

concentrated forms was treated of almost wholly. In opening the debate Dr. Payne gave an historical review of the subject, from which it appeared that up to the sixteenth century there are very few notices in medical literature of the influence of inebriety in causing disease. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they are also rare, Harvey's lectures making no direct reference to alcoholism, though he described certain cases of liver disease evidently produced by that cause. But in the period from 1700 to 1850 they began to be frequent, the earlier part of that period having been marked by the introduction of distilled liquors as a beverage. In 1724 the College of Physicians made a public representation as to the evils of spirit-drinking, and earnest efforts were undertaken by the profession to check the rapidly growing practice. From 1850 to the present time, the era of the rise of pathological histology, or the department of medicine which concerns itself with the effects of disease on the animal tissues, the subject has assumed leading importance. As the result of such pathological investigations, Dr. Payne and all the speakers treated alcohol as a veritable poison; but he explained that he used the term poison not with unqualified condemnation. He described it as favouring the accumulation of fat, acting as a functional stimulus, or, in large doses, as a functional poison on the nervous system, especially on the brain, and working as a tissue poison, as destroying the vitality of some tissue elements and setting up inflammation in others. The changes worked by it on the brain Dr. Payne described as generally like those of old age. Excessive drinking seems to diminish the fertility of both sexes, especially of the male. The preponderance of testimony is that it is not a frequent cause of Bright's disease. The organs of respiration suffer, obstinate catarrhs of larynx and bronchi being common; drinking habits make such skin diseases as psoriasis and eczema inveterate and sometimes quite incurable. So far as statistics obtained by the British Medical Association show, alcohol has no influence in inducing apoplexy, diabetes, and pneumonia, though in the last disease preliminary drinking habits impair resistance to its ravages. Different diseases are induced by different forms of the stimulant, gout being rare in a whiskey-drinking country and common in a beer-drinking. In summing up the debate Dr. Payne said that it had been shown that the action of alcohol had more resemblance to the action of mineral poisons than we have been accustomed to think. —*New York Sun.*

THE LITERARY INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE.

We are very far from claiming the Bible as the only agency in creating the beauty and strength of English and German literature, but it is simply a matter of fact that no other causes have been so powerful or so far-reaching. Without it there could have been no Milton, no Carlyle, Emerson or Ruskin, and probably, if the secret influence could be discovered which created ancestral habits of thoughtfulness, no Shakespeare or Goethe or any of the great writers of peasant origin. We should have had others undoubtedly, but of far inferior quality of mind and heart. When we examine the Bible with the sternest critical eyes we are compelled to admit that it is great enough to be the cause of all which we have ascribed to its influence. Without speaking of its moral or religious qualities it is evident that its literary merits are supreme. Let any one go through it from Genesis to Revelation, and while he will find passages that are now unspeakably uninteresting, yet on every page will be found some pearl of great price, which, even if it were not regarded as a sacred word, the human race would never allow itself to forget. Whatever may be thought of the scientific accuracy of the first chapters of Genesis, few would be willing to have that graphic and poetic account of the creation fade out of the mind. The Bible contains every kind of literature and can furnish specimens of each which can hold their own with the best that the race has produced. Its historical portions, besides being the oldest attempts to trace the history of mankind, and describing the Divine method of dealing with one of the most gifted races of the world, are related with a simplicity and directness which no later historian has surpassed. Its biographies, chapters of human life, when the race was young and men were vigorous in their virtues and great in their crimes, have a charm which can never lose its power. No novelist has ever written a sweeter story than the Book of Ruth. No dramatist has ever treated the universal problem of man's destiny and God's ways with him with such seeing eye and understanding heart, "all in such free, flowing outlines, grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity, in its epic melody and repose of reconciliation." It is not its devotional element alone which has given the Book of Psalms its unequalled place in the liturgies of Christendom, but this is partly due to the fact that it contains poetry of the noblest and most inspiring quality. Even in a prose translation—a test which no other great body of poems like Homer could survive—it appeals to the mind no less than to the emotions, and maintains its position, not wearying by repetition nor weakening through lapse of years. Probably no portion of the Bible has suffered so much in translation as the Book of Proverbs; but nevertheless St. James's version contains sentences of exquisite literary finish, while the wisdom of the generations which have followed has never crystallized itself in more concise or convincing form. Nor is it the spiritual utterances of the prophetic books which give them their only charm. Gems of poetry, having the Divine qualities which touch the imagination and render their places in the literature of the world permanent, are to be found in Isaiah and Jeremiah. The literary qualities of the Bible have been

largely forgotten in the far greater grandeur of its religious and moral qualities, but the sacred Book could never have retained the respect of scholars or, indeed, wholly of the ignorant, if it had been a crude, incondite, and confused jumble, like the Koran. It is certainly a matter of the most profound congratulation that a book that was to be read daily in so many homes, and weekly in all the churches, and which was to be the first popular literature of so many nations, should be cast in such excellent literary form. What its influence has been in the quickening of imagination and thoughtfulness, and as an inspiration of literature, can of course never be measured, but it is only second to the moral and religious influence it has exerted. A large part of this result among English-speaking people is due to the translators of our popular and long-used version. Whatever this lacks in accuracy, it is certainly a "well of English undefiled," and its place can never be taken by anything which is not its equal.—*Providence Journal.*

READ YOUR SCOTT!

