

poet is now in his eighty-seventh year, and, like Mr Gladstone and Professor Blackie, is one of the most interesting figures still remaining among us.

## Music and the Drama.

An audience of perhaps 2,000 or 2,500 people, among whom were the elite of the musical profession, and a large contingent of the best of Toronto society, assembled in the Massey Music Hall to hear the first concert given by the newly-organized vocal society, the Mendelssohn Choir, on the evening of the 15th Jan. This organization, of which Mr. A. S. Vogt, organist and choir-master of Jarvis St. Baptist Church, is the conductor, practically takes the place of the Haslam Vocal Society, and has for its object the finished performance of unaccompanied part songs, a branch of art which is not only valuable as an educational factor, but is very interesting to those forming the chorus, as well as to the general public. There is need of such a society—because, apparently, the Toronto Vocal Society, which has flourished the past several winters, has abandoned the field as we hear nothing of it this year—and it will fill the vacancy in a most capable and satisfying manner. Mr. Vogt was very careful in the selection of his chorus, which numbered, according to the programme, exactly 168 voices. In consequence of the care bestowed in this direction, the tone produced by this body of singers, was exceedingly musical, and of beautiful quality. The ensemble (tone-balance) was likewise good, and the shading (tone color), and general finish of phrases, carefully and most artistically effected. These features which appeal so directly to musicians of cultivation and taste, and, indeed, to the public, who are becoming more and more appreciative of good performances, were admirably presented in Gaul's "Daybreak," which opened the program, and subsequently in Sullivan's "I Hear the Soft Note," Mendelssohn's, "Judge me, O God," and T. Harold Mason's "Lullaby." It is a question in our mind whether any better singing has ever been heard in this city, and Mr. Vogt can be heartily congratulated on the result, and on his success as a conductor. His baton he uses with decision, but, withal, gracefully. Mr. Mason's "Lullaby" is a composition which shows talent, and it is very effective. The final cadence after each verse on the word "Sleep" is, however, too prolonged, and becomes a little tedious. This could be easily improved. The "Choir" was assisted by the very popular and winsome American soprano, Miss Lillian Blauvelt, and the Beethoven Trio, Messrs. H. M. Field, Klingensfeld and Ruth. Miss Blauvelt's voice is particularly fresh, and of the most silvery quality. She sang—not including her encore numbers—"The Jewel Song" from Gounod's Faust, "Au Printemps" by Bouhy, and Vander Stucken's "Fallah, Fallah." These were sung beautifully, although the Aria might have been given with a little more breadth of style, but charming and naïve it was. Miss Blauvelt also was the soloist in Jenson's Choral Ballad, "Feast of Adonis," which closed the programme, and she sang, as earlier in the evening, superbly. The Beethoven Trio performed Raff's "Adagio," from op. 112, with splendid ensemble and finish. We hope in the future to hear them play the entire work. Each member of the Trio also appeared in a solo number, and were very successful. Mr. Field played with great brilliance Liszt's Polonaise in E, Mr. Ruth performed a Bach Air, with fine tone, and technical accuracy, and Mr. Klingensfeld played a fantasia on Russian Airs, by Wieniawsky, with considerable breadth and power. Mr. W. H. Hewlett played the piano accompaniments—with the exception of Mr. Klingensfelds, which was played by Mrs. Klingensfeld—with much judgment and skill, proving himself again a talented young musician. The second concert by the Mendelssohn Choir will be given some time in April.

A fortnight or so ago we received a letter from the famous piano teacher, Professor Julius Epstein, of Vienna—with whom the writer studied during the summer months of 1892—in which he gives us his perfected and new fingering of the minor scales in double thirds. His fingering of the major scales in

double thirds is wonderfully simple, and makes that branch of technic, usually so difficult, comparatively easy. In fact, it may be said, that this fingering has completely revolutionized the technical study of scale passages in thirds (double), and that many of the greatest artists, including Rosenthal, Grünfeld, Schonberger, and all others who are familiar with it, have adopted it. We believe it is only a matter of time before the old fingering will be left in the rear, and quite forgotten. Professor Epstein also mentions, incidentally, that music is flourishing in the Austrian capital this winter, and that he has, at the present time, many talented pupils, among whom are Russians, Hungarians and Americans.

Mr. Walter H. Robinson, the excellent tenor and singing master, has been engaged to sing the tenor solos in "Una," by Gaul, which will be produced by the Festival Chorus, under Mr. Torrington's direction, in February or March.

The pupils of Mr. Edward Fisher will give twelve piano recitals during the months of January, February, March and April. We have seen the programmes and they are most comprehensive, besides being interestingly varied, and speak well of the pupils who are to perform them, and the versatile musicianship of their instructor.

The Toronto Vocal Club, of which Mr. W. J. McNally is conductor, will give its annual concert in Association Hall, on Tuesday evening, January 29th. As stated on the programme, which we have seen, the object of the club is the production of unaccompanied part songs and concerted vocal music. It is also the desire of this society to place the price of admission as low as possible, in order to try and create a wider interest for this class of music among people who have not hitherto—because of price—been able to attend, very frequently, concerts of the kind. The numbers which will be sung at the approaching concert are Gaul's "Daybreak"—which was so beautifully sung by the Mendelssohn Choir on the occasion of their concert last week—"The Miller," McFarren; "There is Music by the River," Pinsuti; "Song of the Vikings," Eaton Fanning; and "Come Unto Him," by Gounod. The following well known artists will also assist: Miss Jessie Alexander, elocutionist; Miss Maggie Huston, soprano, and Mr. Churchill Arlidge, who will play a Fantasia for the Flute on Paganini's "Witches' Dance."

