

## THE COMPOSER OF "MARTHA."

It was in 1812, when April showers were near their apothecies in May flowers, that the wife of a very poor and proportionately proud nobleman of Tenterdorf, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, gave birth to an heir destined to a heritage of but few and sterile patrimonial acres. Frederick Ferdinand Adolphus were the laboriously international names inflicted upon this helpless scion of the Von Flotows: and had paternal pride of blood been allowed to control his future career their heaviness might have symbolized prophetically the bearer's lumbering way through the world.

But Frederick the small was inspired at a very early period of youth to follow his Bohemian ear rather than his patrician nose, and disdain the aristocrat livelihood of diplomacy, to which the Baron would have consigned him, for the studio of the music master. It was a literal "going off on his ear," then, when, at the age of about sixteen, he deserted the study of court intrigue in Germany for the celebrated tutorship of the composer Reicha in Paris; there to gain for his irrepressible musical inspiration the technical instruction required for its artistic expression. Scarcely, however, had his enthusiasm for melodious numbers settled fairly into its Parisian crucible and practical solution, when the revolution of 1830 recalled him to Fatherland; and it was several years before he again saw the capital of France and of the world of art.

In these years of unwillingly resumed domesticity began the romance of Frederick von Flotow's private history. Despairing of his reclamation from musical composition to a profession befitting his birth, unless he could be bound at home by other ties than those of heritage, his father half-influenced, half coerced the mere boy into a marriage with a high-born young lady of a neighbouring chateau, who was similarly urged into the alliance by parental compulsion. In truth, the bride not only loved, but had been secretly affianced elsewhere and went as a lamb to the slaughter. The youthful bridegroom knew nothing of this, probably, at the time; yet even his inexperience must have been perceptible of something very statue-like in the rigid girlish figure standing with him at the altar. Soon thereafter he awoke to the fact that her heart was another's, and never could be his; and almost simultaneously came the conviction that his own heart was still in music—and in Paris. No domestic happiness was possible in such circumstances. What made it more trying, the parental families on either side utterly refused to recognize or sympathize with the cause of the trouble, save only a sister of the young wife, whose earnest sympathy was given to the husband. As for the mismatched lady, the early lover was her only friend. What could ensue from this pitiful union but dislikes, distrust, and misery?

Reckless of all but his own first love, Flotow defied every family vanity and conventional restriction by escaping back to Paris with the manuscripts of half a dozen crude operas in his trunk; determined to be henceforth a musical genius and nothing else. It was a damper to find that none of the Parisian managers would have anything to do with the aforesaid prized compositions of his desolate hours in Mecklenburg; but by and by (1838) his amateur fame secured for him the composition of the score for "Le Naufrage de la Méduse," the immediate public success of which gave him access to the stage of the opera house. The "Forester," two years later, and "L'Esclave de Camoens," in 1843, were additional French successes, paving the way for the splendid European acclamations over his "Alessandro Stradella," in 1844; "L'Ame en Peine," in 1846, and the delightful "Martha," in 1858. The latter composition had 200 consecutive performances at the Opera Comique, and when the now illustrious young maestro carried it to his native Mecklenburg the people went mad over it.

At the height of his continental fame Flotow was patronized by his aristocratic kindred once more, and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg appointed him *maître de chapelle*, or director of the Court Theatre at Schwerin; even though his social name was yet under a cloud from the divorce by which he had been separated from his ill-chosen wife. The composer of "Stradella" and "Martha" might be, indeed, at this hour, on the highest wave of professional celebrity and courtly favour but for the chronic perversity of his domestic genius.

Some ten years ago he took for his second wife that sister of the first who was his friend in the earlier matrimonial desolation, and a final ostracism by court and kindred was the penalty. Such an alliance was deemed unparadonable, and its first fruit was the composer's removal from his court-theatre directorship by the scandalized Grand Duke Frederick Francis. Since then his opera of "Zilda" (1866) has sustained his earlier reputation; but his banishment from patrician circles is irrevocable and keenly felt.

