

the revolution that is going on and the changes that a score or so of years may establish too firmly as constitutional amendments to be resisted in a constitutional way. Professor Tyndall has a paper on "Virchow and Evolution," a misleading title, as the subject is really an apology for his own views and a defence of his position as against some mistaken criticisms founded on Virchow's lecture at Munich last year. "First and foremost," says he, "I have never advocated the introduction of evolution into our schools," and again, "I share the opinion that the theory of evolution, in its complete form, involves . . . spontaneous generation. I agree with him that the proofs are still wanting." He protests rightly against the association of the theory of evolution with Socialism, and quotes Lange's remark "that the Socialists would welcome anything that helped them to annihilate Governments whether it be atheism or papal infallibility." "National Insurance" is an attempt to invent a cheap, practical and popular means of abolishing poor-rates, not very practicable off of paper. Mr. Lowe takes up the defence of the science of Political Economy, such as it is, on the ground that nothing better is offered us. He is not very sanguine as to the future, thinking that that remains for the Sociologists, but he claims for the past a success, setting aside physics and mathematics, greater than that of any of the moral sciences. "Chrysanthema gathered from the Greek Anthology" are some of the most delicate renderings of the beauties of those old songsters who anticipated our Elizabethan poets and modern lyricists in all that is fresh and sweet and loving in nature. Mr. Hardinge's night verses are good to read. "University Work in Great Towns" is followed by another paper on the all absorbing governmental system by Mr. Traill, who seems to find no ground for aught but despair in either the people or the ministers of the present age. An interesting little lecture by Mr. Ruskin on three characteristic works of the Pre-Raphaelites (Rossetti, Millais and Burney Jones) is to be continued. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe concludes his recollections of the revival of Greek independence, and Mr. Gladstone winds up the number with some "Electoral Facts," which seem to be intensely pleasing to himself, though we have seen the same figures used with equal satisfaction on the other side.

MUSICAL.

CAMILLA URSO CONCERTS.

It is seldom we have the pleasure of recording such an excellent performance as that we attended in the Mechanics' Hall on Tuesday evening, 19th inst. There was a large and appreciative audience; but we are sure that had the absent ones known what an excellent treat was provided for those who attended the performance, there would not have been a vacant seat in the Hall. Madame Camilla Urso played a Fantasia on a movement from "Othello," and though we have frequently heard the lady before, we were surprised at the wonderful command she possesses over her instrument. Her attack was vigorous and precise, her stopping was perfectly tuned even on the highest notes, and she played in thirds and octaves with the greatest ease. The harmonics, too, were brought out with wonderful clearness, although the night was altogether unfavourable for stringed instruments. At the close of the first piece she received a perfect ovation, the applause only subsiding on her re-appearance with her violin to perform another piece. Now, in the name of common sense, why should an artiste after going through the arduous task of performing a violin solo such as the one mentioned be expected to return to the platform and play another? It is very complimentary, no doubt, to the artiste, but it is demanding a double supply for a single fee. If we must have more music than we bargain for on entering the room, let us remain after the programme is finished, and pay again for so much more. This plan would have a double advantage—it would enable performers to receive a fee in proportion to the value of their services, and those who do not care to hear the extra pieces would not be obliged to remain late for the selfish gratification of those who do. Later in the evening Madame Urso played Wieniawski's Second Polonaise in the same finished style in which she performed her preceding solos, and being again encored, played Wieniawski's "Legende." We were glad she was encored this time, for we think her playing must have been a study for the many aspiring young violinists who delight themselves and torture the musical faculties with this sublime composition. It is only a few days since we passed some of the most miserable moments of our existence listening to a tyro twisting this admirable melody out of shape, and we hope that he will either take a few lessons from Madame Urso or try some less pretentious composition. We will not draw a comparison between the celebrated composer and the lady who performed his pieces; let it suffice to say that we have heard him play both the "Legende" and the "Polonaise," and we were greatly delighted with Madame Urso's rendering of both.

Miss Ivy Wandesforde was the Soprano soloist, and acquitted herself creditably. Her voice is scarcely sufficiently powerful for public singing, but it is sweet and well cultivated. We thought her performance in the concerted pieces greatly surpassed her interpretation of the ballad music allotted to her, although the baritone and tenor overpowered her in the louder parts. Mr. Tower has an excellent tenor voice and uses it skilfully. We liked him in the operatic music, and also in his solo "Sound an alarm," although we cannot say we admire the solo; the great feature in it seems to be the high A, which Mr. Tower gave out with the force of a Stentor. In the middle part, where the command is given fortissimo on D, Mr. Tower got slightly out of tune, probably from want of care, as he sang perfectly in tune throughout the entire evening. Mr. Rudolphsen was a host in himself. His voice has become stronger and heavier since we last heard him (probably from having to sing bass parts so frequently), and his ballad singing was not altogether so exquisite as we remember it; still, we could see style and culture in every phrase, and his trills and roulades were worthy of a prima donna. Miss Wandesforde, Mr. Tower and Mr. Rudolphsen sang several pieces from different operas as well as we care to hear them sung. Miss Wandesforde and Mr. Rudolphsen sang the comic duet "L'Elisir d'amore" in excellent style, which brought down the house, and they responded with Mendelssohn's beautiful duet "The flight of the swallows," surely a piece as unlike the preceding as possible. It did not

seem to please the audience as well as the buffo duet, but it was nevertheless excellently sung.

