

Everybody is talking bicycles, especially the women. Mrs. — tells me she is taking lessons at one of the schools; and Mrs. —, who is quite an age, can ride round the school-room she attends without tumbling off; while as for the misses, they are just gone on the wheel. Where on earth does all the money come from to purchase these expensive machines? Thousands of dollars are changing hands over bicycles every day. We are told of bad times; but bad times or not, people seem to find money for wheels.

I am not a bigot, I think, but it seems a pity that our sportists and gamists can find no other day than Good Friday on which to have their bicycle and whist conventions—both good things in their way. Good Friday is a day which a large proportion of the people of this country regard as sacred, and there are too few sacred things in modern life for us to be able lightly to secularize any of them. I know all about the cant of freedom that is talked; I talk it myself sometimes. But the older I get the more I feel that unless a man conserves the quiet opportunities of his life, he cannot expect the best things from himself. To put it no higher than mere utilitarianism and good taste, a gentleman should go to church on a Good Friday.

DIOGENES.

### Music and the Drama.

IT was an appreciative audience which assembled in Association Hall on Thursday evening of last week, to hear the annual concert given by the Toronto String Orchestra, under the leadership of Mrs. Drechsler-Adamson. This little orchestra, which was organized a couple of years or so ago, has improved considerably since its last appearance, and in the performance of a couple of numbers from Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, and Haydn's Variations on the Austrian National Hymn, popularly known as "God Preserve the Emperor," the tone was quite mellow and rich in quality. The young ladies composing the band, and their really talented leader, are to be congratulated on the result of their interesting concert. Those assisting were Miss Augusta Beverley Robinson, mezzo soprano; Miss Kate Archer, violiniste; and Mr. W. H. Robinson, tenor. Miss Robinson is, as I have before stated, a very graceful and artistic singer. Her voice, method, and musical phrasing stamp her as a vocalist of both culture and skill, and in several songs she displayed her talent so admirably as to receive spontaneous recognition in applause. Miss Archer is another of our young Canadian violinists who may be expected in years to come to achieve more than a local reputation. She has already developed a facile, accurate technic, and her tone, on the whole, is healthy and vigorous. Mr. Robinson sang with his accustomed success, and as I have frequently alluded to his style of singing (and excellent choice of songs from the musician's standpoint), I will not at this time refer to it again.

Massey Hall was crowded on the occasion of the production of the "Messiah" last Monday evening. No doubt the large attendance was due to the fact of Mme. Albani being engaged as soloist, with the other important engagements, Mme. Van der Vere Green, contralto; Mr. Norman Salmond, basso; and Mr. Harold Jarvis, tenor. The work had a fair representation, a few of the choruses being in some respects exceptionally well sung, although the chorus itself was too large, quantity and volume being apparently preferred to quality and purity. Seventy-five or one hundred singers could easily have been removed, and the effect, in consequence, been much more pliable and musically satisfactory. Mr. Anger did well during the short time the work was in preparation, and can be honestly complimented on the result. His style of conducting is rather stiff at present, but will naturally improve as experience is acquired. The soloists were received favourably, all singing their numbers with care and artistic fervency. Mme. Albani was lustily cheered when she first appeared on the stage, and after her splendid rendition of the noble aria, "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth." Whilst she sings in the same manner as regards truthfulness of interpretation and sincere appreciation of her numbers, the fact is apparent that the ease of intonation and remarkable purity of her voice which gave her singing such world-wide recognition and fame have considerably deteriorated. Phrases which should be sung with one breath are broken, and many of her notes are a trifle harsh and uncertain. Still, she is the great artist, and her winning

personality, happy, refined manner, and beautiful interpretations will ever delight for years to come. Mme. Green has a voice of exquisite purity, and under excellent control; her singing was delightful. In the aria, "He was Despised," she created a profound impression. It was full of pathos and tenderness. In her other numbers she proved herself an artist of first quality. Mr. Harold Jarvis was warmly received, and rightly so, for he sang earnestly and well. In one or two of his solos his voice seemed a little robust, and lacked elasticity, but again in passages which required no particular effort to sustain, or develop volume, it had the appealing, refined quality which has been so universally admired. Mr. Salmond's success with the audience was considerable, for he certainly is conscientious, and sings with manliness, but, unfortunately, not always in tune. He doubtless would appear to better advantage in a song recital. Mr. John Bayley was *concertmeister*, and the orchestra was perhaps better than we are accustomed to hear at oratorio performances. To Mr. Charles A. Harris, the composer and impressario of Montreal, we are indebted for hearing "The Messiah" under such favourable and interesting conditions, as I understand he engaged the Philharmonic, and gave the concert on his own account. For some little time past the manager of Massey Music Hall has refused to extend any courtesies to the musical representatives of THE WEEK in the way of press tickets, notwithstanding the fact that the writer of these lines has always—as files of this paper will show—commented favourably on important musical attractions prior to dates of appearance, ever since, and for years before, Massey Hall was built. In addition, I have endeavoured to further the interests of real musical art, both personally and in this column, whenever possible, by bringing to the notice of at least a portion of the public any concerts of artistic merit which deserved patronage, because of the musically educating effect they would develop in the minds of the people. If the trustees and manager of what was supposed to be the people's music hall imagine their treatment of a friendly journal which for years has had a musical department, and desires to give to its readers a weekly review of what is best in the local musical world, is commendable and respectful, well and good; but I would modestly suggest that courtesy is not an undesirable feature to cultivate and practice, even in the management of our concerts, and always brings its due reward.

Mr. Thomas Foster Wainwright, of Regina, Assa., was the successful competitor in the recent musical competition offered by this paper in the setting of the patriotic words, "We Stand to Guard." It will be issued shortly by the publishing house of Whaley, Royce & Co., of this city.

Paderewski will give a recital in Massey Hall on the 9th of April, which will be pleasing news to our lovers of piano music.  
W. O. FORSYTH.

Mme. Albani drew another large audience last Monday evening, when she appeared at the production of the "Messiah" by the Toronto Philharmonic chorus. The other soloists were Mme. Van der Veer Green, and Messrs. H. Jarvis and N. Salmond. Mme. Albani did herself much better justice than on her former appearance here this season, as the solos of the oratorio do not require any of those very high notes which she now produces with so much difficulty. She sang her part with the authority and distinction which come from careful training and long experience. Mme. Green's sweet contralto voice, though scarcely heavy enough for the part, gave much delight. Mr. Jarvis is not at his best in oratorio, the style and traditions of which he is evidently unfamiliar with. His efforts were greeted with much applause, but not with the enthusiasm they usually arouse at a miscellaneous concert. Mr. Salmond could not, of course, escape the severe test of a comparison with Mr. Watkin Mills, to whom he is clearly inferior; yet he was heartily applauded. That his singing was so persistently out of tune with the average pitch of the orchestra was due, perhaps, not so much to an untrustworthy ear as to his inability to strike an average. Though the orchestra played with considerable expression, and at times, especially in the "Pastoral Symphony," with much delicacy, the deviations from pitch were frequently excruciating. The introduction to the solo, "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?" was much too realistic. The chorus, on the other hand, considering the great difficulty of the work, and the very short time in which