

England is torn by schism, Ritualist and Evangelical have nothing in common, they are as antagonistic as fire and water. We of the Reformed Episcopal Church left the Anglican Church to avoid schism, in keeping with Archbishop Lauds' assurance (a High Church authority) that "they are guilty of schism who give the cause, not they who make the separation."

So far as our future is concerned in this city, if our work is of God it will prosper; speaking from a human standpoint, we have come to stay.

I remain, faithfully yours,

B. B. USSHER, M.D.,

Rector St. Bartholomew's Reformed Episcopal Church, Montreal.

ARARAT.

SIR,—Your bold image of "Ararat and the Ark" is certainly sufficiently puzzling in the application.

What is needed, as it seems to me, is to show that you can give up Calvinism without giving up the Epistle to the Romans.

And, at the outset of the argument, the term "Calvinism" ought to be defined, because there are a good many different shades of opinion that have been set forth under the one head of "Calvinism."

I suppose we shall agree in considering that all Doctrine is based upon Divine Revelation, and not on human opinion.

If a Doctrine is true, it is true always. If we have formed false conceptions about it, we are at liberty to modify them.

TRUTH THE ARK.

MELONS.—A subscriber asks, "How may melons be kept till Christmas?" There are two kinds of melons, called the white and red winter Malta melon, which will keep till February. We have kept them till March. These melons often appear in the market in the fall, imported from Spain. Minorca melons will keep for several weeks and even months, provided the temperature be kept equal. In Persia and Asiatic Russia melons are kept till February, by placing them in a niche in the thick wall of the house, where a uniform temperature is preserved. The melon of the future will be a Hybrid—Minorca and Malta melon—which will combine the fine flavor and texture of the Minorca with the keeping qualities of the Malta. Such a melon would be a great boon to the market gardener, and make a delicious addition to our winter fruits.

THE GLOBE MUTUAL.

A few weeks ago, says the *United States Review* as was duly noted in these columns at the time, the results of the official examination of the Globe Mutual Life Insurance Company were announced by the managers of the company, and met very generally with favorable acceptance, albeit in some quarters there was disappointment that the official report of Superintendent Smyth upon the examination was not itself forthcoming. That report has now appeared, and almost simultaneously with its appearance certain important changes are effected in the management of the company. The venerable Pliny Freeman continues as president, but his son, James M. Freeman, has ceased to be secretary, and is succeeded by Mr. C. Seton Lindsay, who has for several years been at the head of one of the important departments of the company's business. Mr. George Lorillard, long connected with the company as a director, and prominently identified with the commercial interests of New York City, has been elected vice-president, and Mr. J. G. Holbrooke, who for some time past has held an advisory position in the office of the company, has been appointed to the position of superintendent of agencies. It is understood among those informed as to the details of the change, that Mr. Holbrooke is possessed of large powers in the management of the company's business, and it cannot be otherwise than eminently satisfactory to all the friends of the company that such is the case. Few men have had so long and thorough an experience with life insurance affairs as Mr. Holbrooke. Well-skilled in both the science and practical development of the business, and possessed of the qualities that must command the respect and confidence of the agents and office-employees, there can be no question that his services in the company's behalf will accomplish for it commendable results. It may be remembered by our readers that the net surplus of the company, over and above its liabilities of some four million dollars, was placed by the Insurance Department of New York at \$163,117.39. These figures were given as of January 1st of this year, and we are pleased in this connection to announce that on July 1st the books of the company showed a net gain during the six months in question of \$120,000, thus bringing the surplus on the latter date up to \$283,000. We trust that similarly favorable progress, by a wise and faithful administration of the company's affairs, may continue to be realized.

MUSICAL.

THE DE MURSKA CONCERTS.

Montreal is so seldom favoured with anything approaching a first-class concert troupe that, although only one member of this troupe could even be ranked as a *first-class artist*, and all of them are now bordering on the "sere and yellow leaf," we listened with pleasure to their performances, some of their selections reminding us of the palmy days of Mario, Grisi and Titiens, when Ilma de Murska, with a voice both rich and highly cultivated, astonished all London by her wonderful execution of the florid music in "Die Zauberflöte," the role of "Queen of Night" being especially adapted to her high and flexible voice.

