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F. H. TORRINGTON.

IT is our intention to give our readers from time to time short biographies of the leading executive musicians of the day, and, in our opinion, we very properly commence the series with the Conductor of the Toronto Philharmonic Society, who is also organist and choir-master of the Metropolitan Methodist Church, Mr. F. H. Torrington.

Frederic Herbert Torrington was born at Dudley, Worcestershire, 26th October, 1837, and is consequently in his 51st year. When seven years of age, a violin purchased at a fair was the means of bringing to notice his natural musical tendencies, and he immediately became an enthusiastic student, devoting himself entirely to music and kindred studies, to the exclusion of everything else. His parents artied him for four years to Mr. Jas. Fitzgerald, of Kidderminster, to study as a cathedral organist, choir-master and pianist. Of his able instruction, Mr. Torrington is a grateful witness. In 1853 Mr. Torrington became organist and choir-master of St. Ann's Church, Bewdley, but left England in 1857, for Montreal, where he was engaged as organist of Great St. James Street Methodist Church, a position which he held for twelve years. While residing there he founded several vocal societies, and the Montreal Amateur Musical Union Orchestra. He was also bandmaster of the 25th Regiment (Regulars) for a considerable portion of the time. On September 23rd, 1868, he gave a recital on the Great Boston Organ, and was very favorably criticized in *Dwight's Journal* and the Boston newspapers.

His reputation bringing him to the notice of Mr. P. S. Gilmore, who was then preparing the first Great Boston Jubilee, he was requested by that gentleman to form the Canadian contingent of the orchestra which took part in that festival. While in Boston, a short time after, he was offered and accepted the post of organist and director of King's Chapel, which he

held for four years, leaving it for his present position. While in Boston, he was engaged as teacher of the piano and organ in the New England Conservatory of Music, solo organist at the Music Hall Concerts, and as one of the first violins of the Harvard Symphony Orchestra. As solo organist, he was extensively engaged at recitals in the neighboring cities, notably in Brooklyn, where he took part in the Saturday afternoon concerts in Plymouth Church (Beecher's) concurrently with S. P. Warren, G. W. Morgan, and other eminent organists.

His services as conductor were much in demand in and around Boston, and in the last great Jubilee of 1871 six societies of which he was director took part. In connection with this Jubilee Mr. Torrington was the conductor of the mass rehearsals, preparatory to the great gathering of the 20,000 voices which sang together on that occasion. Being engaged to give a recital at the Centenary Church, Hamilton, in 1873, he was met by a deputation from Toronto, and offered the organ at the Metropolitan Church, and when shortly after this offer was supplemented by the conductorship of the Philharmonic Society (then in its infancy) vacant owing to the resignation of Dr. Clarke on account of ill-health, he accepted it. While here Mr. Torrington has labored assiduously to cultivate a



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taste for the best class of music, and through the medium of the large chorus and orchestra of the Philharmonic Society has produced *Messiah* five times, *Elijah* five times, *Creation* three times, and other standard and new works, part songs, and orchestral compositions too numerous to mention, but which form a record surpassed only by one or two of the leading societies of the world. Among the notable events in this connection was the production of Gounod's *Redemption* in December, 1882, this magnificent work being given to packed houses on two consecutive evenings by a large chorus and orchestra and a strong force of soloists, with the best success. But the greatest musical event of Mr. Tor-