

and the material execution of the pamphlet by the Appletons, of New York, proves that every thing is done to render the publication attractive. The paper of Senator Hoar on Charles Sumner is splendidly written, and a laudable attempt to honour the memory of an old friend. But no amount of fine writing or laudation will convince the world, outside of New England, that Sumner was a great man. Another article to which we may refer is that of General McClellan on the Eastern war. If the present Governor of New Jersey would consult his reputation, he would cease writing in this flippant fashion. His own military fame is too vulnerable to allow of his attacking that of others, and he ought to know, from his experience, when he himself was the victim, that nobody places any reliance on such criticism. The amusing audacity with which he disposes of Osman Pasha is in ludicrous contrast with the high estimation in which that great commander is held by the Russians, who were eye-witnesses of his work. General McClellan may keep on giving us the topography of the war out of guide books and maps, but he should let all the strategical and tactical criticism severally alone. The list of the other papers in the NORTH AMERICAN was published in our last number.

SHE MIGHT HAVE DONE BETTER is the title of a novel, by W. H. Brown, of Acton Vale, P.Q., and published at the *News Steam Printing House*, St. Johns, P.Q. The work is really in two volumes, but these have been united under one cover. As it consists of nearly six hundred pages, we cannot say that we have been able to find time to read it through, but what we did read impressed us favourably. The writer nowhere betrays the 'prentice hand, and we suspect that he has faced the fire of publication before. At all events, he displays that ease which results from confidence in self, and the confidence is not misplaced. There are a few digressions, bearing more or less remotely on the political questions of the day, in which our author shows himself an orthodox Liberal, but these do not materially impede the march of the story, which advances along with graduated interest, that many an accreted episode serves to increase. The plot of the tale is also well wrought out. The work, we understand, is sold by subscription, but may be had from the book-sellers. As a Canadian production, all the scenes and characters being Canadian, the author a Canadian, and the publisher a Canadian, it deserves the appreciation and encouragement of Canadian readers, to whom we heartily recommend it. We trust also that Mr. Brown may meet with sufficient favour to induce him to trumpet fortune with a second romance.

STREET MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

BY KEISS.

Which one of us has never been rudely aroused from some delightful reverie, or interrupted in our daily occupations by the remorseless hand of the organ-grinder or his brothers-in-art, in whose hands musical instruments are implements of torture? And who among us, after being thus disturbed, has not sent out upon the shatterer of our nerves a fervent blessing, worded as though it certainly was never suggested by the charms of music?

Vagabond street musicians are not generally encouraged, nor do they deserve to be, for besides the musical torture they inflict, they are lazy livers of a lazy life; but, although they may be unaware of it, they have one redeeming feature, and that is the delight which their performances give to the poor who seldom have an opportunity of listening to music; and to whom the arrival of the musical wanderer is an event of importance. The poor resident of the squalid part of the city contributes his mite that he may listen to the music, and the rich one, with an air indicative of familiarity with grand pianos and guitars—badly played—throws alms to the street musician that he may take himself off. After all, there is a great deal of assumption in this, for we have known young ladies who have put their fingers to their ears in agony after hearing the opening notes of an air from a splendid new barrel-organ, who could tolerate the most frightful discords—of their own making—from the piano.

Let us stop as we pass and join the crowd of tagged and dirty admirers who surround this organ grinder, whose swarthy complexion, black eyes and huge black mustaches, clothing, of which his coat, once velvet, seems to have been chosen as a contrast to the heavy fustian texture of his pataffoons, together with his negligent pose, constitute him a veritable Fra Diavolo. Then, as we watch his glance up at this window, now at that, anon among the crowd in search of his understood reward, we are set ruminating. We wonder that one possessing such a powerful physique should choose such a childish occupation—we wonder if he knows the names of the tunes he spins out day after day—we wonder if he has ever been a brigand, or if he is a relative of that polite and free race—we wonder which is his native Italian city; then we speculate upon the probability of his being some nobleman stolen from home during early adolescence; so dreaming, we are aroused by the importunities of a very ugly and impudent little monkey who has made a ladder of our noble figure and climbed to our shoulder where he sits illustrating to the crowd Darwin's theories relative to monkey and man; for a slight pecuniary consideration he consents to retire, but only to pounce upon the next victim.

