

THE SOLO.

I gaze on the blazoned windows,
The columns ash and cold.
The fretted groinings and arches,
The ceiling of azure and gold.
The organ shudders and mutters
Like a monster dying in pain;
The chorus has wailed its parting,
Lamenting, repenting in vain.
Then out of the sadness rises
An angel whose wings are furled;
You lift your voice in the solo,
And I fly from a stricken world.
I traverse the shining oceans,
Where melody rime the skies,
And I pass the islands of glory,
And the headlands of Paradise.
You bear me, I care not whether,
So long as I hear you sing,
For toil and grief are forgotten,
And life is a heavenly thing.
The music ends, and I shiver,
For my soul has returned to earth,
And the silence falls like a sorrow
Which blanched the face of mirth.

J. W. DE FOREST, in Harper's.

A DISTRESSED FATHER.

Let me tell you my story. I am a man. I am a father. I have a daughter. She is musically inclined. She has been musically inclined for some time. Sometimes I think she may be much more inclined towards music than is music inclined towards her. But I do not know. I am not a musician of any sort. I cannot turn a tune successfully round a corner. I do not know a musical sharp from a flat, nor a baritone from a soprano.

Sometimes I think that as regards musical ignorance, I should make an interesting curiosity, to be best appreciated by professoral musicians, to be labelled as a fine article of musical darkness and hung up in a musical museum. But there is no musical museum, unless it be Steinway Hall on the occasion of one of the Saalfeld concerts.

To recommence. I have a daughter: whether or no a musical daughter time alone will show. She has now been "studying music" for three years. During that period there has been a procession of music teachers through our house—as well as pianos. The girl has been taught by music teachers of the burly Teutonic sort, who seemed to smell permanently of beer and tobacco, the impregnation of which lingered long in the parlour after their absence. There have been dapper, dandified American teachers, and long, lean, bilious instructors of uncertain nationality but certain charges.

As to progress, the girl remains in statu quo. When or where that statu quo commenced, I don't know. She commenced with running up and down the octaves, and it seems to me she is there yet.

All these teachers have united in saying that my daughter has "musical ability," and that all she needs is "practice." Practice, practice, practice! that is their eternal cry.

Now, the girl does practice. She does not do much else. She practices with an energy and a perseverance worthy, I was about to say, of a better cause. Sir, if the physical strength and muscular energy put on that long suffering piano had been expended in household avocations, we need never have employed a cook or washerwoman, and even then I think there would have been several pounds left over daily, to be put into quadrilles, waltzes, or Broadway promenades.

She is a good daughter. She never seems discouraged. Though to-day she cannot play a tune without stopping, as it seems to me, painfully to rest, or breaking down on an average of seven times to each tune, or running off the track at intervals of sixty seconds, or coming, as it seems to me, into di-astrous collision, entanglement or juxtaposition with some other tune, yet she practices painfully, hopefully on, with an air of sweet and patient resignation, filling the house (to my ear) with a jangle of noise and monotonous discord, while our present teacher, who is atmospherically a stronger compound of beer, tobacco and old clothes than any preceding, says that she certainly has "musical ability," and that "all she needs is practice!"

If she has musical ability, where is it? Why don't they get it out of her? Is it to be found with the North Pole? How long in such extreme cases must it require for such a crop of musical ability to come up? I know this. If she has musical ability, she didn't get it from her father. I can't even sing "Home, Sweet Home." Because now, and during all these throes of musical labour, for years I have had no "Sweet Home." I have been brought to that pass that I regard a piano with the dread I would a small-pox coffin, no matter how nicely it smells of varnish, no matter how beautiful its ornamentation.

Nor did she get this asserted musical ability from her mother. My wife can't turn a tune, neither unless at a right angle. She seldom sings. I never stay at home when she does sing. When she sings and my daughter is practicing, I adjourn the Court to the nearest beer saloon.

Such is my story. It is not all. The grand question it leads up to, and the question I would ask of you, is this: "Is our present system of teaching music entirely right?" I know what musical tradition will say. I know what the "masters" will say. They will say that music must be taught through certain scientific methods

and formula—that the scales must be learned thoroughly and so on.

