

Music and the Drama.

On Thursday evening last, the 7th inst., the Toronto Male Chorus Club gave their first concert this season in the Pavilion. The singing of the Club was much better than last year, and the audience, which was large, thoroughly appreciated it, a fact which must have been gratifying to the talented young conductor, Mr. J. D. A. Tripp. It is universally admitted that the salient features of good singing are, a true, full musical tone, clear enunciation, artistic phrasing, and careful attention to light and shade and musical expression generally. These characteristics were largely in evidence in Mr. Tripp's chorus, and I am only voicing the opinion of many others by saying that the pleasurable anticipations which had been awakened by the published accounts of the Club's singing were more than realized. Perhaps it would not be amiss to point out, however, that the least satisfactory of the above enumerated features, was in the light and shade—the manner of producing the *Crescendos*. A *Crescendo* is only in the highest degree effective when the tone as it were steals out, gradually growing thicker and more powerful, until the climax of the phrase is reached, and as gradually diminished, which then produces an artistic balance and symmetry. Not always did the Club effect this possible *ideal* colouring, but frequently began with a bulge of sound on the first tone of the phrase thus anticipating the climax, and partially destroying the beautiful swaying smoothness of the passage. At least this was the effect which reached my ears. Yet Mr. Tripp's musicianship and refined sympathies are beyond question. His beat is steady, and at the same time easy, and he feels every fibre of the rhythm. The programme was well selected and embraced numbers by Wagner, Buck and several others. The assisting artists were Mme Francesca Guthrie-Moyer, dramatic soprano, Mr. Pier Delasco, baritone and Mr. Tor Pyk, tenor, the latter being a recent acquisition to the number of our concert soloists. The former sang a Wagner *Aria*, and a couple of songs from the pen of Mr. J. Lewis Browne, of Toronto, who also acted as the lady's accompanist. She sings, as I have on a former occasion intimated, with breadth, freedom and abandon, her voice being of excellent quality almost throughout the entire scale. Mr. Browne's songs were delivered with care and expression and are very meritorious compositions. Mr. Delasco sang admirably and his admirers were plenty. More than this it is unnecessary to say. Mr. Tor Pyk I only heard in the solo with humming accompaniment, as I was obliged to leave before the conclusion of the programme. He sang carefully and with considerable finish of execution, and was loudly applauded, as were the other soloists and chorus, encores being the rule during the evening. Had the concert begun at the advertised time, 8 o'clock, instead of 8.30, I could have heard the latter half of the programme. As it was, I had to forego this pleasure. The reason for this delay I have not ascertained, but would respectfully intimate that it is much more comfortable for most people to while away a half hour at home than sitting on the hard benches in the Pavilion momentarily expecting the concert to begin, each moment proving a disappointment. A programme made up entirely of singing has not the same interest as one with two or three instrumental numbers, and I believe a singing society would be only acting in its own interest, besides affording greater pleasure to its audiences, if a pianist or violinist were engaged to give additional variety instead of a professional vocalist. The accompanists, including Mr. Browne, were, Miss Ida C. Huges and Mr. Wark, who performed their duties skillfully.

Miss Franciska Heinrich, a young lady still in her teens, and a pupil of Mr. Edward Fisher, gave a piano recital in the Conservatory Music Hall on the evening of the 7th of February, but, as I was present at the Male Chorus Club Concert, did not hear her. I have been told, however, that she displayed very excellent talent, and a large technic in the performance of an exacting programme, closing with Liszt's 12th Rhapsody, which was played with surprising brilliance, for so young a performer.

W. O. FORSTH.

The students of the Conservatory of Music gave the second quarterly concert in Association Hall, Monday evening last, to the usual large audience. A programme of great excellence was presented in a style thoroughly illustrative of painstaking work on the part of both performers and teachers.

There will be a concert in the school room of the Church of the Redeemer, cor. Avenue Road and Bloor St., on Tuesday evening, Feb. 26th. An orchestra has been organized for some time by the choir-master, Mr. Walter H. Robinson, and this will be their first concert. They will be assisted by the splendid choir of the church. The orchestra will play the overture, "La Nozze de Figaro" by Mozart and a Gavotte by Robyn, besides accompanying the choir in the Bridal Chorus from Cowen's Cantata, the "Rose Maiden." The choir numbers will include the Anthem by Gounod, "Sent Out Thy Light"; Stewart's "The Bells of St. Michael's Tower" and the "Slumber Song" by Lohr, all unaccompanied. Among the members of the orchestra and choir are some of the best soloists in the city, and, as solos will be contributed by them, both vocal and instrumental, a very good programme can be expected.

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Art Notes.

