

MUSIC.

Where does sweetest music linger?
In the voice of gifted singer,
In the throats of merle and thrush and the nightingale's
soft lay,
In the streamlet's silver gushing
And the river's royal rushing,
Sweeping onward, ever onward to the ocean far away—

In the wind of Summer even,
When the stars are white in heaven
And the tremulous clear crystal of the moon is pure as
snow,
Through the green leaves lightly straying,
In the forest branches playing,
Swooping down with dewy kisses to the sleeping flow'rs
below—

In the mighty organs swelling
Through the churches and forestelling
All the harmonies of angels and the ecstasies unknown,
In the stormy waters beating
On the wild shores and repeating
The sublimest chants of Nature in majestic monotone!

But the music that is purest,
And the notes the truest, sweetest,
Still enduring, never ceasing, deep, ecstatic, sweet and
strong,
The divine and human blending,
God and Nature comprehending,
Meet and mingle, shrined for ever, in the Poet's golden
song!

T. FERGUSON.

LET THE CHILDREN SING!

BY GRETCHEN.

One hears so much about "naturally" musical countries—such as Germany and Italy, for instance—that I feel tempted to say a few words on the subject myself, although perhaps my ideas may be no novelty to the majority of my readers.

To a certain extent some countries undoubtedly possess more "natural" music than others; but I am convinced that much of what is considered as "indigenous" music can be traced to cultivation. By cultivation, in this case, I mean that the constant association with music, the constant hearing and joining in harmonious sounds must gradually train a people to become musical unless they are singularly devoid of ear. Take one instance alone. Many, many years ago England was called an unmusical nation. Look at England now. Will anyone assert that music is unappreciated there? Where can we find another Henry Leslie's Choir? Where is there one equal of the celebrated Grenadier Guards Band? Where will you find the fine old classical masters listened to with more rapt attention? Let any one go to the famous "Monday Popular Concerts," pay his shilling and take his seat, surrounded often by rough laboring men and poorly clad washingwomen. Note the silence (except now and then a subdued murmur of delight) watch the faces—one whole attitude of attention and appreciation—and then say if England is unmusical! What has caused this? Cultivation. England is becoming—has, indeed, become—a naturally musical nation, and is known to possess not only musical appreciation of the highest order, but to possess also some of the finest voices in the world. I have cited England as one example, but I might also—if space allowed—speak at some length of the gradual musical development of Ireland, Scotland and Wales. I repeat that I consider this development as the work of cultivation, especially the cultivation of the rising youthful generation. The facilities offered for hearing (without large expense) the finest music and the large vocal classes held almost everywhere in the old country.

Now why should not this fair Dominion become "naturally" musical? I see no reason against it. Make music a part of education as common as reading and writing, and you will have a musical people. I now take the title of this paper "Let the Children Sing." I would have children's classes all over the country. People talk of straining children's voices. There is no need for straining any more than when they are speaking. There are now plenty of good teachers in this country, and they may achieve a great work by training up the little one to sing as naturally as they speak. Of course I know that music forms a part of the public school education, and this is a great advantage (if properly taught). There are many children, however, who do not attend the public schools, and thus a large number get no class teaching at all so few children's vocal classes being held. Still whether children have or have not the advantage of outside musical teaching is not the only point upon which I would dwell, but upon the home singing which should form as it were a part of every household as far as possible. Of course there are many homes where this is not possible. Perhaps the parents know nothing of music, or are so placed that they have no time to spare even for the slightest recreation. I do not, therefore, address myself to persons so placed, but to those who have the knowledge and the time to further this good cause, but who do not seem to think about it as seriously as needs. Anyone with a fair knowledge of music yet without being either a fine player or a cultivated singer, can do wonders with our little folks. See how quickly children pick up the dear old nursery songs or any simple hymn tune! A little child may be unable to sing a tune alone partly through timidity and partly because the musical ear is not thoroughly formed, but there are few children who cannot sing with others, and one or two good leading voices will help the rest wonderfully.