Two or three weeks since, a correspondent of the Berlin *Tribune*, saw him at his present home, or exile, near Linz, in Austria, where his yet vast income from his operas enables him to live in a grand chateau called Prientz, with his wife and two children. Idolized by the lady, who is a handsome matron of forty and a brilliant pianist, he might be happy enough in his old age but for the wrong his egotism feels under the coldness of the great. His new opera of "Haida," cannot be produced in Paris, because he is one of those hated Germans; nor in Berlin, because the offended Grand Duke uses his influence there inimically; nor in Vienna, because Berlin rejects. So, at least, says the embittered Flotow, who, if he had been more discreet in past social affiliations or retained less vanity now, should be exemplary of well-rewarded genius and philosophical serenity in the sunset of his days:

## COPYING MEDALS.

Copies of medals or other similar articles may be readily made by a very simple piece of apparatus. A cast of the medal is first taken in wax. This is done by moistening the medal or coin slightly, and then pouring the melted wax over it. The object of the moistening is to prevent the wax sticking to the surface of the metal. While the wax is still warm, a piece of copper wire should be imbedded in it to serve as a support, and to connect with the zinc in the decomposing cell. After removing the medal from the mould, the surface of the mould is dusted over with fine plumbago until it appears quite black; all excess of the carbon is then carefully removed with a soft brush. If fine iron filings can be had, a few of them are sifted over the face of the mould, and a solution of sulphate of copper is poured on it. It is then carefully washed; this serves to give a very thin coating of copper, and facilitates further operations, but may be omitted if not convenient. Care must be taken, in putting on the plumbago

coating, that it comes in contact with the copper wire. A very convenient way of applying this wire is to bend it into a ring slightly larger than the medal to be copied, lay it on the table around the medal, and pour the wax over both at the same time. Scraping with a knife exposes it completely. The mould being prepared, take an ordinary glazed earthenware basin four or five inches deep, and in it set a small flower pot, having previously plugged up the hole in the bottom of the pot with a piece of wood, a little wax, or other suitable material. The flower pot is to be filled with a weak solution of common salt. The outer basin is then filled with a strong solution of sulphate of copper, and a little bag holding crystals of sulphate of copper is hung in it to keep it saturated. Add a few drops of sulphuric acid to both solutions, place a piece of zinc in the flower pot, and connect it with the wire of the mould. The mould being now put in the outer solution, a coating of copper soon shows itself. The mould may be left in the solution two or three days, if a thick coating is desired.—*Boston Journal of Chemistry.*

## Literary Notes.

## NEW BOOKS.

Another volume of Harper & Bros.' excellent edition of Wilkie Collins' works\* has made its appearance. It contains "The Moonstone," one of the most fascinating of this author's novels. Like its predecessors the book is profusely illustrated and its entire get-up—paper, printing, and binding—is perfect.

The Harpers have just issued volumes 407 and 408 of their celebrated Library of Select Novels. The first of these is Anthony Trollope's Christmas story "Harry Heathcote of Gangoil," which first appeared in the pages of the *London Graphic*. It is a short, interesting story of life in the Australian bush, and is illustrated with two engravings. No. 408 is Miss Braddon's novel, "Publicans and Sinners,"† one of the best productions of the fertile pen of this popular novelist. It is a tale of absorbing interest, written with great power and lacking many of the faults which mar some of Miss Braddon's books. While it is essentially sensational, it is nevertheless true to life, the writer having carefully avoided the impossibilities and improbabilities upon which the majority of novelists rely for success.

Professor Swinton whose "Language Lessons" and "Progressive English Grammar" have been favourably noticed in these columns has published the third of his Language Series—School Composition.‡ Of the object of these books the author says: "It is strictly a manual for school work, and has been made with special reference to the rational remodeling recently accomplished, or now in the way of being accomplished, in the Courses of Study in our public schools—a remodeling in which Language-training for the first time receives the attention that is its due. In the plan here adopted, composition is begun with the very commencement of the study, and is carried on *part passu* with the development of rules and principles. It is a matter of common experience that children's power of producing, in an empirical way, is much in advance of their knowledge of the rationale of writing: hence, in the present work, pupils are not kept back from the improving exercise of actual composition until they have mastered the complicated details of rhetorical theory. It should be added, however, that the demands made on the scholar will not be found beyond his powers. He is provided with the material to work on, and his attention is limited to the process of building this material into shape—the author's conviction being that training in the Art of Expression is as much as can wisely be aimed at in school composition. Pupils must first be taught *how to write at all*, before they can be shown how to write *well*—a maxim that has never been out of mind in the making of this book.

"Among our Sailors" ¶ is the title of a capital book just issued by the Harpers. The writer is Dr. J. Grey Jewell, late United States Consul at Singapore, who has undertaken on this side of the Atlantic a work similar to that to which in England Mr. Plimsoll has so nobly devoted himself. His aim is to excite a feeling of sympathy for the wrongs received by the sailors at the hands of avaricious ship-owners, and cruel ship's officers. An appendix to the work contains extracts from the United States Statutes bearing on shipping and sailors.

