

Linda

[Grand opera, in three acts; text by Rossi. First produced at the Kärnthnerthor Theatre, Vienna, May 19, 1842.]

PERSONAGES.

Linda, daughter of Antonio. Pierotto, a villager. Antonio, a farmer. Madalina, his wife. Marquis of Boisfleury. Carlo, the Marquis' son. Prefect.

[Villagers, Savoyards, etc.]

The scene is laid in Switzerland; time, last century.

The first act of "Linda de Chamouni" opens in the valley of that name, and discloses the home of Antonio Lonstolat, a farmer, and his old wife, Madalina, whose only daughter, Linda, is in love with Carlo, a young painter who has recently come into the valley. Misfortunes have overtaken the old couple, and they are in danger of losing their farm, which is owned by the Marchioness de Sirval. Their anxiety is temporarily relieved when the Marquis of Boisfleury visits them and assures them he will save the farm, his real purpose being to effect the ruin of Linda by ingratiating himself with her parents. The Prefect of the village, however, is aware of his designs, and induces them to let Linda accompany a party of villagers to Paris, promising at the same time to place her with his brother, who is supposed to be living in that city. She soon leaves under the protection of Pierotto, the Savoyard.

The second act discloses them on the way to Paris, but Linda unfortunately loses her companion. Upon reaching Paris she finds that the Prefect's brother is dead. Meanwhile Carlo, who has followed her, arrives, and reveals to her that he is the Viscount Sirval, son of the Marchioness, and nephew of the Marquis. He renews his offer of marriage, and places her in a handsome apartment. In these

questionable surroundings Pierotto discovers her. Her father, who has had to give up the farm, also finds her, and, distrusting her innocence amid such luxury, curses her. The Marchioness meanwhile, who has learned of her son's attachment, threatens to imprison Linda if he does not marry the lady she has selected for him. He gives his feigned consent, and Linda, thinking he has deserted her, goes insane.

In the last act Pierotto takes her back to her native village. Carlo arrives there in search of her, and finding her with Pierotto sings to her, hoping she will recognize his voice and that her reason may return. The song has the desired effect. Subsequently the Marchioness relents, gives her consent to their union, and all ends happily.

The music of "Linda" is of that serious and dignified kind which justifies its inclusion in the list of grand operas. In the first act the opening aria of Antonio, "We were both in this Valley nurtured," is a touching expression of the sorrow of the aged couple. Linda's farewell, "Oh, Stars that guide my Fervent Love," familiar on the concert stage by its Italian title, "O, luce di quest' anima," is an aria of strong dramatic power, and has always been a popular favorite. In this act also are Pierotto's pathetic ballad, "Once a Better Fortune seeking," and the passionate duet for Linda and Carlo, "Oh that the Blessed Day were come." The principal numbers in the second act are the brilliant duet for Linda and Pierotto, "Oh, Linda, at thy Happy Fate," which is highly embellished, and the aria for Linda, "Ah! go, my Love." The last act contains a mournful aria by Carlo, "If from Heaven the Bolts should reach me"; his charming song in which he appeals to Linda, "Hear the voice that, softly singing"; and the rapturous duet for Linda and Carlo, "Ah! the Vision of thy Sorrow fades," which closes the opera.