

ment at Rome he heard a rich contralto voice singing one of his themes. It was the Italian servant of the landlady. After much persuasion the girl, who was neither handsome nor graceful, was prevailed upon to sing for the great master, and he accompanied her extempore on the piano. She possessed a rare voice, and from that moment Mendelssohn provided for her musical education in the most self-sacrificing manner, and the simple maid of the Piazza d' Spagna became an excellent singer.

This same kindness of heart characterized his youth. Berger, one of his teachers, became an invalid, and young Felix, though possessed of unusual exuberance of spirit, devoted himself for hours to his instructor, reading to him, playing and copying music for him, and entertaining him with his sparkling vivacity.

His pure nature revelled in the beauties of the universe. He truly enjoyed life, because he was good. The rocks and rills, the babbling brook, the fragrant flowers, the wailing winds, afforded him keenest delight. Whosoever he looked "was nature's everlasting smile."

The impressions thus received were reproduced in soulful tones of music. The "Overture to the Hebrides" is Fingal's Cave set to music. On his return from an extensive tour, his sister, Rebecca, asked for a description of Fingal's Cave. "It cannot be described by commonplace words, and you know I am no poet; so I will play it over to you." The instrument was opened, and Mendelssohn played the beautiful overture.

This was a happy, ideal family circle. Love was its captain. Beautifully tender was the attachment between Mendelssohn and his sister Fanny, who was also a great artist, giving a noble interpretation to his works. Their delicate souls were closely interwoven. It was in this atmosphere of love, music, wit, and intellect that Mendelssohn's splendid gifts were burnished, and his impetuous imagination blended with tender sentiment.

Honors and triumphs attended his every step. As director of music in Dusseldorf, conductor of the Gewandhaus concerts, founder of the Leipzig Conservatory, and *kapellmeister* to the King of Prussia, he received the adulation and encomiums he so justly deserved.

His compositions are characterized by transparent deliberation, and crystalline polish: always graceful, sportive, and blithesome, a true reflection of his happy, buoyant, elastic nature.

"St. Paul" and "Elijah" are masterful oratorios. The subject of the latter was suggested one evening when Mendelssohn was much absorbed in the Bible, by the passage of Scripture, 1 Kings 19: 11, "Behold, the Lord passed by."

Mendelssohn possessed every advantage of birth, education, and natural gifts; but with all these he did not idly fold his hands, expecting that success would come because of these propitious circumstances. He was an indefatigable worker, toiling incessantly with a bee-like industry. A few days before his death, when friends remonstrated with him and urged him to rest, he replied, "Let me work while it is yet day. Who can tell how soon the bell may toll?" In the midst of social ex-

citement, the shifting scenes of travel, and the strain of directing concerts, his prolificacy of composition continued. He often said he was happiest in his little study.

No laurels of fame are awarded to the idler. Wealth, social position, and talents will not place the aspiring upon a prominent pinnacle without application and study. Mendelssohn was a sedulous student, having instructors on the piano, violin, in thorough bass, composition, Greek, Latin, and art.

It is not our aspirations that crown us with success so much as our performances. Thought and action are the wings that will help us to soar. Vacillation, languor, and indifference never leave the low plane of mediocrity and failure. The youth of the present day who would climb to the heavenly heights must be equipped with knowledge, pluck, perseverance, and purity.

It was the silvery sheen of a pure, noble character that caused Mendelssohn to be universally loved, and has left a luminous halo about his name. Without this his gifts would lose their luster. Seek first to be good. Without goodness there can be no true greatness.

go thumping down during the long prayer. He turns half way around, and planting his elbows on the high back of the pew, tries to lift his disappointed chin up into the palm of his inaccessible hand. Then he faces around and extends both arms out along the back of the pew as though they were wings and he was getting ready to fly away and keep still ten minutes. Then he reaches for the hassock with his feet, picks it up with them, drops it and in a frantic effort to recover it sends it crashing against the pew in front. This spoils the best point in your sermon; if you are reading, it makes you lose your place; and if you are speaking extempore, you forget what you said last and what comes next. You are so glad, but you don't show it.

Then the fidget braces up and hooks his elbows over the back of the pew, and you wonder if he is going to throw himself clear over like an athlete on a hurdle bar. He changes his mind and position and slides down until he can plant both knees firmly against the pew next in front. Ah, comfort! For thirty seconds. In his effort to unweave his knees and struggle into an upright position again he clutches the cushion, shakes a couple



RUE ROYALE AND CHURCH OF THE MADELAINE.

THE FIDGET IN CHURCH.

BY BURDETTE.

WHEN he sits down he assumes an attitude as bolt upright as though he had swallowed a hoe handle. He hooks his shoulder-blades over the back of the pew and there is a look of grim determination on his face that assures you he is going to sit still that Sunday if it kills him. Then he immediately kicks over the hassock. He un-hooks his shoulder-blades and puts a hymn-book behind his back to lean against. Then he bends forward and lets the book

of Sunday school books off on the floor, and both his feet come down with a dull thud on the crown of his Sunday hat, and the children laugh. By this time everybody in his neighborhood is as nervous as himself, and as he beats a rapid but muffled tattoo on the floor with his heels, making the pew quiver from end to end, he wishes he were dead. So do other people—wish they were dead—sometimes. But they never mean it.

He who risks life, limb, health, or property for the good of others is acting the part of a hero; but he who risks these treasures for the sake of applause or a brief notoriety is a fool.