NEVER was there a more healthful and health-ministering literature than that which Scott gave to the world. To go back to it from Flaubert and Daudet and Tolstoi is like listening to the song of the lark after the shrieking passion of the midnight pianoforte—nay, it is like coming out of the glare and heat and reeking vapour of a palace ball into a grove in the first light and music and breezes of the morning. It is not for nothing that so many thousands have felt toward Scott a deep personal gratitude, which few, if any, other writers of English fiction have ever awakened. My own case is doubtless typical of thousands. In his novels I first come under the spell of genius in fiction, and in my reading of them the first happened to be what is usually called the least inspired—"The Monastery." But no matter, I gave it three readings, end over end, and followed it with other novels from the same source as rapidly as my dear family Puritan authorities would permit, or as often as they could be evaded. I cannot but think that anything which shall recall to the readers of "Madame Bovary," and the "Nabab," and "Anna Karénina," the existence of "Ivanhoe," and "St. Ronan's Well," and "Guy Mannering," and "The Fortunes of Nigel," or even of "The Talisman" and "Count Robert of Paris," will be of use to them; and if it shall lead them to go further into the great fields which Scott opened, passing through Victor Hugo's "Notre Dame," and finally reaching Manzoni's "Promessi Sposi," the most beautiful romance ever written, it seems to me that there may come a blessing not merely to their minds, but also to their hearts and souls. —*Scribner's.*

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

MARITANA.

SOME courageous young people undertook to perform Wallace's *Maritana* at the Pavilion on Thursday evening, and their fairly good performance justified their temerity. There was a very good chorus, nicely balanced in its parts, which sang fairly well, and which improved considerably as the evening progressed. This improvement was shared by the performers generally as they became more familiar with their novel surroundings. After seeing the excellent performance of this work given at the Grand Opera House two weeks ago, one would naturally be more ready to observe the crudities of amateurs, and at first I was inclined to look a little coldly upon the efforts of these ladies and gentlemen, but it was not long before I began to admire the courage and perseverance which must have been theirs to produce such a pleasing performance. Miss Jardine Thompson, as "Maritana," and Mr. W. Harold Parr, as "Don Jose," showed considerable talent in acting, and have both very pleasing voices. Miss Thompson, especially, sang her music faithfully, and displayed most admirable self-possession, and altogether was a most engaging "Maritana." Mr. F. M. Baker's "Don César de Bazan" was a very good one, and his voice, though light, was of sufficient range for the part. Of the other performers, Mr. Harry Barker, as the "King," Mrs. R. C. Guerin, as "Lazarillo," Mr. P. J. Thicke, as the "Marquis de Montefiore," and Mrs. Maitland, as the "Marchioness de Montefiore," gave very creditable renderings of their parts. The opera was studied under the direction of Madame Stuttaford, who also played the accompaniments and conducted the performance. Her labours have evidently been most arduous, and the success which attended their fruition must have been very satisfactory to her.

A WAGNER LECTURE.

THE handsome music-room of the Toronto College of Music was crowded on the evening of the 14th by an audience which overflowed into all the ante-rooms within reach, on the occasion of the Lecture on Richard Wagner, delivered by Mr. A. S. Vogt, organist of the Jarvis Street Baptist Church. Mr. Vogt's remarks were most interesting, and showed an intimate acquaintance with the history of the evolution and growth of modern music. He traced its progress through the works of Gluck and Weber, until its brilliancy was reached at the hands of Wagner. Though necessarily succinct, with so large a subject and so little time at his disposal, they were interesting and well-conceived to a marked degree. The lecture was followed by an interesting programme illustrative of the subject, in which Mr. Vogt played the "Prayer," from *Rienzi*; "The Pilgrims' Chorus," from *Tannhäuser*, and the beautiful

