Will be acted the Opera of

CLARI.

The Duke Vivaldi, Mr. POWER,
Rolamo, a Farmer, (Father of Clari) Mr. FAWCETT,
Jacoso, Valet to the Duke, Mr. DURUSET, Page Master LONGHURST
Nicolo, Mr J. ISAACS, Geronio, Mr. KEELEY, Nimpedo, Mr MEADOWS
Giulio, Mr. TINNEY, Claudio, Mr. HENRY

Clari, Miss PATON,
Fidalma, Mrs VINING, Vespina Miss LOVE, Ninetta, Miss HELME
Characters in the EPISODE.

Nobleman, Mr. BAKER, Pelegrino, a Farmer, Mr. CHAPMAN,
Wife of Pelegrino, Mrs. DALY, Lenda, Miss HENRY.

The new Operatic Piece in two acts (taken from the French) called

"TWAS I,

will be repeated on Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday next.

Tomorrow, will be produced a NEW PLAY, in five acts, called

THE THREE STRANGERS

The characters by Mr. Warde, Mr. Egerton, Mr. C. Kemble, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Bartley,
Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Evans, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Clarendon, Mr. Barrow,
Mrs. Chatterley, Mrs. Glover, Miss J. Scott, Miss Greenor.

To which will be added, The SCAPE GOAT.

After which (2d time) the revived Ballet, called The DESERTER of NAPLES.

Simpkin, Mons. MAZURIER,

(Being the Last Night but Two of his appearance in London.)

Henry, Mrs VINING, Skirmack, Mons. VANAFRA, Louisa Miss J. SCOTT, Jenny KiosROMER
On Monday, a favourite PLAY.

To which will be added the Comic Extravaganza, in two acts, called

GIOVANNI IN LONDON.

Don Giovanni, - - MADAME VESTRIS.

On Tuesday, the Opera of The MARRIAGE of FIGARO.

Count Almaviva, Mr JONES, Figaro, Mr. DURUSET, Antonio, Mr. FAWCETT,

The Page, Mrs CHATTERLEY, Barberina, Miss LOVE.

Countess Almaviva, Miss PATON, Susanna, MADAME VESTRIS.

And (4th time) the new Operatic Piece of 'TWAS I.

To which will be added, JOCKO, The BRAZILIAN MONKEY.

Jocko, Mons. MAZURIER,

(Being the Last Night but One of his appearance in London.)

On Thursday, the Comedy of The SCHOOL for SCANDAL.

With the Melo-Drama of ALADDIN—in which Mons. MAZURIER will perform.

Being the Last Night of his appearing in London.

This piece will be given on the next representation of the New Comedy of LOVE'S VICTORY.