

The Doctor of Alcantara

[Comic operetta, in two acts; text by Wolfe. First produced at the Museum, Boston, Mass., April 7, 1862.]

PERSONAGES.

Dr. Paracelsus. Señor Balthazar. Carlos, his son. Perez, } Sancho, }
porters. Don Pomposo, alguazil. Donna Lucrezia, wife of Dr.
Paracelsus. Isabella, her daughter. Inez, her maid.

[Serenaders, citizens, etc.]

The scene is laid in Alcantara, Spain; time, last century.

The first act of this operetta opens with a dainty serenade by Carlos, son of Señor Balthazar, to Señorita Isabella, daughter of Dr. Paracelsus, with whom he is in love. Isabella, who is intended for another by her mother, Donna Lucrezia, prefers this unknown serenader. As the song closes, Isabella, Lucrezia, and even the maid Inez claim it as a compliment, and quarrel over it in an effective buffo trio, "You Saucy Jade." Three songs follow this number,--"Beneath the Gloomy Convent Wall," "When a Lover is Poor," and "There was a Knight, as I've been told," in which the three women recite their unfortunate love affairs. As their songs close, the doctor enters with the announcement that a basket has arrived, ostensibly for Inez. The curious Lucrezia looks into it, and finds Carlos, who immediately jumps out and sings a passionate love-song, "I love, I love," which the infatuated Lucrezia takes to herself. The love scene is interrupted by a sudden noise, and in alarm she hurries Carlos back into the basket and flies. Carlos in the mean time gets out again and fills it with books. The doctor and Inez enter, and to conceal the receipt of the basket from Lucrezia, as she might be angry with the maid, they remove it to a balcony, whence by accident it tumbles into the river. Their terror when they learn that a man was concealed in it makes an amusing

scene, and this is heightened by the entrance of the Alguazil, who announces himself in a pompous bass song, "I'm Don Hypolito Lopez Pomposo," and inquires into the supposed murder.

In the second act the situation becomes still further complicated when the doctor and Inez find Carlos in the house. Convinced that he is a detective, they seek to conciliate him by offering him wine, but by mistake give him a narcotic draught which the doctor had mixed for one of his patients. Carlos falls insensible, and thinking him dead, they hide him under a sofa. Meanwhile Señor Balthazar, the father of the youth whom Isabella supposes she is to be forced to marry, and who turns out to be Carlos, arrives to pass the night. As they have no bed for him, he sleeps upon the sofa over the supposed corpse of his own son. A quartette, "Good-night, Señor Balthazar," follows, which is full of humor, mingled with ghostly terror, and grotesque in its effect, especially in the accompaniment. Daylight, however, dispels the illusion, and a happy dénouement is reached in the finale, "Hope, ever Smiling," which is quite brilliant in character. The operetta is very amusing in its situations, the songs are pretty and tuneful, and the concerted music is particularly effective.