We have had quite a musical feast—two concerts, one matinee, and an opera, at least a sketch of an opera; and at all of these performances there was much that we enjoyed. The troupe consists of Madame Ilma de Murska, Signori Susini, Brignoli and Bablo, and Messrs. Hill and Makin. Madame de Murska's rendering of the vocal waltz by Giorza, "For ever I Love Thee," was one of the most exquisite performances it has ever been our good fortune to hear, and we regret that so few availed themselves of the opportunity of hearing such a genuine artiste as she undoubtedly is. After the first few bars one forgets entirely to criticize, and listens with rapture to the passages and roulades so perfectly vocalized, and the turns and trills so gracefully performed, as if in mere playfulness, and not as we often hear them, as some difficult task to be done with as little awkwardness as possible.

As a bravura singer, Madame de Murska is unexcelled, if indeed she be equalled anywhere in Europe; she also sang "Within a Mile o' Edinboro' Town," "Way down upon the Swanee River," and "The Last Rose of Summer" with taste and skill, but interpolated into all of them more or less of the bravura style, in the shape of trills and cadenzas, which, to

our thinking, detracted from the general effect. Fancy, for instance, ending the "Last Rose" on the upper F, with a bravura flourish on the words "scentless and dead," or twisting the "Swanee River" so out of shape as to take five minutes to each verse, leaving us amidst its windings and turnings a very indistinct idea of what the composer had written. However, notwithstanding all that, her performances throughout were very enjoyable, and we would gladly attend four more of a like character. Signor Susini did not impress us favourably as a concert singer; as a buffo operatic singer he is first class, and as "Don Pasquale" was a decided success. He has a fine bass voice, and seems to delight in letting it all out, and (like the organist who always held down the pedal which made the church windows rattle) whenever he gets a good round note, likes to give you plenty of it. Beside Susini, Brignoli appeared to advantage, as he has some little idea of light and shade; he sang several Italian songs very acceptably, and, on the first evening, gave the inevitable "Good Bye, Sweet-heart," in good style, receiving tremendous applause. His singing of "Come into the Garden, Maud," on the second night, was calculated to frighten any average "Maud" out of her senses, and we are sure that were Signor Brignoli absolutely in the position in which he was supposed to be, he would have sung a little more naturally, not to speak of taste or education at all. At the close of each verse he fairly howled, and we were in momentary anticipation of seeing "Maud's" father come rushing from the wings with a horsewhip. Signor Brignoli has, or rather had, a good tenor voice, with the conventional operatic ring in it, and by dint of singing a few bars in stentorian tones, and then reducing his voice to a whisper, manages to captivate the average concert-goer; he succeeds fairly in opera, which does not require so much *artistic singing as general style*, but in the higher branches of vocal art, he is simply "nowhere." His phrasing is bad, and his voice uneven, but his upper G forced out with abnormal lung pressure never fails to "bring the house down." We are satisfied, from the applause bestowed on some of his songs, that were Mr. Sims Reeves to come here unheralded, he would prove an utter failure.

The other gentlemen who sang at these concerts had "vox, et preterea nihil," and very poor "vox" at that; Mr. Hill accompanied exquisitely, and, judging from his piano solos, we would consider him a pianist of considerable ability. His playing contributed in no small degree to the success of the concerts, and we cannot understand why his name should be placed in small type at the foot of the bill, whilst third and fourth-rate singers (called artists by courtesy) are set forth in all the glory of gigantic capitals. Surely a good pianist is equal to a bad vocalist!

The opera on Monday night was highly successful, and was fairly attended. All the singers seemed more at home in operatic than in ballad music, and the acting was above the average. The want of a chorus and orchestra, particularly the latter, marred the general effect, but we have to be content with such faint glimpses of lyric art, Montreal being sparsely populated, and only a few hundred people being attainable for any performance, no matter how good. Our people, too, although in London or Paris, they can pay three or four dollars to hear an opera or an oratorio, cannot afford more than one dollar to have the same thing brought to their own doors, and instead of fostering any attempt towards such an end, endeavour to show their superiority by exclaiming, "Oh! you should hear that work performed in London, there they do it *proprietly*," &c. This is how we have to listen, year after year, to worn out opera singers, instead of having, for a short time at least, the best who visit the continent. As regards a chorus, we could organize in three or four weeks a chorus equal to any in New York or London, operatic choruses being a mere bagatelle compared to what we hear here every day; the orchestra would be more difficult to maintain, but is it *impossible*? If not let us have it; all we want is money, and not much of that. Let each one who enjoys good music labor towards obtaining a permanent orchestra in Montreal; we have a good nucleus here already and more than one efficient conductor. What we want is a fund to enable these men to devote a certain amount of time to practice, and then, when we establish our operas and our oratorios, and symphonies, many players may be obtained from various parts who will be glad to come to a city where they can obtain employment.

Mr. Henry Robinson has been appointed organist and choirmaster of the Church of St. James the Apostle in this city. Mr. Robinson was formerly organist of Trinity Church, but has been studying for some time in England; he is a young man of great promise, and we gladly welcome him back among us, as a good organist is a *rara avis* in Montreal.

Dr. MacLagan's series of organ recitals in Zion Church will commence on Monday next. This species of entertainment is becoming popular, not only in the United States and England, but also in the great continental cities. At the Paris Exhibition, the Committee on Organ Music recommended a series of performances "semblables aux séances communes en Angleterre sous le nom de *Recitals*," and on this continent the success of the Plymouth Church organ recitals in Brooklyn (the admission fee being fifteen cents) has been unparalleled. Speaking of them the *Orpheus* of New York says:—"The organ concerts of Plymouth Church, which were instituted over nine years ago, have been a great instructor to organ music, and have done more than all other influences to promote a taste for organ performances throughout the country. The one hundred and twenty-third concert—the last of the present season—was probably the most remarkable ever given."

We wish these recitals were more common in our churches. It is not the business of the organist to perform fugues and organ concertos during divine service; rather let him extemporise to suit the particular portion of the service into which instrumental music is introduced and reserve the works of Bach, Mendelssohn, Hesse, &c., for performance during the week. To hear an organist, after a solemn address from the pulpit, dash into Bach's "G." minor fugue, or worse still, one of the ephemeral productions of Batiste or Wely, we think shocking in the extreme; yet we hear still greater incongruities every Sunday in our churches. Even a Symphony we consider out of place during service; and, much as we love to hear one at any time, we would prefer to listen to it during the week.

We think it would be well if in every church we had one evening in each week set apart for these delightful and refining entertainments, and an opportunity given to the congregation to hear good music at a trifling cost.

THE DE MURSKA CONCERTS.

SIR,—Your valuable musical column is becoming much appreciated for one reason particularly—among many others—and that is when you criticise the performance of any artist or singer, you, careless of popularity, give an honest and fearless critique. It is by these means only that we can hope to purge our musical proscenium of many of the so-called singers that at present invade it. Now I have nothing to say against the De Murska concerts—much for them, considerable merit being shown—but when a contemporary of yours (*The Jester*) talks such vapid nonsense in speaking of Brignoli's singing as that "his impassioned notes vibrate in the air like a trumpet blast; his soft tones are like the sighing of the wind," I begin to think that the gentleman writing such "balderdash" was not present at the concerts, and consequently "called upon his imagination for his facts and his memory for his 'figures!'"

VERA.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

PRINCIPLES OF ELOCUTION. By Professor A. M. Bell, of Brantford, Ont. Publisher: Thomas Henderson, Box 431, Brantford.

We have before us this valuable and very useful Manual, which from beginning to the end is full of instruction in this very desirable branch of education. Professor Bell has divided and subdivided his work into parts and chapters, treating the subject in such an exhaustive manner, that truly one cannot read it without gaining knowledge. Professor Bell is well known, and has acquired a position as Watkins Lecturer in Queen's University, Kingston; and we may add that the present is the fourth edition of the work.

THE ACCIDENT INSURANCE CO. OF CANADA is now issuing Policies and Permits for Travel, covering all accidents by land or water—fatal or non-fatal—at the same rate which had hitherto been charged for Insurances covering *accidental death only* when beyond the limits of Canada. An Insurance of \$5,000 if killed, or \$25 a week if injured, for a three months' trip to Europe, costs now only \$25 in this Company. The Head Offices at 123 St. Francis Xavier Street.—EDWARD RAWLINGS, Manager.—Adv.