

The Arion,

A CANADIAN JOURNAL OF ART, DEVOTED TO MUSIC, ART, LITERATURE AND THE DRAMA.

VOL. I., No. 8.

DECEMBER, 1880.

PRICE, 10 CENTS.

OUR CHRISTMAS GREETING.

Greeting, kind friends. It is our privilege and pleasure to wish you a Merry Xmas, and in connection with the coming season of festivity, the young *Arion*, (looking to-day for the first time over the snow covered land), modestly desires to give expression to a few thoughts.

Our journal is but three months old to-day, a mere infant, in fact, and (if for this reason only) appeals strongly to your human sympathies, for since the days of Adam and Eve has not all humanity been; at some time or other, in a state of infancy, and the "peace and good will from God to man," which this season commemorates was heralded eighteen hundred and eighty-one years ago, by the birth of the most blessed infant the world has ever seen.

"All mealy wrapped in swathing clothes,
And in a manger laid."

And from that lowly birth grew out the vast power of christianity, the influence of which, for the good of the human race, who may measure? The Christmas season is one of rejoicing: It is a common bond of union between all men who have heard the name of Christ. The herdsman on the scorched Antipodian plains; The dwellers of the vine covered hills of sunny Italy; The fur-clad denizens of the north of Europe, and our own cold clime. It is a grand thought that, for one season of each year at least, the peasant in his cot; the noble in his hall; the monarch on his throne; the prisoner in his cell, all are moved as by a common impulse, and united in a common brotherhood. The custom of family re-union is a feature not least to be admired. What heart among us all will not beat, if but a moment, the faster, on receiving some token of loving remembrance be it ever so humble, from some loved absent one, whom cruel fate still holds asunder? and cold indeed is the heart that will not warm, as with hearty hand shake and cheery "Merry Christmas" he welcomes, or is welcomed to the Christmas fare, whether in lowly cot or lordly hall. Thanks to the law of compensation created by Him who doeth all things well. The humble cottage fare of roast-beef and plum pudding; the stolen kisses under the mistletoe, or its substitute, the homely gift of mystical Santa Claus in the little stocking, will yield as much pleasure in their anticipation and enjoyment, to Tom and Jane, and Baby Frank and little Ella, as banquet and ball and costly presents to lord and lady of high degree.

This is the bright side; but there is another and darker side to this pleasant picture. Let us draw aside the curtain—what see we here? Alas the "always with you,"

the helpless, friendless poor, whose suffering in our climate is only aggravated by the advent of the season which brings joy and gladness to those more blessed. The pure white snow, the thought of which brings joy to you, as you sit by your warm and cheerful hearth, and which you hope may adorn the Xmas morning; strikes terror to the heart of those whose home is the cheerless street or fireless garret floor. When sitting down to the Christmas board surrounded by friends in warmth and light, let your appetite be whetted by the blessed thought that some little act of kindness, some small sacrifice has lightened the burthen of, and shed a ray of light upon the darkened pathway of some, less fortunate of God's creatures.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these, ye have done it unto me."

Christ deserves our adoration, he needs not our help. Are we not most effectively realizing "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," by reflecting a portion of the blessings with which we have been blessed, upon those of our fellow beings less fortunate than ourselves? Shall we not thereby prove ourselves Christians, not alone in name, but Christians in very deed?

A SONG entitled "The Blind Flower Girl," composed by "*Professor*" Workman, has been handed to us for criticism. We are not personally known to the author, and while we regret that the subject of our first review should have proved so unfortunate, we feel that we should utterly fail in our mission did we for that reason decline to speak the truth. As we have already stated the chief object of our paper is to encourage native Art. Had the song in question been written by some young student, while pointing out his faults, we would have encouraged him to try again. This song, coming as it does, from one who boldly prints upon the title page "Professor of Music at the Ottawa Normal School, and Musical Presenter in the Public Schools"—entitles the author to no such consideration at our hands.

With reference to the coming May Festival in New York, it would seem that Dr. Damrosch, Conductor of the Ontario Society of that city, has organized large auxiliary Choral Societies in Brooklyn, Newark, Jersey City and Nyack, for the purpose of uniting with the Oratorio Society, forming in all a chorus of about one thousand voices. At this particular time Mr. Theodore Thomas, it appears, makes a call upon the singers of New York for a huge chorus. Undoubtedly the prestige of his name will assist him in securing the desired chorus. But the friends of the Oratorio Society, not without reason, look with some jealousy upon this act of Mr. Thomas, and regard it at this particular time as an attempt to steal the gilt from Dr. Damrosch's gingerbread. However this may be the feeling among musical people seems to be divided upon the subject, and quite a petty war is waging between the journals holding opposite views on the subject.