

much charm of expression. He received, as did also Mme. Zeisler, several recalls. Miss Jessie Perry and Mr. W. H. Hewlett played the accompaniments, the former for the choir, and the latter for Mr Rieger. Both accomplished their work in a manner as gratifying as it was skilful.

Messrs. Whaley, Royce & Co. send me a parcel of songs by Charles A. E. Harris, of Montreal, entitled "Consider the Lilies" (sacred), "Under the Standard," "A Brigand Bold," "Sleep, Lady Fair," and "Now I Lay me Down to Sleep." These are all melodious and interesting, and carry with them the conviction that the composer is an earnest, gifted musician, whose works appeal strongly to the cultivated tastes of the people. "Under the Standard" is a song of great excellence, is dedicated to Watkin Mills, the celebrated English baritone, as is also "A Brigand Bold." The accompaniments are, unfortunately, a little difficult. In this respect simplicity, which need not necessarily be simple, is a safe guide to follow if popularity is desired, and no doubt it is. The whole set can be used with effect, and will be appreciated by real music lovers everywhere.

The same firm of enterprising publishers also send me "Only for Thee," a sentimental song, by Hastings Weblyn, and a sacred song, "Just as I am," by J. E. P. Aldous, of Hamilton. The former has a graceful, flowing melody, with just the necessary sentiment and passion to make it appealing. No doubt it will please its own public immensely.

In Mr. Aldous' song, a devotional feeling is maintained and expressed with some degree of power, yet it is modestly simple in character. No marks of expression are introduced, not even as regards the tempo, it being left entirely to the interpreter. All of these songs are got out in the artistic style which characterizes the productions of this progressive firm, and reflect credit on their taste and confidence in the Canadian composer.

W. O. FORSYTH.

Although Mr. Forsyth will give a full account of the concert of the Mendelssohn Choir it may not be inappropriate, in consideration of the great importance of the event, for a few words to appear in this column also. Mr. Vogt is certainly to be congratulated on the magnificent results he has obtained, results which indicate a distinct advance even on the excellent work of last year. There is, for instance, an increased solidity noticeable in the louder passages which are now given in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. As for the quality of the tone produced, it is difficult to imagine that it could be further improved; while in enunciation, intonation, attack, and variety of shading the choir is superb. The programme was remarkably well chosen. Among the serious numbers Gounod's motette "Come Unto Him," and among the lighter compositions Caldicott's part song, "Violet and Bee," should probably be given the first place. The latter number, reminding one of the "murmuring of innumerable bees," was particularly well interpreted. The quaint madrigal by Lassus, "Matona, Lovely Maiden," was taken so rapidly that it did not give as much delight as it would otherwise have done.

It may be of interest to inquire into the causes which have led to this remarkable success of the Mendelssohn Choir; for no doubt somewhat similar results are possible in other cities which do not at present possess a successful vocal society. There are several points to be considered in forming such a choir. The conductor must of course be a thorough musician, and not lacking in personal magnetism. The chorus must not be made up of any and every individual who may desire to join it, but the members must be selected with considerable care, for one really harsh voice or one vocalist lacking in musical intelligence will do a very large amount of harm. Having obtained suitable material a long series of practices is essential, even though it should cause a reduction in the number of concerts to one each season. Attendance at these practices should be obligatory, a member who is absent more than a very few times forfeiting his right to sing at the next concert. The selection of the music to be rendered is also a matter of great moment. It must be varied in character and of sufficient worth to remain interesting even after frequent rehearsals; but it should not, as a rule, be difficult, for it is of the utmost importance that the chorus should be able to devote its whole attention, for several rehearsals at least, to the finer points

of shading and interpretation which cannot well be studied until after the music has been "learned." Further, most of the music must be sung unaccompanied, orchestral accompaniments being especially to be avoided. Of course the greatest works require an orchestra, but at present, in Canada, the use of such a body always makes the highest standard of excellence in the performance unattainable, and in some cities leads to financial disaster as well. In order to keep up the interest of the members in their work it is important to make the performance of the chorus the principal feature of every programme; and, in order to maintain a feeling of equality and avoid unnecessary friction, it is usually advisable to give no solos to any member of the chorus. Vocal soloists when needed should always be artists chosen from outside. The various details here mentioned are not stated as mandates on the personal authority of the writer, but as unavoidable deductions from the history of various choral organisations. There is yet another matter of very great importance and in regard to which the Mendelssohn Choir occupies a somewhat unique position. Every member seems to understand clearly that the conductor is not a figure-head or mere time-beater, but the interpreter of the music, the performer, as it were, who is to play upon the chorus in much the same way as he would upon an organ. The members, therefore, seem to sing not for their own pleasure nor for the benefit of the audience, but for the sole delight of the conductor. He is to them the central point of interest, and is watched most intently. This was so strikingly noticeable at the concert of last week that when the arrangement, for female voices, of Kjerulf's "Last Night" was being rendered it was difficult at times to repress a smile. A hundred sweet voices sang with great earnestness

"I think of you in the day time  
I dream of you by night."

and a hundred pairs of eyes were riveted upon that one man. But it is only by such attention as this that the finest effects become possible.

The Toronto Vocal Club is being very carefully drilled by Mr. McNally for the concert to be given in Association Hall next Tuesday evening. At a recent rehearsal which I had the pleasure of attending I was struck with the earnestness of the work being done. The Club will give a good account of itself at the concert, and there should be a large audience present, especially as this will be the only opportunity of hearing the Club this season. Toronto has not too many vocal societies; each one in its own sphere is doing excellent work and deserves the hearty support of the public.

C. E. SAUNDERS.

### Art Notes.

THE two new elections to the Associateship of the Academy ought to be popular. In Soloman J. Soloman the institution adds to its ranks a young painter of great natural gifts as well as studiously acquired learning; and in Edwin A. Abbey the most brilliantly charming illustrator of his day.

The Academy makes few mistakes in the election of its associates, but unfortunately it sometimes happens that the elected do not always fulfil their early promise. A casual glance at Blackburne's familiar "Academy Notes" will confirm this view. There were few men of his time who seemed to be more distinctly marked for success than P. R. Morris, whose picture "Cradled in his calling"—a fisherman's boy carried in a net by swarthy toilers of the deep—was one of the "pictures of the year," and deservedly popular. But his pictures now are unnoticed by the public, while, by the artist, they are laconically censured with a sigh. Leader, too, is tardy in winning his full diploma; and E. J. Gregory has declined from his zenith. It must be said for Soloman, however, (I mean S. J. of that ilk) that he has not yet achieved "all his glory." He has abundant powers, and they have not yet been fully exercised. He is always "springing" a surprise on us. He was acknowledged to be the leader of the younger men who adhered to classic traditions and painted scenes from the Greek mythology, but not even his admirers were prepared for the powerful portrait of a judge (be-wigged and be-ermined) which appeared some five years ago; and it was hardly to be expected that the somewhat conventional muse that inspired him in the creation of