

❀ MUSIC. ❀

For the LADIES AT HOME.

SOME THOUGHTS.

BY TRIAD.

It is with considerable trepidation that I have consented to become a contributor to the Musical Department of the LADIES AT HOME. In some circles the expression, "Crotchetty as a musician," has become an adage—and one which I should fain hope has arisen out of the fact that musicians have so much to do with "crotchets," "quavers," etc., and not because the term "crotchetty" at all describes the mental condition of musicians in general. For myself, I am very fond of turning in thought and mentally communing with "Music, heavenly maid!" And it is in large part because I believe that among the readers of this magazine I shall find many whose lives have been sweetened through loving intercourse with this divine maiden, and who will be inclined to be charitable in judgment and mild in their censure of any shortcomings on my part, and who will be glad to meet with me monthly in these columns, that I have begun what I trust may prove to be a very pleasant employment. It is only as a simple lover of music desirous of being helpful to other lovers of music; as one wishing to do good and to receive good that I shall endeavor to meet you here. Severe criticism let us leave to others more able, and to whom such may be more congenial than, I hope, it ever shall be to you or me. To my readers a cordial invitation to correspond, and so to carry on pleasant interchanges of thought, is extended. Letters addressed: TRIAD, care of LADIES' COMPANION PUB. CO., 166 King St. West, Toronto, will be gladly received. Replies will be given through these columns.

During hours of practise, or in leisure moments, original thoughts, or thoughts which at least seem to us original, will often come into our minds. Stick a pin here, dear readers, and resolve with me that such fugitives shall henceforth be captured whenever they are detected hovering about our mental domains and secured, in bonds of black and white, to be brought forth at some seasonable time to do service for their captor and her friends. A book in which to make jottings of any thoughts or reflections which may occur to us would be a capital addition to the "cosy corners" in all our homes.

I love to think of instrumental music as the expression of the finest thoughts and feelings of which the human mind is capable. I have found much enjoyment in doing thus: I will play a few bars of a piece and then halt and think over it. After practising the piece a number of times I often find myself trying to imagine what were the thoughts and feelings of the composer who wrote it. My conceptions may not be right; I may in my imaginings only be unconsciously trying to put my own "wee" self in the place of some notable musical genius, but surely even this is preferable to a mere mechanical and therefore soulless mode of treating a new selection. One evening when practising one of Mendelssohn's Songs Without

Words, the Hunting Song, the sadness which runs through all the productions of that great composer affected me deeply. As I paused I saw in imagination a vast forest, the trees clothed in their autumnal garb and the subdued sunlight tinging all with golden splendor. I seemed to see ladies and gentlemen in gay attire and to hear the sounding of horns and the deep baying of hounds, while at intervals laughter rang out from lips overflowing with merriment. The gaiety of those I thus seemed to see jarred upon my feelings because, I suppose, sadness filled my heart. Shortly afterwards, in reading a biographical sketch of Mendelssohn I learned that he was not given to looking on the gloomy side of things, but was very lightsome, free from care and cheerful. So I must have dwelt too much on a single phase of the piece I was trying to interpret and have thrust myself into the place I thought the great master was occupying.

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Up in what was then the "Queen's Bush," away back in "the sixties," a raw pioneer lad went to the musical genius of the village near which he lived to be instructed in the mysteries of "fiddling," as practised by that worthy. After several brave attempts the lad was one evening gravely informed that before he could learn to "fiddle" he must have one requisite article of which he was not yet the possessor. "You must," said the musical oracle, "before you can learn anything more, get a capacity." The youth inquired where such a thing might be obtained and, on being directed thither, went to the druggist's in search of a "capacity," only, of course, to be informed that none were, just then, in stock. Capacities are not yet kept in stock in either rural or urban shops, as far as I can learn, but I feel sure that here and there are many young persons who would like to ask questions or tell of their musical perplexities or their joys; their triumphs or their failures, who can speedily develop a capacity for writing nice little letters. Who shall be the first to open a correspondence with,

TRIAD.

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THE POETRY OF SOUND.

By REV. JOHN THOMSON, M.A.

MUSIC is the poetry of sound. That is not the same as the sound of poetry, for true poetry has both sense and sound. Dr. John Duncan delighted to roll out these syllables of Coleridge's *Kubla Kahn*:

"In Tanadu did *Kubla Kahn*
A stately pleasure dome decree,
Wherein a silent river ran
Down to a sunless sea."

"I don't know what it means," he said, in quoting it, "but it is very melodious." And so it is; and so are many verses that might be quoted merely for the pleasure of the sound. Tennyson's "Brook" is so melodious, in the ripple of its syllables, that it seems almost an affront to set it to music. After hearing George McDonald read it I have no wish ever to hear the words rendered in any other way than that of good recitation.

I am tempted here to make a digression in regard to elocution as a companion art to music, and to say of it that it resembles Portia's conception of Mercy—twice blest—seeing it blesses him who reads and also him who listens. And what more soothing exercise than to entertain one's own ear and mind in a quiet evening walk by repeating the rhythmic lines of a favorite poet?

Music, again, is the poetry of sound, but not the poetry of noise; though there is such a thing as the poetry of noise. Read Norman McLeod's "Enjoyment of City Life," and you will know what I mean. "People talk of early morning in the country, with bleating sheep, singing larks, and purring brooks. I prefer that roar which greets my ear when a thousand hammers, thundering on boilers of