

## THE WIFE.

BY PERCY RUSSELL.

The good wife ever is the keystone strong  
That binds the arches of the social state;  
It is her quiet counsels that create  
That solid virtue and endurance long.  
That give the victory to those who wait.  
Unto the husband and the son belong  
The harvest of her works; she maketh straight  
Each crooked path, and arms us for the strife,  
But with the sickle of Religion true  
Cuts down the tares that choke the better life.  
Without her, who, unscathed, can struggle thro'  
Soul-solling labours! Her affection's dew  
Keeps green the promise of our higher fate,  
And is that love which must be wisdom too!

## MUSICAL CULTURE IN CANADA—A FEW WORDS ABOUT AMATEURS.

BY GRETCHEN.

Any one with cultivated musical taste cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that our amateur music in Canada requires much renovation. I do not mean to say that plenty of sound is not heard almost everywhere, but *quality* and not *quantity* is what is so greatly needed in order to raise the present musical standard.

Why should this dearth of really good amateur music exist in a country which has made such rapid strides in other directions? Twenty or thirty years ago, there was, perhaps, some excuse—music teachers were scarce—and indeed—in many places—not to be obtained at all. Now, however, there are but few Canadian towns of any importance which do not overflow with teachers—and surely there must be thousands of intelligent young people, willing and able to take full advantage of musical instructions! Yet—what awful trash do we constantly hear! What wild scamperings across the long-suffering piano! What silly, sentimental stuff is wailed forth by some of our "very musical" young ladies! I cannot blame them—for how can you expect people who have never, perhaps, heard one note of good music in all their lives—to perform and appreciate what they cannot understand! There are many, of course, who possess that natural refinement of ear which instinctively separates the gold from the dross in music, as a painter's eye distinguishes the true from the false coloring—but these are the exceptions—and I speak of the average. Who, then, is to blame? *Chiefly the teachers.* Not that class of know-nothings who flood the country (and about whom I shall write at a future time)—but those who do know what is right—and yet do not insist upon their pupils discarding at once all the wretched apologies for music to which they have been accustomed—and endeavor to inculcate in them a taste for pure art. *These are the teachers who are to blame—and that heavily.* There are, I am fully aware—many pains-taking music teachers in Canada who have done—and are still doing much to create this pure musical taste. I know others, however, who do not strive for this good end. Teachers who are really competent—but who do not care to take the trouble.

Teachers have much to contend with, I grant. In many instances bad habits have already been formed—often past all redemption. Young ladies come for "a quarter's lessons—just to finish!" when in reality, their musical education is not even commenced—with such pupils it is most difficult to deal, for they must simply be put back to the commencement by any conscientious musician. There are but few pupils, however, who would not be very grateful for the putting back—that is, if they have any real love for music—any honest desire to learn. Those who do not possess this musical mind, had far better cease tormenting themselves and their instructors by continuing to learn—or rather to hear what is told them, but not to *learn* at all—and here let me make a remark which applies not alone to Canada—by any means. Why will parents insist upon their children learning music after it is once discovered, that they have neither taste nor ear for it—or do the infatuated papas and mamas never believe that such can be the case?

Within the pure art range of music are all styles—grave and gay—simple and difficult. I have frequently met people to whom the term "classical music" meant something heavy, intricate and uninteresting, yet who were surprised and chamed upon hearing the ever lovely "Lieder ohne Worte," of Mendelssohn, portions of Beethoven's "Sonatas," and many of the works of Chopin, Schumann, Heller, etc., etc. "Is that classical music?" say they—"why that is not dry at all."

It is astonishing how a girl will scramble through a set of (brilliant!) variations, regardless of time and wrong chords, or sing a rapid song (playing vilely the accompaniment, the while), when she might, with one half the trouble she has expended on all this trash, charm her audience with some simple melody within the pure art range, thus elevating her own taste and that of her friends.

In this short article I have merely dealt with one influence which lies in the power of teachers to exercise upon the youth of the country—as so much depends upon that influence. If all true musicians, all really anxious to further refined taste, would take a stand and work with one accord to exclude all the miserable Brummagen tinsel with which the name of music is insulted, what a revolution should we perceive in the musical culture of Canada, and that before very long!

