

Musical and Dramatic Notes.

BY VIOLA

Mr. Frederick Boscovitz gave the first of a series of three piano recitals last Monday night in the theatre of the Normal School in presence of an audience distinguished for its critical ability. The scheme was indeed very well launched, among the patrons being Miss Marjorie Campbell, Lady Macpherson, Lady Gzowski, Mrs. Edward Blake, Mrs. Henry Cawthra, Mrs. Gooderham, Mrs. G. W. Allan, Mrs. B. Nordheimer, Mrs. Blackstock, Mrs. Heward, Mrs. F. Osler, Mrs. B. Robinson, Mrs. Sweetman, Mrs. Langmuir and Mrs. Kerr. The concert was entitled "A Dream of the Past," and the programme included compositions from the days of William Byrde, 1543, up to the present time. It goes almost without saying that many of the pieces introduced were interesting more as historical relics than as musical works. The remarks made by Mr. Boscovitz upon the character of the various numbers were instructive and full of point, and the evening was therefore a very profitable one. Mr. Boscovitz's style has developed and ripened during the twenty years he has been absent from this city. In the old days he was not free from the suspicion that his treatment of the piano was a little too energetic. Time has, however, moderated the exuberant aggressiveness of youth, and the pianist's playing is now that of the matured and refined artist. Mr. Boscovitz has exceptional technical facility, allied to a vivid and poetical imagination, exemplified in his interpretations. Charming as was his performance of the time-honored numbers, the old-fashioned precision, formality and quaint grace of which he made conspicuous, he shone to the greatest advantage in his rendering of the Chopin, Liszt and Field pieces. His rare beauty and equality of touch were specially admired. The numbers characterized by the dance-form he rendered with an *abandon* the spirit of which communicated itself to the audience and placed it thoroughly *en rapport* with the music. Mr. Boscovitz is certainly a valuable acquisition to the ranks of the teaching professors of the city, and his presence in our midst can hardly fail to advance the development of pianoforte playing.

The boards of the Grand Opera House were occupied on Monday night by the Duff Opera Company, who produced for the first time here Lecocq's comic opera, "The Queen's Mate." The company is a very well balanced one, and the principal rôles were consequently appropriately and effectively filled. Miss Helen Bertram, the leading soprano, proved herself to be a capable singer of her music, with a bright voice, and she was well supported and rivalled by Miss Bettina Gerard, the second soprano. The plot of the opera is simply used as a means of connecting the various numbers. The music is pleasing throughout, without having any distinguishing merit of originality or invention. The opera scored a very fair success, thanks to the singing of the two ladies already mentioned, and the comic business of Messrs. Raffael and Carroll and Messrs. W. H. Clark and Stanley. The duet between the two latter gentlemen in the second act was really a

clever bit of humor cleverly worked out by them, and reminded one of some of the best efforts of Offenbach and Lecocq before the comic opera vein became exhausted. The chorus were handsomely dressed and well filled the stage in the grand *ensembles*, and the impression produced contributed materially to the success of the opera.

A local event of some interest last week was the soiree-musical given in the rooms of Messrs. Farwell and Glendon, King St. West. A well arranged programme was given and was carried out in a manner that gave much pleasure. Special features which might be noted were the *debüt* of Miss Sara Ryan as pianist, and the introduction of a new "Lullaby" by Mrs. Blackstock, which was sung by Mr. Harold Jarvis. Miss Ryan won more than a *succes d'estime*. She evinced marked musical ability with much natural talent as a pianist. Mrs. Blackstock's little song is decidedly one of her best compositions, and being given a finished rendering by Mr. Jarvis, it proved most effective. The few bars for the piano which are employed to connect the verses I think might be changed to advantage; they sound out of keeping with the lullaby style of the song, which in other respects is well maintained.

CAN BLIND MEN SMOKE?

