

MUSIC.

THERE has been much Handelian dissipation throughout the musical world in honour of the composer's bi-centenary, in connection with which two interesting performances have taken place in London, one of which was given by the newly-established Handel Society, which gave a revival of "Saul," on February 21st, in St. James's Hall. Of all Handel's oratorios "Saul" is one of the least known in the present day. For many years it has not been performed in England, which neglect is accounted for in an English musical paper by the fact that it consists largely of solo numbers. Handel's songs have to a great extent become old fashioned, whilst his choruses have constantly increased in popularity. The Sacred Harmonic Society also gave a performance of Handel's oratorio "Belshazzar." Mr. C. Hallé conducted, and the vocalists were Miss Marriott, Miss Chester, Madame Patey, Mr. Edward Lloyd and Mr. Bridson. In Germany the occasion has been celebrated in various places with much *eclat*. At Halle, where the composer was born on February 23, 1685, the festival was munificently patronized by the local authorities and numbers of visitors from all parts of Germany. The work chosen for the first performance was the secular oratorio of "Hercules." Dr. Homeyer, the well-known organist of Leipzig, accompanying on the organ. The performance was perfect and produced a deep impression on the crowded audience. On the anniversary of the composer's birth a ceremony took place in front of Handel's monument in the market place, when some choruses from "Judas Maccabeus" were sung. The oration of the day was then delivered, and was followed by the march from "Joshua," for wind instruments. A grand performance of "The Messiah" was also given, the orchestra comprising the band of the Gewandhaus Concerts, of Leipzig, together with that of the City of Halle. Similar Handel celebrations have taken place in several other prominent German towns. Other celebrations are yet to come, notably the lower Rhine Festival, which will take the form of a commemoration of the joint bi-centenary of the birth of Bach and Handel, and the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace, which will be given this year in honour of the anniversary.

Two entertainments recently given at Government House, Ottawa, claim notice in this column, as they are a step towards the recognition of the claims of music. They consist of *Soirées Musicales* given by their Excellencies Lord and Lady Lansdowne. At these delightful *réunions* high-class music has been performed by The Ottawa String Quartette Club, Mr. F. Boucher, the violin virtuoso, and leading amateur vocalists. The large hall which is connected in people's minds with many delightful balls and theatrical entertainments is now carpeted and handsomely furnished as a drawing-room, which with the rest of the house is open to the limited number of guests invited, to move about at will, the only restriction being that they are expected to listen in silence whilst the music is being performed. Unfortunately a few ill bred persons occasionally transgress notwithstanding the respect due to the art of music and to their distinguished hosts; but all those who have performed have marked and appreciated the personal efforts of his Excellency Lord Lansdowne to ensure a proper appreciation of their efforts.

"SILVANA," an opera by Carl Maria Von Weber, which has been recently revived in Hamburg, was commenced by that great composer in his twenty-second year, and was first produced in 1810 in Frankfurt; but did not achieve any great success in consequence of being wedded to a weak libretto, and was accordingly dropped for many years. In 1854 Mr. F. Langer, a composer of standing, and Mr. Ernest Pague, poet and *librettur*, undertook to revive the work. Mr. Pague wrote an entirely new libretto on a subject taken from Rheinish myths, which comprised four acts, whereas the old work had only three. The composer accordingly adapted music from the rich treasure of Weber's piano compositions and arranged it so cleverly that "Silvana" as it stands is a genuine Weber opera without a note of music from any other pen. It will shortly be produced in all the chief theatres of Germany.

The directors of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, have decided to undertake German Opera again next season. An attempt, it is said, will be made to obtain the services of Herr Hans Richter, of Vienna, as conductor. Mr. Walter J. Damrosche has been chosen assistant conductor in recognition of the services of his lamented father. Among the operas produced will be Wagner's "Meistersinger," "Gotterdammerung," "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin," "Walküre," Rubinstein's "Nero," Goldmark's "Queen of Sheba," etc.

The Philharmonic Society of London (England) recently gave the first concert of the season, under the conductorship of Sir A. S. Sullivan, in St. James's Hall, which was crowded on the occasion. Among the numbers performed were a new symphony by Brahms, overtures by Weber and Mendelssohn, and violin concerto by Beethoven, played by Herr Joachim. The novelties announced for the coming concerts comprise a specially composed symphony by Dvorak, a "Symphonic Poem" by Charles Wingham, and a prize overture by Gustave Ernest.