Mr. John Cameron, editor of the *London (Ont.) Advertiser* has published a neat volume\*\* containing the letters written by him to his paper during a summer's tour through Europe, in which he gives his impressions of the Old World. The books will doubtless be eagerly read by Canadians.

## THE MAGAZINES.

*St. Nicholas* for February opens with a charming little poem by W. C. Bryant, and then, on the very first page, the stories begin with a well-told tale of the middle ages, "Blanca and Beppo," by J. S. Stacy, full of the flavour of youthful chivalry, and illustrated by a most exquisite engraving by Miss Scannell. Among the other short stories, we have "How the Heavens Fell," by Rossiter Johnson, illustrated by H. L. Stephens; "How Jamie Had His Own Way," by Miss Mary N. Prescott; "What St. Valentine Did for Milly," by Susan Coolidge: all good and each one with a character of its own. Besides these, there are the three serials, "Fast Friends," by J. T. Trowbridge, illus-

\*The Moonstone. By Wilkie Collins. 12mo. Cloth. Illustrated. \$1.50. New York: Harper & Brothers. Montreal: Dawson Brothers.

† Harry Heathcote of Gangoil. A tale of Australian Bush Life. By Anthony Trollope. Small 8vo. Paper, pp. 61. Illustrated, 25 cents. New York: Harper & Brothers. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

‡ Publicans and Sinners; or, Lucius Davoren. A Novel. By Miss M. E. Braddon. Paper. Small 8vo. pp. 190. 75 cents. New York: Harper & Bros. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

§ School Composition: Being Advanced Language Lessons for Grammar Schools. By Prof. William Swinton, A. M. Linen, 16mo. pp. 119. 50 cents. New York: Harper & Bros. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

¶ Among Our Sailors. By J. Grey Jewell, M. D. Late United States Consul, Singapore. 12mo. Cloth, pp. 311. New York: Harper & Bros. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

\*\* Impressions of a Canadian. Sight and Sensations in Europe. By John Cameron, editor of the *London (Canada) Daily Advertiser*. Cloth, pp. 154. 50 cents. London: John Cameron & Co.

trated by White; "Nimpo's Troubles," by Olive Thorne, with a drawing by Miss Hallock; and "What Might Have Been Expected," by Frank R. Stockton, with an illustration by W. L. Sheppard, and one by Sol. Eyttinge. Among the pictures is a very curious and amusing drawing by F. Beard, showing how little boys may change into frogs if they play leap-frog too much. There are useful articles on the Velocity of Light, Wood-Carving, and about that curious animal the Manatee. C. S. Stephens, who has written so much for *Our Young Folks*, describes a "Moose Hunt in Maine;" and there is a short resumé of Stanley's recent book for boys, bringing in some startling adventures with wild animals in Africa, with pictures that will charm the heart of many a youngster. A poem, "What's the Fun?" by Olive A. Wadsworth, illustrated by eight appropriate cuts, gives, in a lively and rollicking style, an idea of the fun that can be had in each of the months of the year. There are also poems by Celia Thaxter, Silas Dinsmore, Mary E. C. Wyeth—who contributes some baby valentine verses; and a humorous ballad by Theophilus Higginbotham, called "Mild Farmer Jones and the Naughty Boy," which is illustrated by nine very funny Silhouettes by Hopkins. Two pages for little folks are given this month; and there is some capital talk from "Jack-in-the-Pulpit;" a lively pantomime for parlor acting, by G. E. Bartlett, well known in that connection to the readers of *Our Young Folks*; and a well-filled Riddle Box. The Frontispiece, by W. Brooks, entitled "In Sister's Care," is a vigorous, well-drawn picture. This number of *St. Nicholas* like the last, while it keeps its individuality in every particular, shows a decided disposition to accept freely every advantage offered by its late absorption of *Our Young Folks*. The old readers of the latter magazine will recognize several of their favourite authors in this number of *St. Nicholas*, which, by the way, abounds in illustrations, there being no less than fifty pictures in it, all of them good, and some of them remarkably fine. *St. Nicholas* is certainly the brightest and best of children's magazines.

We have also received *Harper's Magazine*, the *Galaxy*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Scribner's Monthly*, *Old and New*, and the *Penn Monthly*, on which we reserve our comments until next week.