Mr. Arthur Blakely gave his seventh organ recital last Saturday afternoon in the Sherbourne St. Methodist Church to a large audience, who were much pleased with this gentleman's splendid playing. The programme was devoted to the works of Wagner.

The vocal pupils of Mr. H. N. Shaw, B.A., assisted by Miss M. E. Mathews, reader; Miss Ella How and Miss Mabel Bertram, pianists, gave a concert in the Conservatory Music Hall, last Monday evening, January 21. Although the night was an unpleasant one, the hall and corridors were crowded with people, eager to hear the various numbers, which constituted an exceedingly well selected programme. Some eight young ladies and one gentleman, Mr. J. Connelley, of Mr. Shaw's pupils, were down for numbers, all of whom were there except two, Miss Ritchie and Miss Millichamp, who were detained through illness. Perhaps, among those who took part, special mention might be made of the singing of Miss Jean Mortimer, Miss Ella Patterson and Miss Tena G. Gunn, although Miss Watson, Miss Lazier and Mr. Connelley, sang with remarkably good enunciation and voice quality, besides phrasing in a very musical and finished style. Good, easy voice production is like having a good touch on the piano. The beauty and clear limpidity of the tone depends on it, art demands it, and the finished execution or performance of a piece of music in the highest sense is impossible without it. Mr. Shaw is particularly careful in developing a good tone and artistic style, as the singing of his pupils amply proves, for it is a pleasure to hear them. Miss Webster was particularly successful in her selections, and she was vociferously applauded. The Misses How and Bertram, pianists and pupils of Mr. Tripp and Mr. Vogt, respectively, performed their numbers admirably.

Several ambitious and talented young lady pianists of Winnipeg, among whom are Miss Margaret Van Ettan, Miss Moore and Mrs. Stanley Adams (née Miss Lillian Kennedy), have organized a musical club in Winnipeg, having for its name "The Amateur Pianist's Club," for the purpose of meeting weekly and criticising each others playing, and giving an open meeting, or concert, to their friends each month. Whilst the idea is not absolutely new, it is an exceedingly good one and can be made the means of awakening among the members an earnest desire to study with care and zealous enthusiasm. These music loving young musicians of the Prairie City study the life and several compositions of one or two composers, as the case may be, until they get into the very spirit of the pieces selected, working them out with painstaking exactness, so that they may be ready to play intelligently when called upon, and with technical freedom and style. We send the young ladies our sympathy and greetings and hope their club will be a source of much pleasure and profit—as it doubtless will—not only to themselves, but exert an expanding influence for musical appreciation among their friends as well.

Miss Ellen Beach Yaw, she with the phenomenal voice compass will sing in Toronto under Mr. Hirschberg's direction on the evening of April 28th.

## Art Notes.

Miss Harriet Ford has recently received from Paris the portrait of herself, which was not only exhibited at the Salon several years ago, but hung on the line, no slight mark of distinction and merit.

At the second session of the Ontario Association of Architects, held in this city last week, Mr. Hamilton McCarthy read a paper on "Architecture and Sculpture" in which he advocated a renewal of the intimate relation that, in their palmier days, had existed between these sister arts, and also between them and painting.

Mr. Robert Harris, R.C.A., of Montreal, has about finished his portrait of Lord Aberdeen, which is to hang in Haddow Mansion. It is said to be an excellent likeness and a splendid example of Mr. Harris's vigorous workmanship. Lord Aberdeen wears a crimson robe, the insignia of LL.D., conferred recently upon him by McGill University.

The Chicago Loan Exhibition of Portraits, opened on January 1st in the Art Institute of Chicago, shows some interesting pictures. The works of the late G. P. Healy occupy a separate space and are quite numerous, as he painted nearly every contemporary of note, among them a sepia drawing of Guizot. A portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence, one of Castnar Johnson by himself, and portraits by Lefevre, Cabanel, and Bridgman, Robert Vonoh, the Philadelphia impressionist, Hubert Vos, the Dutch conservative, Couture and others will all repay careful study, and give opportunity for interesting comparisons that need be in no way "odious."

The Woman's Art Association have prepared a most interesting course of lectures on Art to be delivered at St. George's Hall, Elm Street. Professor Clark is to lecture on January 25th on "Literature and Art"; Mr. D. A. Patterson, R.C.A., on February 8th, has for his subject "Motif in Art"; on February 15th Professor Fraser speaks on "Michael Angelo"; and Mr. Oliver Howland, M.P.P., closes the course on February 22nd with "Art in Doors and out of Doors." This is certainly a most active and enterprising organization, and they have succeeded in choosing interesting subjects and procuring good men to lecture. We hope the lectures will be well attended. Tickets may be had at Nordheimer's.

Mrs. Seton has just loaned to Messrs. Tiffany & Co., New York, to place on exhibition for a few days an invaluable original miniature of Mary Queen of Scots. This miniature, a relic of the sixteenth century, is one of historic portraits of the unfortunate Queen. Its interesting history, briefly traced in the inscription on the silver plate set in the little wooden case which protects the portrait, reads: