

tral genius of New York:—"To speak of orchestral music in America is at once to discuss the position and work of Mr. Theodore Thomas, who towers like Saul the son of Kish, a head and shoulders above all his fellows."

The London, Eng. *Musical Times* in a recent article on "Educational Value of Dance Music" says that a school of English dance music has been developed of which "the prevailing characteristics are a mawkish monotony, a cloying sweetness, a religious avoidance of anything approaching syncopation, freshness, or piquancy of rhythm, in fine, a steady adherence to the levels of the flattest insipidity. The music of the ball-room and the concert-hall, on the one hand, and that of our churches, on the other, seem to have changed places. Our waltzes and ballads are as sad and serious as hymns, and our hymn-tunes far more lively than our waltzes."

"If the service of song in the house of the Lord is to bear his stamp, it must be, in all essential elements and influence, reverent, thoughtful, earnest and pure; inspiring only feelings of devout adoration, with nothing to distract the mind from true devotion and sincere worship. Whatever interferes with this is out of place. If, however, as many seem to think, the main purpose of this service is simply to attract the multitude and gratify their varying taste, the whole matter is to be regulated by the tactics of the concert room * * * * *

Again, if the service is regarded only as something with which to fill out the regular routine of church services, giving something of variety to the programme to break the monotony of sermons and prayers, then it becomes, to those who hold this view, of comparatively little importance what is the character of the music, if it be fairly good of its kind. In such cases, there is too much of stolid indifference to make it worth while to be at the bother of having any image or superscription at all."—*Boston Musical Herald*.

Miscellaneous.

LAKE MISTASSINI

Omne ignotum pro magnifico. Some of our readers may feel tempted to apply this Latin proverb in explanation of the idea of vastness which is called up by the mention of the above name. Lake Mistassini is however not altogether unknown, and what is known of it seems ample to justify the prevailing notions of vastness and grandeur which are connected with it. The following extracts from the report made to the Quebec Geographical Society by Francis H. Bignell, who visited the Lake last year, will be found of interest and will stimulate curiosity to know more of this Great Canadian Lake and its surroundings:—

"From Point Bleu, where I organized my party, consisting of nineteen men and six bark canoes, I took my departure on the 16th of July, with eight months' provisions and stores for the main expedition, for whose special use also, on the frequently rough seas experienced on Great Mistassini, the two largest of the six canoes were intended. These two large canoes were manned by six men each, myself being one of the number, and the four smaller ones by two men each. To insure despatch, as well as to facilitate our journey, we left Lake St. John with all the stores in one load; but when the rapids encountered,—and they were numerous,—were too severe or dangerous, we made two loads.

The route selected by the guide was primarily by way of the Chamouchan River, as well on account of its greater directness as of its larger volume of water, which enabled us to take up the two larger canoes with greater facility. Nothing worthy of note presented itself until we reached a few miles below the falls of the Chamouchan and about fifty from Lake St. John. Here we entered the Hawk Mountains, which vary in height from 350 to 500 feet over the river. At the junction of the Chamouchan and the Chief rivers, into which the guide, deeming it the best route, next struck, the country is very beautiful, and the soil seemingly excellent. Indeed, all the way up to the Height of Land, the soil seems generally

good and about one-third of the region well adapted to settlement. Ascending the Chief River for a short distance, we came on an old abandoned Hudson Bay Company's post, of which the only vestiges remaining are the stone foundations of the house and the cleared land around, which still supports a good growth of hay.

At thirty-five miles from the Chamouchan, on the 6th of August, I discharged ten of my men, and with the remainder continued my journey toward Mistassini by way of the Sapin Croche River, which was followed to File-Axe Lake, a beautiful sheet of water, the main body of which is about six miles long and the same broad, dotted with many pretty islands and showing a good growth of timber along its shores. After leaving File-Axe Lake, and at no great distance from it, we crossed the so-called Height of Land forming the present northern boundary of this province. Let me here observe that the elevation of this watershed is so trifling as to be scarcely perceptible. In point of fact, one is hardly aware that he has surmounted and passed it until he begins to notice that the waters, instead of flowing southward toward the St. Lawrence by the feeders of the Saguenay, now pursue a contrary direction northward toward Hudson's Bay. Indeed, I question whether in some instances the summit waters do not flow in both ways. I did actually meet *en route* across it a small lakelet, or pond, which my Indian guides declared to have two outlets, one discharging its waters northward and the other southward; but I could not afford time to fully verify their statement. From the Height of Land, — which, by the way, it may be remarked, offers not the slightest difficulty to railway construction,—we descended into Rupert's Land, by way of the Doré or Little Percé River, and, at a distance of some seven or eight miles, entered Foam Bay, the most southwesterly extremity of one of the two great arms into which the nearest and best known, or south-western end, of Great Lake Mistassini is divided by a long, narrow peninsula. Some eighteen miles further brought us to the Hudson Bay Company's Mistassini port, which is situated on this peninsula, and which was safely reached after a journey of some 300 miles from Lake St. John." * * *

It has been mentioned that the Indians summering at the Post subsist largely on the fish which they catch in the great lake. It may be added that the Post also derives a large and important portion of its supplies from the same source, which seems to be inexhaustible as well in its wealth as in its variety. Lake trout, river trout, fresh-water salmon, pike, white fish, perch, all of large size, and a species called the fresh-water cod-fish, which is said to resemble in every respect the regular codfish of the ocean depth, abound, and are caught in large quantities with nets, lines being seldom or never used, except, perhaps, through the ice in winter.

And, speaking of the ice, I am reminded that Mr. Miller mentioned that it took opposite the Post last fall on the 14th of November; but the main body of the great lake,—if it ever wholly does so,—never freezes before mid-January. Last spring the ice opposite the Post broke up on the 22nd of May, which is not much later than on the lakes in this neighborhood; but the main body did not disappear before the 8th of June. The fur-bearing and food-producing animals which inhabit the Mistassini region comprise the caribou, hares, beaver in seeming abundance, otter, lynx, fisher, pine-marten, mink, weasel, muskrat, foxes (red, black, white, silver, and cross), porcupine, skunks, wolf, wolverine, etc.; black bears of unusual size and ferocity. Moose were in olden times plentiful, but of late years appear to have totally disappeared. The birds include the crow, blackbird, golden woodpecker, robin, rosignol, bluebird, wren, blue-jay, magpie; a bird the Indians call "Le Petit Malin," which I take to belong to the Great Gray Shrike family (*Lanius excubitor*), and which artfully captures its prey by deceitful but most natural imitation of the sounds emitted by small birds in distress; the common sandpiper, sanderling, night-hawk,