

## Musical.

All correspondence intended for this column should be directed to the Musical Editor, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

### WHAT IS CLASSICAL MUSIC?

This is a question which is frequently asked, but seldom answered satisfactorily. Many persons call only those pieces classical which are devoid of melody, and in speaking of them they frequently use various degrees of comparison, calling one piece "more classical" than another, &c. Others, again seem to consider all music, other than that written for dances or comic songs classical, and we frequently find in so called "classical" programmes, pieces from "Trovatore," "Norma," "William Tell," and even the "Bohemian Girl!" We noticed last week that an anxious enquirer had written to the Montreal Star for a definition of classical music, and was gravely informed that the compositions of Mozart, Handel, Balfe and Verdi were usually considered classical. Of course, the Star is not a musical journal, and it is absurd to expect editors to know everything, but we think it would have been better to have given no answer at all than to have spoken authoritatively on a subject with which the Sphinx is evidently unfamiliar. Our object in mentioning the matter, however, is, not to criticize or blame the Sphinx, but to show that even in enlightened and well-informed circles the generally received meaning of the term is not understood, in fact that it has no meaning at all. The following definition, from Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," may be interesting not only to musicians, but to amateurs:—

"Classical—is a term which in music has much the same signification as it has in literature. It is used of works which have held their place in general estimation for a considerable time, and of new works which are generally considered to be of the same type and style. Hence the name has come to be especially applied to works in the forms which were adopted by the great masters of the latter part of the last century, as instrumental works in the sonata form, and operas constructed after the received traditions; and in this sense the term was used as the opposite of "romantic" in the controversy between the musicians who wished to retain absolutely the old forms, and those, like Schumann, who wished music to be developed in forms which should be more the free inspiration of the composer, and less restricted in their systematic development."

According to this authority, even Schumann's music is not classical, and would be out of place at a concert of classical music.

Musicians, perhaps, cannot clearly explain on what principle they make these distinctions and classify various styles of composition under distinctive titles, but, as in literature, there is a fair general agreement concerning these distinctive titles, and, perhaps without knowing why, an educated musician would no more compare Rossini to Beethoven, or Balfe to Mozart, than a literary critic would speak of Thomas Moore and Shakespeare, or plain Dion Boucicault beside Euripides.

We would classify the great composers as follows:—

Classical—Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Spohr, Schubert, Mendelssohn.  
Romantic—Gluck, Weber, Schumann, Meyerbeer, Wagner, Gounod.  
Popular—Auber, Bellini, Donizetti, Flotow, Wallace, Balfe, Verdi, &c.

The older composers wrote nothing but classical music, in fact they knew no other style; but as the art progressed different schools were developed, and many of the modern composers wrote in different styles at different times. Much of Mendelssohn's music should, we think, come under the head "Romantic"; and although Verdi's "Il Trovatore" and "I Lombardi" are of the popular order, "Aida" may be considered "romantic" if not altogether "classic" in style. Balfe was at least consistent, his operas are all of the popular type; how the composer of "When other lips" and the "Power of love" could possibly be classed with Handel, Mozart, or even Verdi, is beyond our comprehension. Wallace (his countryman) wrote many finer operas, and his instrumentation is much nearer that of Weber and Verdi.

In our own day composers write classical, popular and sometimes humorous compositions at will; as an instance we may take Dr. Sullivan, who has written "The Prodigal Son" in the classical style, "On shore and sea" and many ballads of the popular order, and yet seems equally at home in "Pinafore" and "Trial by Jury." Many of the compositions of Sir Sterndale Bennett, Professor Macfarren, and others of the present day, may be considered classical, as they are composed in the style of the earlier masters; at the same time they have written pieces of a modern type which would be out of place at a "classical" concert. We trust that in view of the many concerts given under the above title these few remarks may not prove uninteresting. Classical opera is fast dying out, Beethoven and Mozart being superseded by Gounod and Verdi; even Weber's grand operas have given place to the modern and more romantic works of Wagner. We must confess that we do not regret this, as modern composers have greater resources at command and the stage itself has changed considerably; but the old masterpieces in Symphony, Sonata and the various styles of concerted music will ever be revered and respected, and like the classic temples of Greece and Rome will serve as models for generations yet unborn.

We are glad to learn that an amateur orchestral association is being formed at McGill University, by the students, for the study of concerted music of a high order. We wish the undertaking success.

