

## Musical &amp; Dramatic Notes.

BY VIOLA.

There was a select gathering of musicians and critics in Association Hall on Saturday evening last to hear Herr Arthur Friedheim, the solo pianist. The engagement was made by my old friend, Mr. W. O. Forsyth, who had met the *virtuoso* in Germany, and had conceived an admiration for his ability. I am sorry for Mr. Forsyth, as I am certain he must have lost a good round sum of money on the venture. However, like most of the lads of the village of Aurora, as I remember them when I used to romp with them, he has lots of pluck and I should not be surprised if he should bring Friedheim here a second time. Herr Friedheim showed himself to be a phenomenally equipped player; he has an ideal hand—pianistically, excuse the word—extraordinary power, splendid execution, and a most versatile and well-developed touch, capable of the most varied effects. He gave the Beethoven sonata, op. 26, a musicianly, orthodox, and artistic interpretation. He showed strength that was well restrained, and delicacy that was not effeminate. A great merit of his reading was the wonderful clearness with which every phase and point was brought out. The *finale* was an exquisite bit of workmanship, so rapid, distinct, crisp and equal. His transcription of the "Tanhauser" overture was a veritable *tour de force*, but surely it is a mistake to attempt to rival the orchestra. An endeavor to work up such a colossal climax as that of the overture naturally results in bringing out the noisy qualities of the metallic monsters which the modern concert grands have become. One hears the thud of the blow, and the clang of the metal. I may be old-fashioned in my ideas, but it seems to me that public taste as to piano-forte tone has become degraded of late years. The Leipzig school of pianopounders have had much to do with this; as they progressed in the art of smashing hammers, snapping strings and untuning instruments at one sitting, the manufacturers responded by increasing the weight of the strings and the strength and size of their pianos. At this rate the piano of the future will weigh about twenty tons and will be about fourteen feet long, and performers will have to undergo a preparatory course of instruction at a blacksmith's forge in order to work up muscle to qualify them to combat with such masses of iron and steel and wood. The volume of sound that Mr. Joseffy produces from a piano is quite sufficient for me; when I go to a piano recital I do not want to hear a brass band. In my opinion, Herr Friedheim plays many compositions with too much force, and often gets beyond the real tone of the instrument; he is lacking moreover in warmth of sentiment.

Mr. Boscovitz will give his second piano concert lecture on Monday evening in the Normal School theatre. Mr. Boscovitz will be

sure to have something instructive to say and pleasant to listen to.

The seventh annual convention of the Canadian Society of Musicians will be held in this city on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 29th and 30th in the Public Hall of the Education Buildings, St. James' Square. The programme embraces contributions by Mr. Thomas Martin, of London, Mr. A. M. Read, of St. Catharines, Messrs. W. Elliott, Haslam and D. W. Forsyth, of Toronto, and other prominent musicians. The celebrated Mehan Ladies' Quartette, of Detroit, will sing on Tuesday afternoon, and in the evening a reception will be tendered the members of the convention by Mrs. George Tate Blackstock at her residence. The convention will close on Wednesday evening with a grand concert by the world-renowned pianist, Vladimir De Pachmann, his first appearance in Canada, assisted by Mrs. Wyman, the popular New York contralto. The society's enterprise deserves the ample support of our music-loving citizens.

Mr. Torrington writes to say that it is not true that he is opposed to the employment of a first-class orchestra in connection with the proposed musical festival. I am glad to hear it, and can only say that his views must be singularly misrepresented by his own friends. His letter will be found elsewhere. With it is forwarded the circular issued by Mr. Torrington in the fall of 1885, claiming support for the festival of 1886, and announcing that the chorus would be assisted by the orchestra of Theodore Thomas or Dr. Damrosch or the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We all know that instead of one of these organizations being secured, a "scratch" orchestra from Buffalo was engaged.

The concert of the Toronto Vocal Society, Mr. Edgar Buck conductor, occurred too late this week for notice.

We are to have an embarrassment of pianists shortly. Alfred Gruenfeld, Vladimir de Pachmann, and Paderewski are all announced to appear in Toronto between this and the 8th of January. If Paderewski comes I hope his manager will have a spare piano handy, as it is said that on one occasion in New York, he smashed three of the hammers of the concert grand he was using. Naturally he infinitely regretted the *accident*.

Things seem to be badly arranged at our theatres. Opera is announced for next week at both the Grand and the Academy—Miss Agnes Huntington in "Captain Therese," and Marion Manola in "Tar and Tartar." Both attractions are strong, so that each will suffer from the rivalry.

Gilbert and Sullivan's new light opera is expected to be ready for production in London shortly before Easter.

It is a curious fact that a Frenchman wishing for a repetition of a piece cries "Bis" (a Latin word), a German shouts "Da Capo" (Italian), and an Englishman yells "Encore" (French).

The critic of the *Mail* says that my old friend Mme. de Chadenades ought to be heard more frequently in concert. He is quite right; she is a sweet singer, and her style is much more attractive than that of several more pretentious vocalists who get well advertised.

Paulton's comedy "Niobe," which has been running all the week at the Academy of Music, is one of the best attractions that has been given at this theatre this season. Not the least of its merits is that it is free from vulgarity and horseplay. I am no prude myself but I must say that the rude jokes, coarse swearing and indecent kicking which have been prominent features of American farce-comedies of late years, cannot but have done much to hurt that delicacy of sentiment which is attributed to the sex. By kicking I do not mean the frisky antics of the skirt dancers, but that vulgar "booting" of each other indulged in by low comedians. "Low," indeed.

"Chromaticus," in a letter which will be found in another column, writes giving his views in opposition to my statement of last week as to the decline of oratorio. I have to postpone my reply till next issue.

A very interesting private *musicale* was given last Monday evening in the residence of Mr. A. S. Vogt, 605 Church Street. The programme was supplied by pupils of Mr. Vogt assisted by Mrs. Adamson, violinist, Miss McGill, vocalist, and Mr. Dinelli, violoncellist. It speaks well for Mr. Vogt's merits as a teacher and his taste as a musician that the selections included compositions by Beethoven, Schumann, Wagner, St. Saens, Bizet, and Scharwenka, and that the performance was most creditable in every case. The pupils who contributed were: Miss Benson, Miss Boulbee, Miss Andrich, Miss Burke, Miss Gaylord, Miss Topping, and Miss Mary Mara. I am sorry I have not more space at command to give to this notice.

Communications having reference to this column should be posted not later than Monday to secure notice in the next issue.

A little breeze, a gentle breeze—  
The kind that whispers through the trees,  
And flirts with flowers and birds and bees,  
Attuned to Nature's minor keys,  
Which wafts o'er downy beds of ease,  
Yet cools the couch of foul disease  
And everybody seems to please—  
May well deserve the sick man's prayer,  
May on its breath sweet fragrance bear,  
May soothe the clammy brow of care,  
May bless the brave and kiss the fair—  
But, heavens! how it makes me swear  
When here and there and everywhere  
It blows my papers in the air!