A new weekly illustrated paper was to have been started in London this month to be called the *Illustrated World*.

It is stated that Mr. Darwin is engaged in the preparation of a revised and extended edition of "The Descent of Man."

Cornell University has courage as well as enterprise. It has made Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, the well-known Swedish novelist, Assistant Professor of North European languages.

A sum of fifty pounds is offered for the best essay on the importance of the rest of the seventh day for all, but especially for those who are employed in laborious occupations. Memoirs are to be addressed, not later than September 30th, 1874, to the president of the Swiss Society for the Sanctification of the Sabbath, Place de Champel, 497, at Geneva.

Mr. George Darwin, son of the distinguished naturalist, Mr. Charles Darwin, who was Second Wrangler at Cambridge a few years ago, is engaged upon an important work upon marriage. His researches have been principally in regard to the proportion of all marriages that are marriages between first cousins, and with a view to the discovery of the physical and mental results of these marriages.

The new novel in the *Cornhill Magazine*, "Far From the Mad-dening Crowd," which is so good as to have been almost suspected to have come from the pen of George Eliot, is in reality written by a Mr. Hardy, already the author of one or two novels, which, however, failed to make any impression on the novel-reading public and the critics at large. His new work is attracting much attention; its authorship is eagerly canvassed.

As our readers have long long been expecting the series of articles on Junius, by the Lord Chief Justice of England, we beg to inform them that, although the work has been interrupted by the Geneva Arbitration and the terrible Tichborne case, it has not by any means been relinquished. A good deal has already been written, and the Chief Justice has spent many hours, won from his laborious weeks, at the British Museum in collecting evidence. The services of an eminent expert in hand writing have also been called into requisition.

A very curious book is just now in course of publication by two French firms and Messrs. Trubner & Co. of London. It is a manual of the Chinese mandarin language, compiled after Ollendorff's method. The editor is Monsieur Charles Rudy, of Paris, a member of all the principal Asiatic and linguistic societies. The object of this publication is to teach Chinese English. The pronunciation has been one of the points most carefully noted, several small reading books of tales and fables accompanying the series, which both in idea and execution is certainly original.

The *Counter Poison* is the title of an almanac which is extensively circulated under the aegis of the Government throughout the kingdom, for it is unlawful to speak of the Republic even by inference. The "poison" is the Republic, Liberal ideas, &c. The "counter poison" is the reign of the clergy, the restoration of Henri Cinq. The Government is not to blame for its tolerance of these nonsensical *nécessités*, but it is to be blamed for authorizing the circulation of these openly seditious publications, when it stamps its veto on any almanacs which are illustrated with Republican devices.

Paris brought out thirty-six new journals and periodicals during the past year; many of these have had only the life of the roses—the space of a morning—or evening. The *Gallant Mercury*, destined to reform the frivolities of society, died on reaching its fifth number. Folly was too powerful. Among those which also succumbed to the diseases of infancy were *The Friend of Religion*, *Universal Suffrage*, *Mme. Angot*, *Actuality*, &c. Among those holding on are the *Soleil* newspaper, the property of the Duc d'Aumale, and "claiming only to pay its way;" the *Avenir Matrimonial*, specially dedicated to old bachelors and flinty-hearted maids; the *Gastronomique Gazette* explains itself—is as great a necessity to the diner-out as a box of Oeuf's or any other body's pills; the *Brocanteur* is devoted to the rag-picking and marine store interest; it devotes a column, however, to art and curiosities.

Mr. Henry Glassford Bell, who was sheriff of Lanarkshire, died on Wednesday last. Recently he had had his right hand amputated, with the view to the removal of a cancer. Unwell, of course, after the operation, it was hoped he would soon, however, be able to resume his judicial duties; but last Saturday he took a slight chill, and on the Tuesday following his illness became alarming, and he died on the next day. He was born in 1805, and was the friend and frequent companion of Professor Wilson, and Wilson speaks of him with respect and affection in the "Notes," where he appears under the name of "Tailboys." In 1832 Mr. Bell was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates, in 1839 he was appointed one of the Sheriff's Substitute of Glasgow, and in 1867 he was raised to the office of Sheriff Principal, on the death of Sir Archibald Allison. Some time ago a volume of his occasional productions was published by Macmillan, under the title of "Romances and Ballads." His literary fame will rest, however, on his well-known poem, "Mary Queen of Scots," written in his early years.