

## MUSIC.

LIVING in Canada, at a distance from all artistic centres, it is of interest and importance to musicians to keep themselves informed as to the many new artists who make their *début* in London and elsewhere.

In this connection nothing is more striking than the number of excellent pianists who are constantly appearing. It seems in the present day more difficult to find bad than good ones. At the Crystal Palace, and Monday and Saturday Popular Concerts, Mdlle. Clotilde Kleeberg, a young French Pianist, has played this season with great success; she is said to have a perfectly faultless *technique*, to which she adds thorough musicianly qualities. Her repertoire is extensive, including the Mendelssohn, Chopin and Beethoven Concertos, Bach's "Fantasia Chromatica," and all the standard pianoforte works. She first appeared at Mr. Mann's benefit last year, and has this season played her way into the first rank of pianists. Herr Barthe is another pianist who has gained acceptance at London classical concerts, although his success does not appear to have been as marked as that of the lady first mentioned. His most successful effort has been a wonderful performance of Brahms's second concerto for piano (Op. 83 in B flat), an enormously difficult work, the execution of which produced a great effect. Another young pianist is Mdlle. Marie Fromm, a pupil of Madame Schumann. She has not yet reached the foremost rank of pianists, but is a promising performer and has been kindly welcomed, perhaps partly on account of her revered teacher. Herr Leonard Emil Bach, recently announced as pianist to the Court of Prussia, gave a Recital recently in London under the high-sounding title of "Bach's Beethoven Concert," at which he undertook the ambitious but unpleasant feat of playing at a sitting three pianoforte Concertos of Beethoven (in C, C minor, and E flat). Herr Bach is a good pianist, but does not possess sufficient power for such an arduous task. A more successful *début* was that of Herr Fritz Blumer, at the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts, in the difficult A minor Concerto of Saint-Saëns. By this performance he at once established his reputation as a brilliant performer, although further proof will have to be given of his musicianly qualities. Last on the list comes Herr Franz Rummel, who on the 13th December played at the Crystal Palace, where he had not been heard for more than two years, and was well received. Herr Rummel is well known on this side of the Atlantic, and has, since his return to Europe, won golden opinions in Germany and England.

Amid all this superabundant growth of piano virtuosity, it is curious how few executants attain any real and lasting fame. Out of the hundreds of eminent players in existence how many are there who can by the mere announcement of their name, independently of local interests, attract an audience in every metropolis? Rubinstein, Von Bulow, Madame Schumann, Madame Essipoff, and possibly Joseffy, Pachmann, and Rummel. These are the days of universal cleverness; cleverness so great as to do most of the things that genius does, and to do them so well as to challenge comparison. In every art thorough grounding and systematic training can be had, and *technique* is perhaps more thoroughly systematized in music than in any other art. The anatomy of the hand is studied and considered in the invention of finger exercises; every muscle has its own proper training for the acquiring of strength and independence, nor is the mind neglected. The conservatories turn out a larger number than ever before of learned musicians, men not only well trained in their own profession, but possessing for the most part a good general education.

The result of all this is that Haydn need no longer become valet to Parpora and brush his clothes in return for crumbs of instruction. Young musicians no longer require to exercise the determination of transcendent genius to acquire the not easily attainable knowledge of past times. Any intelligent and fairly gifted student can be sure by mathematical calculation of gaining a certain result by a certain number of years of hard work. Therefore, good pianists (as distinct from great ones,) are now so multiplied in number and so high in ability, that one is inclined to ask where is the difference between the good and the great. If we recall the good pianists who have visited Canada from time to time, we cannot fail to remark that they play the same programmes as the Rubinsteins and the Bulows, and execute them nearly, if not quite as well—and yet they are not Rubinstein or Bulow—one thing is wanting, individuality, personal greatness. A great pianist must be a great man, and put his character into his playing. How many have we heard play the great A flat Polonaise of Chopin, perhaps even more perfectly than Rubinstein, whose leonine personality obtrudes itself throughout, making the piece tell us rather what Rubinstein thinks of Chopin than what Chopin has to say, and whose wrong notes are not infrequent. Still, the conscientious interpretation of the smaller artist does not impress us like the more erratic reading of the greater master, whose wrong notes, when they occur, seem more welcome than another player's right ones. Von Bulow, with what has well been called his "passionate intellectuality;" Essipoff, with her self-conscious originality; Madame Schumann, with her poetic playing and the halo of her husband's greatness around her; Pachmann, so specially imbued with the spirit of Chopin—all these are personalities, as well as players, and without a marked and striking personality no instrumentalist can hope, nowadays, to rise above the crowd of accomplished musicians who can be met with all over the world.

It says much for the spread of musical education that it is now-a-days not uncommon to have good amateur performances of solo and concerted music in large towns and cities. Where formerly the amateur's repertoire was confined to ballads, with an occasional plunge by bolder spirits into something higher, now oratorio and opera bouffe are attacked by ladies and gentlemen singers and instrumentalists in their leisure hours with

such success as encourages them to give public performances of well-known works. Hamilton has distinguished itself in this direction, and is now in a position to form at least two companies whose musical performances are worthy of public approbation. The visit of the Hamilton Amateur Opera Company to Toronto last week was a most noteworthy one, and was attended by an amount of success which augurs well for future visits. The operetta selected was Gilbert and Sullivan's popular "Pirates of Penzance," and was performed in the Grand Opera House morning and evening. It was quite evident that the audiences were not prepared for so finished a rendering—always, of course, speaking from an amateur standpoint—and freely expressed their surprised delight in generous applause. Not only was the singing almost universally good, but the acting was with few exceptions capital. The dresses were, moreover, admirable and (a much more uncommon thing) appropriate. The choruses were given in a manner that showed considerable industry had been bestowed upon them, and the solos were generally marked by a finish unusual in amateur singing. An amount of tameness certainly characterized portions of the dialogue—Mr. Beddoe (*Frederic*) should look to this point—but that weakness is almost inseparable from such performances. Mr. Wild's acting, as the *Major-General*, on the other hand, left nothing to be desired, and Miss Barr was a general favourite for the unaffected vim she threw into her character, *Edith*. Mrs. McCulloch, as *Mabel*, sang remarkably well, with feeling and understanding, and a similar meed of praise must not be withheld from Mr. Beddoe. *Ruth* was charmingly portrayed by Miss Audette, and if that lady had a little more confidence in herself, she would play a first-rate part. Mr. Warrington (*Pirate King*) of course sang well, his make-up being also remarkably good. The difficult patter-song which fell to the lot of Mr. Wild was done by that gentleman perfectly, which is more than could be said of Mr. Dunn's topical gag in the *Police Sergeant's* song. Indeed, the only piece of bad taste in the whole performance was a one-sided political reference. That kind of thing is always in questionable taste, and can only be justified by having a fling at both parties. On the whole the operetta was rendered most effectively, and reflected great credit upon the company, who are in no small degree indebted to Mr. R. T. Steele for his able direction.—*Com.*

## THE PERIODICALS.

SOME of the best reading in the February *Harper's* is that headed "Editor's Easy Chair"—albeit had any other than an American pen been responsible for the racy and clever article on the Statue of Liberty offered by the French nation a pretty storm would probably have followed. In the same department are some very sensible comments upon the right to hiss a public performance. Says the writer:

The drama that I do not like my neighbour may greatly enjoy. If I do not like it, very well. Let me dislike it, and if it becomes aggressively disagreeable to my taste and judgment, let me quietly withdraw. I bought a ticket to the play, but I did not receive a guarantee of enjoyment.

"Pullman: a Social Story," a paper by Richard T. Ely, will prove a revelation to not a few. That place has been considered, especially by continental workmen, as an artisan's paradise, but the trail of the serpent is there also, and the result of the experiment goes chiefly to show that over-government, even though its aim be the general good, produces popular restiveness. "Pullman is un-American. . . . It is benevolent, well-wishing feudalism, which desires the happiness of the people, but only in such a way as shall please the authorities." Mr. John Fiske's paper upon "The Federal Union" may be commended to the attention of Canadians perplexed by the clashing of the Dominion and Provincial powers. The two biographical papers of the number are equally interesting of subject and able in design. Whatever the judgment of posterity upon the Marquis of Salisbury, his name must be interwoven with the history of the greatest English reform of modern times. Richard Montgomery's memory needed no tribute; but Mr. Hunt's paper is that of a loving and intelligent enquirer, and the impression he leaves is most pleasing. In "The Lick Observatory of California" are materials for a thoughtful character study, and in "Guardian Birds" is a valuable contribution to the interdependence of many bird and brute creations. There are other attractive papers, as well as a considerable amount of poetry and fiction.

So nearly as such a thing is possible within the limits of one review, there is material to suit all tastes in the January *Nineteenth Century*, of which the Leonard Scott reprint is just to hand. There are eleven articles; four on Imperial politics, by the Right Hon. Earl Cowper, Sir R. Spencer Robinson, K.C.B., J. O'Connor Power, M.P., and Arminius Vambéry; a speculative enquiry into the true inwardness of the term "savage," by Professor Max Müller; a sketch of the rise, progress, and founders of the *Times*, by W. Fraser Rae; an enquiry into the character and works of Charles Lamb and George Wither, by Algernon Charles Swinburne; a disquisition on bicycling, by the Right Hon. Viscount Bury; a description of the American locust and its ravages, by Miss F. C. Gordon Cumming; a paper on the propriety of acting religion, by Henry A. Jones; and the lucubrations of H. S. Salt on Eton, its methods and its faults. Earl Cowper is apprehensive of Cæsarism in England—not the Cæsarism which is founded upon arms, indeed, but that which grows out of the affections of the people. M. Vambéry is confirmed in his opinion that Russia means to acquire India if she can. Mr. Rae's paper is very attractive to all who are interested in journalism, though he is betrayed into claiming a position for the *Times* which has not belonged to it since the days of the penny press. Mr. Swinburne succeeds principally in showing his contempt for the writer who says that in six words which might be made to employ sixty. Sir Spencer Robinson has evidently got a bad attack of Jingo fever, and echoes the *Pall Mall Gazette's* croak about the British navy.

THE *Andover Review* is establishing itself in the front rank of the higher theological literature of the times. It is liberal, but not destructive in tone, thoughtful and scholarly in its treatment of subjects. It is thoroughly adaptive to the thought and tendencies of the time. All that is fundamental in religious thought and life finds in the *Andover* an able and trustworthy exponent. The February number opens with the first of a series of papers on the "Reformation Theology," Professor Gerhart contributing an admirable paper on "Historical Antecedents." "The New Charity," by Rev. Henry A. Stinson, is a forcible statement of the problem which pauperism presents to the Christian and philanthropist. A critical estimate of the life and work of John Wiclif is given by