

THE JESTER,

A COMICAL AND SATIRICAL RECORD OF THE TIMES; ILLUSTRATED; EIGHT PAGES;
WEEKLY. PUBLISHED BY GEORGE E. DESBARATS.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, 7TH JUNE, 1878.

THE Montreal *Herald* of Wednesday, terms Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD and Mr. CHAPLEAU "birds of a feather" with the true Conservative "ring." Why not call them a pair of ring doves at once?

SHAME!

Alderman MENCER certainly deserves the thanks of the respectable portion of our citizens more especially parents and guardians for his zealous efforts in suppressing the gross exhibition of ornamental wit, that adorned at the time of writing, one of the amusement stands on St. Helen's Island. Why dont the daily press take cognizance of this impertinent outrage on public decency. Surely the *Witness* must have overlooked this important duty. But our Council in its anxiety, to scrape every cent together for revenue purposes, permits this contamination to continue in the light of day—under the very gaze of youths, maidens, and all who seek the pure refreshing air of St. Helen's Island—at the expense of morals. The Committee on Parks and Ferries evidently think it a big joke and who can wonder at the continuance of indecency in our midst, when Aldermen, who are supposed to be gentlemen, ridicule the earnest efforts of Mr. MENCER by asking him in reply "if he had ever been to Paris?" Whether they have or not we do not know; but we venture to say that search the public gardens and parks throughout Paris, high and low, they could not find anything to equal the specimen of bare faced license referred to. Shame!

AMONG THE MUSICAL CRITICS AT THE PHILHARMONIC CONCERT.

(By the JESTER'S Special Commissioner.)

SIR.—Thanks to the courtesy of Mr. A. M. PERKINS, the efficient Secretary-Treasurer of the Philharmonic Society, two seats were reserved for the use of your Commissioner at the Concert at the Skating Rink on Friday last. Wealth, beauty refinement and the musical profession were there in full gorgeousness. The ushers were attentive and knew their business, which is saying a great deal for the ushers. Fortunately for you, Sir, that obliging individual seated me in the centre of a galaxy of professional talent and I give you the result of their profound observations, for I don't know one note of music myself and, therefore, I would not be impertinent enough to intrude remarks upon you which might lead to a libel suit, or involve you in endless controversy.

On my right there were seated two professional teachers of the organ. Immediately in front three ladies "who receive a limited number of pupils," sat in new bonnets. Close behind me was a well known pianist, while on my left a disciple of the Tonic Sol Fa system, hummed a psalm tune softly to himself, on the syllabic principle, waiting for the overture to commence. A well known leader of a brass band sported with a miniature tuning fork three seats in front, and to complete the "charmed circle" two reporters possessed themselves of a couple of seats immediately behind my own. Could any one desire a more satisfactory combination?—and if those were not already sufficient, a distinguished amateur soon joined the Tonic Sol Fa man with a huge score under his arm, supposed, as I afterwards learned, to be an exact copy of Handel's original score and he ought to know, if any one did.

Under these circumstances, Sir, you could not expect me to give an opinion.

Mrs. OSGOOD then took her seat on the platform, and was cheered. Miss WELCH, ditto; Mr. WISCH not so much ditto; and Mr. DELAHEUT, far more than most awfully ditto.

"She's very plain," (meaning Mrs. Osgood) said one of the ladies who receives "the limited number of pupils."

"Made up," observed the second lady who also "receives a limited number of pupils."

"Much older than I thought her," added the third lady who likewise "receives a limited number of pupils."

(I mention these facts, because I thought, Sir, you would like to know everything.)

"Knew her twelve years ago in Boston" remarked the brass band leader.

"Decidedly plain." So chorussed the three ladies.

"Extraordinary woman, and greatly improved I hear since she returned from England," added one of the two organists on my right.

"But WISCH dont amount to anything," remarked his companion. "Too solid, no expansion, tone muffled, wants *timbre*." (I thought he meant stamps.)

"Miss WELCH aint much. Yes, I do think she looks a trifle cold," said number two who receives such a limited number of pupils.

"How much space are you going to give this thing Tomson?" asked one of the reporters.

"Oh, about a quarter of a column. Got to go to a missionary meeting at 9 o'clock. Got a feller to promise to write it up for me.

"Think I shall make a couple of sticks," replied his friend Gregson. "It wont do you know to attempt to *criticize*. Sure to offend some of 'em. Its the *names* I want to get. Everybody buys the paper if their name's reported. Say old man, think I'll get you to do the concert for me and I'll send you a proof of the missionary meeting. Wonder if we can get a glass of beer anywhere. Let's go up in the Director's room, they generally have some pretty good stuff there."

And the two left for the Director's room. In one of the reports I noticed some reference to "liquid notes." But, of course, I had nothing to do with that.

Then the Overture commenced. The man with the copy of the original score opened his volume, and the leader of the Brass band said "weak, very weak, not body enough." Then the two organists agreed it "was a great mistake not to have had a large organ;" then the Tonic Sol Fa man, struck his miniature tuning fork held it close to his ear and murmured to his friend with the copy of the original score "half a tone flat." Then the well known pianist "knew how it would be; that it couldn't be expected to be a success without a piano. He had told a friend of his on the Committee that this omission was a great mistake." Then the audience cheered very enthusiastically. Then every body was silent, except the boys who went around the Rink to sell copies of the score.

In the meantime one of the two reporters had returned and sat down; took extensive notes and said it was "very fine—in fact almost as good as one could expect—considering the material."

But you do not expect me to give you a detailed report of everything that was sung—because if you do you will be disappointed.

Next Mr. WISCH came forward, and before he had a chance to sing a note the Tonic Sol Fa man was "down upon him," although the three ladies who "receive a number of limited pupils" admitted "that he had" the air of a professional." Having swelled out his chest he proceeded with what I think is called "the *Aria*" and sung to the audience how "Every Valley should be exalted." Had it not been for the *Herald* I should have supposed Mr. WISCH to be a bass singer, but that excellent authority informs me "it was clear that the voice of that performer was only a baritone worked up into the upper register." Even the three ladies admitted that "he was fair," and the two organists had no especial fault to find except "that they couldn't hear a word he said, owing to something being wrong with his matriculation organs." The distinguished amateur thought "it wouldn't be hard to find a dozen men in Montreal to beat WISCH," while the newspaper reporter expressed the opinion that he had a friend who could sing "O, let me like a soldier fall," ten times as well as Mr. WISCH. The applause was nothing to speak of, but one man I noticed particularly wished it *encored*, because, as he observed, "he was keeping a seat for a friend, and didn't want Mrs. OSGOOD to commence until his arrival." This was one of the best illustrations of friendship I have ever witnessed at any musical performance.

Then the choir sung the first chorus. Had the members of that choir known what those people about me were going to say of them, they would never have sung a note. Happily they didn't, and although I thought it an excellent performance, my professional hearers differed.

Let them speak for themselves:

TONIC SOL FA MAN.—They didn't commence promptly half a beat behind. I tell you, Sir, (to the distinguished amateur) you can never get high class music sung well, unless you adopt the Tonic Sol Fa Method. There's too many notes in the old notation and it puzzles 'em."

BRASS BAND LEADER.—That orchestra wants firmness; it lags too much, it only embarrasses them.

DISTINGUISHED AMATEUR.—Glad I didn't join 'em. Wanted me to, badly. But I couldn't, you know. They're scarcely advanced far enough for me.

LEADING PIANIST.—If they'd only have taken my advice a piano would have been invaluable in keeping them together.