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[FOR THE CRITIC.]

MORNING.

Behold! the eastern clouds are telling
What they oft before have told:
Sombre shades, with glory swelling,
Flash from gray to ruby gold.

A thousand voices sweet uprising
Glad some greetings to the day,
As the sun, his forehead blazing,
Wakes the birds, and paints the gray.

See the warm clear rays of sunshine
Touch the soft cold veil of mist,
Lakelet-like the fog was lying
Ere the sun its surface kissed.

Where has that smooth ocean vanished
That just filled the valley wide?
Into cloudlets it is banished
Floating up the mountain side.

All the leaves with moisture glisten
In the glory of the sun,
While in stiffest hush they listen
Till they feel the day begun.

List, and hear the gentle rustle
As the trees from sleep awake;
Every leaf is in a bustle:
Tiny mist drops off they shake.

Brilliant drops like diamond powder,
Catch reflections of each ray:
Dancing leaflets, murmuring louder,
Shake the moisture far away.

What are words to show the splendor
Of the waking of the light?
Words all fall in power and grandeur
To portray the death of night.

Black and awful for a season
Night's oppression holds the world.
All the mighty strength of reason
Backward into dreams is hurled.

Till the day's approaching brilliance
Wrestles with the gloom of night,
While the dark, with stubborn dalliance,
Slowly yielding dies in light.

—B. MCGRAW, JR.

A WARNING NOTE.

America, next to Italy, is now acknowledged to possess the most favorable atmosphere for the production of good voices, and American singers are beginning to take precedence of all others in the great musical centres of the world. As yet, most of the successful songsters receive their training in Europe; but it will not be long before every facility for the acquirement of the art of singing will be attainable at home. Even now there are scores of well-established conservatories within our borders, and hundreds of vocal teachers are scattered over the length and breadth of our great country. Most of these teachers either have been educated abroad, or have studied with the pupils of celebrated foreign masters, so that the merits and faults of European vocal culture may be considered as fairly represented in the systems pursued in schools and private lessons in America. It is not too much to say that these systems are for the most part false and hurtful. Jenny Lind was accustomed to declare, "there are no singers nowadays," and this sweeping criticism was not inspired by professional jealousy; it was the condensed expression of her sorrowful conviction that the art of singing has become almost a lost art. Adelina Patti and a few other examples of the old school of training still remain, and there is now and then a teacher, not necessarily well appreciated or widely known, who is faithful to the traditions of the old Italian method, which was, and is, and ever must be, the only good method for the cultivation of the voice; but the vast majority of the persons who dare attempt the development of the very delicate vocal organ are incompetent for the task, and the result of their instruction is not merely negative failure, but positive disaster. Almost every teacher of singing professes to use the Italian method, though some are honest enough to admit that the old system is in their case qualified by or supplemented with the supposed improvements of the Franco-German school; the truth being that very few teachers understand the main principles of the old Italian method, and break its most important rules at every step of their progress. The trouble is that the earliest masters of the perfected art did not write down and publish their manner of teaching, which was, therefore, only handed down by tradition, and exemplified in the glorious career of exceptionally gifted pupils. With the progress of time, the successors of these great teachers have become fewer and fewer, while the majority of the famous singers of each generation have yielded to surrounding influences, and departed, more or less, from the good old way. The Wagner school of music has proved itself the arch enemy of the human voice, and of all rational modes for its development. The unnatural demands made upon the vocal organs through Wagner's total ignorance of the art of singing, and the abnormal development of the orchestra through the impatient yearnings of his unquiet soul, have banished for the time all chance of melody in music, and as Wagner's utterances are the outcome of an age of noise and hurry, of ruined faiths and tragedies of passion, his genius must have its day, and work its full measure of harm upon the voices chosen for the inhuman act of personating his superhuman creations. But the time will come when the present mad havoc with the lungs and throats of singers shall cease. Just as men begin to see that war must be abolished, because the weapons of war have reached to so high a power of destructiveness, so the thunders of drum and trumpet in the modern orchestra must subside, if that sweetest music,