One piece we did not like, although it was performed fairly enough, and that was the duo from "Lucia di Lammermoor," between Edgardo and Henrice. It is surely an absurdity only to be found in Italian music, where men vowing hatred and war to the knife, like a rhythmic marching air, and end with the conventional four bars of even crotchets (subdominant, dominant, seventh, tonic, &c.) with the usual high chest note for the tenor at the close. If we are to have men singing under circumstances let us have the music of Beethoven, Weber, or even Wagner, which expresses the words used, and not the silly, meaningless Italian effusions of Donizetti. We must not forget to mention Herr Benno Scherek, who played a piano solo, which though announced as a Hungarian Fantasia by Liszt, we thought sounded more like "Rigolette" by that composer. (Are we not right, Herr Scherek?) He also took part in a duet with Madame Urso, and played the accompaniments splendidly throughout the evening. It is a pity that such a magnificent instrument, as the Weber piano which was used at this concert, undoubtedly was, should be so defaced by the name appearing upon it so conspicuously.

We hope Madame Urso and her troupe will visit us again at an early date; we will gladly welcome them as artists of no mean order.

On Monday evening, Nov. 18th, at Zion Church the lecture on Handel by the Rev. Mr. Bray, illustrated from the works of the great master by the Church Choir, under Dr. MacLagan, took place. We expected a good lecture from the Rev. lecturer, and we got it, and consequently we have nothing more to say on that point, except that in his happiest style he gave a short and pithy "life of Handel." With regard to the musical illustrations we can hardly speak so favourably. The performance after the lecture commenced with a solo by Miss Scott who, naturally enough, having to open the ball, was a little nervous, and did not do herself justice; however, she amply made amends in her second and last attempt, when she overcame the feeling and sang really well. In criticising a concert of this kind, we do not think it fair to expect amateurs to sing like professionals. What we say is: if any one takes the position of a professional or sets himself or herself up as a "professional vocalist," then the public have a free and perfect right to criticize severely. For it is only natural to suppose that the performer believes himself perfect or he would not perform, and consequently the cynic has a right to be cynical, even leaving just criticism out of the question. Miss Cowan did not sing as well as we have heard her, nor did the choir render Handel's splendid "Unto us a child is born" as well as we have heard them do so, but, as a whole, it was neatly done. The piece is difficult, and the gallery inconvenient for the grouping of the singers, since we notice the basses were on one side and the altos on the other, instead of being together.

Mr. Delahunt sang better than we have yet heard him, and as we are able to compare his performance with a similar one which took place in the rink, we can simply say he has greatly improved. He still somewhat mumbles his words, and we would recommend him to pay special attention to this, but he was far away the best singer present in the choir. The tenors performed their parts clearly and creditably, and, as a whole, they were in better form than the basses or altos. Taking the concert altogether, it was a success. The weather was very unpropitious, yet there were present some 500 people, and we imagine their expectations were quite realized.

The Masonic Concert held in Montreal on Wednesday evening last was in every way a success. The hall was well filled—better, we think, than we have seen it at all this season—notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. The Chairman, Melbourne M. Tait, Esq., opened the entertainment with a pleasant speech, much to the purpose, and then followed the musical part of the programme. Want of space prevents us from going into details. All interested seemed to strive to do their best, and their endeavours were appreciated by the audience. We trust that it was as great a success financially as it was in every other respect.

We understand Mr. Albert Weber has received an order for one of his finest Cabinet Pianos for the use of the Princess during her stay at the Windsor Hotel.

The Mendelssohn Choir purpose giving an entertainment in the American Church on 13th proximo. Mr. and Mrs. Barnes will take part in the programme.

STR.—I should like to know why it is the daily newspapers find it difficult to write honestly when criticising any musical performance which takes place in Montreal. Thus saith on Saturday the *Gazette* "A large and appreciative audience, composed of the elite of the city, welcomed the advent of the Marie Roze-Mapleson troupe at the Academy of Music last night." The audience may have been select, appreciative it certainly was, but large it was not. Very few seats were taken in the balcony, although the body of the hall was comfortably full. "The gods" also were not at all satisfactorily represented. Is this a result of the dishonesty so severely criticised by you on the occasion of the Rivé-King concerts, when there "was much ado about nothing." Not more than one-half of the performers promised put in an appearance, and two of those who did show up were very second-rate. Moral, "Once bit twice shy," said the Montreal people. "As faith was not kept in the last case, how do we know it will be this time?" and consequently when good concerts are really given, few avail themselves of the opportunity, and those who do are "very select" and shew their "selectness" by clapping and encoring in the middle of the songs and pieces, perfectly regardless of whether there is any meaning in so doing, and frequently spoiling the harmony.

All musicians must certainly wish every success to those who endeavour to elevate the musical taste of this city by bringing artists of first-class talent amongst us. That the musical education does want looking to is proved by the fact that the splendid instrumental exertions made by Mr. Pease on the piano