Many people put on airs when they assume to despise all street musicians; it is not unpleasant to listen to a good barrel-organ provided the player is not too long-winded—this is where the trouble comes—by the terrible repetition of hackneyed tunes. Still, a hand-organ player generally keeps moving on and so does the crowd with him. It is a wonderful fact that, although street musicians are much exposed to accident, few are killed in the streets; perhaps organ-grinders and their kin, like book-agents, live forever; "more's the pity" some people will say.

The pleasantest music to be heard on the street is that from the violin, flute and harp men; good ones are almost as rare though, as they are pleasant to listen to, because their performances require much skill, while any one can turn a hand-organ handle. It is wonderful how these musicians, whom I have just instanced, play by ear. They know not a note of music, but their Italian taste and feeling allows them to perform music from some of the best opera and other writers very acceptably, while they play dance music admirably; their earnings, too, are much more than is generally supposed. Fortunately they do not claim for themselves the title of musicians, for they generally affirm that they know nothing of music but the imitation by ear, which is a birthright of the Italians. The Germans, who are born under more rigid musical discipline in music, generally have a knowledge of notes.

The little Italian harp or violin boys deserve pity if not alms. The life they lead is seldom of their own choosing; it having been only lately discovered that some cruel Italian loaders in our large cities spirited the boys from their fatherland and sent them out on the street to play for money, they taking from them each night all their daily earnings and at the same time thrashing and submitting them to other cruelties. There is enough to be found in the lives of these little waifs to construct many a thrilling romance, which in print would almost appear to be exaggerated. Many persons must have observed the unnaturally old face and attenuated form that are characteristic of these little unfortunates. We have seen them, during our Northern winters, on the street, walking in broken shoes and without socks, overcoat or mittens, and we have often wondered that the frail little frame could stand all which it was called upon to bear. Surely, although these boys are the worst of players on the worst of instruments, the human nature that lies in most everybody's breast will be aroused when the sufferings of these would-be sons of Orpheus are made known.

Blind street musicians are numerous in large cities. It is a pity that the corporations of cities do not find means of support for these blind sufferers and not allow them to parade their infirmities by means of a loud voice or poor violin badly played, that they may gain the means for bare subsistence. We have in our mind's eye now a blind singer who lost his eyesight by an explosion of gunpowder, and he must have lost his voice at the same moment, for he is capable of making a noise with his larynx that rivals saw-sharpening in purity and sweetness of tone; his face and eyes, too, are a horrible sight from the effects of the explosion; but, what other means can this poor man take to make a living?

What an interesting collection of photographs one of each of these street musicians would make! Here are two French sailors in their undress navy uniform, both having lost limbs, but, retaining their fair voices, use the latter in the absence of their former requisites, to obtain bread; fine lusty voices from two who are fine looking fellows despite their mutilation of body. We wonder why France does not support these two men. French accordion players are another line of music makers, some of whom make very fair music, while two or three of them playing in parts make a regular orchestra. Here is a blind accordion player and his daughter who sings to his accompaniment. What a respectable looking man he is, and how sweet his little daughter looks. We are straightway set musing over his probable history, for we are convinced that his present employment has not been his occupation during all the days that are gone; his little daughter's refined look and gentle manners go to strengthen our conviction.

One of the latest inventions for the manufacture of the music of the street is the piano on wheels. The proprietor and performer, who are generally the one person, opens up his instrument, seats himself upon his moveable stool, and launches into the manufacture or destruction—generally the latter—of music. These performers are rare birds, however, the preference being given by producers of street music to a kind of piano played in the same easy and graceful style as the hand-organ, but which is a string instead of a reed instrument, so that the street audiences can go into raptures over the skilful performer's "touch"—upon the crank handle.

