

MUSIC AND DRAMA

THE cycle of Mendelssohn concerts has left nearly twenty thousand hearers in a state of profound gratification over the yearly progress of a Choir whose conductor's motto appears to be *plus ultra*. The best assurance we have, of the Mendelssohn Choir programmes' vitality, is the eternal vigilance of Dr. Vogt in seeking out compositions of every school and century. This year's concerts have shown no flagging in enthusiasm and a growth in all choral graces. The *Toronto Globe* has referred editorially to the great example afforded by Dr. Vogt's choir to the leaders of choirs throughout the country, and this aspect of their influence cannot be estimated too highly. The man who trains the village choir has too often imagined that noise means music and clamour accompanies true devotion. If the attendance of choir leaders from all parts of Ontario at these concerts can convince them of their error, the Mendelssohn Choir has succeeded in a mighty mission and many congregations will call them blessed. These concerts mean far more than a week of artistic gratification—they mean the uplifting of thousands to a higher level of emotion and ambition, the coming nearer to that "perfect arch," of which the old musician, *Abt Vogler*, prophesied. The ripples of these great choral waves break on shores of which we never dream. Those who saw the quiet Canadian student going about the day's work and practice in Leipzig long ago, would have smiled if anyone had said that he would one day be conductor of the best choral organisation on the continent of America. But his mind and imagination were then filled with the harmonies of the masters and such interpretation as he has given them might well satisfy ambition of the highest order.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to the choir comes from the girl or young lad in the top gallery who has "saved up for a Mendelssohn" and who would not have missed the final chorus in *Caractacus* for anything. Speaking of that splendid bit of imperial harmony, a visitor to Toronto made the inquiry which was uttered by a Chicago man last year: "Why in the world didn't the audience give three cheers for that choir? New York would have done it and I'll bet Chicago will."

The only reply to be made is that Toronto takes its music seriously and solemnly. It will tear itself to pieces over Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir James Whitney, Lord Dundonald—or Thomas Longboat. But a choral triumph is a different matter and Toronto will pay five nights in the week, will applaud in decorous fashion, will arise as His Excellency leaves the hall to catch a train—but it refuses, except in cases of isolated enthusiasm, to show more than what it considers a correct degree of approval.

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THE concerts to be given by the Schubert Choir, assisted by the Pittsburgh Orchestra, in Massey Music Hall, Toronto, on February 22nd and 23rd, are assured of excellent patronage, for the good work of Mr. Fletcher's "senior" Choir and the firm hold of Mr. Paur's orchestra on public esteem have given these concerts a place of their own. The programmes to be given in these events of next week are as follows:

Monday, February 22nd.
Overture—"Kaiser March" *Wagner*
Choruses—"Hunting Song" *Schubert*
"Passion Motette, No. 6" *M. Haydn*
Symphony—"In der Natur" *Paur*
(First time in Canada)

Choruses—

"Up, Up, ye Dames" - - *Leslie*
Chorus for Women's Voices
"Weary Wind of the West" *Elgar*
Capriccio, Italian Op. 45 - -
- - - - - *Tschaikowski*



Mr. Emil Paur,

Conductor of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Choruses—

"Wiegenlied" (Six Parts) *Brahms*
"Battle Hymn" from *Rienzi* *Wagner*
"Liberty" A Dramatic scene by
Eaton Fanning. For Chorus and
Orchestra.

Tuesday, February 23rd.

Overture—"Rienzi" - - *R. Wagner*
King Thamos— - - *Mozart*
Chorus and Orchestra.

Choruses— - - *Schubert*

Four Vocal Dances.

"Her True Love She Greeteth"
"Hark! Silvery Bells Ringing"
"As Dewdrops at Morn"

"Tender Music All Inviting"

Rosemunde Selections— - *Schubert*
Chorus—"King Arthur" *Boughton*
Violin Solo— - - *Eduard Tak*
Chorus—

"Who is Sylvia" (Six Parts)

Schubert

Selections from Schubert's Mass in G

Orchestral Rondo— *Strauss*

"Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks"
The most novel orchestral number
is Mr. Paur's own composition, the
symphony, "In der Natur," which
has received most favourable notice
from critics in New York.

Mr. Paur gives his own description
of the movements as follows:—"The
Adagio is the forest at night where
the mysterious, and at times weird
sounds of nature call up the sorrows
of a long life, but not in a morbid
sense.

"The Scherzo is like a sunny day
when the birds are singing and flitting
back and forth and the bright-winged
butterflies are flying here and there
and nothing stays more than an
instant in one place, not even one's
thoughts. The last movement is my
joke, and perhaps a little more than
a joke now and then. The opening
theme is given to the basses, cellos
and bassoons.

"You may imagine when you hear
that, some pompous and fussy old
gentlemen taking a country walk and
talking together. They are very
earnest, but somewhat ridiculous and
after a moment some young people
overtake them and mimic their talk.
Well, the old gentlemen get excited,"
continued Mr. Paur, "and then the

young people only mock them the
more, and then the old gentlemen get
angry and the young people all the
wilder. But a storm comes up and,
of course, it is a thunderstorm, and
the old gentlemen and young people
have to run to cover. Then as the
storm dies away all is heavy and
quiet with a rainbow in the sky. Then
nature begins to waken and the young
people also. There is much jollity,
some of it rough, and when the old
gentlemen again appear they immediately
get into trouble with the
young folks.

"This scene is in the form of an
epilogue, in which a fugue is developed
in the humorous style. At last
the old gentlemen go off very angry.
Then the bird that sang in the beginning
is again heard."

* * *

ONE of the most pleasing evenings
at the Conservatory Music Hall
this month was the occasion of "Dramatic
Episodes," under the management
of Mr. William Sauter and Mr.
R. S. Pigott. "The Prize," a farce
by Mr. Sauter, in which he was assisted
by Miss Hughes, Miss Pigott and
Mr. Pigott, was a delightful bit
of drollery; "Bergliot," a melodrama
by Bjornson and Grieg, was effectively
given by Miss Brenda Smellie, and
the final Pierrot playlet, "The Course
of True Love," was a charmingly
artistic snatch of romance. But the
numbers which will probably remain
in the memory when the dainty
comedy is forgotten were "The Lady
of Shalott," read by Mr. Pigott, with
exquisite trio accompaniment of
piano, cello and violin, and Mr. William
Sauter's rendering of "The Vision
of Sydney Carton," arranged as
a tableaux vignette with original
music. These were so comprehensively
given that all lovers of the
Laureate and the great man who told
"The Tale of Two Cities" will hope
to hear the poem and the prophecy
again.

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Mr. James K. Hackett
at Royal Alexandra Theatre, Toronto

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MR. FLETCHER, conductor of the
Schubert Choir, has returned
from Pittsburgh with glowing accounts
of the work done by the orchestra in
Mr. Paur's composition, "In der
Natur." The Pittsburgh Orchestra is
always welcome to Toronto and the
story of its magnetic conductor's
latest success makes pleasant reading.

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