Every facility is now at hand for teaching our very tiniest tots. The charming nursery rhymes, set to music, and other easy part-songs—all perfect boons to lovers of music—can be had everywhere, and at a price within the reach of every one. I lately came across a most delightful and useful little book, "The Children's Choral Book" (Boosey's Edition, obtainable through Wm. Pond, the New York music publisher). This book has a short preface by the editor—Rev. C. S. Bere—telling of how the little German children take their song-books to school just as naturally as they take their spellers and copy-books. What wonder that Germany is musical when the little folks are thus encouraged to sing!

Now, I am going to suggest a plan by which mothers, who are musical, could greatly assist children who have no advantages in music at their own houses. Why not form a little class with your own children and their young friends? I believe that most children would hail this plan as both novel and pleasing. They might have, too, a sort of little concert or rehearsal once a month—or at any convenient interval—with a good game and a big tea thrown in, if you like. How would that do for a children's party? Then how nice it would be, at a Christmas Tree—that special delight of the youngsters—to have some simple Christmas song sung by the youthful voices just as the tree is exposed to view, radiant in its gorgeous dress of pretty presents! At a picnic, too, the little class could sing a sweet song or two under the trees. I know that something of this sort is sometimes done at Sunday-school festivals and other public gatherings, but does anyone ever think of it in a private home?

Never mind how simple the music, so long as there is music. I would have everything sung in unison until the children were accustomed to singing together in tune and time. Then gradually a few would be found capable of taking an easy second, and from that the young class would very soon be able to sing simple three-part songs.

Before, however, attempting any harmonizing of the voices, children should be accustomed to hearing some one sing the lower part whilst they sing the melody, otherwise they might be put out of tune at the first attempt amongst themselves. I have tested this by taking different parts whilst my own little ones were singing in unison some nursery songs, &c. The first time I struck in with the alto, my eldest boy cried, "Mother, m' ther, you're singing wrong!" I explained matters, and have now accustomed them to hearing any portion of the harmony added to their melody, without putting them out of tune.

I am afraid that some of my readers will think I am writing a music lesson, and telling a great many things which everyone knows, but I often come across people who know a great deal, but who do not bring their knowledge into practice; and it happens to be the practice that we want in this case. Once let a few really musical people set to work, and it will not be found a very difficult task to gradually train children until their musical faculties are quickened and their tastes refined. And thus, when they eventually hear good music, they will do it with an appreciation and an enjoyment utterly foreign to those with whom music has been a sealed book the best part of their lives.

We must be prepared for disappointments. I know people who have lived all their lives amongst musicians, and who are yet utterly unmusical, just as, on the other hand, one meets with those who have scarcely heard a note and yet can appreciate the very best music; we must take the rule, not the exceptions, and I repeat what I said at the commencement of this paper, viz., that what is generally considered as "indigenous" music is largely due to cultivation, commenced by accustoming young people to hear, and join in, sweet sounds. All over Canada, then, "Let the children sing."

ZE BOAXE.

This is the simple story. It was at the Court Theatre, in the Duchy of Lagerbeerheim, that the celebrated tenor, Franz von Dickerkopf, was nightly entrancing the audience. The opera was quite new. One of its chief sensations was the fight in the last act between the tenor, and a big bear, the tenor saving the heroine and her father from the clutches of the brute, and felling it to the earth with one blow. The curtain fell nightly on the tableau of the victorious tenor standing over the slain bear. The part of the bear was played by a super—one Karl Schmidt—who, in the day time, was employed at the principal hotel in the town. Amongst other seasonable visitors to Lagerbeerheim was a stalwart English tourist, middle-aged, somewhat taciturn, and possessed of ample means. He patronized the opera nightly. One day he entered into brief conversation with Karl at the hotel, and Karl somehow managed to bring in his own pet topic, the opera. He asked the Englishman's opinion of the new piece.

"It is very good, but the bear does not please me."

Karl explained that he himself played the bear.

"What did his performance lack?"