Sir, d—in the scales. Pardon this outburst of feeling from a distressed father. I am not now often profane. I would not be. I disapprove of such methods of expression. But rough was I in my youth and little apt to the set and proper forms of speech, and the force of old and former habit still lingers with me.

The point to which I desire to whittle down my musical question is this. Is it really a necessity, that in order to develop musical ability, this long and dreary mechanical system of pounding must be practised? Practice which, does it please the ear? Practice which tires body and mind. Practice which drives every one within ear-shot—nearly crazy!

Some months since I heard a lecture from a lady on a new system of teaching foreign languages. She argued in favour of dispensing entirely with the grammar and dictionary, with verbal definitions, and the long and tiresome repetition of grammatical rules. She said: "Let the pupil learn a single sentence in French, Spanish or German. Let him or her learn its pronunciation from the lips of one native born to that particular tongue. Never mind its translation. Let them first get the 'swing of the sound' peculiar to that language. Let them repeat this over and over again until their ears know it perfectly. Let the ear, above all, be first educated. Then, this sentence serving as a base and corner-stone, let them go on and add to it other sentences learned in the same manner."

Is not this the way in which foreign languages are learned by those who best speak them? Is it not substantially the way in which the English or American child picks up its French from the French nurse. And do not those taught in this manner really speak the language as they do their mother tongue, and speak it without that fear and trembling peculiar to the school-taught French of our time?

"Now, how wide is the step between language and music? Both are let into the brain through the same door—the ear, rhythm, melody, intonation and accent belong to both.

Why could not my daughter have been taught a simple air at first—only one tune. I don't know that she's got a tune in her. I doubt if she has. If there be one it must be stowed away in the deepest and most inaccessible recesses of her being. But let us suppose a miracle. Suppose she has that tune, couldn't somehow or other—I don't know how—couldn't this tune have been taught first, and then might it not have served as a basis whereby to convey all this technique which musical science says can only be gained by the long and weary travel through the Sahara of musical practice?

Just as language has been so successfully taught through laying the corner-stone of a single simple sentence, until the ear gets "the swing of the sound?"

I know what musical science will say to this. I can hear its "Pooh to you." That's the way with nearly all science. It's always tying itself to its crowbar of dogmatic method, and insisting that no one can swim in its waters unless this crowbar be strapped to its first.

The martinets who surrounded the youth of the First Napoleon said, "Pooh to you," at his new methods of warfare. He said, "They will burn their books on tactics in six weeks." This was just before the first Italian campaign. They said battles must be fought on the old approved scientific principles. He said, "I will fight battles out of my brain." He did; we know the result.

And in every science and art a man comes along from time to time who cuts away from books and rules and "established principles," and, after being proven by the professionals and martinets to be a fool and an idiot, starts a new ball to rolling, and when it does roll we all say "It moves. It is a success—a wonderful thing." And then we crown him Lord of all, and the world goes on and ties itself to his system till another rebel starts up and improves upon it, or devises a better.

Enough, I can say no more. I am interrupted, I hear my daughter's pounding. She is labouring on the scales. This is the third year. Poor, irl! where can that tune be? Three years five eparate teachers, three pianos, and no tune yet. How long, O Lord, how long!—Musica.

ARTS OF THE TOILET.

It is commonly thought that to paint the face, to wear rouge and pearl-powder, is a very meretricious practice. To those who like looking at pretty things, this brightening of the natural beauty only seems inexcusable when it is badly done. Whether it is intrinsically a greater sin than the wearing of Worth's corsets, or of twelve-buttoned gloves, is a question which may be left to those who are casuistically inclined.

The aim of a woman of the world is to look as lovely as Nature will permit and art will allow; and it is easy to forgive her the thousand and one little artifices by which this charming effect is produced. We all know that art is used wherever Nature fails; but what does it matter, if the face is beautiful, whether the delicate flush upon the cheeks be rouge or not? There is a great number of persons to whom what is called making up the face is an evil thing indulged in only by painted Jezebels of the stage and the demimonde. It is fondly believed by the great majority that no lady is guilty of such a thing, and that even if a lady

goes upon the stage she will remain from it. She may refrain, it is true, but the result is always unfortunate. The loveliest woman in the world pales behind the footlights, and the terrible upward-thrown shadows produce deep lines as of illness or sorrow. The painted Jezebel of the stage is seldom or never painted in private life. To her the rouge-pot belongs to her profession as much as the artist's colour-box does to his.

The lady of fashion, on the other hand, puts off her pallor with her morning wrapper; puts on her rouge with her fringe and her figure. Her maid, her corsetière, her hairdresser, alone share with her the secrets of her beauty. She deceives her best friends, and wears always the artistic make-up with which she appears in society. She is always prepared for inspection, though her visitor may be only some intimate friend—whose loving tongue would be the first to proclaim that which should be unknown.

When you find Amoret asleep in her tea-gown by the drawing-room fire, and she starts from her slumber to entertain you and give you a five-o'clock cup of tea, you imagine that it is the siesta she has indulged in which makes her cheeks so charming a colour and her eyes so bright. You do not stay to argue it out; but you imagine, being a man, that no reasonable woman would make up her face in order to go to sleep by her own drawing-room fire. You go away convinced that Amoret, at least, does not paint. You forget that Amoret was aware of the possibility of your calling; that she knew her dreamy figure and bright eyes, lit by the fire-flames, would make a very pretty picture for your memory; and, above all, that Amoret lives only to be lovely. It is her profession; she has nothing else to do.

It is these women, the women that are in society—whose serious business is visiting, and most important concern to be well dressed—who are in reality the most artificial. It is our wives and daughters who deceive us the most delicately and consistently. And it is to be remembered with them the deceit is genuine. They would have us believe that they possess every beauty which they exhibit. The actress makes no such pretension. To her all the aid which art can give may be vitally important, but only at night. Then she is an artist, and has a right to utilize everything in her power to heighten the effect which she has to produce. When a great actress appears in such a character as Fron-Frou she despises no detail of her appearance; her colour, her hair, the very line of her eyebrows, is part of the artistic whole. The arrangement of the hair alters the shape of the face; the line of the eyebrows changes the expression. No one will sneer at the actress for making up her face who has ever seen the trouble it entails, or has appreciated the experience and intelligence which it requires. A little rouge and powder, such as suffice for the ordinary drawing-room beauty, are to the actress useless. The actress, accustomed to make-up, who thought herself too pale for a party of pleasure, would only put on a little rouge, and then rub it nearly all off again. A dust of rose-pink powder would complete the effect. Whereas in the evening she must go through an elaborate process. First the skin of the face must be delicately coated all over with vasoline. Upon that is rubbed in a coat of pink cream de l'Impératrice. Then comes the tug of war—the rouge; and only a clever woman ever really knows where to put it. If it is put in the right place, the more rouge the better. Actresses who appear most delicately and slightly made up, looked at from the front, put on masses of rouge; but they know well where it should go, and how perfectly it must be shaded off. Over that comes any quantity of Fay's rose-powder; and then the eyebrows and eyes must be pencilled. And this has to be done with the touch of an artist. These pencillings are not merely to produce additional beauty, but to give expression and character to the face. The skilled actress knows how much lies in all these details. She will play no tricks with her art; and though her natural complexion may be as lovely as a peach-bloom, she will not make the vain attempt to exhibit it upon the stage.

There is nothing meretricious in this. Acting, like all other arts, is essentially unreal. The actor is for the time not himself, but something entirely different; he is representing; and the greater the illusion, the better the art. An actress is justified in making herself beautiful by false means as much as an artist is justified in laying colours on his canvas. The question becomes a very different one when the lady whom we love and the girl whom we fancy genuine carry these deceptions into daily life. Of course, if we are content to accept a woman off the stage as well as on it for what she looks, not for what she really is, then all is well. But though art is a glorious thing in its place, and artifice well enough on occasions, most of us have a not unnatural preference for the beauty which is fresh and home-grown. London World.

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

A NEW wrinkle at aesthetic dinner parties is to serve the champagne from large cut glass pitchers, and into the same style of glasses.

THE opening of the electric exhibition at the Crystal Palace has been delayed, but it is expected to be the most perfect thing of the kind seen.

Mr. TENNYSON is now accredited with two short plays, one or both of them resembling the old masque comedies. If one is not soon produced they are to be published.

MR. GLADSTONE, by the elevation of Sir John Holker, will secure himself a much easier time in his attempt to introduce Mr. Bradlaugh. Sir John was a determined opponent of the effort.

AN Irish tenant has had the audacity to write to a Wexford paper denouncing as "a false and wicked calumny" the report that he had "either paid his rent or influenced others to pay theirs." This report he "absolutely and emphatically denies."

It is stated that, in the event of the Alliance being established in the House of Commons, the Conservative majority in the House of Lords will, in future, unhesitatingly exercise its undoubted right of freely and promptly rejecting any measure which may have passed the Lower House without fair and adequate discussion.

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

All communications intended for this Column should be addressed to the Chess Editor, CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, Montreal.

J. W. S., Montreal, P.Q.—Papers to hand. Thanks. J. H., Lachine—Score of game received. Thanks. J. R., Hamilton, Ont.—Letter received. Will answer by post.

Both in the present and the past, we find many examples of men willing "to show delights and live laborious days" in order that they may be useful to those who dwell around them. It is not so much that they suffer for the carrying out of some high principle as that they are willing to be miserable that others may enjoy themselves. Among this class chess has its representative.

The Conductor of a Chess Correspondence Tourney gives himself heart and soul to carry on the work he has set his hand to, but although he may expect and indeed may receive a reasonable amount of tribulation he has no conception of the horrors that he is certain to have about his ears after the beginning of hostilities. A tourney of this nature, no doubt leads to much enjoyment on the part of those who form new friendships carry on their games with steady perseverance, and carry off their prizes with flying colours. But before the latter can be realized, the unfortunate Conductor has had to encounter his sea of troubles and when he has got to the end of the whole affair, for it must terminate at last he vows that all the gold of the Indies would not induce him to undergo such another trial. Here in Canada, we have had two Correspondence Tourneys brought to a conclusion during the last four or five years, the second begun almost as soon as the first was terminated. Where is the self-deceiving chessplayer who for the harm of the game will set on foot another?

There is no knowing what chess enthusiasm may do, but out of a pure desire to save much human suffering we must raise a note of warning.

A chess match between Messrs. Sanderson and Marshall has been attracting much attention during the past week at Quebec, where we are glad to say, much interest is taken in the royal game, even by those who are not members of the chess club. The fight no doubt will be a tough one, as both players are excellent over the board, and well matched. As far as we have been able to learn, Mr. Sanderson has succeeded in securing the two games already finished. We hope to give the result of the contest in our next Column.

An interesting match was played on Monday last between the third and fourth classes of the City of London Club, the former giving the latter the odds of pawn and move. Each side was championed by eleven players and, after an arduous and exciting contest, the odds givers were victorious by seven games to four. Toronto News.

Mr. James Mason writes to us that it is his intention to return to this country at once. Writing on the 20th of January he says that he expects to leave England during that month, in which case he ought to arrive in a few days. He is coming by the Atlantic Line, and will reach New York by way of Quebec and Montreal. Turf, Field and Farm.

A kind correspondent who last week stayed a few days at Toronto sends us the following interesting piece of chess news.

The Toronto Club challenged Quebec to a telegraphic match of six on each side. Quebec accepted provided the players were allowed to travel on each side. Toronto Club met last night (at which meeting I was present) and decided to fall in with the views of Quebec so now the match, I imagine, is a settled thing. Considerable interest, I think, will attach to it.

We are sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Boden, the well-known English chessplayer. Mr. Boden's name has been so long connected with chess both as a player and writer, that we feel inclined to give a short account of his career in our next Column.

PROBLEM No. 267

(From the Globe-Democrat.)

By G. H. Mackenzie.

BLACK.



White to play and mate in three moves.