

of Westminster Abbey, the music sung by fifteen hundred Canadian choristers, representing three centuries of cathedral music. On the twenty-third of last May, Dr. Harriss directed the Empire concert, given in Albert Hall, London, England, at which there was an audience of ten thousand present, among whom were many Canadians then visiting the Old Country. The visit of the Sheffield Choir, under the great conductor, Dr. Henry Coward, is the most ambitious step in musical reciprocity yet undertaken by Dr. Harriss and marks an epoch in the choral tours of Canada. This country has made for itself something of a reputation in the matter of choral societies and support of their work and it shows that the Mother Country is confident of Canadian sympathy, when hundreds of British singers come to the Dominion in the expectation of making friends and receiving artistic appreciation.

Dr. Harriss has been indefatigable in urging this visit and arranging for the itinerary, showing the determination and the readiness to take "chances" which we are accustomed to associate with New York or Chicago, rather than with the native of Old London. About twelve years ago, Dr. Harriss thoroughly identified himself with his adopted country when he married Ella Beatty Shoenberger, a daughter of the late Dr. Beatty, of Cobourg. Their beautiful home at Ottawa is "Earncliffe," of historic interest as the one-time residence of Sir John Macdonald.

Toronto's Mendelssohn Choir, will doubtless prove enthusiastic over the British visitors from across the Atlantic. Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Hamilton, Brantford, London, Lindsay and Peterborough are to be the favoured centres in Quebec and Ontario. The new Allan liner, *Grampian*, has been chartered for the voyage and will sail from Glasgow this month with a party, looking forward to strenuous work and a happy time.

Toronto is unusually fortunate, since three of the evening concerts, November fifth, sixth and seventh, with an afternoon concert also, fall to her share. The reason for this is not far to seek, for, whatever be the failings of Ontario's capital, a lack of enthusiasm over choral conquerors is not to be laid to her charge. Selections from the "Messiah" will be given at the first concert, and on the following night the greater part of the concert will be devoted to excerpts from the "Elijah." Miscellaneous and lighter selections will be given at the afternoon concert and on Saturday night a digest of the "Dream of Gerontius" will be rendered. On the "Messiah" and "Elijah" nights, the accompaniments will be played by the Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, under Mr. Frank Welsman.

In the autumn of 1906 there took place a friendly and musical visit to Germany, when the Choral Union of Leeds and the Musical Union of Sheffield

"Dream of Gerontius," to which Canadian music-lovers are looking forward with eagerness, although the whole work will not be sung here by the Sheffield Choir. The effect of the German visit was most happy as the Yorkshiremen and their hosts fraternised in a fashion good to behold, while the English chronicler declared that "Dr. Coward has brought back with him four hundred missionaries of the Brotherhood of Nations."

The members of the Sheffield Choir, in coming to Canada, visit a country in which the "old Boys" of Yorkshire are to be found in every town and city. They will be greeted everywhere by friends of olden days whose hearts will be gladdened by the music of the great northern choir. In visiting Germany, the English singers impressed the musical communities of three great cities with the fact that England is not an unmelodious country, destitute of choral art. In visiting Canada, the singers from across the sea will find that, young and unformed as the Dominion may be, there is not lacking appreciation of the great works of the masters, nobly rendered. May they find that we, as a people, have not been so busy with axe, spade and plough that we have become deaf to the immortal harmonies! The choir from the Yorkshire City will bring us gifts of choral culture and will find us ready to receive and enjoy. They are coming to their own—and may they receive a welcome worthy of their traditions and their breed!



The Sheffield Choir, the Famous English Organisation which sails for Canada this month.

The Sheffield Choir is to be accompanied by distinguished journalists, representing both the Yorkshire and London press. As the members of this choir are prominently identified with the industrial enterprises of Sheffield, the visit will be of economic importance as well as of musical edification. It will be impossible for these leaders in British industry to come to Canada, behold the growth of Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Brantford and Hamilton without grasping the enormous possibilities of this new country. This view of the visit has appealed to the executive council of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association which last winter sent a letter to the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, not only extending a hearty welcome to the members of the choir and their friends, but also assuring him: "Members of our association individually will do everything in their power to make your visit both profitable and enjoyable." The municipal corporations of Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto have also forwarded resolutions to the Lord Mayor of Sheffield extending cordial invitations to the Choir.

The Sheffield singers will be in Canada for a fortnight only and during that time will give nine evening and five afternoon concerts in Canada. There will be an evening concert in Buffalo on November ninth, the only appearance of the Sheffield singers in the United States. The Bison City, which has always shown itself so appreciative of

combined in a Yorkshire Chorus under the leadership of Dr. Henry Coward. Dusseldorf, Cologne and Frankfurt were the chief cities in which the English Chorus appeared, winning such applause from the Teuton as formed a memorable tribute. One of the Dusseldorf critics said of their first oratorio work: "What has been presented to them by a German, viz: the whole treasure of the 'Messiah,' was what brought the Britons to the Rhine. There was not much omitted, so that during a performance lasting an hour and a half nearly the whole of the work was given. With German tempi this would have been impossible, but Dr. Henry Coward, of Oxford, accelerated not only the Chorus (which was constantly encouraged by a rhythmic *accelerando*) but also the instrumental interludes, for which he had in hand the Dusseldorf Municipal Orchestra. As a conductor he is master of great choral effects. With an imposing tonal wealth and a dramatic decision the chorus is finely trained in dynamic gradations. But to praise the singers means with Handel to praise the whole performance. Especially rich in tone, also in the fulness and clearness of the single voices, the soprano stood out prominently. . . . But the height of imposing expression the chorus reached in the 'Hallelujah,' the representation of which was heard standing, according to their custom, by those Englishmen present in the hall."

Evidently the Yorkshire Chorus made a deep impression in Germany with Sir Edward Elgar's

FROM CANADA'S GREATEST CONDUCTOR.

September 7th, 1908.

DR. CHARLES A. E. HARRISS,
"Earncliffe," Ottawa.

MY DEAR DR. HARRISS,—I cannot but feel that the approaching visit of the Sheffield Choir to Canada, is a great joy and privilege to all those interested in the cause of music in this country. The choir is superb, the conductor, Dr. Coward, is regarded in England as the "Master Chorus-Master," and the singing of his magnificent body of singers has been of such a high order as to exalt to an unprecedented level the character of choral work in England, the home of mixed chorus singing. The Choir sing with magnificent abandon, charming sincerity of expression and splendid rhythmical swing.

In view of the many requests received by the Mendelssohn Choir to visit other cities in Canada, invitations which we have been regretfully forced to decline, it should be gratifying to our kind friends to know that in the Sheffield Choir they will hear a chorus of which the great leader, Arthur Nikisch, said, "They are the finest body of singers in the world," and which is regarded both in Great Britain and Europe as not merely a great but a wonderful choir.

I remain, very sincerely yours,

(Signed) A. S. Vogt.