

Musical.

All correspondence intended for this column should be directed to the Musical Editor, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

All communications to contain the name and address of the sender.

Notices of Concerts in Provincial towns, &c. are invited, so as to keep musical amateurs well informed concerning the progress of the art in Canada.

MILITARY CONCERTS.

Military concerts are the order of the day, varied occasionally by performances by members of the sister service. The sailors of H. M. S. Tourmaline are to appear at the Skating Rink on Friday evening and perform solos and choruses in company with the members of the 6th Fusiliers. Now we may be wrong, but we imagine that if the gentlemen were to appear in civil costume, and trust simply to the merits of their performance, they would have but a slim audience; it is therefore as sailors and soldiers of Her Majesty on exhibition that people go to see them, and the uniform, which is paid for by the people, is used, like a showman's costume, for the attraction of a gaping multitude. We have a high opinion of the defenders of our land, and think them worthy of an office more noble than that of exhibiting themselves for a consideration, like the tame Zulus in England. To call such shows *concerts* is, we think, to misapply the term, as in these days we understand by a concert a public musical performance. There are many people, however, who never go to any entertainments on their merits as such, but invariably enquire: "What church is it for?" or "What institution will I benefit by going?" The idea of benefitting *themselves* never seems to enter their heads, and they are satisfied to accept any kind of performance, as the performers are not musicians, but sailors. If they are sailors let them attend to their profession, singing only for the gratification of themselves and friends. Montreal is shunned now by most professional troupes, as all the people's money flows into the pockets of those who are paid by them for a very different purpose.

MUSICAL CONCERTS.

We are glad to hear that we are to have some *musical* concerts soon. Nordheimers' Hall, of which Mr. DeZouche is the lessee, will shortly be opened by Mr. Franz Rummel, the eminent pianist; and the Mendelssohn Quintette Club are to give two concerts on the 6th and 7th of October. Mr. Rummel is known as one of the leading pianists of the day, and we look forward with interest to his appearance here. We consider the piano *the first of all instruments*, and a piano recital by an artist is always a great treat.

The Mendelssohn Quintette Club is so well and favourably known throughout Canada that it is sure to be welcomed amongst us. Some changes have taken place in the *personnel* of the organization. Mr. Edward Heimendahl, who appeared so successfully in London last season, being now "First Violin," and Mr. Frederick Giese, a Hollander of repute, is the "Violoncello." Miss Fanny Kellogg, now one of the leading concert singers in America, accompanies them as vocalist. It is now a long time since the Mendelssohn Club has visited Montreal; we almost identify it with the musical history of this city, and believe it has done much to counteract the effect of the unmusical concerts we have so frequently to complain of. The members of the Club do not give the proceeds of their concerts to any benevolent institution, and in attending them it is possible that we may be guilty of the enormity of helping to support half a dozen musicians; but we can say with truth that the concerts are given for the benefit of the entire community, and trust that many will avail themselves of the opportunity of attending them.

"PAUL AND VIRGINIA."

At a recent interview of Miss Emma Abbott, the writer commenced his queries by asking Miss Abbott why she opened her season with "Paul and Virginia," when Gounod had pronounced her greatest success to be in "Faust."

"Why?" said the cantatrice, giving one small boot an energetic tap with the ivory handle of her parasol, "why? Well, I'll tell you. Because it is one of the grandest operas ever written; because I have created the *role* of Virginia in this country—love it and have succeeded in it. But to begin at the beginning, as the children say, you will remember that the story was written by Bernardin de St. Pierre in 1789, and created a sensation wherever the French language was read. Napoleon was so affected by it that he conferred the decoration of the Legion of Honour on the author. As an instance of its effect, it is said to have revolutionized the fashions of the day, which ran to the wildest excess in glitter and extravagance. The picture of 'Virginia,' as she was drawn by the gifted pen of the author in her innocent goodness and simplicity, leading a life of daughterly devotion to her mother, filled with a love pure and sweet as a child's, yet warm and intense as a woman's, for Paul, wearing the simplest of white dresses, fresh and bright as one of the flowers of her own tropical forests, was such a striking contrast to the feminine character and dress of the time that the nobler by nature endeavoured to imitate this beautiful character, which has always stood alone in literature as it will in opera. The music is by the great composer, Victor Masse. When I was a student in Paris I sang for him, and he said I was better adapted to the *role* of Virginia than any singer he had ever heard. The music accords with the romantic story, and is full of strange and beautiful effects, such as the weird Bamboula chorus, sung by the slaves in the cotton field; the impassioned love duo, 'By the Air That I Breathe,' and the exquisite bird song, which introduces the most charming ventriloquial effects. Some of the melodies are so full of warmth and feeling that it needs no educated ear to guide them straight to the heart. It has been enthusiastically received so far, for its varied elements strike the popular fancy. The scenic effects are very novel and beautiful."

At Pesaro, lately, no ballots were cast at the election. The electors had all gone to a musical festival where Rossini's music detained them all day. "Willam Tell" has evidently not taught the Italians that "eternal vigilance is the price of freedom."

SIGNOR ALBERTINI will make his debut in New York on October 7th at Steinway Hall, and will have on this occasion the assistance of Miss Gertrude Franklin, Signor Agramonte and a grand orchestra. After the success the young violinist has had in private circles, his concert ought to awaken interest, if there is any interest left in New York, for concerts of virtuosi.

Chess.

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PROBLEM NO. XL.

From the *Detroit Free Press* Tourney. Motto: "Et voluisse sat."

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