

painter, he would hold his own with the best living artists. The Queen was graciously pleased to accept and approve his execution of her commission, secured through the appreciation of the Princess Louise, herself no mean artist. Mr. O'Brien is not only a prolific painter (contributing no less than fifteen pictures to the Exhibition); he is also ambitious and persevering, and his motto is evidently "Excelsior." Never has he achieved better work than on his largest canvas. "The Perils of the Banks," No. 179; his masterly rendering of the atmospheric effects of fog must be seen to be appreciated, and is beyond all praise, unless we call it Turneresque (in Turner's best water-colour days). On the opposite side of the room hangs a smaller picture "Off Tadousac," No. 110, which treats the same subject—Vessels in a Fog—with an idyllic touch. This artist too has no pronounced style except softness and colouring; he seems to possess an absolute command of his brush, as will be conceded from the miscellaneous character of his works, embracing both landscape and marine effects; and he is equally at home in the old world and the new. His work on "Dartmoor," No. 176, a study of oak foliage; his "Devonshire Farm Lane," 122; his off "Devonport Dockyard," 166, all speak for themselves of English sights and sounds, while his "Near River Ouelle, Lower St. Lawrence," 143; "Low Tide, northern end of Grand Menan," 147; "At Point Levis, Quebec," 149; "A Bastion of Fort Chambly before Restoration," 159; "In Nottawasaga Bay," 173; "Among the Islands of the Georgian Bay," 175; "In the Gulf, Deep Sea—Fisherman," 181, and "A Summer Afternoon," 185, all display his perfect handling of Canadian scenery. Of the other contributors the greatest success has been attained by the artists who appear to have followed in Mr. O'Brien's path, and whose pictures suggest his style of treatment. Among these we noticed "Quebec at Sundown," Mr. Matthews, 105 (a happy thought—Mr. Matthews not being always so well equal to the occasion); "Mountain Path, Lower Canada," H. Perré, 156, somewhat marred by elaboration of detail in the foreground; "Ebb Tide," 178, by F. W. Bell-Smith; "On the Shingly Shore," 192, ditto. F. A. Verner shows in his "Maiden Newton, Dorset," 145, that he is evidently profiting by his English experiences. F. C. V. Ede exhibits some original promising figure-studies in "Evangeline," 169 and "Over the Sea," 142; his style has a tendency to sketchiness but is bold and effective.

The average of good work in water-colours is so much higher than in oils that they will well repay a close and careful inspection. In the same room will be found one charcoal and four chalk studies, in which branch Mr. Dickson Patterson carries off the honours; his black chalk drawing of the late Edward Mintern, after the painting, gives the points of the original picture without its good scheme of colour. His charcoal drawing is also an excellent typical study.

Mary Heister Reid exhibits, among the other blacks and whites, two carefully executed Venetian Drawings in pen and ink which are remarkably cheap at five dollars apiece and should be secured by some art lover ere they disappear off the walls.

L. C.

### TORONTO MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

WITH unqualified pleasure, we have to record that the arrangements for the Festival are in a very satisfactory shape.

The monster choruses, both adult and children, have been for the past fortnight rehearsing in the Festival building, night after night Mr. Torington and his 1,000 picked voices are to be found at the building, and the enthusiasm with which Conductor and Chorus attack and overcome the difficulties of the two Oratorios is without precedent in the musical history of Toronto.

We are safe in promising our readers who visit the Festival an opportunity of hearing these two magnificent Oratorios rendered in a manner unique in the history of Canada.

Of Handel's masterpiece, "Israel in Egypt," the merits are so well known that comment is unnecessary. Of the other Oratorio, "Mors et Vita," by Gounod, we quote from the *Standard*.

M. Gounod has this time been thoroughly in earnest in his endeavour to wed his muse to his purpose; and while endeavouring to brighten his score by the introduction, wherever practicable, of those broad expansive melodies which he, perhaps, better than his contemporaries knows so well how to write, he has not shrunk from investing the dread aspect of his subject with such semblance of terrors as lie within the resources of his art. . . . In the Quartet "Quid sum miser," the chief subject allotted to the tenor in G minor, is repeated by the contralto on the dominant, and again in its original position by the soprano, the bass Solo then interrupts with the "Act tremedæ," which after a somewhat stern opening, merges into a charming and passionate melody for all four voices, redolent of the master's happiest manner from first to last. The "Salva me" episode is both beautiful and poetical, the voice parts being admirably distributed,

though a considerable tax is laid upon the powers of the soprano. . . . The verse "Sed signifer Sanctus Michael," sung by the soprano, to a delicate accompaniment of wood wind, and violins, pulsating in triplets, while an occasional chord from the harp and the least suspicion of a touch on the symbols gives colour and accentuation to the music. This is another of M. Gounod's little triumphs. . . . Introduces, in the soprano part, the truly lovely theme which is entitled "The Motive of Happiness," whose "linked sweetness" extends to fifteen bars. No attempt is made to develop this, but in its concentrated form it is so fascinating that probably any alteration would be a disfigurement. . . . By way of Epilogue comes an interlude written for full orchestra, with the addition of a gong and the grand organ, the subject-manner being derived from the counter-themes of Consolation and Joy, and Terror and Anguish. Thus an imposing and majestic, as well as significant, peroration is attained, and the chief division of the trilogy ends forcibly, as it began. . . . The exquisite and prolonged theme which first prefaces and afterwards accompanies the Chorus, "Sedentis in Shrono" is unquestionably the most inspired of the trilogy.

The sale of seats has been very satisfactory, some \$8,000 worth of seats having been already selected. The plans for the sale of single tickets were opened to the public on Saturday last.

### OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

TRIUMPHANT DEMOCRACY IN FIFTY YEARS' MARCH OF THE REPUBLIC. By Andrew Carnegie. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

The political sentiment of the author of this book is shown as well in its title as in the emblems on the cover. A crown reversed, monarchy depicted as a pyramid resting on its apex, and a republic, also pyramidal, secure on the firm foundation of its base,—these emblems sufficiently, display the political faith of the writer of the book. Mr. Carnegie is a Scotchman by birth, and an American by election: the institutions of his adopted country are the object of his idolatry, those of Great Britain are his abhorrence. He seems indeed to entertain a personal resentment against all things English, except the "plain common folk, the democracy of Britain," while, on the other hand, his love for and faith in the institutions of the Great Republic is most ardent. Yet, in fact, in many respects England is already far more truly democratic than the Great Experiment to the south of us; and, moreover, from the unbroken continuity of her history, the manner of her development and the absence of any written constitution, she has every chance to outrun America in the race of progress and true liberty, just as the English language has outdone in general usefulness much more pretentious languages that have been stopped short in their growth by being fixed in writing too early. However, Mr Carnegie in this book has given us a valuable outline view of the American Republic; his chapters on Education, Religion, Art and Music, and Literature, are well worth careful study; and though he describes many excellencies in these and kindred matters where they do not at all belong, seeing in the marvellous growth of the United States an effect, not of its great natural resources, as one might suppose, but of the mere form of Government (which, however, no doubt, is an aiding cause in as far as it leaves natural growth untrammelled),—although Mr Carnegie attaches, we think, an undeserved influence to the form of government in America, yet we must admit the general correctness of his facts and figures and the fairness of his deductions; and above all the friendly and appreciative tone wherein he points, and how, in his opinion, the British Constitution may be improved. The radical fault of his book is that he has treated merely of the dark side of British life and of the bright side of American—the reverse picture in neither case does he touch except very lightly; yet surely it is the extent of this very light and shadow that may convert the one dark picture into a lighter one, the other into a darker.

VICTOR HUGO: By Algernon Charles Swinburne. New York: Worthington Company.

It is seldom we receive the estimate of a poet by another who has won himself a distinguished place in the literary temple of fame; and for that reason, apart from its intrinsic merits, we welcome Mr. Swinburne's delightful study of Victor Hugo. No one is more qualified than the English poet to handle such a subject. A thorough French scholar, capable of touching the chords of the human heart, and exceeding, moreover, all recent poets in his "marvelous gift of rhythm"—his "unprecedented melody and freedom," in the present criticism he dissects with a keen and loving hand, whose evident partiality enables him all the better to enter into the meaning and grasp the spirit of the works of his master. We know of no book which gives so exhaustive an account, couched in the most fascinating language, of the various writings of the great French poet. To such readers as are ignorant of the French language, a translation of the selected passages would have been an advantage. This is a