Do not let my readers misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that a girl is *never* to play

so-called "light music." There are many charming pieces which do not exactly come under the head of "Classical," but which are exceedingly pretty and taking. These will do no harm, so long as *all* practice is not devoted to them. Again, every young lady who can play at all, ought to know a little dance music, so that she can contribute to an evening's enjoyment by obliging in this manner, when there is dancing. A girl who can play, but is above playing a waltz for her young friends' benefit does not appear in a very good natured light, especially if she is not above dancing herself to others' playing. All this, I say, will do no harm, so long as refined taste is being cultivated, instead of being allowed to become so dulled that a pupil—with even a decent ear for music—cannot tell a really pretty graceful piece from the veriest rubbish. There are at this moment, pieces which are simply a mass of bangs, scampering arpeggios, and prolonged shakes, (over the latter most girls invariably founder.) Yet these pieces have an enormous sale, and there are but few young ladies' music cases in which they are not to be found.

I know well that it is useless to hope for a total exclusion of bad music, or for a "garden of girls" with sweet voices, nimble fingers and perfect "ears," but I also know well that a widely different musical standard to what now exists can be attained, if only the earnest lovers of music, (professional and amateur) will work together to achieve it.

## CLIMBING THE ALPS.

ON THE RIFFELBERG.

I came up here yesterday from Visp, a little village on the railroad from Brigne to Geneva. There is only a bridle path for half the way, so I had to come on horse back. When I ordered the horse and guide in Visp I expected to ride a charger, with my guide, a young mountaineer, on another, and that we should come over in fine style. Imagine how I was "let down" when an apparently decrepid old man led a tame old horse up to me with a rope tied around his head, and when I had mounted led the horse through the town as if I had been a bag of meal, the people all looking on, but not in surprise. I found that my guide was to go on foot all the way to St. Niklaus, and at all the difficult places he took hold of the bride. When I found how unsafe in appearance many places were I was very well satisfied with our very prosaic way of getting along. The old man proved to have stout legs and plenty of strength, so that he walked as fast as I could have gone anyway. Our path led up the valley of the Visp River. The first nine miles took us four hours or more to accomplish. Then after dining and resting two hours we took, toward three p.m., a rude buggy and drove to Zermatt, at the upper edge of the Visp gorge. The town of Visp, or Viège, as the French call it, is at the lower end. There we were, just where four or five glaciers converge from the ravines of the surrounding mountains. My greatest delight was experienced when just before we got out of the Visp gorge the lofty, sharp peak of the Matterhorn pushed into view above on the right. It appears to be such a sharp and lofty pinnacle of dark rock rising from a high mountain at its base that snow can scarcely rest on it at all and its glacier begins far below. I looked at it with incessant wonder that any one should have been bold enough to scale it, yet it is now done every day and often by women. Last night I saw a light half way up the pinnacle and was told it was from a cabin where climbers rest at night, it being not feasible to ascend to the summit and descend in one day. This morning with a telescope from our hotel I saw four men crawling or rather walking slowly over the apex and others cautiously coming down. The way they do it is by tying the whole party together by a strong rope so that if one falls the others save him. But some years ago the first party that ever reached the top had started to come down (and it is almost like coming down the side of a house) but had not gotten far before one slipped; the jerk carried the next off his feet, then the next and the next, while the rope snapped between him and the two last above. These were saved, but the unhappy four shot down over the precipice four thousand feet on to the snow below. Their bodies were found and their graves are in the churchyard at Zermatt.

Stopping at Zermatt to telegraph up the top of the adjacent mountain, the Riffel—where we could see the hotel perched, as it were among the clouds, I learned that they could give me a bed on the floor. So I mounted again and had a long and weary ride partly after dark, up through the pine woods and then along horrible precipices till we gained the hotel, where the good lady, to reward me perhaps for my good nature in seeming glad to get even a bed on the floor, presently found a nice room for me. I went to bed soon and slept soundly under a half feather bed, which was comfortable enough in this cold air. I woke this morning to find a bright day. It was glorious to look from our elevated position on the ring of snow-clad peaks around us as the sun brightly touched them. After breakfast, having made the acquaintance of an English clergyman, a great mountain lover, we clubbed in and got a guide—a bergsteiger—and went up on the ridge a few thousand feet above the hotel, on the south, called the Gornergrat, whence we had a view, which has become famous. South of us was the beautiful Monte Rosa covered almost entirely with snow, and very little lower than Mount Blanc. To the right of that was the mountain called