Apropos of what my friend Mr. Cruikshank calls the "lecturing epidemic" amongst painters in this city, I should like to quote a sentence from Lady Eastlake's "Five Great Painters." She says: "The true artist talks but little on art; he leaves that to those who know less about it. Even one in the fullest exercise of creative power has but few and rudimentary principles on which he proceeds; and these he cannot always define." This is what the Cockney calls a "knock out" for prospective lecturers; and I recommend it to the consideration of those about to figure on the platform. The vulnerable point in Lady Eastlake's dictum is that she admits that the layman "knows less" than the artist; which is a very good reason for the latter to speak.

I had occasion, the other day, to read a paper giving "Some reasons why a painter should not lecture on art," in which I protested against the demand that he should cease painting and begin to talk about his craft—should generalize, in a large and airy way, about an art which has not been mastered, practically, by more than six of our race, and has never been theorized upon successfully by any one at all—the six giants referred to, who might have said something authoritative, having been wise enough not to try. It is true that Vasari wrote an exhaustive treatise on painting and painters which has historic interest; but half his personal anecdotes have been called in question; and his judgments were biased, and not much more valuable than his paintings. The father-in-law of Velasquez wrote about painting; but again the interest is mainly historical and the painter feeble. There are two or three other instances of practical workers in one or other of the fine arts who wrote on their art; but no instance of a successful practitioner who was an equally successful theorizer. Perhaps the most interesting artist-writer is the brilliant, swaggering Benvenuto Cellini; but his inclination to narrate personal anecdotes, which shall redound to his own credit, is too strong to admit of much discussion of the abstract principles of art. It is a great pity that none of his stories relate to fish.

Sir Joshua Reynolds said a good deal that was valuable in his famous "Discourses;" but one detects in his theories the evidence of strenuous effort which is wholly absent in his paintings, which were the result, not of an intellectual process—not of painfully applied formulae—but of a divine intuition.

Hunt's "Talks on Art" are pleasant reading, and not without value (though it was probably greater when and where the talks actually took place); and Chase (he sounds like a synonym of the last man) is "game" to talk to his students for three hours at a stretch.

E. WYLY GRIER.

Notice has been sent out to American artists of the offer of a prize of \$5,000 by Mr. William L. Elkins, of Philadelphia, for the

best picture by an American painter, and stating the conditions of the competition, which is to be under the control of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

Owing to the severe weather of last Friday Mr. D. A. Patterson's lecture was postponed. Before this issue of THE WEEK appears the date will probably have been announced in the daily papers. Both introduction (by Professor Mavor) and lecture promise to be of great interest.

We call attention to the card of Mr. Moran in this issue of THE WEEK. His studio in the Confederation Life Building is a most interesting place to visit. Mr. Moran makes a specialty of portrait painting, and the specimens of his work are well worth careful inspection. He is now forming classes for instruction in the art and is meeting with great success.

The *Critic* mentions the fact that the artistic poster which has for some years been in existence in Paris has now made its appearance in New York. An exhibition of poster designs, by Mr. Louis Rhead, among them those for the Christmas Century and Harper's Bazar, are to be seen at Wunderlich's Gallery, New York. Mr. Rhead seems to take the work of Mr. Aubrey Beardsley as a model, to a certain extent, but shows his good sense by departing from it in several particulars, notably in the type of face which he effects. Several of his designs are very handsome, and all are striking and well adapted for their purpose, which is to catch the attention and retain it.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has been enriched by the loan—which we hope will prove a permanent one—of a valuable and unique collection of wood carvings, ancient, mediæval, modern and educational. The collection was begun by W. Gibbs Rogers, who was wood-carver to George IV. and William IV., and was continued by his son, George Alfred Rogers, who is now wood-carver to Queen Victoria, and a prominent member of the Hagarth Club in London. The collection includes 410 specimens, among them fine old carvings from English churches and cathedrals of the twelfth century, pinnacles of the fifteenth century, and a carved bellows belonging to Marie Antoinette by the great carver Demontreuil, who was attached to the court of France. The most ancient of them is a relic of the Egyptian diety Cynocephalus, the dog-headed monkey, which is (rather wildly) estimated to be 6,000 years old.

The members of the Art Students League, although virtually a band of workers, occasionally lay aside palette and brush, and, like true Bohemians, have a characteristic, informal "good time." The gathering in their rooms last Saturday evening was something of this kind. A considerable portion of the evening's entertainment was an exhibition of lantern slide-plates from snap shots made in Europe last summer by the vice-president, Mr. Will W. Alexander, additional interest being given to some of these by Miss Jessie Alexander's contribution of her sketch, "Coaching in Scotland." The illustrations of the old coach driver, the portress of Dalkeith Castle, Roslyn Castle, and others, were well-timed and interesting. These were followed by local subjects from the camera of Mr. W. H. Moss, of the Toronto Camera Club, and "League Celebrities," by President Holmes, the latter including some good portraits of ten members of the New York branch, which is now a flourishing body. Refreshments provided by the ladies were next served and some merry chatty hours spent, the evening ending with "Auld Lang Syne."

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