

Literary.

THE FLAG,

The legendary annals of the past ;
And the new halo of historic page
Recording a young nation's heritage,
Make proud thy folds now to the breezes cast.

Fair Flag, is this our manhood come at last !
For thy bright glory shall a people wage
A conflict peaceful, for a surer gage
That union welding slowing shall be fast.

Fair Flag of Canada, float thou on high !
Among God's people, tell us we dare stand
As nations stand. Give power to the soul-
flame ;
To the proud glance that lights a nation's eye ;
To the warm clasp of brother-loving hand,
Born of the faith that dwells upon her name.

Wolfville, N. S.

J. F. HERBIN.

MUSIC.

AN ancient philosopher taught that the legitimate end of man was the pursuit of pleasure, and that in virtue was found the highest happiness. Says Ruskin in one of his lectures—"So far from being immoral, little else except art is moral." Of the different arts which contribute to this purer happiness, music though the youngest stands first. While, the sculptor chisels from the stone a face which is supposed to indicate the disposition of the individual and the poet paints nature to the mind's eyes, the musician attempts to refill the soul with the sensations experienced when in contact with nature. Music improves the mind, refines the senses, and fills us with the sense of beauty.

Although there is no real history of music previous to the 12th century, it is believed to have existed from the earliest times. Among the Jews praise songs were abundant, and it is probable that contemporary nations were not far behind.

Antiphonal music, consisting of responses between different choirs, seemed to be the earliest form of these religious songs. This style of music is now obsolete although efforts have recently been made to revive it in certain New England churches. Trade songs formed a conspicuous part of ancient music. Then it was true as now that,—

"Song sweetens toil, however wild the sound."

Modern travellers tell us that these trade songs still are sung in many countries. Thus in Greece each class of labors has its own style of singing; in Abyssinia even the potato-laborers have their own peculiar songs; and from the cradle to the grave song is the constant companion of the Russian peasant. Hence the old story of Amphion building Thebes with his lyre contains a truth. Yet modern invention seems to be divorcing song from labor. The modernist must sing to the latest patent, instead of to the motion of his own untiring limbs.

Musical instruments were early pressed into service. As the primitive mind detected *time* before *tune*, the first instruments were of precursion, used to mark intervals of time. Reed and stringed instruments with their numberless varieties soon followed. Yet all this ancient music consisted of but one part, varied only by responses and the mingling of different voices. To gain an idea of the music of our ancestors we need only listen to a number of singers and players all performing the same part.

All arts have owed much to the church, and Italy as the theological centre naturally took the lead in music. It is generally accepted that the Italians were the first to separate music into the divisions now called soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The next step was to combine them to produce harmony. Music as an art may be said to date from this point. Then, following the renaissance as its latest and, in the opinion of some, its greatest result, came the musical era, which began in 1725, and closed seventy-five years later. During this period the Italian, German and French opera-houses, like the theatres of Greece and England during the Periclean and Elizabethan periods, were daily the scene of new productions. The composers of this time wrote each piece for a particular individual. Each master had a number of apprentices. He had no knowledge of the vocal apparatus, nor the remedies for particular vocal defects, but was a perfect judge of the voice. If the first voice did not suit, another was tried till one of sufficient promise was found. In the vigorous course of training which followed it was not uncommon to keep a boy from his twelfth to his fifteenth year confined to the scales. The result of such training was a degree of efficiency now unknown. Vernon Lee says,— "The vocal music of the eighteenth century was infinitely more difficult than our own. It did not require greater