

THE GRUMBLER.

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WHOLE NO. 79.

THE GRUMBLER.

"If there's a hole in 'yur coat
I redce you tent it;
A chief's among you taking care,
And, faith, he'll pzent it.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1859.

THE "LEADER" ON MUSIC.

Whether the cold of Wednesday night congealed the milk of human kindness in the *Leader's* bosom, or whether the *Leader's* dinner sat heavily on the editorial stomach we cannot say, but the *Leader* on Thursday was completely out of sorts. Its tempers which, fortunately for the exhibitors at the Fair, had been serene during the day, was completely soured, when he re-visited the Palace at night.

The audience were irreverent, the position of the orchestra was bad, the programme ill-selected, the chorus singers were incompetent, the band poorly trained, whilst the solo singing was more execrable still.

What, in the name of conscience, had deranged the physical organization of our contemporary that he could be so unmercifully caustic and severe?

A hurriedly eaten and badly digested beef-steak, or a watery potatoe may have troubled our dyspeptic contemporary; but why should he vent his humours on the unhappy musicians? A quiet dose of salts or a couple of Ayer's pills would have removed the complaint and, restored his good-humour in a night, without exposing his needless spleen and ill-nature.

First, the audience were expected to stand without moving, or sit quietly on the floor during a concert of two hours and a half duration, without moving. The *Leader's* bump of veneration was sorely troubled by "the listlessness of the majority," nor did even "seeming reverence" of some (for after all it could not have been real) allay the pang caused by the "gaiety" of the rest. We are inclined to think that if the *Leader* had not been of the number of "well disposed persons" who appropriated all the seats there were in the building, he would have become painfully aware of the existence of a pair of legs which even his reverential spirit and notorious piety could not have kept at rest for over two hours and a half. It is all very well to be quietly devout when you have secured a seat for yourself, reverence is not so easily kept up in a standing posture.

The next thing was the position of the orchestra—"The merest tyro in acoustics" would know better than put it at the end; why did they not root up the fountain, disturb the exhibition, and throw everything into disorder to please the *Leader*. It was very wrong, though we cannot but think that

a disordered stomach had more to do with the complaint than skill in acoustics.

The third grievance was that the horns did not sing in one united mass. "The males tried to be very prominent." We do not think that required a very great effort, seeing that they formed four-sixths of the whole chorus. Difficult as it is to produce a *comprehensive ensemble*, the piano and forte ought to be observed; the singers should recollect what "equal temperament" means, &c., &c. Then the "tempo" was bad, and there was a want of *savoir faire* in the band, and the singers were not musicians "*par excellence*."

The falsetto notes of the counter-tenor were "*false indeed*," (a pun from the *Leader*, and such a pun!)

"The turbulent tenors" came in for the next stricture; the Bass were fortunately spared the rod which demolished their brethren.

He next complains because he was not favoured with a solo for which of all others, the building was least adapted. Then notwithstanding his great reverence and devoutness, the applause of the audience was not obstreperous enough to please him. We always thought it extremely out of place during the performance of sacred music.

He winds up by giving several erudite observations on music, which he tells us he derived from a perusal of "Dr. Mark's able works," and there leaves us for the present. We trust he will take advantage of all the time at his disposal to inform himself upon the subject on which he assumes to speak. He may learn that a reckless sprinkling of French and Italian and wise saws gleaned from ten minutes' perusal of "Dr. Mark's able work," do not constitute a man a musical critic. If our singers are not "*musicians par excellence*," we have assuredly less reason to boast of our critics. With regard to this concert, we consider that Mr. Carter and his company were deserving of all credit, considering the hurried manner in which the concert was prepared. The gentlemen on whom the critic spends his wrath are not professional men, nor are they paid for the time and trouble they devote for the benefit of the public; and we suppose that they do not care to be held up to public ridicule, when they are working in a public cause. Taking into consideration the alacrity with which they came forward on this occasion, we think that they might have been spared the reckless and ignorant censures of the *Leader*. In joining in the diffusion of a taste for music amongst the people, we fail to see the propriety of heaping scorn and contempt upon the first effort made to place such performances as these within the reach of all. We trust that during the approaching winter some effort will be made to unite the factions into which our musical people are unhappily divided. Mr. Carter's energy and ability as a leader—even Solon of the *Leader* does not attempt to deny—and with the care which he bestows

in training his chorus, we expect to have cheap and well-rendered music, in spite of the carping of the critic who prates ignorantly of "light and shade, colouring matter, and expression" through the columns of the *Leader*.

HISTORY OF CANADA.

BY BUTTERFLY DEESWAXES, ESQ.

No. 1.

I purpose to write the history of my native Province from the time when the first pine cone dropped into Canadian soil to the departure of the industrious floss from Toronto in the year of our Lord 1859. But before a chronological chain of facts be unrolled it will be better to enter upon a few speculations, highly interesting and philosophical, though perhaps too abstruse for the generality of our readers.

Of the original unity of the humane race we are too orthodox to doubt for a moment. How then was the continent of America peopled?

It is supposed by some that Rolley Poley, the great ancestor of the Indian race, and Bang Whi, his wife, sprung from the foam of the Falls of Niagara, but Dr. Wilson refuses to give his countenance to the theory, so we abandon it. Another account is that the above-mentioned chief was bathing in Behring Straits and left his clothes on the east coast of Asia. The policemen came down and roast-beefed him, and threatened to fine him for bathing before seven o'clock. Rolley Poley dreading the consequences of his indiscretion, swam towards the American shore, and having raised a wigwam there, went back and brought his wife over.

By some free-thinkers it is thought that the protoplast of the Indian race might have had a boat of his own at the deluge, and thus arrived at a destination far distant from the resting place of the ark.

Other authorities say that some Asiatic tribes finding their neighbours beyond bearing determined to be beyond Behring themselves, and finding themselves in great straits, instead of bearing the cross resolved to cross the Behring without delay. But even here they were not altogether contented for their leader is reported to have quoted Shakespeare's words,

Here we are in America, more fools we,
For when we were at home we were in a better place.

His followers became enraged and roasted him for breakfast on a gridiron. From this circumstance some historians think that the peculiar flag of the Yankees was derived.

These and a few more speculations which will appear in our next will constitute the introduction to our History.