The Englishman declined to state the grounds of his disapproval, but turned suddenly and offered Karl ten thalers if he (Karl) would allow him (the Englishman) to take his place as the bear for one night. Ten thalers were a fortune to Karl. He consented. Next night the

Englishman, smuggled into the theatre, dressed in Karl's room, and stood ready on the stage in the last act. The heroine and her father were cowering before him. The tenor approached. His silvery voice rang through the house. He saw the danger of his beloved. He flew to the rescue. He dealt the master blow of the German fist that was to annihilate his ursine foe. To his surprise the bear dodged the blow and replied with one, two, three, after the approved Jim Mace style. The tenor staggered back, but renewed the attack, hitting out in the most ineffective mode of boxing practised in Germany, and entreating the bear, *sotto voce*, to fall. It was no use. The bear plugged first the silvery-voiced tenor, and then the old father, who came to his rescue, and finally the curtain descended to the reversed tableau of the triumphant bear standing astride the prostrate body of the silvery-voiced, who had all the wind knocked out of him for that night. Karl Schmidt understood the Englishman's little objection.

ECHOES FROM PARIS.

NECKLACES of Coptic coins are fashionable novelties in jewellery.

THE Empress of Austria occupies the rooms at the Bristol Hotel which the Prince of Wales usually retains. It is given out that Her Majesty will pass a few days in Paris. There is gaiety enough to attract, of that sort, however, which does not inconvenience itself much about Lent.

THE Commission which has been sitting with regard to the crown jewels has decided that the renowned diamond, the Regent, shall not be sold, neither are the Mazarin jewels to be sold. The whole are valued at twenty-two millions; the gems that will be sold are estimated to be worth from eight to nine millions.

SUCH truly magnificent arrangements are being made for the grand ball to be given after Easter by Madame Bamberger, in her hotel in the Avenue of the Champs-Élysées, that it is expected to be the success of the season. She was equally fortunate last year in pleasing the fashionable world, and leaving a happy remembrance of her kindness, taste, and lavishness.

THE French Meteorological Association intends to celebrate the centenary of the invention of balloons by the brothers Montgolfier next year by an exhibition in Paris, and by balloon ascents from Lyons, Dijon, Calais, and Annonay, the starting points of early balloon voyages. The exhibition is intended to embrace every natural and artificial means for flight, and all sciences are invited to co-operate.

MME. DROUYN DE L'HUYS, who was one of the most fashionable ladies at the Imperial Court, is about to sell her residence in the Rue François Ier. It was in this magnificent hotel that the wife of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs was compelled, on her return from Biarritz, to remove—so runs the story—a part of the staircase to get up the enormous boxes containing her toilettes.

Mlle. Ida Corani, a young and highly-gifted prima donna, having already earned a brilliant reputation in Italian operatic circles, is at present in Paris adding fresh laurels to her fame in our musical salons. We trust that the rumors that Miss Ida Corani is in treaty with one of our lyric theatres is correct, in which case we anticipate for her as great success in Paris as she has already achieved in Italy and London.

RHEIMS, EPERNAY, and other wine producing centres in the champagne country are up in arms because the Austrian Government proposes to raise the duty on sparkling wines of French origin from 1fr. to 2½fr. per bottle. The Minister of Commerce has taken the matter up, and promises to do all in his power to maintain the *status quo*. The equanimity with which French manufacturers regard any increase in home duties at once abandons them when it is a question of placing their wares at a disadvantage abroad.

A WORKMAN the other morning repairing one of the roofs of the Central Markets of Paris fell from a height of 100 feet. Happily he alighted on a quantity of butter, into which he was thoroughly immersed, and the fall being thus broken, he scrambled out of his soft bed safe and sound, to the satisfaction of the bystanders. The butter woman had fainted from sheer fright; but when she came to herself, her first words were instinctively expressive of her sense of self-interest. "Come here, my little man," she said to the individual, "let me scrape you, lest you take away with you too much of my butter."

THERE has been a good deal of talk recently about the *début* of a young Russian lady, Mlle. Feyghine, at the Comédie-Française. This is the second time the house of Molière has opened its doors to subjects of the Czar. Years ago, Mme. Louise-Fusil, who was a long time an actress in Russia, adopted an orphan girl and directed her artistic education. The girl was named Nadège. Brought to Paris by her protectress, she made her *début* at the Comédie-Française, but obtained little success, in spite of the interest excited by the story of her life,

which was narrated here and there before she appeared on the stage, just as has been done for Mlle. Feyghine with no better success. Nadège became known under the title of the "Orpheline de Wilna."

