

ABU MIDJAN.

UNDERNEATH a tree at noontide,
Abu Midjan sits distressed,
Fetters on his wrists and ancles,
And his chin upon his breast;

For the Emir's guard had taken—
As they passed from line to line,
Reeling in the camp at midnight—
Abu Midjan drunk with wine.

Now he sits and rolls uneasy,
Very fretful, for he hears,
Near at hand, the shout of battle,
And the din of driving spears.

Both his heels in wrath are digging
Trenches in the grassy soil,
And his fingers clutch and loosen,
Dreaming of the Persian spoil.

To the garden, over weary
Of the sound of hoof and sword,
Came the Emir's gentle lady,
Anxious for her fighting lord.

Very sadly, Abu Midjan,
Hanging down his head for shame,
Spoke in words of soft appealing,
To the tender-hearted dame:

"Lady, while the doubtful battle
Ebbs and flows upon the plains,
Here in sorrow, meek and idle,
Abu Midjan sits in chains.

"Surely Saad would be safer
For the strength of even me;
Give me then his armour, lady,
And his horse, and set me free.

When the day of fight is over,
With the spoil that he may earn,
To his chains, if he is living,
Abu Midjan will return."

She, in wonder and compassion,
Had not heart to say him nay;
So, with Saad's horse and armour,
Abu Midjan rode away.

Happy from the fight at even,
Saad told his wife at meat,
How the army had been succoured
In the fiercest battle heat.

By a stranger horseman, coming
When their hands were most in need,
And he bore the arms of Saad,
And was mounted on his steed.

How the faithful battled forward
Mighty where the stranger trod,
Till they deemed him more than mortal,
And an angel sent from God.

Then the lady told her master
How she gave the horse and mail
To the drunkard, and had taken
Abu Midjan's word for bail.

To the garden went the Emir,
Running to the tree, and found,
Torn with many wounds and bleeding,
Abu Midjan meek and bound.

And the Emir loosed him, saying,
As he gave his hand for sign,
"Never more shall Saad's fetters
Chafe thee for a draught of wine."

Three times to the ground in silence
Abu Midjan bent his head;
Then with glowing eyes uplifted,
To the Emir spake and said:

"While an earthly lord controlled me,
All things for the wine I bore;
Now, since God alone shall judge me,
Abu Midjan drinks no more."

A. LAMPMAN.

THE TORONTO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

SOMEWHAT back from the city streets, in other words around the corner from Yonge on Wilton Avenue, are situated the premises, convenient in the extreme, of this recently-established institution. The handsome prospectus issued during the summer months by the Faculty has already informed the public that such an organisation is in its midst and being fully equipped for the season's educational fray. So far the Conservatory appears to have been undeniably successful. Detractors there may have been a few, here and there a dissentient voice with the reluctant caveat of caution and distrust, the sentiments of the archaic Tory who must deprecate everything new. But the generally expressed opinion seems to have been, and to be, that of admiration for the original idea itself—that of organising and maintaining a Conservatory of Music here in Toronto on much the same grounds and in the same manner as that of Boston,—and further, of complete faith in the Directors of the enterprise and in the skill of the present Faculty. To one who is more or less an outsider in music, the exterior aspect of the new Conservatory certainly appears to offer unusual attractions. One is greeted at the entrance door by what may be termed a burst of "representative sound," the tones of the cornet, the organ, the piano, and the flute mixing up not at all disagreeably with the human voice and the fiddle. It is like the rehearsing of an unseen orchestra, and must not be confounded with that bane of the unmusical—promiscuous and insubordinate tuning. The environment is thus felt to be at once highly musical, and one would not dare to presume upon turning the handles of any of the doors, sacred to the professors and their pupils, till one has traversed the first staircase, noting the extreme neatness and finished appointing of the building, and made oneself known to Mr. Roberts, the courteous and indefatigable Secretary whose office is part of the general waiting-room. This apartment is most beautifully and comfortably fitted up, decorated in graduated tints of pale terra-cotta, and furnished with every convenience. Here are pupils, friends, units dropping in for information, an occasional member of the Press, with and without portfolios, packages, and music books. Mr. Roberts informs us that the number of pupils is registered at two hundred and thirty, and that soon the present site will be too small for them. Leaving the waiting-room where the Registrar, Miss Ferguson, is busy answering the questions of the many would-be students and pupils, we are ushered still by our cicerone Mr. Roberts into the various class-rooms, the first Mr. Haslam's. The next is the corner room devoted to the use of Signor Francesco d'Auria, who receives us most indulgently and seems not to mind the interruption in the least. We find the new professor a gentleman of prepossessing foreign appearance, who is charmed with Toronto, and with the evidences of musical culture to be met with at every step. Signor d'Auria is conductor, composer, and teacher, all three, and has published several excellent treatises on the voice and upon the abstruse question of harmony. Passing through other class-rooms, the floors of which are all painted a warm, rich colour and furnished with pianos and chairs, we recognise the familiar faces of Herr Carl Martens, Mr. Guest Collins, Miss Elwell, and Miss Dallas. Every department seems full of pupils, and the cordiality with which all these different professionals pursue their vocation under one roof speaks well for one primary object of the institution, the binding together of musicians themselves in a true *entente cordiale*. In the violin department not quite so much is going on, but the influx of pupils into the lower or first grade indicates the speedy improvement in this direction. Mrs. Drechsler Adamson, whose name is on the prospectus, is, however, compelled by indisposition and its results to give up many of those who otherwise would prefer her instruction. But here are Mr. J. Bayley, our prominent bandmaster, and Mons. François Boucher, late of Ottawa and Montreal, in her place. Mons. Boucher is a young French-Canadian and has a great deal of the musical genius of his countrymen in him. He speaks excellent English, and is also delighted with the appearance of Toronto and with his position on the staff. We pass on the stairs an elocution class going up to be commended or the reverse by Miss Jessie Alexander. Going down with us are a couple of aspirants for the 'cello, Mr. Arlidge, the talented flautist, and Mr. Edward Fisher himself, the presiding genius of the establishment. The hours, he tells us, last from eight in the morning until nine at night. The staff, already forty-five in number, may have to be increased. We are shown several courteous notices clipped from both British and American papers, and conclude as we stand again at the bottom of the wide staircase that the Toronto Conservatory of Music is fairly launched and become a subject for kindly criticism.

The advantages of a conservatory, as set forth in the prospectus, are undeniably great. The system consists of arranging students in graded classes (usually not more than four in each), and of thus exciting emulation and affording greater stimulus than can possibly be produced under other and more private conditions. But while we all know the difficulty attending the making of any assertion, we feel that it is not true that class teaching is always successful. To very stupid pupils such teaching may possibly leave them more stupid than before—no great harm perhaps, while in the case of more brilliant ones personal supervision of the most minute description will be needed to detect and overcome besetting sins of practice and performance. However as private lessons are provided for in every department of the new conservatory, this must be left to the individual. Two important objects for its consideration must be the foundation of scholarships, and the giving of as good and as numerous lectures on musical subjects as can be found reconcileable with time and season. Public confidence in the project is the result of the excellent scheme of organisation submitted by the Directorate, embracing some very prominent Canadians, and holding a capital of \$50,000, divided into five hundred shares of \$100 each.