The German brass band seems to have passed off the face of the earth—or have blown themselves off—into oblivion. Where are now those concerted—

"horns in E-flat coolly blowing"

Where is the little cloth cap with a peak and the awfully tight-fitting frock coat? Where has the poetical looking trombone-player flown to? The German bandsman did not only attempt to play airs, but they had presumption enough to put them on, as the fact will testify, that some of these musicians carried music and music-stands with them and played therefrom, although they were unable to read a note of music. What a terrible looking fellow the double-

bass player of these bands was generally found to be! *Double* was rolled out from the depths of his awful brass instrument of destruction, and *double* was bespoken as latent in his stern brow and distended cheeks. But the most annoying fellow was the clarinet player who always insisted upon playing variations and *faule flourishes* to every piece in hand, although he could not play the simple theme without "executing" it, in the annihilative sense of the word.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

NOTES.

No. 10. "Why are so many women sick amongst us and so many sleep? Why, but because they fail would stamp out a part of that nature of womanhood which God gave them wherewithal to serve him and to be the crown of True Glory to themselves." Essaying too rather to be angels, they pine away too soon from off the earth, and the argument seemeth moot an God have mercy on their unwomanly souls. Rather should they forgive the husband, each eye, his offences, and caress him daily with such endearments as woman knoweth so well to use. So shall they kindle anew each eventide the torch of nuptial love which smouldereth under the hasty retorts and frowning cares of the day, yea and is oft well nigh extinguished. So shall he not seek other fields and pastures new, to wit, the embracing of alien arms which know but too well how to woo his passionate regards by all those means which, in the unhappy primness of these purient days, a wife in her folly would seem to disclaim to use."

C. G., 1878.

Belleville.

No. 11. Following up the "ancient saws" of "Beaver Hall," I would recommend your readers to Ray's collection of Proverbs, and Erasmi Adagia—and also an entertaining book called "Time's Telescope," published in London in the year 1814. Many of the proverbial phrases and adages found therein are generally based on observation, and are, as a rule, more likely to be correct than the false and vain theories published in our weather almanacs. One thing ought to be remembered—that these Proverbs and Prognostics are based on the Meteorology of Great Britain, consequently are valueless here, where our climatology and meteorology are so utterly different. For example:

"Who in January sows oats, gets gold and groats. Who sows in May, gets little that way."

"When Candlemas Day is come and gone, The snow lies on a hot stone."

Candlemas Day, the 2nd of February, or thereabouts, is invariably near to what in Canada is called a cold term. Upon reference to my observations in 1861, I find the night of the 3rd was considerably below zero, and that from the 7th to the 9th inclusive the mean temperature was, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., 10 degrees below zero; the thermometer registering during the night of the 8th 34 degrees below zero. Chaucer writes in his *Canterbury Tales*:

"If on Candlemas Day it be shower and rain, Winter is gone, and will not come again."

On Candlemas Day, 1877, we had rain in Montreal, but the thermometer did not reach, during any night of the month after that of the 2nd, above the freezing point, and the mean minimum temperature of the month was about 20 deg. So much for "winter is gone."

These proverbs or popular prognostics of the change of weather are common in most European countries. Theophrastus, the Grecian naturalist, cultivated the science of these proverbial rules, and his collection of them was shortly afterwards put into verse by Aratus, the poet, more than two thousand years ago, and was imitated by Virgil, Lucan, Pliny, Seneca, and others.

It would be well if Mr. Venmor, in his migratory geological tours, would collect from the Indians and the old *habitans* their proverbial rules of judging the weather. They are deserving an attention which they have not yet received, and are worthy of the meteorologist's labour and study.

THOS. D. KING.

REPLIES TO QUERIES.

No. 1. In reply to J. H. G., I will state that, if he will send photos of the remarkable bones which he lately mentioned in this column, I shall be happy to publish them. Thus, perhaps, we shall find a fuller answer to his query.

THE EDITOR.

No. 5. To N. P.'s query about St. John being the patron saint of Masons, I answer: There is no other reason for the choice of this Saint by the Order except the association of his name with the idea of charity and brotherly love. This ought to be perfectly understood, and I wonder any member of the Order could ignore it.

MASON.

Montreal.