A blind man living in Toronto recently observed:—"My daughter read me the other day a newspaper paragraph about smoking, in which it was stated that no man can tell, without watching for the smoke, whether his pipe or cigar is alight or not, and stating that few, if any, blind men smoke. The writer must have been entirely misinformed in this matter, for, however much imagination there may be in the enjoyment of smoking, it is quite usual for blind men to smoke, and I do not think any of them are ever betrayed into useless puffing at a cigar which has gone out. For my own part I smoke after every meal, and very frequently while at work as well, and I never remember wasting a match trying to light a cigar already burning." So far from men who cannot see the smoke not being able to enjoy a weed, many such men, including myself, derive great comfort and consolation from the almost universal habit. There is no doubt that smoking aids imagination and helps a man to forget trouble, but that is all the imagination I know of in regard to the habit. Certainly the loss of eyesight does not destroy the desire to smoke, except, perhaps, when a physician attributes the infirmity to over-indulgence in the habit."

ANCIENT BRITONS.

Our ancestors tattooed themselves; they knocked out their front teeth in sign of mourning; the men wore their own hair long and shaved their wives' as a mark of slavery; they thought it impious to wed a deceased wife's sister, and took a wife by force from another tribe, after, as a rule, knocking her down; they believed themselves to be descended from a wild animal of some kind, and worshipped those of their kindred who still clung to fur or feathers; sometimes they claimed lineage with a tree or a stone; they ate horse-flesh, and habitually got drunk.

The American sculptor MacMonnies is working in Paris on an immense fountain for the Chicago Fair. It will be the central decoration of the Exhibition grounds and will consist of thirty gigantic figures. It is now being put in plaster.

Poetry.

[In this column will appear every week a lyric by one of the old English poets and one by a Canadian. This week the poets are Sir T. Wyatt and W. W. Campbell.]

A SUPPLICATION.

SIR THOMAS WYATT (BORN 1543; DIED 1532.)

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant; •
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life, ye know since when
The suit, the service, none tell can;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! O, forget not this,
How long ago hath been and is
The mind that never in amiss—
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved
The which so long hath thee so loved
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved—
Forget not this!

A HEBREW FATHER'S PRAYER.

W. W. CAMPBELL

O Thou just One, who givest gifts to men,
Who holdest light and darkness in thy hand,
Who alone can blight and bless, whose strong com-
mand

Can make a garden of a darksome fen;
O Thou who lovest all and hatest none,
Look down compassionate, I pray, on me;
Not for myself, but for the sake of one—
The little child that smileth at my knee.

Men say we come of a dark, cursed race,
Who fell in bitterness from out thy word;
Who slew thy blessed Son, a ruthless horde,
And gave him gall to drink, and smote his face.
O thou who knowest all, let not this blight,
This awful blight come down; but if it be,
Send it on my dark life, not hers so bright—
The little child that smileth at my knee.

Thou knowest I have sinned and fallen short
Of all thy laws; that I was reared in hate
And bitterness as dread as theirs who wait
In gloom and darkness round Hell's baleful court.
But pity, Lord, O pity my distress!
Let all thy righteous sentence fall on me!
Consume me utterly, if thou wilt bless
The little child that smileth at my knee.

O take me, Lord, and make me what thou wilt;
Give me to drink whole centuries of woe;
For her dear sake, who is as driven snow,
Plunge agony's cruel sword clean to the hilt.
Heap on me all! O what would I not bear!
For deepest Hell were Heaven indeed to me,
To know that thou didst have her in thy care—
The little child that smileth at my knee.

Then spake God's angel, answering thus: "Old man,
Thy love so white hath burnt out all thy sin,
Where thy child goes thou, too, shalt enter in:
Heaven hath no hate for thee in all its plan.
God made love strong, that it might whiten all,
Might conquer all, and make all chereby free.
Thou lovedst thy God in loving that one small
Unconscious child that smileth at thy knee."

Daniel C. French, the New York sculptor, has just arrived in Paris to fill an order for the Chicago Exhibition. It will be a colossal statue of the Republic, a female figure sixty or eighty feet high. He is also at work on a memorial statue of the late Martin Milmore, the Boston sculptor.