We have pleasure in calling attention to the reading by Mrs. T. Charles Watson, which will take place on Monday evening next, at Nordheimer's Hall, under the patronage of well-known citizens. At a reading given recently in Quebec, Mrs. Watson gave much pleasure to her audience, and her many friends in this city predict for her here a gratifying success.

To the Musical Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

DEAR SIR,—The reply of "Euphrosyne" is aside of the matter altogether.

I stated facts to prove that "Buttercup" was right and the "orchestra" wrong, and they are incontrovertible.

"Euphrosyne" tries to make a point, by saying "Buttercup" insulted the Conductor, by showing him the orchestra was wrong; now this only proves conclusively she does not know what she is writing about. Pray to whom was "Buttercup" to appeal, if not to the Conductor? I presume it would have suited "Euphrosyne" much better to have had the lady break down and be blamed for it, right or wrong, rather than her pet theory that conductors and accompanists are always right, and poor vocalists always wrong.

I will not be drawn into a discussion where the blame lay for the mistake. I state facts, and leave the public to judge of the rest.

I am, dear sir, yours truly,

A Lover of Truth.

[We insert the above letter from "A Lover of Truth," and with this the discussion must close. For the future we must insist on all letters for this column being written logically and coherently to some extent, each successive letter gets further away from the point at issue, and throws no light whatever on the matter under consideration.—MUS. ED.]

### PROVINCIAL NOTES.

HAMILTON, ONT.—The fourth concert of their series was given by Mrs. Adamson and Mr. Aldous in St. Thomas Church Schoolroom on Tuesday, Feb. 10th. Owing to illness and other causes, the excellent programme prepared had to be modified at the last moment. The Allegro of Haydn's Quartet, Op. 64, was given; the Adagio and Allegro Agitato from Mendelssohn's Sonata for violin and pianoforte, Op. 4, was played by Mrs. Adamson and Mr. Aldous; also a "Romanza" for violin and piano, composed by Mr. Aldous; Miss Alice Cummings played Liszt's Tannhauser March in a manner that gives promise of much success in future as a pianist, and Mr. Aldous played Rubinstein's Melody in F and Valse-Caprice. Miss Davis, of Boston, gave two songs and two recitations with great effect, proving herself an artiste in both departments.

## Chess.

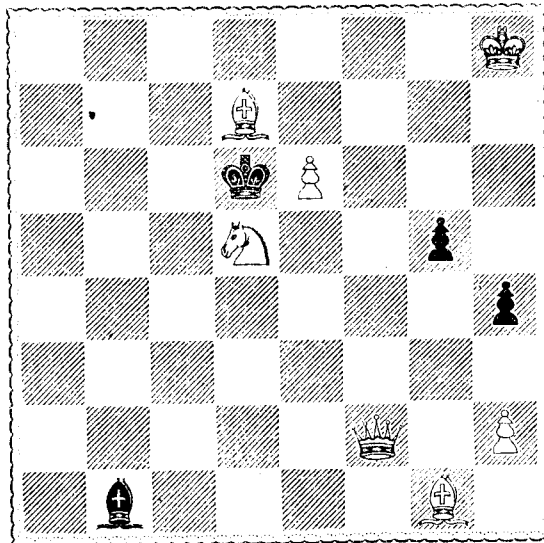
All Correspondence intended for this Column, and Exchanges, should be directed to the Chess Editor, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

Montreal, Feb. 21st, 1880.

### PROBLEM NO. LX.

By Mr. R. Ormond. From *The Croydon Guardian*.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

The chess editor of *The Croydon Guardian* remarks on this Problem: "It is so good a three-mover that we will give Bird's 'Chess Masterpieces' for the first correct solution with all the variations." We cannot emulate this munificence, but have much pleasure in presenting the problem to our readers, and trust to receive a long list of solvers, with their comments on the position.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. LVII. By Mr. X. Hawkins. Q to Q B 3.

Correct solution received from G.P.B.; J.H.; J.W.S., "A neat two-mover, with no superfluous pieces and free from duals"; ALPHA, "Very tough."

### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BRUNSWICK.—If Black reply R to R 2, how do you mate? Try again.

### GAME NO. LVI.

Played a few years ago between Mr. Sterling and Mr. Frazer, two of the strongest amateurs in Scotland.