A YOUNG clerk of a French merchant recently received an invitation to a masked ball at his employer's, and was the envy of his comrades. It was considered a mark of very great favor, and was looked upon as a sign that he would soon be offered a place in the firm itself. Resolved to do all he could to make the occasion a success, he spent a good deal of time and considerable money in devising and making his masquerade costume, which, after long deliberation, he resolved should be that of a monkey. Then he spent a week learning a number of tricks—grinning, clambering on the chimney, springing over the bed, balancing himself on the back of a chair. The evening came. He rang the bell, flung his overcoat into the servant's arms and with a grin and chatter turned a somersault under the chandelier. The gentlemen stood stupefied, the ladies screamed. His mask prevented him from seeing much, but the noise encouraged him to bound over a sofa and throw down a cabinet of old china. At this moment a hand seized him, tore off his mask and the voice of his employer asked him what he meant by this disgraceful conduct. Before he could explain he was hustled out of the house, learning by one glimpse that the rest of the company was in evening dress. The next day he was sent for and entered the office with trembling knees. "I had the pleasure of a visit from you last evening," said the gentleman. "Yes, sir—that is—!" "No excuses," said the other, "no excuses—I have raised your salary. I noticed you were overlooked for promotion last year. Good morning; shut the door after you." His employer had made an early investigation into the matter, and found that the other clerks had hoaxed the young man by sending him a bogus invitation.

VARIETIES.

ONE Sunday, in August last Naples had a *fête* of an extraordinary character. Tradition says that on the 31st of August, in some year a long time ago, a number of the inhabitants of Santa Lucia who had been captured by corsairs were saved by the interposition of a "local" Madonna. However that may be, the denizens of Santa Lucia on the last Sunday in August assemble on the border of the sea. They wear garments made of paper decorated with all kinds of fireworks; some carry umbrellas decorated in the same way, and others carry on their heads baskets of fruits surrounded with fireworks. On the tolling of the bell of the neighboring church, there is a general explosion, men and women are ready to throw pitchers of water over the zealous devotees, the baskets of fruit are upset, and a regular scramble takes place. Again the church bell sounds, and hundred of persons, either clothed or nude, throw themselves into the sea, doing so time after time. Amongst these crowds are the aged, the young, and women. "We have seen the infirm," says a witness, "who have risen from their beds throw themselves into the sea." The firm persuasion is that, as the former inhabitants of Santa Lucia were liberated by the sea from certain death, the water at Santa Lucia can, on that day, heal every species of infirmity. "We can verify only one miracle," says the *Roma*, "and that is that, notwithstanding there was a large crowd, a continual explosion of fireworks, and though hundreds threw themselves into the sea, no accident took place."

NOT SUCH FOOLS.—Mr. Gilbert the dramatist once heard that his *Trial by Jury*, renamed and slightly altered, was being given at a certain hall; and not liking to be swindled, he called upon the manager. The author opened proceedings by inquiring whether the hall was not let for amateur theatricals sometimes. It was certainly, any evening, if not already engaged, and the manager inquired what his visitor proposed to play. "Well, there's a piece called *Trial by Jury*. I was thinking of that," the visitor replied. "And a very good piece too," the manager kindly assured him; "sure to take." "I know who could play the principal parts very well," Mr. Gilbert said, "but I was doubtful about the chorus. Could you help me in this, do you think?" "I think I could—in fact I'm sure of it; you need not trouble about a chorus that knows the music," the manager replied. "Thank you; you are very kind," Mr. Gilbert gently answered; "but," he continued, "by the way, are there not some charges—fees—of some kind to be paid for the right of playing pieces of this sort? I fancy I have heard something to that effect." Then the manager grew very confidential indeed. He looked sly. He even winked; and he said, "Never you mind about that. I don't. Why, we play the very piece you're talking about every night; only we don't call it *Trial by Jury*. We ain't such fools. Gilbert and Sullivan don't know anything about it, and ain't likely to. You leave it to me, and you'll be all right!" It was now Mr. Gilbert's turn, and he quietly replied, "I think you've made a slight mistake in my name. I am Mr. W. S. Gilbert, and I had heard that you were good enough to play my piece without mentioning it; so I came to see." Mr. Gilbert declares that the man shrank visibly. For a huge creature six feet high he seemed to descend to the dimensions of a child in petticoats; but Mr. Gilbert mercifully spared him for the sake of the fun he had afforded.