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OURSELVES.

We have already several times been asked the question "Do you intend to publish any music in THE ARION." On our replying that such was not the intention with which we started out, we have been told that the "*people*" would not support a Musical Journal unless it contained music, and that they would not read or understand the articles, essays, criticisms, etc., or, in short, take any interest in the literature of Music and Fine Arts. We have launched our journal, the broad sea lies before us; her Port of Destination is the advancement of Art. Winds may blow fair or foul, we may have to beat to windward, tack, or scud before the gale, take in canvas, or spread all sail, but blow winds fair or blow winds foul, we shall endeavour to weather all, and by using such tact as we may possess in trimming our sails, we hope to arrive at our Port of Destination safe at last. Our journal has not been started as a commercial enterprise: We do not hold out as a bait to subscribers a little cheap music, a large quantity of advertisements, and a few funny clippings and reprints. We are not subsidised by, or published in the interest of any large Pianoforte maker or Music publisher. Returning to metaphor, our little barque flies at the peak, the flag of no party, class or interest, but the colours, only, of mutual improvement and advancement in the arts we represent. The tastes and the requirements of the people to whom our bark is cleared will vary very much; our vessel is small, and our cargo consequently limited. It therefore behoves us to use great care in assorting the articles with which we shall freight it.

A young merchant whom we knew, his father having just started him in business, improved that opportunity, by sending a cargo of skates to the West Indies. We can only hope that our efforts may not prove so disastrous and ill chosen, and that our little barque may, each month, bear to its patrons some useful, new, or half-forgotten truth, and return to her port of Entry (our Editor's chair), laden with the approbation and appreciation of those for whom our efforts are put forth.

MUSICAL IMPROVEMENT IN TORONTO.

The position which Toronto, as a city, has taken, and the progress she has made, during the past ten or twelve years, must be a matter of surprise to any one who has given the subject the least intelligent consideration; and this is as true in reference to music as other things. Ten years ago Toronto possessed no permanent musical organization (due credit being allowed for Mr. Henry Martin's Glee Choir, Mr. Carter's and Mr. Kerrison's Choral Societies). Ten years is a short period in the

life of a city, and the growth of art is necessarily slow in new communities. Nevertheless, Toronto, to-day possesses two musical societies which seem to rest upon firm foundations. The Philharmonic and the Toronto Choral Societies—the former in the full vigor of sturdy youth, the latter yet in its infancy, but healthy and promising. We welcome the birth of this younger society, first, because we think there is room enough for two, and secondly, because a *friendly* rivalry between it and its older brother (with reference to the matter and manner of their public performances) will result in a gain to the public and the cause of music generally.

While speaking of the Philharmonic Society, we cannot help expressing a regret that the title "Philharmonic" was chosen to distinguish it. It is true from the etymology of the word, no exception can be taken to its use, but a Philharmonic Society is generally understood to mean an orchestral organization. Harmonic or Sacred Harmonic Society, such as in New York, would have answered the purpose just as well, and left no doubt in the minds of strangers as to whether our society was a choral or instrumental one. We have been so accustomed to hear of the various Philharmonic Societies of Europe and the older cities of the United States, in connection with Symphony, and other Orchestral works, that it sounds strangely when we hear of the Philharmonic Society as performing an oratorio. Nevertheless the society under discussion may do just as good work, and make its elevating influence felt in the community as well under one name as another.

Not only in the satisfactory condition of the two societies above referred to, has Toronto shown marked improvement, but equally so in the general improvement which has taken place in the musical appointments and services of her churches. Small "meeting houses," melodions and amateur organists, have given place to stately edifices, large church organs, and in some cases to trained and efficient organists, though reform in this latter particular, seems the slowest in its accomplishment. With respect to the employment of trained and experienced organists we will venture to say a few words. Frequently some ambitious amateur, dazzled with the small glimmer of light which he possesses, supported by a few personal friends, who for the time have the power, and who know still less than himself, occupies the position of organist. It also frequently happens that some member of the choir, though not possessing a technical command of the instrument, is a far better musician than the organist. Here we find the elements of a first-class ruiction. The organist, by virtue of his office, is impatient of suggestions or dictation from a member of the choir; the member of the choir has no respect for the