### SCOTCH GAMBIT.

| WHITE.            | BLACK.           | WHITE.             | BLACK.          | WHITE.              | BLACK.         |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Mr. Sterling.     | Mr. Frazer       | 8 R to K sq        | Castles         | 16 Kt to K Kt 5     | Kt to K 4      |
| 1 P to K 4        | P to K 4         | 9 B to Q 3         | Q to Q 4 (c)    | 17 Q to K R 3       | P to K R 3     |
| 2 K Kt to B 3     | Q Kt to B 3      | 10 Kt to Q B 3     | Q to K R 4      | 18 Q R to K sq      | Kt to K Kt 5   |
| 3 P to Q 4        | P takes P        | 11 R to K 4        | Q to K B 4      | 19 Q R takes Kt     | Kt takes K B P |
| 4 Kt takes P      | Q to K R 5       | 12 R to K R 4      | Q to K sq       | 20 R takes R P (ch) | P takes R      |
| 5 K Kt to B 3 (a) | Q takes K P (ch) | 13 B to Q B 4 (ch) | K to R sq       | 21 Q to K R 5 (f)   | Resigns.       |
| 6 B to K 2        | B to Q B 4 (b)   | 14 B to K B 4 (d)  | P to Q 3        |                     |                |
| 7 Castles         | K Kt to K 2      | 15 Q to Q 3        | Q to K Kt 3 (e) |                     |                |

NOTES.—(a) This move is the suggestion of Mr. Frazer, who now has the weapon turned against himself.

(b) It is difficult to determine whether this move or P to Q 3 or B to Q Kt 5 is the preferable line of action at this critical juncture.

(c) The position of the Q looks dangerous, but there is no other square to which she could be moved with safety.

(d) R takes K R P looks promising, but is not sound.

(e) Foreseeing White's intention to play R takes R P.

(f) After this clever and unlooked for move, Mr. Frazer resigned.

### CHESS INTELLIGENCE.

THE "CANADIAN SPECTATOR" PROBLEM TOURNEY.—We beg to tender our thanks to the numerous chess editors who have been so kind as to draw attention to our Problem Tourney. Without their friendly notices our venture would not secure that wide publicity which tends so far to create a numerous list of composers, and we therefore recognise their kindness in all its fulness. The *Ayr Argus and Express* will, we are sure, exonerate us from any intention of putting an unkind foot on any of its blades of grass, in announcing that solutions to Tourney sets will not be received in the A 1 notation. This regulation was adopted simply to save us the trouble of analysing positions couched in a notation with which we are not familiar and the deciphering of which leads to loss of time and discomfort. We take occasion to repeat that the latest time for receiving competing sets of problems (one in two moves and one in three moves) is for America April 1st, and for Europe May 1st.

LA STRATEGIE.—This excellent chess journal for January is received. The number commences the 13th volume. The leading article is "On the Defence to the Steinitz Gambit," being a translation of what appeared in *The Chess Players' Chronicle* for May last—a communication to that journal by Mr. Frazer of Dundee. Out of eight games, all copiously noted, no fewer than five were by American players. This is a further proof of the interest American chess awakens in Europe. An unfortunate hitch appears to have arisen in the match between Messrs. Zukertort and Rosenthal. O! those professionals!! The latest result of the match between Mr. Gossip and Mr. Bezukowny shows Bezukowny 2, Gossip 2, drawn 1. Publicity is given to the Hamilton Correspondence Tourney; but by a freak of pseudo-geography, or as a *bon bouche* for the annexationists, the city of Hamilton in Canada is stated to belong to the United States. However, M. Preti, the editor, suggests that a similar Correspondence Tourney should be inaugurated in France.

ITEMS.—We are informed that Mr. Rogers of Detroit has withdrawn from the Hamilton Correspondence Tourney, his place being taken by Captain Noyes of Halifax; and that Mr. Hood, formerly of Wrexeter, but now of Barrie, Ont., has joined, raising the number of contestants to twenty.—We have also pleasure in announcing that the second match between Messrs. Barnes and Delmar will commence very soon, probably about Feb. 24th, the terms being the same as before.—A match has been arranged between Messrs. Ascher and Von Bokum of the Montreal Club, and the result is looked forward to with much interest in Montreal chess circles.—Mr. Grundy, who took second prize in the Congress Tourney, will visit Toronto next week. We have not heard whether he intends to come as far as Montreal.—Already forty sets have been received in the Congress Problem Tourney, and when these are supplemented by the European contingent a very superb collection will be obtained. Probably the adjudicators may have 150 sets to analyse, and we do not envy them the task.