The chief topic of discussion in Hamilton musical circles is the Hamilton Musical Union. The promoters issued a circular asking for support, stating that their object was to form a musical society for the development and cultivation of local talent, and to provide agreeable recreation for the citizens. The Union is to be divided into operatic and choral branches, and active members may join one or both. Among those mentioned as patrons are Senator James Turner, J. M. Gibson, M.P.P., Judge Sinclair, R. A. Lucas, E. Martin, Q.C., and J. N. Travers. The new society is an outgrowth of the Hamilton Amateur Opera Company which, some weeks

since, gave good performances of the "Pirates of Penzance" at the Opera Houses of Hamilton and Toronto, under the direction of Mr. R. Thomas Steele. The promoters are for the most part men of wealth, and the organization will have the support of the best society. It is proposed to give two or more performances of light opera during a season, and possibly a cantata or short oratorio, with a programme of part songs for a third concert. Musicians, both professional and amateur, are much troubled to decide as to the probable result of the organization of this new society upon the cause of music in the city. The supporters of the Union claim that there is a field for their society, while the patrons and members of the Philharmonic Society, which, under Prof. Torrington, has done excellent work in performing "Naaman," the "Elijah," the "Messiah," and shorter works of the best order, assert that the city is not large enough to support two societies, and affect to see a spirit of factious opposition in those who have organized the Musical Union. Hitherto large musical societies in Hamilton have been unable to meet expenses. By close financial management the Philharmonic Society has this season been kept out of debt. There is considerable doubt existent as to Mr. Steele's ability to successfully manage a large choral and orchestral force so as to produce important works, and until this doubt is removed it is scarcely probable that musicians will leave a society under Prof. Torrington to work under an untried man. This may be merely an unfortunate circumstance for Mr. Steele; but it is one which he will have to battle against, and if he should prove able to overcome it, the greater will be his after success. The members of the Union talk of performing Sullivan's "Iolanthe" before the close of the season.

"Elijah" is soon to be given by the Philharmonic Society. Mr. Stoddard, of New York, is to be the bass soloist. Local talent is spoken of for other solo parts. The Arion Club (male voices) has taken up the study of a strong work for male chorus, soloists and orchestra—"Mila," by Robert Schwalbe.

Mrs. Martin Murphy, soprano, who has studied under good masters in New York, has accepted an engagement for next season with the Emma Abbott Opera Company. She has a voice of fair range, good quality, and that will enable her to do effective work in the lighter operas. Mr. MacDuff, one of the best violin teachers in Hamilton, gave his first annual concert in St. Paul's Church School-room in that city on Thursday, March 19. The programme was symmetrical (in a musical sense) and chiefly notable for the first appearance of the Hamilton Harmonic Quartette (brass), organized by Mr. Peel, leading cornet of the 13th Battalion Band. The quartette played some part songs with surprising smoothness and balance of tone, though there was a lack of promptness in attack. The most satisfactory number of the programme was the Allegro from Mendelssohn's Trio Op. 49, for violin, cello and piano, played by Mr. MacDuff, Prof. Parker and Miss Cummings. As a whole the trio was well played, though at times the piano was rather obtrusive and the cellist did not bring out as broad tone as could have been desired. But it is encouraging to see such a number on the programme. Mrs. Rosina Wilkinson, late of England, played an Andante and Rondo by De Beriot as a violin solo. Her fingering is rapid and clear, and she plays with dash and vigour, but lacks the intellectual quality which stamps the work of a really fine artist. She does not always play in tune.—*C Major*.

The promoters of the concert announced to be held in the Toronto Horticultural Gardens on April 10th are exceedingly anxious that the public should understand that it is Miss Clara Louise Kellogg—not Miss Fanny Kellogg—who is engaged for that occasion, along with Miss Huntington and the String Quartette of the Buffalo Philharmonic. The subscription list already includes the names of many of the *élite* of the city.

THE PERIODICALS.

THAT prince of sporting magazines, *Outing*, begins Vol. VI. with the April number, and comes out in a neat new wrapper; moreover, it is almost doubled in size, and other improvements entitle it to take place, as the enterprising publishers claim, in the foremost rank of American magazines. Four serials are begun in this number. Julian Hawthorne's "Tramp," by Mr. E. C. Gardner, is an illustrated serial in which the problem of summer homes is pleasantly and helpfully considered. "The Flag of the Seven Upright Ones" is a striking tale of Swiss democracy, by the famous novelist Gottfried Keller, translated by Miss Frances A. Shaw. The fourth serial is entitled "Across America on a Bicycle," and begins the story of Mr. Thomas Stevens' journey across the continent. Two bright short stories are given,—"Early Jim," a study of Lancashire character and dialect, and "How Mr. Podwinkle was Encouraged," a sketch by President Bates. A leading feature of the number is a strong group of letters on the preservation of the Adirondack Forests, Green Mountains is profusely illustrated by the author, J. R. Chapin, and a delightful piece—a striking picture drawn by Henry Sandham, engraved by H. E. Sylvester, and "Harbour," illustrated with an exquisite full-page engraving. There are also poems by Edith M. Thomas, Frank D. Sherman, and R. K. Munkittrick. Other features are an exciting description of an ocean yacht race, by Col. Stuart Taylor, a valuable paper on Richards, jun'r, captain of the Yale eleven.

A CAPITAL portrait of Lincoln forms the frontispiece to the April number of *Harper's*. It is a striking piece of wood-cutting by Krull, from a photograph in the possession of W. P. Garrison, Esq. Equally good likenesses, almost as well cut, of the Prince and Princess of Wales accompany a paper on their favourite country-house at Sandringham, and other lovely illustrations assist to an idea of that charming Norfolk hall. Judged by the beautiful pictures which resulted from it, a more successful wild-geese chase could