the Lyskamm, then two peaks called Castor and Pollux, then the broad white shoulder of the Breithorn. Farther to the right was the little Matterhorn. Then came a snowy mountain gap called Matteredgösch, then the broad expanse of the Theodule glacier leading the eye around to the west, where sprang up the triangular pyramid of the isolated Matterhorn—monarch of the circle—followed in quick succession as the gaze ran round to the north by Dent Blanche-Gabelhorn, Rothhorn, Weisshorn, Bruneck, horn and the Mischabel. The first and last being the highest—over fourteen thousand feet.

Then we lumbered down a steep descent until we stood on the great Gorner glacier, one of the greatest—the second in Switzerland—which winds like a great white snake from Monte Rosa down nearly to Zermatt, and which is the only one I have seen that really comes down into the valley, the rest ending high up these ravines and giving place to torrents of whitish, muddy water, which issue from the glacier's bottom and rush down most wildly to the valleys. The Gorner is the main trunk into which empty five large glaciers at different points in its course. The glacier ice is not pure and clear, but lumps of ice frozen together, and the surface has a whitish rough appearance and is easily walked over, though fatiguing from its unevenness, having hills and hollows and great crevices reaching down hundreds of feet. The surface is dirty, from dust blown on it, and along the sides are piles of stones, the lateral moraines. My friends and I had long canes, like a hoe handle, with iron spikes in the bottom (called Alpenstocks), and occasionally the guide would give us a hand. We jumped over the crevasses and pitched big stones down them. These were deep funnel shaped hollows in the surface of the glacier, and one of them, about fifty yards across, was filled with clear ice water. The glacier is perhaps three quarters of a mile or a mile wide and is very high in the middle. All about on it were big rocks, and they all, when single, were poised on ice, forming tables, while every little stone and pile of gravel were always sunk in and lying at the bottom of sometimes deep holes, filled with water. Both things are made by same cause, viz.: the rocks get hot faster in the sunshine than ice, because they absorb heat better. Hence, if the rock is thin, it makes the ice warmer than the naked ice around, which thus melts faster, and so a hole is made. On the other hand, if the rock is very thick the heat travels so slowly through it that its bottom does not get warm in one day, so that it protects the ice under it, while the naked ice around gradually melts away and leaves the stone on top of a column. Now then there ought here and there to be a rock neither too thick nor too thin which would neither sink nor rise. Such is the fact and I saw some on the surface. We finally got round to the side of the glacier again and reascended the Gornergrat by a different path and came back to the hotel.—*Home Journal.* F. H. S.

## ECHOES FROM LONDON.

THIS is hard luck. Mr. Laycock, M.P., who died the other day, a fortnight before his death inherited a fortune of 40,000*l.* a year. His enjoyment of this large sum was sadly and singularly brief.

A GENTLEMAN named Hirst was telling the meeting of the British Association recently that he was eighty-one years of age, and had never been an abstainer, when he was greeted by the exclamation (which brought down the house), "You would have been a hundred by this time if you had."

A STATIONER advertises "Christian note paper," whatever that may be. The explanation that it is stamped with "a series of seven art outlines, representing a Christian as portrayed by Bunyan and Shakespeare, illustrating the Common Prayer for each season," which does not make the matter much clearer.

A CURIOUS experiment, it is stated, is being tried in several corps of the Russian army. This consists in the introduction of dogs in lieu of men as sentries. For this duty the wolf dog of the Ural Mountains is found most suitable, as this animal will growl at the presence of an intruder, instead of barking outright, and thus inciting all the dogs in camp to do likewise.