In answer to N.P., St. John the Evangelist is not the patron saint of the Fraternity of Freemasons. If such a saint existed, St. John the Baptist's ought to be recognized as the chief festival of the Fraternity of Stone Masons, which, according to an old tradition, was first created into a Brotherhood in Magdeburg Cathedral in the beginning of the 13th century. From these guilds of Stone Masons sprung our modern Free and Accepted Masons. The celebrated Inigo Jones was elected Patron of the Freemasons, over which he presided, between the years 1607-

1618. The quarterly meetings of the Grand Lodges were fixed by him thus: March 25, June 24, Sept. 29, Dec. 27 (St. John's Day), hence the gathering of the Brethren on the latter day to elect their officers and have a festival—although this is not arbitrary. N.P. is referred to a very interesting book, entitled *History of Freemasonry down to the present day*, by T. G. Findel, published in 1869. The writer of this communication thinks it the best book ever published in connection with the history of the craft. It can be purchased at Dawson Brothers, Rex.

No. 6. When your correspondent Fergus asked for the derivation of Hogmanay he hit upon a philological error. It was right in supposing that it is not Gaelic. I will give him the four derivations most in vogue.

I. From the Greek words *nyx mēnē* (holy moon or month.)

II. In the song "Hogmanay, trololay," these words are supposed to be a corruption of the French *Homme est né—Trois Rois la* (A man is born—Three kings are there.)

III. From *Hoggu-noll, Hogsnat, or Hoggy-night*, the ancient Scandinavian name for the night preceding the feast of Yule, and so called in reference to the animals slaughtered on the occasion, the word *hoggy* signifying to kill.

IV. From the French *Au qui menez* (To the mistletoe go.)

SCOTLS.

No. 7. The Feast of St. Stephen, 26th December, is called Boxing Day, because it was the day on which the claimants of Christmas Boxes went their rounds of collection. The evening is known all over Britain as Boxing Night, because then the new Christmas pantomime is produced for the first time, and the galleries of the theatre are crowded.

X.

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

MR. MAPPLESON is said to have made a great hit by his winter opera. In theatrical circles he is credited with having netted 5,000*l.*

THE QUEEN this year presented each of the London Hospitals with fatted bullocks, sufficient for the Christmas dinners of the patients.

SEVERAL wealthy Nonconformists contemplate establishing a daily newspaper in London for the purpose of advocating the cause of Dis-establishment.

HYDRANTS capable of throwing jets upon burning houses without the intervention of engines are to be fitted up throughout the city of London at a cost of over 14,000*l.*

THE *Times* is trying to obtain permission for the establishment of telephonic communication between the House of Commons and Printing-House-square, in time to be used for next session. Of course the like privilege ought to be extended to all the London daily papers.

THE Italian pianette players have hit upon a new mode of rendering themselves intolerable. They have entered into competition with the Christmas "Waits." Consequently London is not just now the place to enjoy undisturbed the blessings of sleep.

It is perhaps a sign of the times that Colonel Wellesley will return from the seat of war immediately, and, it is believed, will not return. Two English newspaper correspondents have been told by the Russians that they are not wanted.

THE German press is now, "by desire," unmitigatedly impudent, and gibes at England with gross contempt. The *National Zeitung* brands us as a fish-blooded people, and to-day observes that Gortschukoff treats Turkey as a sick man, while Bismarck regards England as a sick woman.

THERE are very serious rumours of another strike. The carpenters and joiners of London want more leisure, but not less pay, and they are already arranging to follow the example of the masons and to demand an extra penny an hour with only fifty-two hours work per week. They have not yet moved, but an action is expected immediately.

It is the intention to allow Prince Albert Victor of Wales, the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, to pass about two years as a cadet on the *Britannic* training-ship, after which he will proceed to the University, and will subsequently be appointed a commission in the army. What branch of the service the young Prince will enter is as yet unknown, though it is certain that he will not follow the usual custom and be at once gazetted a field officer.

Something thoroughly English.—In anticipation of the fall of Plevna leading to the cessation of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, plans are being matured for excursion parties to be taken to the scenes of the recent struggles in Europe and Asia. One party will proceed to Vienna and along the Danube, visiting Bucharest, Giurgevo, and Ruscchuk, thence to Plevna and the Balkan range. The other tour is proposed to include Athens, Constantinople, and the Black Sea to Trebizond, and thence to Kars, Erzeroum, and Mount Ararat.