Lohengrin "Prelude" on the fine College organ in a masterly style. Mr. Henry M. Field played the transcriptions by Liszt, Wagner's great admirer, of the "Spinning Song," from *The Flying Dutchman*, and the "Festmarch," from *Tannhäuser*. Mr. Field showed admirable technique and played most brilliantly, and everyone present must have been delighted with his performance, and must have felt regret that his attainments and talent are so seldom placed before the public. Mlle. Adèle Strauss was in better voice than I have yet heard her, and gave beautiful renderings of the cavatina "Traure, mein Herz," from Weber's *Oberon*, and of "Elizabeth's Prayer," from *Tannhäuser*. Mr. E. W. Schuch presented a fine, sonorous rendering, the celebrated "Evening Star," aria from *Tannhäuser*, singing with special excellence in the dignified recitative. The vocal selections, though delivered in German by both artists, were none the less interesting on that account, the dignity and sonority of that language being naturally best suited to the breadth and largeness of Wagner's music. It will be seen that Mr. Vogt's lecture and illustrations extended only to Wagner's early period, and if, as I hear is the case, he purposes giving future essays on the subject, he will be doing good service to the cause of music, besides interesting many in a subject with which the acquaintance of Torontonians generally is of the most meagre description.

MUSIC AT THE UNIVERSITY.

THE annual conversazione of the University Literary and Scientific Society on Friday evening possessed more than usual interest from a musical standpoint. The Band of the Queen's Own occupied the place of honour at the reception of the guests, and played with even more than its usual excellence. In the Museum the Hungarian Band whiled away many pleasant hours during the evening, besides contributing to the variety of the entertainment in the Convocation Hall. Here the Glee Club was the principal feature and the greatest attraction. The Club was well represented, about forty active members, of whose activity no beholder could have any doubt, occupying the platform and singing with all the energy and enthusiasm of youth, under the careful direction of Mr. E. W. Schuch. Yet this energy was well tempered with discretion, for I have not in many years heard the Club sing with such close attention to the niceties of light and shade. This was especially noticeable in Garrett's waltz song "Hope," in which some very fine effects were produced. The Club also gave a fine, sonorous rendering of "The Pilgrims' Chorus" from *Tannhäuser*, but undoubtedly its best work was done in the unaccompanied part song "Eulalie," which was beautifully phrased. Mr. Schuch had his forces well in hand, and deserves credit for the certainty and precision he secured from the chorus. The accompaniments to the Club's singing were well rendered by Messrs. G. H. Fairclough and A. S. Vogt. The other participants in the programme were heard in both parts, Mons. Boucher giving an excellent rendering of Ernst's "Airs Hongrois," and of Hubay's "Plevna Nota," eliciting an encore. Mrs. Mackelcan's noble voice rang out like a clarion in "Alla Stella Confidente," with Mons. Boucher's violin obligato, and in Buck's "When the Lindens Bloom," winning a recall in each case. Miss Campbell's sweet, clear voice and engaging manner was heard and seen in "I Seek for Thee in Every Flower," and in Gounod's "Sing, Smile, Slumber," for which latter Mons. Boucher played a charming obligato. This young lady sings with a delightful certainty of tone, wonderfully soft in quality, yet being distinctly audible in all parts of the room. Though apparently only a student as yet she appears destined to become one of our foremost vocalists. Mr. Mundie, too, has a sweet voice but rather small in volume for a large room, and is imperfect in his vocalization, besides showing signs of nervousness. His popularity among his fellow-students and their appreciation of his efforts secured his recall. Mr. Schuch's fine rollicking rendition of the "Skipper" was deservedly encored. A debutante in Toronto was Miss Nora Coleman, a young elocutionist with a charming appearance, and considerable magnetic power. She read Lytton's "Aux Italiens" with a piano accompaniment of airs from *Trovatore*, which produced quite a dreamy effect. Her reading of the Chariot Race from *Ben Hur* was her strongest effort, and was admirably rendered, a strong interest being aroused in the audience in the fortunes of the contestants in the great race.

THE SECOND ALBANI CONCERT.

GREAT as was the satisfaction of the audience with the first Albani concert, the second one was a still greater success artistically, though the audience was not so large as on the previous occasion. Mme. Albani, herself, was in splendid voice, and gave magnificent renderings of "Caro Nome" from *Rigoletto*, "Ardor Gl'incensi" from *Lucia*, and "With Verdure Clad" from the *Creation*. The *Rigoletto* number bristles with technical difficulties, which she surmounted with the greatest ease, her wonderful execution and marvellous clearness of tone standing her in good stead, and the *Lucia* selection was sung with that pathos and intensity which has made her rendition of "Lucia" a world-wide celebrity. But it was in the oratorio piece that the great singer excelled all her former greatness. It was delivered with rare dignity and earnestness, and was a study replete with information and knowledge to all oratorio singers. The applause of the audience, in each instance, was hearty to boisterousness, which increased to a veritable uproar, when ex-Lieutenant-Governor Robinson, assisted by Col. Sweney and Mr. Percival Ridout, presented Mme. Albani with a magnificent floral trophy, the finest of the kind ever presented in Toronto.