LEICESTERSHIRE must be the farmers' Elysium just now, provided he has no objection to his fields being occasionally ridden over by the various "hunts" which so greatly affect the country, for farms are to be had for an old song, if not for the bare asking. One farm in that county, which was formerly let at 35*s.* per acre, has been reduced to 12*s.* Another large farm, once occupied by one of the first agriculturists in the county, has had to be let under the following conditions: The tenant to pay nothing during the first two years, and at the expiration of that time to commence with a small rent.

ANOTHER revision of the Bible is in progress. The cheap edition of the Scriptures which seven years ago was printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society for the Malagasy is now about exhausted, and communications have been entered upon for a reprint which shall have been revised. The revision is slowly taking place in Mada-

gascar—the Protestant missionaries of the Church of England, the London, Quaker, and Norwegian Societies joining in the work, which will yet take some years. In the new edition of the Malagasy Bible it is intended to adopt the new translation as far as it has been accomplished.

THE jubilee meeting of the British Association makes York crowded for a time. The Treasury of the old Minster will be shown to the visitors, and some of its contents are treasures of curiosity as well as of value. One is shown, namely, a horn by which important lands were held for the Dean and Chapter. The tenure consisted in blowing the horn, and perhaps—unless a Court of Equity would interfere—no musical instrument in England could be more valuable. If the horn were stolen the lands were gone. In the library of Trinity College, Dublin, there is at present another horn by the tenure of which certain tracts of land belong to the Kavanagh family. But as land in England differs from land in Ireland, so does the method of service, where apparently, and certainly nominally, the tenures are the same. The Englishman has to prove his ownership by blowing through his horn. The Irishman proves his by emptying it. It is a tall narrow flagon, the cubical contents not very formidable. It is only fair to say that in Ireland the capacity of emptying drinking vessels extend to the tenants, and perhaps has led as frequently to the loss of land as to its tenure.

## LITERARY AND ARTISTIC.

A COMPLETE catalogue of the manuscripts in the Dresden Library is in preparation.

IN the cathedral of Ulm a fresco covering an entire wall has been newly discovered. It is a representation of the Last Judgment.

THE translation by M. Golenischeff of a most interesting Egyptian hieratic papyrus, relating romantic adventures in Punt or Somal, probably in the thirteenth dynasty, will shortly appear.

THE Queen has commissioned Miss Chaplin, whose models of animals in terra-cotta have attracted favourable attention both from artists and the public, to execute a portrait of one of her colliers.

IT is proposed to remove the modern structures abutting upon the Tower, and also the present law courts that fringe one side of Westminster Hall, so that the two most ancient and historic buildings in London will, before long, be visible for the first time in their proper simplicity.

AN important discovery of ancient silver coins is reported from Tarasco, Province of Lomellino, Piedmont. A countryman found a vessel containing 600 silver coins, mostly belonging to the first Roman epoch.

THE Antwerp Museum has lately added to its collection another picture by Rubens—*"The Venus"*—bought from an Antwerp family for 100,000 francs; also paintings by Teniers, Brauner and Weenix, and a fine portrait of the Dutch school by a master unknown.

DR. G. W. LEITNER, of Lahore, intends to return to England next winter in order to compile a catalogue raisonné of the Græco-Buddhist sculptures and other collections which he has lent to the South Kensington Museum.

MR. Walter Brown, of Great Portland street, will shortly publish a collection of about ninety woodcuts by Thomas and John Bewick, printed mostly from the original blocks. The work will be issued in imperial quarto. The subscriptions are limited to one hundred copies, at a guinea each.

A FINE life-size marble statue, broken into several pieces, which, however, were put together without any difficulty, was discovered during the course of some recent excavations on the site of Hadrian's villa, near Tivoli.

## HUMOROUS.

A MEDICAL writer says that children need more wraps than adults. They generally get more.

"MALAKIA," said the Old Orchard landlady, "well no, we haven't got it; folks hasn't asked for it, but we'll get it for your family."

SOME one wrote to Horace Greeley inquiring if guano was good to put on potatoes. He said it might do for those whose tastes had become vitiated with tobacco and rum, but he preferred gravy and butter.

CANADIAN CHOLERA.—This terrible disease is but little less fatal than real Asiatic cholera, and requires equally prompt treatment. Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry will cure it as well as all other forms of bowel complaints of infants or adults if used in proper time.

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